



Civil Society Development in Syria

Diana Khayyata and Jan Jaap van Oosterzee.

Speakers: Diana Khayyata (Syrian civil activist) and Jan Jaap van Oosterzee (PAX)

Diana is a 31-year-old civil activist from Aleppo. She studied English at the Aleppo University and joined the revolutionary uprising in 2011 there. Later she had to flee the country and worked for the Syrian Opposition Coalition in Turkey, until she joined protests against corruption there. She had to flee to Europe and is currently living in Zutphen, won the reunification/divorce case and taking up civil activism in the Netherlands again.

Jan Jaap (55) is senior advocacy officer for the Middle East team of PAX, with 20 years' experience in supporting and advocating for civil activism in the Middle East (in particular Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel and Occupied Palestine and Morocco).

The History:

Prior to the popular uprising in March 2011, international organizations working in Syria to implement cultural, political or development projects in collaboration with local civil society organizations found themselves operating in a void. Many simply gave up after years of fruitless and frustrating attempts to work and build constructive relationships with the civil society institutions there. The absence of an active and independent civil society in Syria

was one of the factors explaining the country's dire plight. But radical change is currently being sought in this and so many other aspects. To understand better the situation within which civil society operates in Syria, it is important to look back to the time before and during the rule of the Baath "Resurrection" Party that is the leading Party in Syria owned and established by the Assadian regime.



3 . Civil Society Development in Syria

In Syria before revolution the civil society consist of charities. Which played a role in the process of social solidarity, also

religious organizations led a role in the dissemination of education as well as providing services and social assistance

Phase I: Before Resurrection Party takeover power in 1963:

The establishment of charities and educational and cultural clubs in Syria started in the middle of nineteenth century. the first charity was in 1874 through initiative named "Bond of love" and it was a scientific one.

But after France occupied Syria they shot down most of the initiatives because they are spreading education and knowledge. Only few survived because they didn't play

any role against Colonialism and his policies.

In this phase a lot of other initiatives and clubs established. Also, political parties, newspapers, magazines and theater groups which indicate that there were civil society action developing and being active spread all along the 40s and 50s.



Phase 2: Resurrection Party coup and takeover power in 1963:

After Hafez Al-Assad became president in 1971 he launched a new phase under the name "Corrective Movement" were most lefties patriotically political parties take over and all other parties were ruled out. Also, he made "Resurrection party" the leader of the state and society in 1973 constitution that continued until the next constitution issued in 2012 after the Syrian revolution. were the Front in its statement declare "Resurrection

party is the Front president for life". Although in the beginning of Resurrection party initiatives and clubs were so active but in time their role become the arm of that party and only those who have same goals had the right to work and others not. Even in media served only the control of Resurrection party over society and state.

4 . Civil Society Development in Syria



Phase 3: After Bashar Al-Assad takeover the rule of Syria in 2000:

The media was controlled by security and the media minister whom rejected the free press and approved only on channels that broadcast support opinion to the Assadian rule. The Regime continue to postponed issuing laws of launching democratic political proses under the alibi of exterior pressure and accused the callers of civil society movement of being a spy for westerns that they seek to topple the regime and flip opinions against it. So, the suppress procedures begin were the regime forces were arresting the symbols of educational, social and political movement. And in this there was an abortion of this movement but it left a huge mark on the Syrian Society which start to perform different political awareness so the discussions of freedom of expression and human rights spread among young Syrian people. Although the suppress and arresting, going back and retrieve became impossible and a lot of human rights centers and political parties continue its work. Since the beginning of Bashars rule over Syria, one could witness more efforts from international organizations (EU, Embassies of Western countries, some European NGO's) to identify and support Syrian civil society. Embassies could sometimes support civil activists and diplomats were actively following legal cases against civil society actors. Some civil

society activists could participate in regional and international civil society networks, for instance on women's rights, and meet with activists from other countries where there was more space for civil society. Yet the impact of this international support was always very limited and supporters always had to act carefully in order not to endanger the security of Syrian civil society actors.



5 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Phase 4: The Syrian Revolution 2011:

Initially in Daraa in the south and ultimately across the entire country, Syrians took to the streets to demand political reform. From the outset, their peaceful demonstrations were brutally repressed. It was therefore not long before protesters were demanding not only reform but also the ousting of the regime. To cloak violence with dialogue, the government began showing an unprecedented degree of interest both in the weak organizations that had been nurtured and controlled by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and NGOs suggesting that these were partners in dialogue with the regime and thus projecting the impression that popular opinion was indeed being taken into account. Not surprisingly, these attempts to mislead the population failed, and many of the organizations involved were clearly aware of being miscast as the “voice of the people”. Concurrently, popular mobilization in the towns and villages of Syria continued apace. The spontaneous demonstrations of

the early days of the uprising were soon superseded by more organized protests as grass-root support structures were put in place across the country. Many areas saw the founding of Local Coordinating Committees (LCCs), which organized demonstrations, managed public relations, developed strategies, built up contact networks and engaged in fund-raising. As the insurgency spread and the number of casualties and displaced persons increased, informal administrative structures were also set up to help get humanitarian assistance delivered to citizens in need. Gradually, the revolutionaries created a variety of structures working in parallel to those of the government. In areas no longer controlled by the regime, some of these structures were institutionalized in the form of Local Councils (LCs) which, although differing

from one area to another in terms of their capacities, support the functioning of all kinds of public services ranging from distributing aid providing medical services and education, maintaining the judiciary system, to managing waste collection.

