



**"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH..."**



**"THE NEW NORMAL IN SYRIA..."**



**MAKE WORDS MATTER**



**MAKE WORDS MATTER**



**MAKE WORDS MATTER**

**THE SYRIA  
CRISIS IN  
UNITED  
NATIONS  
STATEMENTS**



**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH..."**



**"...SEIGE AND STARVATION..."**

# MAKE WORDS MATTER



**"...DEEPLY ALARMED..."**



**"...AN UGLY WAR."**

**MAKE WORDS MATTER**





**“ I began by saying we have run out of words to describe the situation in Syria.**

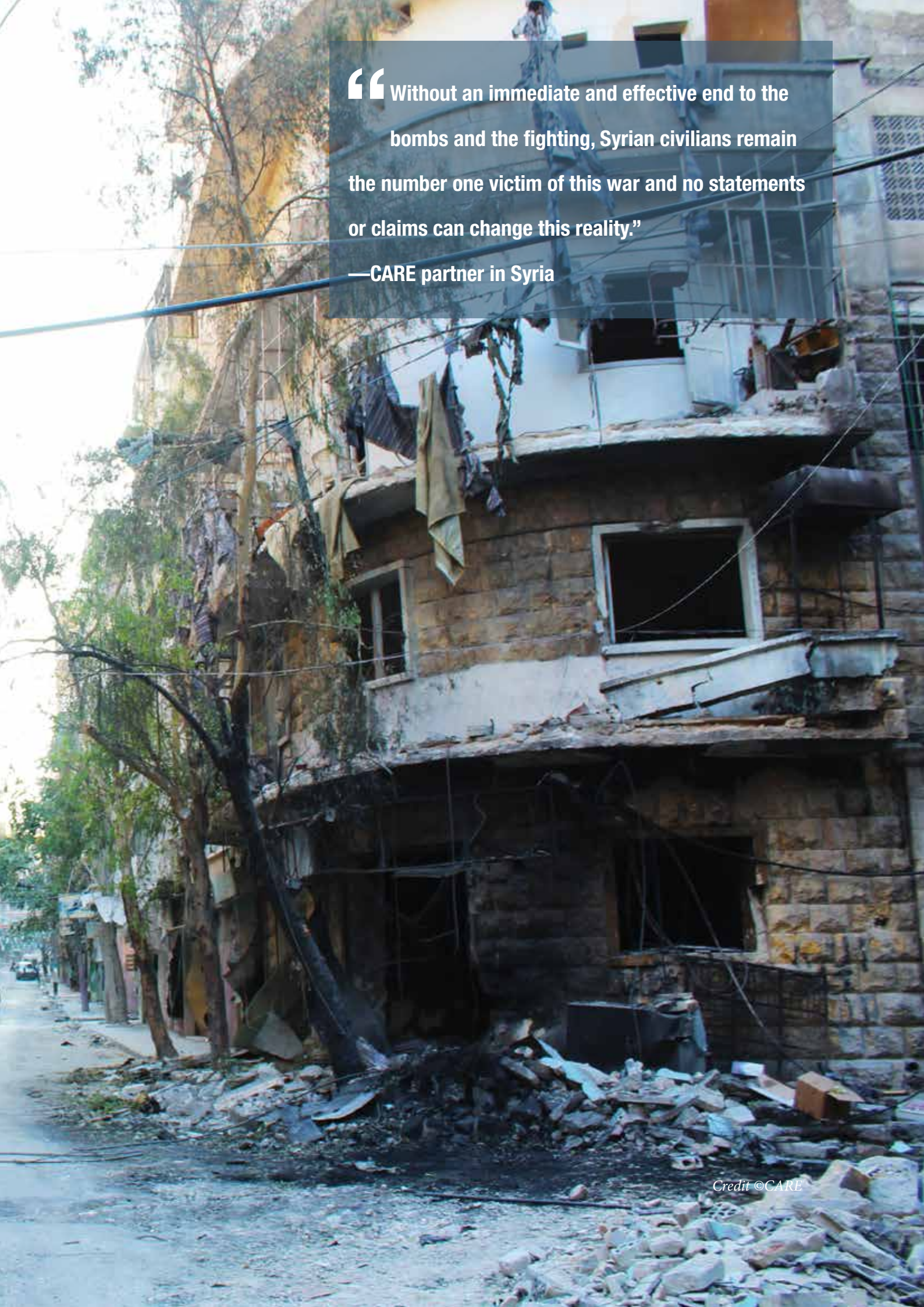
**Let us resolve together to replace all of our words with collective action to finally deliver peace to the people of Syria and uphold our common humanity.”**

**—U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in a briefing to the General Assembly 20 October 2016**

**“ Horror is now usual – it is a level of violence and destruction that the world appears to consider normal for Syria and normal for the Syrian people.”**

**—Stephen O’Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs in a briefing to the UN Security Council 16 December 2016**

The author of this report is Blake Selzer, Senior Regional Advocacy Coordinator at CARE, Syria Crisis, with input from colleagues and partners around the organization.



