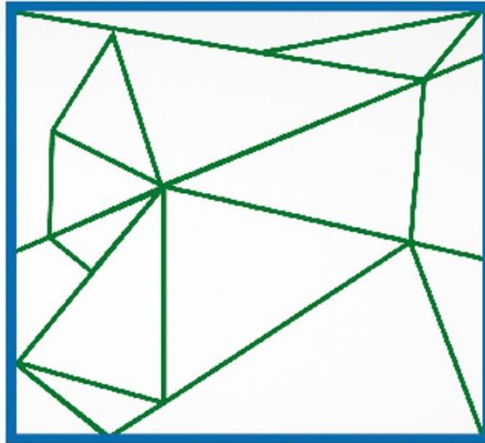


Syria: Recommendations for the Africa-Middle East Regional Forum on Minority Issues 2022

سوريون
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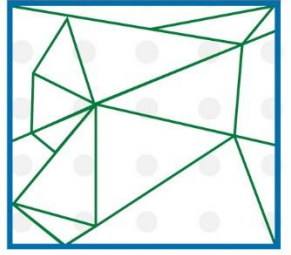
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*The new Syrian Constitution must eliminate exclusion,
marginalization as well as religious and racial discrimination
enshrined in the successive Syrian Constitutions*

In September, the United Nations (UN) is organizing a [regional conference](#) to mark the 30th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992-2022) by undertaking a critical assessment of its problem-solving capacity through a gap analysis. The [conference](#) will be held online on 6-7 September 2022, with the support and cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco. As part of our work to improve the human rights situation in Syria and in advance of the regional conference, Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) recommends:

1. Putting pressure on the Syrian government to conduct a comprehensive review of the current 2012 Constitution as well as its domestic legislation, with a view to repeal or amend existing legislation, which implies discrimination against minorities based on ethnicity, language, or religion. If Syrian law can protect Syrian communities against discrimination and racism, it can encourage Syrian minority communities to participate in public life by opening avenues to public participation that were previously closed by discriminatory policies and unequal treatment.
2. Urging the Syrian government to initiate legislative, constitutional, and political programs which encourage the participation of minorities in creating a new Syria free of all forms of discrimination.
3. Pressuring the Syrian government to pass a law criminalizing all forms and manifestations of racial discrimination with severe penalties for perpetrators, both individuals and groups. This should be accompanied by the creation of a legislative environment conducive to equality between all Syrians, regardless of their national, religious, or other origin. Any legislation to be issued must be in line with international conventions and treaties, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965.
4. Urging the United Nations, especially its Office of the Special Envoy for Syria, to cooperate with the Syrian Constitutional Committee and consult with it with the aim of drafting a new constitution that eliminates exclusion and marginalization enshrined in the current constitution. The new constitution must abolish or amend all the discriminatory provisions in its predecessor, including the preamble as well as Articles 1-3 which entrench racial and religious discrimination. Additionally, the new constitution must be compatible with UN resolution No. 2254, which calls for the establishment of an inclusive, unbiased government and it should place emphasis on respect for international human rights conventions.
5. Encouraging Syria's stakeholders, including donors, international organizations and states to organize awareness programs aimed at promoting a culture of respect for all nations and religions by emphasizing the equal rights and obligations of all Syrians. These notions should be included in the schools' curricula to foster equal citizenship and the rule of law.

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About Us:

Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization monitoring human rights violations in Syria. Founded in 2015, STJ has been based in France since 2019.

STJ is an impartial and independent Syrian human rights organization operating across Syria. Our network of field researchers monitor and report human rights violations occurring on the ground in Syria, while our international team of human rights experts, lawyers, and journalists gather evidence, examine emerging patterns of violations, and analyze how violations break domestic Syrian and international law.

We are committed to documenting violations of human rights committed by all parties in the Syrian conflict and elevating the voices of all Syrians victimized by human rights violations, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, class, and/or gender. Our commitment to human rights monitoring is founded on the idea that professional human rights documentation meeting international standards is the first step to uncovering the truth and achieving justice in Syria.



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