



What Syrian Women suffer and what they want from Geneva II

Date: 17 January 2014



Today, the Syrian Women's Forum for Peace (SWFP), a core member of the Syrian Ishtar movement, released the results of a survey filled in by over 6,000 women aged 15-65 years, in over 10 governorates across the country. The survey focused on what Syrian women currently suffer in Syria and what they want from Geneva II. Highlights of the results included:

Challenges facing Syrian women

- 5% have been physically abused
- 45% have been forced to change their place of residence more than once.
- 52% have had to house other displaced Syrians.
- 40% reported that they have had their homes looted
- 28% have been forced to stop their education.

What Syrian women want from Geneva II

- 98% would like a free and democratic homeland
- 99% agreed that women should be a part of the peace process
- 99% agreed that it is necessary for women to be economically empowered
- 94% agreed that UN resolutions relating to women, disarmament and peace building should be respected

Mouna Ghanem, head of the SWFP, commented: "this survey is the first of its kind and it highlights the level of suffering that Syrian women have endured, coupled with the hunger that Syrian women have for freedom and for their rights to be restored. Any group that lacks proper female representation, and any decision made without consulting Syrian women, holds very little credibility or legitimacy. Those at Geneva II would do well to remember this."

The survey also collected a number of comments from participants. These were overwhelmingly negative about Geneva II and its participants and strongly called for initiatives to stop the conflict immediately. One commented: **"The most important outcome we would like to see from Geneva II is to stop the violence and armed conflict, which is the priority for all Syrians, especially women."**

Quotes also highlighted how Syrian women have been some of the worst affected by the crisis. One respondent declared: **"I really hate my life now because I lost everything and I'm thinking of killing myself if I do not find something help me out and I don't have any money or anyone to help me to study. Please help me."**

For a fuller breakdown of results see the appendix attached to the press statement or please contact Mouna at: dr.mounaghanem@gmail.com

Notes: The SWFP is a Syrian women's group based inside Syria dedicated to prioritizing peace in Syria. Ishtar is a movement across Syria that seeks to unite women's networks across the country.

Appendix A: A fuller breakdown of results:

Challenges facing Syrian women

Women in civil society: The research showed that women are playing an enormous role in NGO activity. For example, 58% of respondents reported that they do work for an NGO, 68% of which started this work within the last year. However, they lack training and assistance. For example over 80% of women reported that they had not received training in advocacy

Women as victims of social disruption: The research showed that women have suffered from significant internal displacement. For example, over 35% of respondents have been forced to leave their place of residence due to circumstances (IDPs) and over 45% have been forced to change their place of residence more than one time. 52% have had to house other displaced Syrians. The conflict has also had severe economic effects. For example 33% of respondents have lost their homes, over 40% reported that they have had their homes looted and 44% have lost their savings.

Women as victims of abuse: 5% of respondents have been physically abused (2% sexually abused) while 40% of respondents claim they have been subjected to psychological abuse

Women's access to basic services: Women lack access to basic services. For example, 24% of respondents do not have access to healthcare and 28% have been forced to stop their education. The situation has not improved. For example, 45% of respondents said their access to basic services has worsened

What Syrians want from Geneva II

Women want freedom: 98% of respondents want a free and democratic homeland.

Women want inclusivity: 99% want fair and equal representation in decision-making processes, while 99% agreed that women should be a part of the peace process. 100% agreed that women should have full participation in social and cultural life

Women want rights: 94% agreed that UN resolutions relating to women, disarmament and peace building should be respected, and 100% wanted rights to ownership, education and work to be respected.

Women want power: 99% agreed that it is necessary for women to be economically empowered and 99% wanted economic programs so that women affected by the crisis can rebuild their economic projects and trust.

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