“ Without an immediate and effective end to the bombs and the fighting, Syrian civilians remain the number one victim of this war and no statements or claims can change this reality.”

—CARE partner in Syria

**March 2017 marked six years of conflict in Syria. The Syrian government and its allies, as well as armed opposition groups, bear the primary and direct responsibility for the appalling reality that Syria's civilians face on this grim anniversary. But they are not alone, the international communities' collective failure to put an end to the conflict is unacceptable.**

During the course of the Syria conflict, the international community, primarily through the United Nations (UN) Security Council, have passed over twenty resolutions aimed at protecting civilians, providing for humanitarian access to hard-to-reach and besieged areas, and calling for a diplomatic solution to end the conflict in Syria. World leaders have spoken out forcefully in the UN and other international fora on these issues. Over the past six years, with a progressively increasing sense of urgency, officials have run out of words to describe the horrific reality in Syria. However, despite these resolutions and speeches, civilians continue to be killed, areas remain besieged and a diplomatic solution to the conflict remains elusive. Resolutions unenforced, and statements unfulfilled are merely empty words.

## **We must make these words matter.**



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As world leaders, Syrians, civil society, and others mark the sixth year of conflict in Syria and gather in Brussels in April for a high-level conference on the Syria, CARE is calling on the international community to take decisive action to turn these words into action. Six years is too long to wait.

**Make Words Matter** documents the views of a range of senior UN officials, global leaders, Syrian staff, civil society partner organisations and others, about their hopes, fears and thoughts on ways forward in the crisis.

**FIVE MAIN THEMES EMERGED:**

- Protection of Civilians
- Humanitarian Access
- Political Solution
- Civic Participation
- Refugee Support

Civilians, including humanitarian aid workers, must be protected inside Syria, sieges must end to allow for unhindered humanitarian access, Syrian civil society, including women, must play a central role in a diplomatic solution to the crisis, as well as post-conflict governing of Syria. And the international community, particularly developed nations, must do their fair share to meet the global funding needs in and around Syria and support refugees, including providing opportunities for resettlement and humanitarian admission.

# PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

Despite numerous UN Security Council resolutions demanding the protection of civilians inside Syria, and in stark violation of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL), attacks on civilians, including targeted and indiscriminate attacks, continue in Syria, with conservative estimates upwards of 400,000 killed in Syria over the past six years, and over a million injured.

Over half of all Syrians have been forced from their homes since 2011, 6.3 million of whom are internally displaced, more than 4.9 million registered as refugees in neighboring countries.<sup>1</sup> Despite a “ceasefire” agreement brokered in Astana, which took effect 30 December 2016, civilians across Syria continue to be displaced, fleeing airstrikes and continued siege tactics in Syria. In 2016, the rate of displacement continued unabated with an average of over 5,000 people displaced per

day between January and December – some more than once.<sup>2</sup>

With the discussion of so-called “Safe Zones” in Syria, the reality is it is premature for refugee return to Syria. The conditions which caused the refugees to flee in the first place remain – active conflict, including continued attacks on civilian attacks, communities under siege. Syria’s neighboring countries, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, who are generously supporting over 95 percent of Syrian refugees, need to receive increased support from the international community. At the same time, we must guard against any returns to Syria that are not voluntary or safe, recognizing this runs contrary to international law. Civilians must not be forced to return to Syria. Rather, Syria’s neighboring countries, with support from the international community, must recommit to the right to seek asylum and allow those fleeing violence to cross borders to safety, as well as guard against refoulement.

## International commitments

### UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

- **UNSCR 2139** (2014) demands that all parties immediately cease all attacks against civilians, as well as the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas.
- **UNSCR 2165** (2014) Decides that all Syrian parties to the conflict shall take all appropriate steps to ensure the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel, those of its specialized agencies, and all other personnel engaged in humanitarian relief activities as required by international humanitarian law, without prejudice to their freedom of movement and access, stresses the need not to impede or hinder these efforts, and recalls that attacks on humanitarian workers may amount to war crimes.
- **UNSCR 2254** (2015) demands that all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects as such, including attacks against medical facilities and personnel, and any indiscriminate use of weapons.

