

WE exist!

Narrative report 2020



WE exist
syrian civil society advocacy alliance

We Exist! Advocacy Alliance

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ABOUT WE EXIST!'S STRATEGY & THE YEAR 2020



We Exist's vision is for a **democratic, pluralistic and peaceful Syria**, which respects **fundamental freedoms, human rights and the rule of law**. Our vision is that progressive Syrian civil society organizations and individuals, who believe in equality and inclusiveness, are **central to the future development of the country** and should be an important part of those discussions. We Exist's mission is to **bring together** active, vibrant and dynamic **civil society organizations** to **ensure the voice and agency of Syrians** is **at the forefront of discussions about Syria's future**.

The advocacy alliance's objectives are the following:

- To **campaign and advocate** for a **democratic and pluralistic Syria**, which respects human rights and the rule of law ;
- To **advocate** for the **inclusion of Syrian civil society in key decision-making processes** about the country's future ;
- To **share knowledge** and expertise **within the network** so that individual network members can benefit from each other's experiences.

The year 2020 was very challenging and limiting. Circumstances have forced us to shift our plans and adapt them to the pandemic context. Almost all of our events and campaigns took place online, and we allocated some time to research and advocate around the crisis related to the pandemic and its impact on Syrian vulnerable communities (see our comprehensive briefing within the Half of Syria campaign). We have also tried to use this context as an opportunity to reach new audiences and re-think our strategy. Despite the practical difficulties and a global fatigue in the Syrian civil society, we are confident that this year forced us to better define our next steps and new directions.



LOOKING BACK AT 2019

2019 was a transitional year for the alliance, as it had started without funds then functioned without a coordinator for several months. Despite the challenging situation, the alliance, mostly led by its board of directors and members, still managed to achieve the following things:

1. Launching the « Half Of Syria » campaign (*see below - page 5*)

2. General Assembly #3

The alliance's 3rd General Assembly was held online on July 26th 2019. During this General Assembly, future plans were discussed. Decisions were made in regards to the next steps for the Half Of Syria campaign.

3. Advocacy trip to Brussels

As part of its plan's strand of providing member organizations with support and services in campaigning and advocacy, We Exist! coordinated an advocacy trip to Brussels in December 2019 (from Tuesday Dec. 3rd to Friday Dec. 6th). This initiative was run by our members **Syrians for Truth and Justice** (Bassam Al Ahmad, Co-founder and Executive director), **Impact** (Jelnar Ahmad, Research and M&E manager) and **Basmeh and Zeitooneh** (Leonore Lekkerkerker, head of advocacy and research department), along with 11.11.11. This advocacy trip to Brussels aimed at meeting new policy makers on the EU and Belgium levels and brief them on the latest developments in Syria.

The delegation team focused on 3 topics: the **changed Syrian CSO landscape** and the associated challenges and risks, the situation of **Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Turkey** and **human rights developments in northern Syria**.



NETWORK BUILDING & SUPPORT IN 2020

One of the objectives of the alliance is to enable and enhance knowledge and expertise sharing within the network, so that We Exist! members can benefit from each other's experiences. Furthermore, the network, has joined the *Syrian Civil Society Networks Platform (SCNP)* in 2019; it is thus also collaborating on joint advocacy initiatives and sharing knowledge within this framework. We Exist! has taken part in all the quarterly meetings with the platform.

The internal support and networking main initiatives were the following:

- A monthly members meeting to share information, positions and plans;
- Financial support of some of the members' advocacy activities (*upon request and approval from the board*);
- The alliance's 4th General Assembly was held online over 2 days in October 2020. A new board has been elected;
- We Exist! has provided support to its members through its « pool of ressources » to support members initiatives. For example: We Exist! has hosted online webinars for its members as it has a Zoom Webinar license that we have provided to our members;
- Working groups within the network have been built around specific projects;
- Coordinating advocacy and campaigning initiatives to highlight findings from members' reports and researches.

The exceptionnal context of 2020 has extremely limited the capacities of supporting and coordinating advocacy trips, as well as *in situ* interventions. Furthermore, our members activities and initiatives have been highly affected by the global context as well; their needs for support have thus been altered.



