

Regional outreach Istanbul March 2024

Summary Report

6 March 2024

SUMMARY

As part of the regular outreach activities conducted by the Office of the Special Envoy in Syria through the Civil Society Support Room, a regional outreach mission was held in Istanbul on March 6, 2024, where the Deputy Special Envoy Ms. Najat Rochdi met with eighteen Syrian civil society representatives.

DSE Rochdi met several Syrian think tanks discussing the situation on the ground and exchanging on entry points to advance the political process.

The humanitarian actors were particularly concerned with shrinking funding, underlining the dramatic impact of the cutting of the WFP food baskets on extremely vulnerable communities, with wide ranging impact, including an increase of SGBV.

Women activists spoke about their many projects and initiative to empower women and enhanced their participation in the economy, political and social work. Several referenced the recent murder/death of a women activist in northwest Syria and ongoing threats against women activists and leaders in the area. They noted the damaging impact to women political and humanitarian activities and called for protection mechanisms.

Interlocutors noted deep concern among Syrians about the impact of Syria being divided under different authorities for almost a generation. They demanded an end to hostilities and for civilian protection, stabilization, livelihood and education opportunities.

DSE Rochdi recalled two essential aspects of SCR2254 that must be implemented in parallel – the first: restoring Syria’s sovereignty, including by addressing the issue the presence of terrorist groups and foreign forces, and the second: addressing the legitimate demands of the Syrian people through free and fair elections, the release of arbitrarily held detainees and abductees and information on the fate and whereabouts of missing persons, and the crucial issue of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

CSSR, 2023

The Civil Society Support Room (CSSR) was established in January 2016 by the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria as a mechanism to consult with a broad and diverse range of civil society actors. Through the CSSR, civil society actors can meet, interact and provide their insights and ideas to the Office of the Special Envoy, relevant United Nations actors, as well as international stakeholders.

This mechanism aims at rendering the UN mediation process more inclusive.

The overall supervision and guidance of the CSSR rests with the OSE-Syria. swisspeace Foundation has been mandated by the OSE to provide methodological expertise, operational and technical support to the process.

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