### UN OFFICIALS

U.N. Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien (September 2016):

“It is with raw grief, with dismay, intense sadness, frustration and an unquenchable anger at the excess of sheer and unbridled horror --- way beyond even the apex of horror a fortnight ago – that I report to you, the Security Council, on the ultimate humanitarian shame that is Syria today.”<sup>3</sup>

### SYRIAN VOICES

Maria Al-Abdeh, Women Now for Development Syria:

“We are trying to have a safe place for women to discuss change and make change in their country. Many of the women are eager to learn English, so that they can read articles and write them. Women come from miles around just to learn. In some areas, the women’s center is the only place where they can be together since no stores are open. They can learn about what’s happening outside of their neighborhoods and become engaged in the broader community. It’s a solidarity movement — and helps keep hope about Syria.”<sup>4</sup>

Hema, 23, nurse, Aleppo:

“We live in a situation where each of us leaves home in the morning, to work or study, saying goodbye to their family as if it is the last time, not knowing if we would return or not. Death is everywhere. We were born to live, we were not born to suffer or to die.”



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Mohammed, 32, humanitarian worker, Idlib:

“There are many hardships that include constant bombing, especially targeting medical facilities, the high cost of living, particularly that of medicine and essential food items. To

the international community, I say: ‘please help end this war that destroyed people and homes. Support education and health, help the displaced, the poor, provide help for people with amputated limbs and build facilities for them, and support women and children more.’”

# HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Despite numerous UN Security Council resolutions enacted over the past three years calling for unhindered humanitarian assistance, humanitarian access to civilians in Syria remains a significant challenge with nearly five million people in need of humanitarian assistance in besieged and hard-to-reach areas.<sup>5</sup> Most egregious is that there

are still nearly 700,000 people live under siege in 13 areas in Syria. Civilians living in besieged areas are denied their basic rights, including freedom of movement and access to adequate food, water, and healthcare, in violation of International Humanitarian Law, including a number of UN Security Council resolutions.



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## International commitments

### UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

- **UNSCR 2139** (2014) demands that all parties allow rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for UN humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners... Calls upon all parties to immediately lift the sieges of populated areas
- **UNSCR 2165** (2014) all Syrian parties to the conflict shall enable the immediate and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance directly to people throughout Syria, [...] including by immediately removing all impediments to the provision of humanitarian assistance
- **UNSCR 2268** (2016) expresses support for the ISSG initiative, [...] to accelerate the urgent delivery of humanitarian aid, with the view towards the full, sustained, and unimpeded access throughout the country
- **UNSCR 2336** 31 December 2016: "Reiterating its call on the parties to allow humanitarian agencies rapid, safe and unhindered access throughout Syria, as provided for in its relevant resolutions."

### SYRIAN VOICES

Dr. Abdulsalam Saif, a Syrian doctor working with Syria Relief and Development in northern Syria:

“At the beginning of the war I was frightened that Aya and my first child, Lana, would be targeted because of me. So many groups were threatening me, accusing me of being with one side or another or trying to force me to work for them. My answer has always been the same: “I’m a doctor, a true doctor and I will help everyone who needs my help.”<sup>6</sup>

Syria Relief and Development in message to Humanitarian Task Force:

“It’s clear that the approval for UN cross line convoys is thoroughly linked to political negotiations. We are concerned that convoy permission is being used as a means of enticing populations into entering or maintaining localized truce agreements, while simultaneously penalizing those that will not. The continued exclusion of places like Moadamiya from the approved list of convoys suggests that approvals are tied to the political process and control of these high priority areas – not based on humanitarian need. Besiegement cannot continue to be used as a weapon against civilians and humanitarian aid cannot be a tool for political wrangling by a state. Fundamental humanitarian values are being challenged and this is a test of the international community’s commitment to humanitarian principles”<sup>7</sup>



# POLITICAL SOLUTION

There will not be a military or humanitarian solution to the conflict in Syria. A political solution to the end the war in Syria is desperately needed to avoid further suffering in and around Syria.