On a less institutionalized level, after the correspondents of foreign news agencies had been expelled from the country and independent reporting from Syria had become impossible, informal news agencies began to emerge through which self-appointed citizen journalists were able to document and comment on events taking place in all parts of the country and make their information available to the world. Concurrently, medical and humanitarian aid networks were being expanded and increasingly supported by newly founded organizations in Syria and abroad. Equally important were the countless civil society groups (CSGs) that were set up to operate in all areas of social engagement with a view to creating democratic structures and strengthening civil society. Within these CSGs, students created independent student groups. New democratic trends also emerged even within the trade unions, which had become part of the state control apparatus under the rule of the Baath party. Over the past six years, dissidents – the majority of them young and until today completely unknown – have brought about fundamental changes to Syrian society. In a country where all forms of collective action have been firmly in the hand of the state for decades, new forms of grass-roots organizations are now being tested and the “people”, so regularly invoked in Baath Party rhetoric, have themselves redefined their role. And again, international organizations are looking for suitable partners with whom they can become active in Syria. While government bureaucracy

6 . Civil Society Development in Syria

was their most difficult challenge in the past, often their main challenge today is having to deal with nascent organizations operating under exceptionally difficult circumstances. Cooperation therefore requires a high degree of flexibility and an assumption of partnership-worthiness in advance, an assumption that conflicts with the rules of many international donor institutions and needs to be challenged. The first response of international supporters to Syrian civil society was quite positive. A good example was the US Ambassador Robbert Ford who in the spring of 2011 visited several demonstrations, which at that time still helped to limited the violence by Syrian police against the demonstrators. Most European diplomats followed this example and were in regular contact with activists. From the side of European NGO's there were several initiatives to support and create solidarity. In Germany, Syrian exiles and Germans started a campaign "Adopt a Revolution" to support non-violent local civil groups. PAX joint this campaign in the Netherlands. Others started initiatives to support free media or women's rights organizations.



7 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Civil Society on the Ground: Geographical spread:

First, we have to talk about the military support, Syria is roughly divided between four groups: regime forces supported by Hezbollah; Isis; other Islamist groups; and more moderate opposition groups. Kurdish militias separately control areas in the north of the country. Also, the refugee's distribution that is being caused by Assad and his allies.