HALF OF SYRIA CAMPAIGN

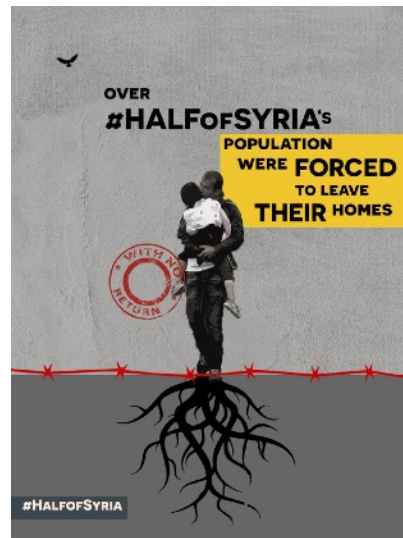
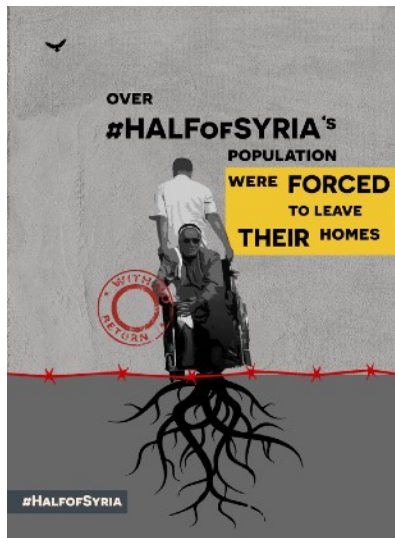
In 2019, We Exist! launched its campaign « Half Of Syria ». It aims to highlight the **mass forced displacement** of Syrians. The campaign was launched at the Brussels III conference, as a side event, organized by some of We Exist! members along with their partners PAX for Peace and Amnesty International Belgique.



Members of We Exist! held a panel to talk about over half of Syria's population who has been forced to leave their homes. The campaign's narrative is mainly around the multiple issues related to **the largest displacement crisis of our current time**, according to the UN.

Within the framework of the campaign, we have filmed interviews with displaced women in Turkey and Germany speaking up. We also produced infographics about Eastern Ghouta and Afrin, and posters. Our video (<https://www.facebook.com/409832513159788/videos/316799745667052>) (11.k views on Facebook) was screened at the parisian « *Syrien n'est fait* » festival in Summer 2019.





In 2020, the Half Of Syria team had planned a few events and public stunts, for the Brussels conference but also all along the year. Given the context, these were all cancelled and the team had to change its strategy into a 100% online approach.

Despite these alterations, the campaign has had several achievements over the year. A website dedicated to the campaign was created (www.halfofsyria.com); it includes a blog with mostly real-life stories of displaced people. An Instagram page has also been created (<https://www.instagram.com/halfofsyria/>).

The campaign has had various achievements over 2020, mostly around 3 main sub-topics:

1. A call to stop intensified bombings of civilians in Idlib

In the end of December 2019, the Half Of Syria campaign wrote a **statement to call upon the international community to take initiatives to stop the intensified bombings targeting civilians and hospitals in Idlib**. In January 2020, this statement circulated and was signed by 1000 individuals and almost 30 NGOs. It was then shared with almost 400 diplomats and 1000 media representatives.

2. Impact of Covid-19 on Syrian communities

In March 2020, the Half Of Syria team has produced a comprehensive briefing on the critical challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to Syrians, as reported by Syrian civil society organisations. These challenges have been collated following extensive interviews with the teams of our member and partner organisations working in the field in various sectors: health, child care, education, women's empowerment, media and culture, research, human rights and accountability, relief and social services, and local governance. The comprehensive briefing also included concrete recommendations formulated by the Syrian civil society.