## International commitments

**Geneva Communiqué** “UN-backed Action Group for Syria” June 2012

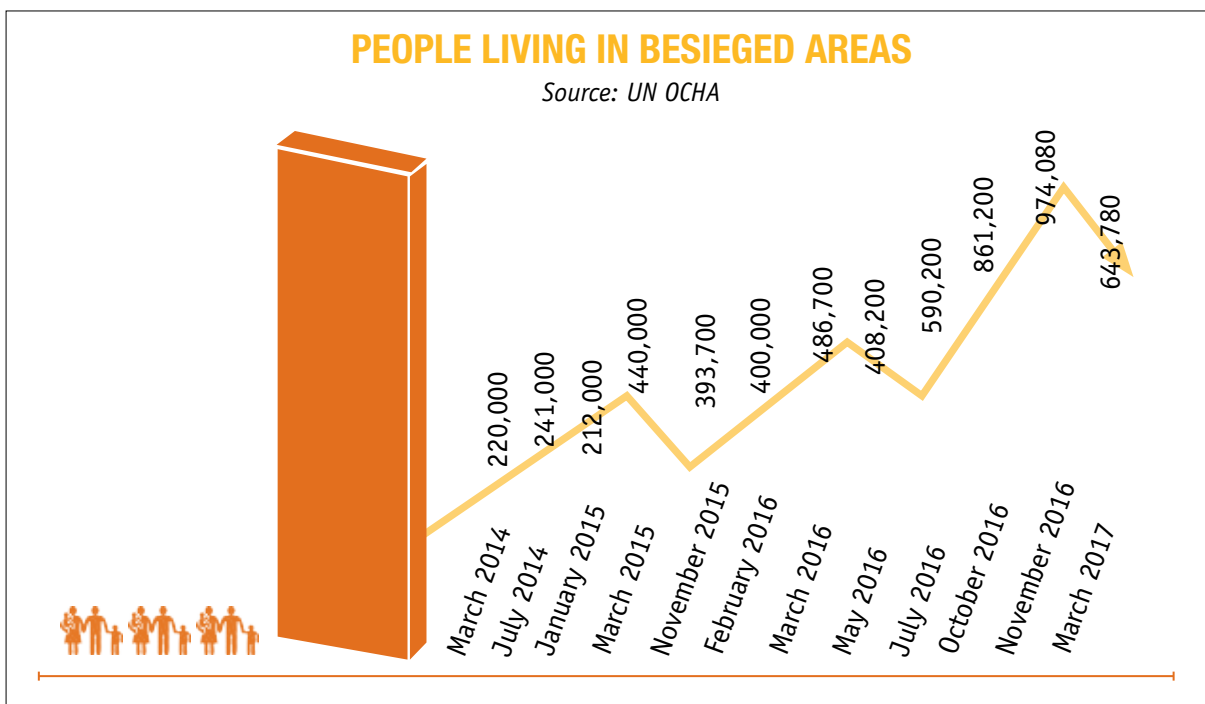
Communique called for a Syrian-led political process and a sustained cessation of armed violence, including:

- Establishment of a transitional governing body with full executive powers that could include members of the government and opposition, and should be formed on the basis of mutual consent
- Participation of all groups and segments of society in Syria in a meaningful national dialogue process

- Review of the constitutional order and the legal system
- Free and fair multi-party elections for the new institutions and offices that have been established
- Full representation of women in all aspects of the transition

**UN Security Council Presidential Statement** October 2013

The Security Council emphasizes that the humanitarian situation will continue to deteriorate in the absence of a political solution to the crisis, reiterates its endorsement of the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012 and demands that all parties work towards the immediate and comprehensive implementation of the Geneva Communiqué aimed at bringing an immediate end to all violence and violations and abuses of international law, and facilitating a Syrian-led political process leading to a transition that



meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people and enables them independently and democratically to determine their own future. It reiterates the need to convene as soon as possible an international conference to implement the Geneva Communiqué in order to facilitate a Syrian-led political process leading to a transition that would hasten an end to the conflict in Syria.

**UNSCR 2254** December 2015

The UN Security Council endorsed a road map for a peace process in Syria, setting out an early-January timetable for United Nations-facilitated talks between the Government and opposition members, as well as the outlines of a nationwide ceasefire to begin as soon as the parties concerned had taken initial steps towards a political transition.

Reiterating that the only sustainable solution to the current crisis in Syria is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, with a view to full implementation of the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012 as endorsed by resolution 2118 (2013), including

through the establishment of an inclusive transitional governing body with full executive powers, which shall be formed on the basis of mutual consent while ensuring continuity of governmental institutions.

Encouraging, in this regard, the diplomatic efforts of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) to help bring an end to the conflict in Syria... Encouraging the meaningful participation of women in the UN-facilitated political process for Syria.