Support with military action

Support with diplomacy or logistics

Oppose with military action

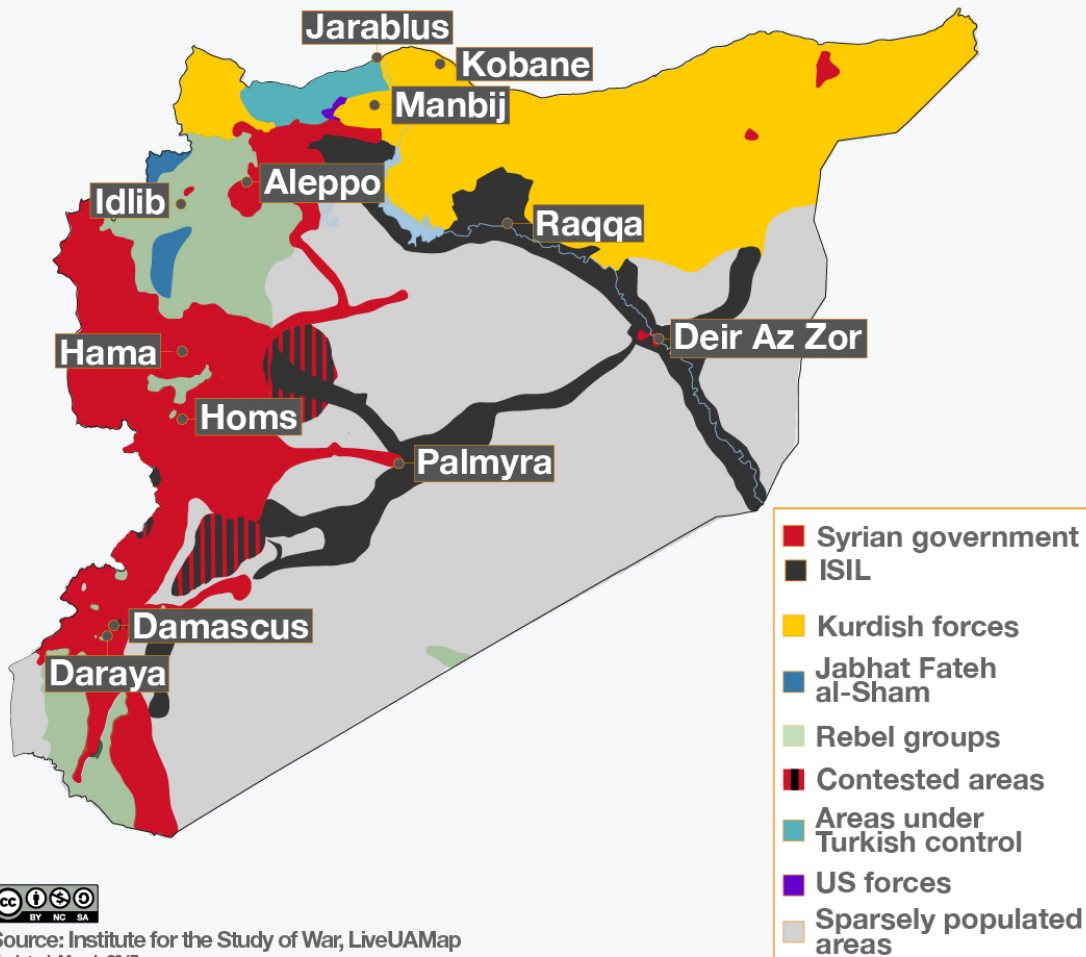
Oppose with diplomacy or logistics

	Syrian regime	Isis	Islamist groups	Moderate groups
Russia	●	●	●	●
US	●	●	●	●
UK	●	●	●	●
France	●	●	●	●
Turkey	●	●	●	●
Iran	●	●	●	●
Saudi Arabia	●	●	●	●
Qatar	●	●	●	●
Jordan	●	●	●	●

8 . Civil Society Development in Syria

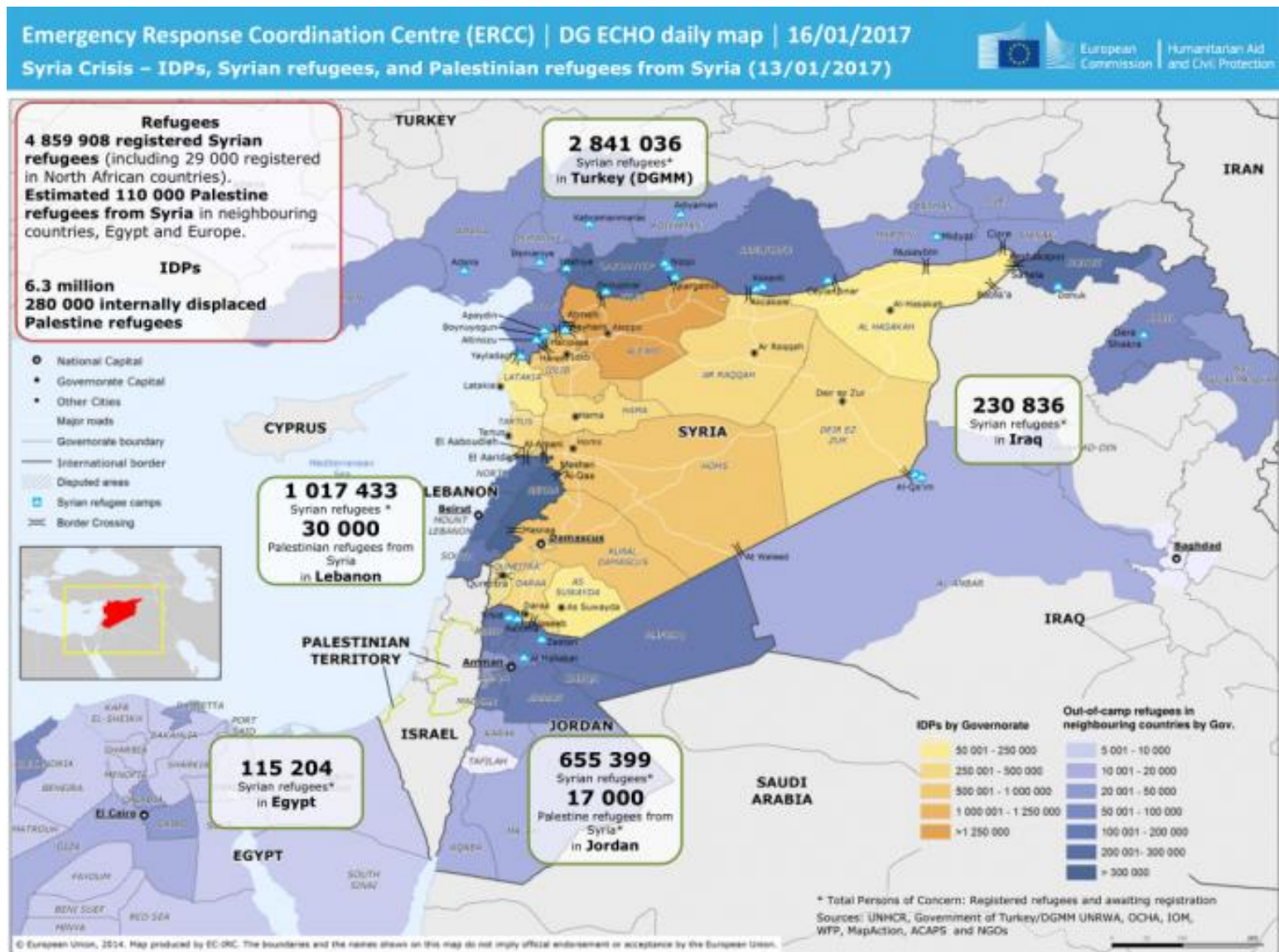
And in the following map you can see who controls where;

