



## Geneva: An Oral Intervention Presented to the Annual International Forum on Minorities



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International Forum on Minorities**

*Pressing for an international treaty on minority rights is the legal context for  
more coherent action to protect these minorities and ensure their effective  
participation based on equal citizenship*

Thank you, Mr. President,

My name is Bassam al-Ahmad. I am here on behalf of Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ), a Syrian organization concerned with documenting human rights violations perpetrated by all parties in the conflict.

In parallel with this international forum, and as we speak about minority issues, the population in northern Syria, including Syrian Kurds and other minority groups, struggles with an existential threat, arising from Turkey's new intended incursion into the area. This incursion will likely be as brutal as the Turkish military's previous operations, "Olive Branch," which targeted the Afrin region in 2018, and "Peace Spring," which targeted the cities of Ras al-Ayn/Serê Kaniyê and Tal Abyad in 2019.

Notably, the Turkish military is not the only perpetrator of the violations documented during and after these operations. The International Commission of Inquiry has corroborated that Syrian armed opposition groups, operating under the Syrian National Army (SNA), are equally involved in systemic crimes aimed specifically at Kurdish communities.

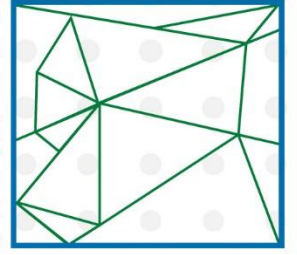
Therefore, we call on the United Nations and international bodies to focus on the violations committed in northern Syria by all parties, combat impunity and ensure accountability, exert pressure to end the military escalation in the area and prevent Turkey from launching a new invasion.

Under the forum's theme for the year, bridging gaps, reviewing, rethinking, and reforming the Minorities Declaration, the main recommendation we would like to offer is that the forum set up a comprehensive action plan. This plan shall be geared towards adopting an international treaty on minority rights, inspired by the Declaration, to be binding on all countries known for their diversity, including Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran, among other countries in the region.

Thirty years into the Declaration, and given all the systemic existential targeting of minorities across the world, and particularly in the Middle East, pressing for such an international treaty becomes the natural and legal context for a more coherent action to protect these minorities and their rights, and to ensure their effective participation based on equal citizenship.

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سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  
Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice



## 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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