Expresses its support, in this regard, for a Syrian-led political process that is facilitated by the United Nations and, within a target of six months, establishes credible, inclusive and non-sectarian governance and sets a schedule and process for drafting a new constitution, and further expresses its support for free and fair elections, pursuant to the new constitution, to be held within 18 months.

**UNSCR 2268** February 2016

Endorsing the 22 February joint statement of the United States and Russia on the cessation of hostilities in Syria, demanding the compliance



of all parties to whom it applies, and calling upon all sides to allow humanitarian agencies access to all people in need. Reaffirms its support for a Syrian-led political process facilitated by the United Nations.

Welcomes the cessation of hostilities as a step towards a lasting ceasefire and reaffirms the close linkage between a ceasefire and a parallel political process, pursuant to the 2012 Geneva Communiqué, and that both initiatives should move ahead expeditiously as expressed in resolution 2254 (2015).

Calls on all states to use their influence with the government of Syria and the Syrian opposition to advance the peace process.

#### **UNSCR 2336** December 2016

Supporting efforts by Russian Federation and Turkey to end the conflict and jump-start a political process. Reiterating that the only sustainable solution to the current crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process based on the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012 as endorsed by resolution 2118 (2013), its resolution 2254 (2015) and 2268 (2016) and relevant statements of the International Syria Support Group.

Welcomes and supports the efforts by Russia and Turkey to end violence in Syria and jumpstart a political process.

#### **UN OFFICIALS**

U.N. Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien:

**“We must show the people of Syria that the world has not forgotten them or their plight and indeed their country. Not through more words of solidarity, but through immediate and concrete political action that brings an end to this futile cycle of violence and misery. The credibility of the international community is at stake.”<sup>8</sup>**

#### **SYRIAN VOICES**

Syria Relief and Development message to Humanitarian Task Force:

**“As humanitarians, it is not within our power to end the war—but we can speak loudly about our commitment to serve those in need and not give up on the values we hold closely. We call on parties to the conflict to urgently come to the negotiating table and commit to end the violence once and for all, as the only way to finally end the massive human suffering.”<sup>9</sup>**

# CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The war in Syria over the past six years has enormously disrupted Syrian civil society. It is critical to support civil society to determine the future of Syria. Syrian civil society, including women, must be engaged in political discussions and the rebuilding of communities in Syria.

## International commitments

- **Geneva Communiqué** June 2012: Syrian-led transition. It is for the Syrian people to determine the future of the country. All groups and segments of society in Syria must be enabled to participate in a National Dialogue process. That process must not only be

inclusive, it must also be meaningful—that is to say, its key outcomes must be implemented. Women must be fully represented in all aspects of the transition.

- **UNSCR 2165** (2014) Reiterates that the only sustainable solution to the current crisis in Syria is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process with a view to full implementation of the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012.
- **UNSCR 2254** (2015) “Encouraging the meaningful participation of women in the UN-facilitated political process for Syria.”

# REFUGEE SUPPORT

Refugee flows from Syria are unprecedented in recent history and, as such, challenge the international community to share the responsibility for helping those displaced by the violence. Syria’s neighbors, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey continue to bear the brunt of the responsibility, supporting over 95 percent of refugees from Syria. One aspect of responsibility-sharing is for other nations, including the US, European and other states, to accept their fair share of refugees. Whereas some states like Germany, Canada and Sweden have been generous in hosting refugees from Syria, others have been much less so. Refugee hosting needs to be understood as part of an enlightened longer-term strategy that has

both humanitarian and political benefits. For example, in Lebanon, refugees now comprise a quarter of the population. No amount of aid funding will make this economically and socially sustainable, and further instability in that country would only further complicate efforts to resolve the Syrian regional crisis. Another aspect is how wealthy donor nations provide aid funding to support countries neighboring Syria, who host the majority of Syrian refugees. At the London Conference on Syria in February 2016, donor governments pledged to provide multi-year flexible funding adequate to support host governments in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey as well as civil society, private sector and other kinds of

support, in addition to supporting life-saving aid inside Syria. Some donors, including the EU, UK and Canada, have met their funding pledges and started to provide longer-term funding, which allows humanitarian agencies to plan better and respond to changes on the ground. Others have not yet.