Syria: Who controls what?



9 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Syrian refugees in the movement;



10 . Civil Society Development in Syria

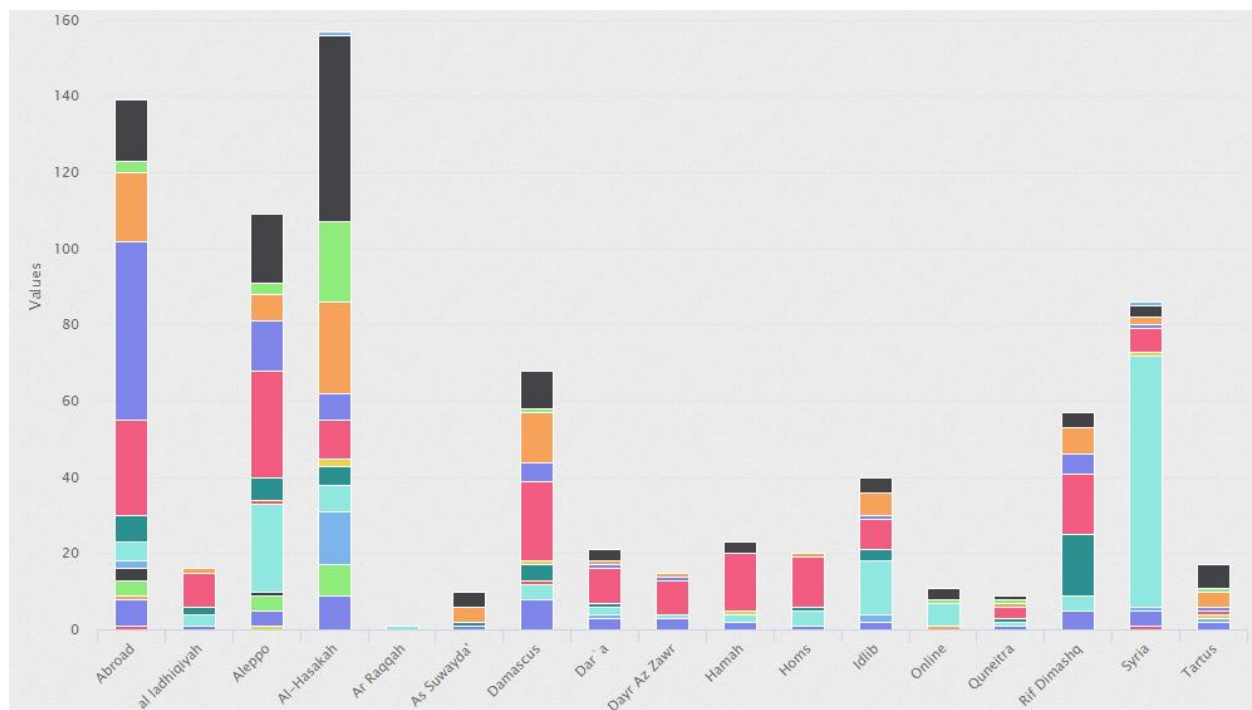
Refugees 4,859,908 registered Syrian refugees (including 29 000 registered in North African countries).

Estimated 110 000 Palestine refugees from Syria in neighboring countries, Egypt and Europe.

IDPs 6.3 million

280 000 internally displaced Palestine refugees

So, the organizations started to come to surface based on the needs and based on the search conducted by Citizens for Syria Org the total organizations inside Syria is 1,012, however the verified Orgs are total of 837 active ones inside and outside Syria.



- BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, UNIONS
- Civic and Advocacy Organizations
- Culture and Arts
- Development and Housing
- Education and Research
- Emergency and Relief
- Environment
- Health
- Law and Legal Services
- Media and Communications
- Other Recreation and Social Clubs
- Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion
- Political Organizations
- Service clubs
- Social Services
- Sports
- voluntarism promotion and support

11 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Successful Stories:

The women role in revolution is outstanding were in the beginning of protests they took the role of nursing and protecting men and young men to be taken to prison. Also, logistics in carrying protest materials and deliver it to the right area. In also media coverage were several women covered a lot of horrible shelling and bombing stories.

Therefor in Aleppo was one of the first local councils that includes women in their political positions in. then in Daria also they are running elections that included women as candidates.

Women organization:

Syrian Women Network (Shams): Domain: gender equality, education and human rights - Founded in May 2013 - Member organizations: 30 organizations and around 200 individuals - Located at many governorates, especially in Damascus and Lattakia.

Syrian Women Initiative for Peace and Democracy: A political initiative aims to empower women participation in negotiations, the initiative took part in Geneva talks, doesn't have a presence inside Syria but continued working from abroad.

Syrian Feminist Lobby: A political independent lobby, aspires the equal participation of women and men in all political decision making processes in Syria and on all levels.

Women Cultural Forum in Qamilshy: Aims to create a meeting space for women for cultural exchange, capacity building, empowering and educating women.



Majed Shurbaje took a prize International Women of Courage Award presented from the American Government in 7th of March 2015 for her role in demanding for women rights through her work in Enab Balady magazine which is one of the most successful magazines in Syrian revolution and has many followers also a lot of other women who has a huge role in the



revolution we have to mention the human rights activist Razan Zetune who got kidnapped by unknown sources from her office in Eastern Gouta in Damascus with her colleagues because they were working on documenting human rights violations from the regime in 9th December 2013. She won five different prizes she couldn't receive any.

12 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Kesh Malek:

In order to activate the civil society movement and peaceful resistance in the city of Aleppo, a team of youth founded the Checkmate group in January 2012.

The group's main goal is to spread the concept of nonviolence. Their first project was to document the most relevant events of the uprising in 2011, through what they called "Freedom Calendar." Attached to each month is a famous freedom quote, by renowned Syrian poets and intellectuals such as Nizar Qabbani, Saad Allah Wannus, Mohammad al-Maghout. One of such quotes reads: "These regimes have shrunk the laws and constitutions to guarantee their stability and interest. And still, they will take any opportunity to side-step and violate the law, taking pleasure in their own power".

Checkmate has also launched and participated in several campaigns, such as Eulogy for Fear, and Don't Try to Promote I Won't Vote, which was a response to the regime's proposal for a constitutional referendum while its tanks and armed forces were killing civilians. The group also boycotted parliamentary elections, and took part in demonstrations and campaigns such as My Country, I Dream.

Among its grassroots activities were a festival for children in the neighborhood of

Bustan al-Qasr, several cleaning campaigns, a new school named Martyr Mustafa Qurman, and psychological support for children under distress, in addition to distributing leaflets, participating in strikes and organizing demonstrations with other groups.

The group works in collaboration with other groups, such as the Days of Freedom, Pulse, Free Youth of Bustan al-Qasr, Salah al-Din Rebels and Grandchildren of Kawakbi, and took part in campaigns such as A Human's Revolution for Life and Loaf of Bread, among several other projects.

Due to the increasingly dramatic situation civilians face in the country, many of the group's activists have turned to humanitarian aid, while others have been forced to leave the country. Despite the pain caused by the loss of members of the group, Checkmate remains hopeful and optimistic. "Seeing the kids' reaction during activities like the children festival makes it all worth it. We also laugh a lot while we work."

Checkmate activists aim to keep working after the fall of the regime, focusing on grassroots projects, while they finally take in the freedom they have pursued for so long.



13 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Dubarah:

While the previous waves of migration meant a harsh social disconnect and waiting up to two weeks for each letter to arrive by mail, possibly censored by the regime apparatus after the events of the 1980s, today it is much easier to stay connected. This led to virtual public spheres becoming the alternative meeting place for Syrians dispersed all over the world.

Many projects have been launched to substitute and expand the social networks that previously provided support to those living in the same area. The most prominent of these is the Dubarah network. Dubarah is a colloquial Syrian term meaning “managing a solution” in a very improvisational and creative sense.

The network was set up by a small group of young Syrian volunteers as a Facebook page and quickly expanded into a proper non-profit organization registered in Canada, boasting thousands of volunteers in over 30 countries.

On Dubarah, one can find announcements about scholarships, work vacancies, trainings, online tutorials, and even events that bring together the diaspora to share know-how about adapting to the regulations and norms of their new countries.

