

CONCEPT NOTE

for a Side event to the Syria Brussels Conference 2021 - B5C

Chaired by the European Parliament's Human rights subcommittee

**co-chaired by the European Parliament's delegation for relations with the Mashreq
countries**

Dates and format

The European Union will host the fifth Brussels Conference on “Supporting the future of Syria and the region” on 29-30 March 2021. In view of Covid-19 restrictions, the Conference will take place in virtual format. On 29 March, the Day of Dialogue will allow for consultation between civil society, refugee-hosting countries, the EU and the UN. The Ministerial Conference will take place on 30 March.

--> Other Syria-related conference side events will take place the week before.

Background on the Syria Brussels conference

15 March will mark the 10th anniversary of the Syrian uprising. The conflict is still ongoing, the situation in Syria and the region remains highly critical, with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the deterioration of the economies across the region over the last year further exacerbating the dire humanitarian situation inside Syria and the conditions for Syrian refugees and their host communities in neighbouring countries.

The Brussels Conferences have over the years become an opportunity to reassert the international community's continued support to the UN and the UN Special Envoy's efforts for a negotiated political solution to the Syrian conflict in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254. They also serve to mobilise necessary financial support to meet needs of Syrians and their host communities, as well as to pursue and deepen dialogue with civil society. In 2020, the European Parliament's Human Rights Subcommittee organized, jointly with the LIBE committee, the first EP side event to the Syria conference, focused on child protection in North East and North West Syria.

Proposed side event

Date: 23 March 2021 from 13.45 to 15.45 tbc

Duration: 2h

Proposed title: **Syria's uprising, 10 years on - Why is fighting impunity a top priority for victims of serious human rights violations in Syria?**

Interpretation: English - Arabic (tbc)

The event will be co-chaired by the Chair of the Human Rights subcommittee, Maria Arena, and the Chair of the Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries, Isabel Santos, with the participation of AFET standing rapporteur on Syria, Nathalie Loiseau.

The event falls under the thematic priority of fight against impunity, as well as the protection and promotion of Syrian human rights defenders advancing basic freedom and human dignity in the country. The event will also look at universal jurisdiction processes underway in Europe. Sub topics: widespread and systematic arbitrary detention, extra judicial killings and enforced disappearances; torture and other human rights violations in detention; violence against women; forced displacements and international humanitarian law violations; truth, justice and support to the victims and the victims' associations,

The main purpose of the meeting is to put forward concrete operational recommendations to keep the fight against impunity in Syria on the agenda of the international community, including the peace process, preventing the normalisation of atrocities committed in Syria, pushing for concrete measures to resolve the issue of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, raising public awareness, and encouraging donors' pledges in support for justice and accountability efforts.