## International commitment

- **UNSCR 2139 (2014)** “Urges all Member States to contribute or increase their support to the United Nations humanitarian appeals to meet the spiralling needs of people affected by the crisis, and to provide this support in coordination with the relevant United Nations agencies, and to ensure that all pledges are honored in full, and further urges all Member States, based on burden-sharing principles, to support the neighboring host countries to enable them to respond to the growing humanitarian needs, including by providing direct support.”

## SYRIAN VOICES

Barshra, a Syrian refugee woman living in a tent in Mafraq, Jordan:

“**Shortly after we arrived in Jordan, we moved to this neighborhood in Mafraq because UNHCR [the UN refugee agency] was distributing tents here. We chose this place because it is a bit higher. When it rains, the tent is not flooded. But we can't do anything to prevent the mattresses from remaining damp all night. The roof of the tent is waterproof but the water leaks from the sides. We know that blankets and coats will not protect us from this cold. We were forced to flee Syria. We could not stay. We all were under the risk of dying there. And now, with no solutions on the horizon... What kind of a life do we have here?**”<sup>10</sup>

## U.N. SENIOR OFFICIALS

Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, statement to the Security Council on Syria:

“**2016 was a year where we witnessed devastation and suffering in Syria at levels that defy comprehension.**” 26 January 2017

Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs:

“**Horror is now usual – it is a level of violence and destruction that the world appears to consider normal for Syria and normal for the Syrian people.**” – briefing to the UN Security Council 16 December 2016

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon:

“**I began by saying we have run out of words to describe the situation in Syria. Let us resolve together to replace all of our words with collective action to finally deliver peace to the people of Syria and uphold our common humanity.**” – 20 October 2016

Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs:

“**I am deeply alarmed by the ferocious pummeling of eastern Aleppo city where an estimated 275,000 people are besieged. Indiscriminate bombing and shelling continues in a shocking and unrelenting manner, killing and maiming civilians, subjecting them to a level of savagery that no human should have to endure. Now is the time to recognize the gravity of the horror before us and to act before it is too late.**” 2 October 2016

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, remarks to the UN Security Council:

**“ Given that well over 300,000 Syrians had been killed, half of the country’s population had been uprooted and much of its infrastructure lay in ruins, the Syrian tragedy shames us all. We are at a make-or-break moment. I challenge everyone to use their influence now to restore a cessation of hostilities, enable humanitarian assistance everywhere it is needed and support the United Nations in charting a political path for the Syrians to negotiate a way out of the hell in which they are trapped. You have now no higher responsibility in your service as members of the United Nations Security Council.”**

Stephen O’Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs remarks on Security Council Statement to the Security Council on Syria:

**“ There is something fundamentally wrong in a world where attacks on hospitals and schools, on mosques and public markets, on ethnic, religious and confessional groups, have become so commonplace that they cease to incite any reaction... Surely all of this should shake the moral conscience of the world. Surely the international community must question its humanity.” 23 June 2016**

**“ People in Syria continue to face horrific deprivation and violence, especially those trapped in besieged areas.... I warned members of the Council that attacks on medical facilities and health personnel have continued in the last days, despite the recent resolution passed by the Security Council, and despite the expressions of concern and commitments to action. This is unacceptable. 03 June 2016**

**“ As the war continues, it is innocent civilians and children who continue to be subjected to even greater levels of suffering than could ever have been imagined five years ago... The continued use of siege and starvation as a weapon of war is reprehensible... The punishment of civilians through besiegement tactics must stop immediately... The current reality is not something that we should, or can accept. There should never be impunity for behavior which shows complete disregard for international humanitarian law, flouts the resolutions of this Council, and causes such immense human suffering... As the Secretary-General has said, we are ‘one humanity, with a shared responsibility. The bottom line is that politically we continue to fail the people of Syria dismally in this regard. 27 May 2016**

UN Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura:

**“ You have seen enough conferences, two of them already taken place. This one cannot fail. We’ve heard your voices, we heard when you have been telling us so many times wherever we met you, you Syrian people, you women, men and children of Syria, saying: Enough, ‘khalas, kefaya,’ enough killing, murdering, torturing, prisons.” 28 January 2016**

Yacoub El Hillo, Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria:

**“ We come with a clear message to those coming to Geneva that enough is enough. Syrians can no longer continue to pay the price for political failure, and what we see in Syria is indeed political failure at all levels.” 26 January 2016**

## GLOBAL LEADERS

British Prime Minister Theresa May, speaking after a bilateral meeting with the Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło:

**“I think it is important that internationally we put pressure on Russia to recognise that its behaviour in Syria in terms of the indiscriminate bombing and support of indiscriminate bombing of innocent civilians is unacceptable.” 28 November 2016**