Salina Abaza, an early volunteer with the network told Syria Untold that the main reason for their growth and success was the “focus on educational and cultural development for Syrians, supporting them in their new communities, and informing them about the available scholarships around the globe.” Furthermore, Dubarah assists Syrians in the complicated process of applying to universities and for scholarships. Occasionally, the network has also raised funds for urgent medical operations.

As for parcels that obviously cannot be sent virtually, social media has also been utilized to capitalize on the geographic dispersion of social networks. Mail services into Syria are currently blocked by many countries and mail that reaches Syria is heavily scrutinized, with corrupt local mail operators often stealing the shipped contents. Therefore, people who need to send valuables and important documents do so by hand using trusted intermediaries.

Those who can still travel into Syria are a rare and valuable resource, due to the travel restrictions many face. Consequently, Facebook groups where members announce their upcoming travel routes and what/how much baggage they are allowed to take along with them have been set up. Those who need to send something also post what it is and to where it should be sent. These groups, however, tend to be smaller and private because of the goods' values.

Lama, who still lives in Syria, is a member of one of these groups. She works as an interpreter, a profession which regularly requires her to travel abroad. “I got used to announcing my travel date a day or two before the actual date, because I know many people will contact me last minute wanting me to take this or that object along. It became part of my regular travel packing process!” she explained.

Paid delivery services have been set up, such as the Expatriate Mail Group, which is a mail order service that allows you to buy presents for your loved ones in Syria. The

14 . Civil Society Development in Syria



client selects the type of gift, and the group administrator confirms its availability on the preferred dates. Payments are made online abroad due to Western sanctions, then group members inside Syria buy the gift from local markets, and deliver it to the doorstep in many Syrian cities. The service covers mainly regime-controlled areas although it operates unofficially.

Carol, a physician currently living in Germany, has used the service in the past. Her family in Homs is unable to visit her due to visa reasons, and she cannot afford to visit them more than once a year, since it makes more sense for her to save the cost of the trip and send them the money.

“A week before Mother’s Day, I ordered a bouquet and a cake from the Expatriate Mail Group.” remembered Carol, “They confirmed availability but it seems they were overloaded with orders that day. The delivery reached my mother just before midnight, with countless calls for hours back

and forth before that. And it was really expensive.

“Still, it somehow became a good deal all the same. We spoke a lot on the phone that day, and she felt the effort I put into it. I still can’t believe she stayed up till midnight waiting for a stranger to deliver my flowers!”

The problem of finding a potential Syrian partner in this geographic dilemma has found controversial solutions in some other Facebook groups.

Umm Ahmad the Matchmaker, for example, has her own Facebook page now. People searching for a spouse send in descriptions of themselves and their hopeful. In their messages, they tend to focus on age, education, job, city of origin, economic status, and residency status and, occasionally, physical traits. Each request is posted by the page administrator and given a number. Those interested contact “Umm Ahmad” via private message referencing the number of the post they are answering to.

Though almost every post on the page has comments ridiculing either the post, or the entire process, the page has almost 14,000 followers, many for the fun of it.

Despite their downsides, social media and virtual communications have become essential for Syrians today. They are the only way to stay in touch with the people and communities to which they still feel like they belong. Live broadcast, for example, might soon substitute weddings!

15 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Baytna:

Baytna Syria is the platform for Syrian civil society inside and outside the country. We offer an open space for Syrians to meet, mingle, attend lectures, and get involved. We are convening people and creating networks among civil society as well as with donors. Through our cultural events, we create a fertile environment for young artists to grow and flourish.



Role of international supporters to civil society in Syria

As said ,since the beginning of the revolution there has been international support for civil society and civil and non-violent opposition. In the beginning Embassies in Damascus played quite a role, but in early 2012 almost all European and the US Embassies were closed . . . Several countries opened a diplomatic representation in Turkey of Lebanon, in particular after the EU Foreign Affairs Council had recognized the Syrian Opposition Coalition as" legitimate representative of the Syrian people" in 2012. In particular, the Turkish city Gaziantep, not far from the Syrian border, has become a hub for Syrian civil society and opposition, and international organizations supporting them ...

International support has been quite crucial in the support for Syrian civil society organizations . Yet a number of challenges and setbacks need to be mentioned :

- Many international organizations focussed on training and capacity building ,especially after the violence increased and it became unsafe for internationals to operate inside Syria . . .Yet all the capacity building programs were badly coordinatedIn particular, during the times when support to civil society was strongest, between 2013 and 2016 , some Syrians could take one training after the other, and never return to Syria to put it into .practice
- International organizations have a tendency to formulate their own priorities, without consulting Syrian civil society about the needs of the population .this could result in very

16 . Civil Society Development in Syria

donor driven programs by Syrian organizations .Often there was insufficient funding for overhead costs, so the Syrian civil society organizations could not really build sustainable organizations Sustainability was further jeopardized by short term funding . and

- Western governments and the EU had established relations to the Syrian Opposition Coalition and its institutions, and also wanted to support Syrian civil society organizations. Yet there were serious coordination problems between the SOC and later the temporary government, and the civil society organizations and also between Syrians inside Syria and outside. . Most Syrian civil society groups are quite closely related to the revolutionary movement, but very critical about the leadership by SOC .and Temporary Government

There have been cases of misuse of funding, extremely high salaries and overhead costs and sometimes corruption. Unfortunately this is not uncommon for large scale aid and civil society building programs. Yet still the running costs of Syrian organizations is quite limited compare to the running costs of the UN bureaucracy in and around Syria.

