

April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020

*Distinguished members of the UN Security Council,*

The fate of millions of Syrian people is in your hands. As you meet today to discuss COVID-19, **we call for your urgent intervention and support to mitigate COVID-19 impact in Syria. We urge you to use this crisis as an opportunity for peacebuilding in Syria.**

As this pandemic upends life around the world, we are deeply concerned by the potentially devastating impact of COVID-19 on Syrians, who have already suffered unfathomably. As Center for Civil Society and Democracy (CCSD) board members, from Europe and the United States, we stand in solidarity with CCSD staff, the communities they serve and all vulnerable Syrians facing into this public health crisis. The CCSD team are working tirelessly for the past month educating Syrians about prevention, social-distancing, community mobilization and are advocating on their behalf. We appeal to you to support UN Special Envoy for Syria, Geir O. Pedersen's appeal (March 24), Secretary-General António Guterres' appeal (March 23) and we reiterate [CCSD's call to the UN Security Council](#) to:

1. Deliver an immediate permanent nationwide ceasefire throughout Syria, with international support to sustain it.
2. Lead a comprehensive Syria-wide strategy for tackling COVID-19, and support WHO, Syrian and international civil society organizations to:
  - a. Deliver fact based public health campaigns on prevention and protection measures.
  - b. Ensure full, sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access to all parts of Syria.
  - c. Provide essential medical supplies and technical support to all parts of Syria.
  - d. Ensure equality of access to testing and medical care for all Syrians.
3. On humanitarian grounds, secure the release of all detainees and abductees. Seek immediate humanitarian and adequate healthcare access to all detainees, in all prisons and all detention centers. Ensure adequate medical care and protective measures in all areas of detention.
4. Ensure equality of humanitarian and healthcare access for all Syrians in refugee and IDP camps.

We are all endangered by this virus. We recognize it knows no geographical boundaries in Syria. We anticipate its impact will be even greater in conflict-riven areas. As board members we seek to protect and uphold the rights which drive CCSD in their work. At this time the most basic rights of Syrians, the right to healthcare, to protection and prevention from this deadly virus are in jeopardy, especially for vulnerable refugees, IDPs, and detainees. We ask that you use your passion, knowledge, power and political will to save Syrian lives, both inside and outside Syria, and mitigate the impact of this impending humanitarian catastrophe. In this chaos, we see the possibility for negotiating peace. We appeal to you to seize this opportunity, and for you unwavering support and influence to realize it.

**Thank you,**

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