British Foreign Secretary Johnson during an emergency debate in the British House of Parliament:

**“The House will know that intentionally attacking a hospital amounts to a war crime. It is time, I think, for all these incidents to be fully and properly investigated with a view to assembling the necessary evidence to ensure that justice is done.” 13 December 2016**

French President Francois Hollande during a joint press conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel:

**“There is a humanitarian emergency, there is a humanitarian ultimatum that we shall deliver here because human lives are endangered, tens of thousands of people are held and it's our duty to act.” 13 December 2016**

Jean-Marc Ayrault, French Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development to the French Council of Ministers:

**“It's time the international community wakes up because a tragedy is happening in front of our eyes.” 30 November 2016**

German Chancellor Angela Merkel speaking on attacks in Aleppo:

**“We have been, in the past few days, not just appalled but horrified by what has been caused in the way of human suffering for tens of thousands of people by bombing.” 8 February 2016**

Christoph Strässer, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid, Germany:

**“The German Government is pushing hard for aid agencies to be granted access throughout Syria, regardless of battle lines. In Resolution 2254 of 18 December 2015, the UN Security Council again called for rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to the besieged areas.” 7 January 2016**

Peter Wittig, German Ambassador to the United States statement to the UN Security Council:

**“The arbitrary withholding and denial of humanitarian access in Syria cannot be tolerated. Using starvation as a method of warfare constitutes a war crime. We urge all conflict parties in Syria to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to all affected people as this Council demanded in its Presidential Statement of 2nd October 2013” 12 February 2014**

Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. to the UN Security Council:

**“It is a sad day on the Security Council. When members start making excuses for other member states killing their own people, the world is definitely a more dangerous place. The international community can look no further than the Security Council for contributing to that.” 28 February 2017**

U.S. President Barack Obama news conference:

**“We’ve seen relentless targeting of humanitarian workers and medical personnel, entire and neighbors reduced to rubble and dust. There are continuing reports of civilians being executed. These are all horrific violations of international law.” 16 December 2016**

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry speaking at U.N. Security Council:

**“Supposedly we all want the same goal. I’ve heard that again and again. Russia, Iran, the United States, Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, everybody sits there and says we want a united Syria – secular, respecting the rights of all people, in which the people of Syria can choose their leadership. But we are proving woefully inadequate in our ability to be able to get to the table and have that conversation and make it happen.” 21 September 2016**

Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, statement at the UN General Assembly plenary meeting on Syria:

**“Canada is taking a stand at the United Nations General Assembly today to protect vulnerable Syrians and help find a solution to the conflict engulfing that country. With the support of 70 other UN countries, Canada is applying as much diplomatic pressure as possible on the UN Security Council to break their impasse on Syria. On behalf of the government, Minister Dion called today for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the provision of unhindered humanitarian access to the victims of the conflict – including children and women – and the resumption of political talks. I encourage other countries to help generate forward momentum on Syria,**

**given UN members have a collective responsibility to protect the world’s vulnerable and weak when others cannot or will not.” 20 October 2016**

Ambassador Guillermo E. Rishchynski, Permanent Representative of Canada, to the United Nations Security Council Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict:

**“The brutal conflict in Syria represents a stark example of how much work remains to be achieved to better protect civilians who are routinely victims of deliberate and targeted attacks, as are hospitals, medical facilities and health care workers. The result is that people in desperate need are denied lifesaving humanitarian assistance.” 19 August 2013**

Lois Brown, Conservative Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation:

**“Canada strongly condemns the ongoing violence against civilians in Syria. We call for full, safe and unhindered access by humanitarian actors to all affected populations in need. Canada remains committed to saving lives and addressing the most critical needs of those affected by the Syrian crisis.” May 17th, 2013**

E.U. High Representative Federica Mogherini:

**“No one has an interest in winning a battle and losing the peace. Syria will have to be at a certain moment in the hands of an inclusive, accountable government; will have to face a difficult process of reconciliation; will have to find ways of including all parts of society in the reconstruction and this can’t be built in the ruins of Aleppo or other cities” 15 December 2016**



Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission:

“It is time for bold, determined and concerted action by the European Union, by its institutions and by all its Member States. This is first of all a matter of humanity and of human dignity. And for Europe it is also a matter of historical fairness.” 9 September 2015

Donald Tusk, President of the European Council:

“The EU is calling for an end to the atrocities and an immediate cessation of hostilities. It will consider all available options, if these atrocities continue.” 21 October 2016

# RECOMMENDATIONS

CARE is calling for an immediate end to violence towards civilians and aid workers and attacks on civilian infrastructure to end immediately. Humanitarian delivery of services must be provided to civilians in need unimpeded, sieges must end. CARE calls on all members of the international community, in particular permanent members of the UN Security Council, to insist on the full implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions on Syria that relate to International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL), as well as implementation of the Geneva Communiqué.