Syria now

The war in Syria may go on for many years more, and I hate to say it but, Bashar al-Assad is the advanced side. Having secured his grip on key cities like Homs and Damascus, the Assadian regime forces retook parts of Aleppo in late 2016 and reached the eastern city of Deir al-Zor, while Russian-brokered truces locked down his gains in the west.

The Syrian opposition often point out that these advances rely on foreign support. That's true, but Russian and Iranian involvement in Syria is just one side of the coin: no less important is the slackening of international support for the Syrian opposition and the changes of agreements between them.

Indeed, as Syria slid deeper into civil war, the Friends of Syria fast become fewer. More than sixty nations had taken part in the group's first conference in Tunis in February 2012, and even greater numbers attended the follow-up meetings in Istanbul, Paris, and Marrakech. It was the high point of international support for the Syrian opposition. But then the Syrian opposition role detached from Syrian people by presenting only themselves in meetings and conferences and not really committing or managing to change the situation inside and out Syria for the Syrians politically or military and sadly many of the representatives have cases of corruptions.

At this point it was overwhelmingly clear that the Syrian opposition is not the correct representative for the Syrian people.

But the Syrian opposition isn't exactly being abandoned. Support continues to flow to many armed groups and the exiles have been kept on hand for whenever whatever deal may become feasible. As long as they adapt to their foreign sponsors' agendas, for example, Turkey will continue to have a need for local allies to contain its Kurdish enemies.

But there is no longer any serious international support for the opposition.

As for the support of civil society many projects had been shut down and a few are managing to continue in the liberated areas.

Also many political movements from the Syrian activist are being established in the aim of believing in the first phase of revolution and that many believed the best solution is the political

17 . Civil Society Development in Syria

transaction and that Syrians has the right in a democratic free liberated country these movements are now the hope of the Syrian people who believe in revolution's principles western support to civil society in Syria and diaspora is still substantial - actually the EU budgets have remained the same in the last years. EU institutions also still support the political opposition, but less indeed, probably also because the political opposition has less leverage. Of course, a large part of this support is focused on providing humanitarian aid. The EU expresses commitment to cooperation with civil society (both Syrian and international) - the Brussels conference early this year was quite messy, but there is commitment for next year's Brussels conference (which is basically a pledging conference for humanitarian aid and reconstruction). EU staff (who are in many ways completely frustrated with the political opposition) expressed that they actually see the development of civil society as the only positive result of the Syrian revolution.

On the issue of justice and accountability. The good news is that the Dutch government has been on the forefront of supporting the accountability mechanism and other efforts to document war crimes and bring criminals to court, the bad news is that this a very slow process and will have little effect on the situation at the moment. The process of the Yugoslavia tribunal just ends now with the conviction of Radko Mladic to life imprisonment, almost 25 years after the war in Bosnia and the Srebrenica genocide. But still it is important.

The future of Civil Society in Syria: A Call out

WITHOUT EUROPE, NO END TO SYRIAN BLOODSHED

My country has become a living hell. We need the EU to finally step up.

Civil society, from activists to local councils and humanitarians to human rights defenders, are laying the foundation for a political solution in Syria. We share a vision of Syria's future based on the principles of the March 2011 uprising: Syria as a sovereign, democratic and pluralistic nation. We have strived to achieve these goals for six years, and will not give up. But the truth is that we cannot do it alone not while our people are being bombed, starved and tortured. We need Europe to fulfill its responsibilities to help pave the way toward an end to this conflict and to protect our civilians.

The indiscriminate targeting of civilians has turned Syria into a living hell. The attacks perpetrated by the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime and Russia are by far the leading killer in Syria, accounting for more than half of all civilian deaths. Civilian infrastructure from medical facilities to local councils has been targeted by regime airstrikes in a deliberate attempt to destroy ordinary life in opposition-held areas. Syrians have been calling for protection from these attacks and for a no-bombing zone for years to no avail.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry made it unequivocally clear to the United Nations Security Council late September that if there is any hope of a ceasefire holding in Syria, the first step is the protection of civilians from Syrian government and Russian aircraft. The international community must urgently address the fundamental flaw that has undermined the two previous ceasefires: the absence of enforcement. The inevitable failure of both ceasefires has been

18 . Civil Society Development in Syria

followed by massive escalations in the indiscriminate aerial bombing campaign. Violations cannot be simply swept aside. It is Syrian civilians who are paying the price.