Specifically, CARE calls for:

## Protection of Civilians

- **An immediate end to violence towards civilians and aid workers and attacks on civilian infrastructure** as called for in numerous Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR 2139, 2165, 2191, 2254, 2258, 2332).
- **End the criminalization of humanitarian aid workers in Syria** in post-‘reconciliation’ areas. Humanitarian aid workers must be allowed to work in Syria, in both government-controlled areas, as well as opposition controlled areas without fear of reprisal.
- **UN monitors to be deployed on the ground** to guarantee protection and access efforts, specifically around reconciliation and ceasefire efforts.

## Humanitarian Access

- **All parties to the conflict must allow for humanitarian actors to have rapid, safe, unfettered, and consistent access to all civilians in need across Syria** as called for in a number of Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR 2043, 2139, 2165, 2191, 2254, 2258, 2268,

2328, 2332, 2336). The continued medieval tactics of placing populations under siege must immediately end. It is unacceptable that 13 areas in Syria remain under siege with nearly three-quarters of a million people trapped without consistent access to services and needed humanitarian assistance.

- **Support the registration of more impartial, independent humanitarian agencies to operate in Syria** to enable the meeting of needs in government controlled areas, particularly those areas where reconciliation agreements have been made. Humanitarians must be permitted to make independent assessments of need, and deliver aid impartially based on those assessments.

## Political Solution

- **CARE supports a diplomatic solution to the conflict in Syria.** The international community must continue to work to apply pressure on parties to the conflict towards implementing the 2012 Geneva Communiqué and negotiate a political settlement to the conflict.
- It is critical that simultaneously to working toward a diplomatic solution, the international community, and in particular the US, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, continue to apply pressure on all parties to the conflict to immediately stop attacks on civilians and allow for the unimpeded and sustained humanitarian access as called for in numerous UN Security Council resolutions. These confidence building measures are essential. Human lives must not be used as bargaining chips.

## Civic Participation

- CARE calls for **inclusive and meaningful participation of civil society** in all peace negotiations. Syrian civil society – including women, youth, marginalized populations, and diaspora communities – must have meaningful access to and participation in all negotiations to ensure that the will of Syrian civilians is accurately portrayed and their needs are considered.
- In particular, **participation of women in negotiations cannot be a side-show.** CARE calls on the international community to ensure adherence to provisions in U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254, “Encouraging the meaningful participation of women in the UN-facilitated political process for Syria.”
- **Syrian civil society must play an active role in post-conflict Syria, including “reconciled” areas throughout Syria.** Excluding civil society in post conflict Syria will result in lost knowledge, capacity, and expertise, and lead to resumed tensions and likely conflict.

## Refugee Support

- CARE calls on all Member States to accept and support their ‘fair share’ of refugees. At a minimum, **CARE calls on developed nations to provide for resettlement and humanitarian admission to 10 percent of Syrian refugees by the end of 2017.**
- CARE calls on the international community to meet the UN 3RP (Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan) 2017 request of \$4.68 billion. This funding is critical to support the five million Syrian refugees in neighboring countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt and host communities. Donors **must also follow through on multi-year funding, including fulfilling pledged made at the Syria London Conference last year.**
- Governments should take action to ensure refugees from Syria have the **right to legal stay, education, and to inclusive access to decent work and economic opportunities.**

## Notes

- 1 OCHA Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, Statement to the Security Council, 22 February 2017
- 2 OCHA Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, Statement to the Security Council, 22 February 2017
- 3 OCHA Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, Statement to the Security Council, 29 September 2016
- 4 <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/across-borders-syrian-women-gain-strength>
- 5 OCHA 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview, December 2016
- 6 <http://www.newstatesman.com/world/middle-east/2016/10/inside-aleppo-daily-battle-save-lives>
- 7 <http://syriareliefinddevelopment.org/message-to-humanitarian-task-force/>
- 8 OCHA Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, June 2016
- 9 <http://syriareliefinddevelopment.org/message-to-humanitarian-task-force/>
- 10 <http://www.careinternational.org.uk/stories/syria-crisis-we-dread-time-year>





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