Europe has expressed outrage and condemnation in the face of these disgraceful attacks. But without consequences, there is nothing to deter the perpetrators from staging new ones. Until the international community takes concrete steps protect Syrian citizens, the Assad regime will continue to systematically target civilians and humanitarian workers. European leaders who are genuinely committed to reviving the ceasefire, ending the conflict and supporting our common vision for Syria must now support the protection.

German Foreign Minister Frank- Walter Steinmeier has supported Kerry and called for a no-fly zone. Other European leaders need to follow his leadership and show a united European position on the protection of civilians.

The alternative is bleak. Assad and Russia will continue to plunge to new depths of depravity in pursuit of a military solution.

During the short-lived ceasefire, the regime continued to block aid access directly undermining the agreed terms, while Russia was either unwilling or unable to force it to relent. The United States has indicated that it believes Russia was responsible for a recent airstrike on an aid convoy. If confirmed, Russia must immediately be given an ultimatum and forced to show that it can deliver on agreements to provide humanitarian access. If it fails to do so within the specified time period, unilateral humanitarian airdrops must be conducted in areas where the regime continues to block access. Syrian civil society, local councils and humanitarian groups inside Syria are prepared to support this effort through the mapping of drop zones and coordinated collection of airdrops. Impunity for war crimes is at the heart of the ongoing violence and mass exodus of Syrians from their homeland.

While Russia continues to block accountability at the U.N. Security Council, other options must be actively pursued. European nations in particular have the capability to open war crimes prosecution cases under national and universal jurisdictions. Enough credible evidence has been amassed, including through the important work of EU member countries, for cases to be brought forward against individuals including regime figures who have sought refuge in Europe. A clear demonstration that war criminals will not escape justice would be an important sign of hope for the Syrian people and central to any comprehensive approach to the crisis. The conflict in Syria is the defining crisis of our era. The failure to deter war crimes has given rise to the global terror threat of the Islamic State and the unprecedented refugee crisis currently facing Europe. The fallout of this conflict challenges the post-World War II consensus in Europe and threatens to undermine hard-earned post-war liberal, centrist European values. With so much at stake, European leaders must step up and do more to end the conflict in Syria so the uprising of civil society movements can take the lead and deliver to Syrian people what is in their best interest.

Recommended literature on civil activism and civil society in Syria:

Citizens for Syria study on the civil society from summer 2015

<https://citizensforsyria.org/OrgLiterature/CfS-mapping-phase1-EN.pdf>

Rana Khalaf has done several good researches with Badael and Chattam house

<http://st-andrews.academia.edu/RanaKhalaf>

19 . Civil Society Development in Syria

a remarkable study by the Danish Local to Global on the funding and the role of funding agencies and contractors

<http://www.local2global.info/area-studies/funding-syria>

some survey studies by The Day After organization

<http://tda-sy.org/en/category/publications/survey-studies>

a credible source of information on medical civil society organizations in Syria by Dr. Zedoun Alzoabi

[www.alnap.org/pool/files/syrian-medical-ngos-in-the-crisis\(1\).pdf](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/syrian-medical-ngos-in-the-crisis(1).pdf)

In German from Correctiv, an investigative article

<https://correctiv.org/recherchen/flucht/artikel/2016/10/11/un-hilfsgelder-staerken-assad/>

Video Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPI93UfM9xw>

Local Council Example

Video of Syria in 50s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEvtjX0_gyg



PAX

PAX means peace. PAX brings together people who have the courage to stand for peace. Together with people in conflict areas and concerned citizens worldwide, PAX works to build just and peaceful societies across the globe.

Everyone in the world can contribute to peace, but it takes courage. The courage to believe that peace is possible, to swim against the tide, to speak out and to carry on no matter what. The courage to praise peace, to shout it from the rooftops and to write it on the walls. The courage to call politicians to accountability and to look beyond one's own boundaries. The courage to reach out to people and to invite them to take part, regardless of their background.

PAX brings together people who have the courage to stand for peace. We work together with people in conflict areas, meet with politicians and coordinate efforts with committed citizens.

20 . Civil Society Development in Syria

Peace belongs to everyone. Everyone who believes in peace can contribute. PAX sets peace in motion. We call on committed citizens to take part, by posting a simple request on Facebook, by starting up a Peace Embassy, or by thinking up a new initiative to engage concerned citizen. We firmly believe that all these steps, whether small role large, inevitably lead to the greater sum of peace.

PAX. Peace. Are you in?

WWW.PAXFORPEACE.NL or WWW.PAXVOORVREDE.NL

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Freedom”.**