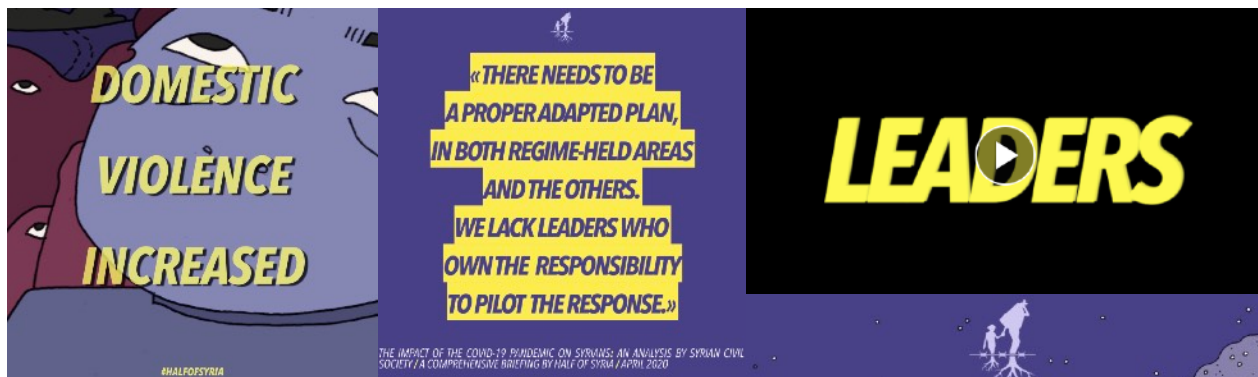
It has been released in April 2020 (<https://weexist-sy.org/impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-syrians-a-comprehensive-briefing-by-halfofsyria-campaign/>) and was shared with major partners, diplomats and media representatives.



The briefing has gathered quite some attention: two French newspapers mentioned our briefing in their articles: the major newspapers Libération (https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2020/06/24/syrie-l-aide-humanitaire-victime-des-sanctions-internationales_1792279/?fbclid=IwAR0CoPwuWjs05RwAIRs3V2T2gfo_AmWH4XYx_fM9FVLV8q4Jvpoic6_SXao) and Guiti News (<https://guitinews.fr/cest-leur-histoire/2020/05/06/au-nord-ouest-de-la-syrie-le-desastre-annonce-du-covid-19/>) Furthermore, we have given an interview for Radio France International (<https://www.rfi.fr/fr/podcasts/20200523-migrants-syriens-les-oublis-la-pandemie>). Also, the briefing was shared with the French National Assembly and the UK Parliament (<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/98/international-development-committee/publications/written-evidence/?page=12>).

The briefing was disseminated all throughout the year, on social media platforms. A « teaser » video was produced to invite our audience to read our briefing. Furthermore, Half Of Syria was part of the panel « *Civil Society Challenges in Preparing for COVID-19 Response: How has the preparation for and response to COVID-19 impacted non-health sectors?* », an official side event to the Brussels Conference organized by the SCNP.

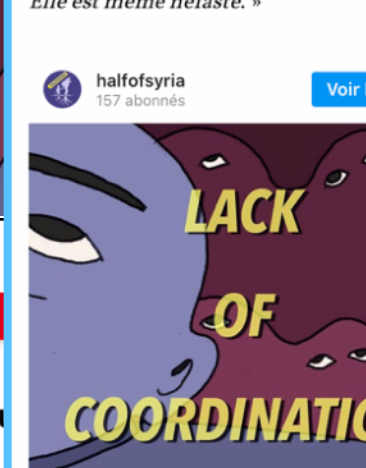
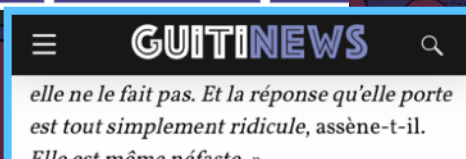
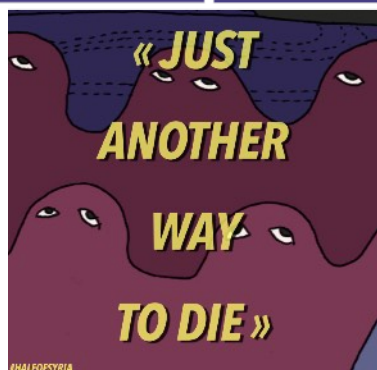




All photos



THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON SYRIANS: AN ANALYSIS BY SYRIAN CIVIL SOCIETY / A COMPREHENSIVE BRIEFING BY HALF OF SYRIA / APRIL 2020



Alors que la crise sanitaire frappe la plupart des pays de la planète, bien se préoccupent des migrants. La plateforme **#WeExist**, qui regroupe vingtaine d'ONG syriennes, a lancé grande enquête sur le sort des déplaçés

COVID-19 : les camps de réfugiés relativement épargnés... pour le moment
Par Hala Kodmani — 6 mai 2020 à 18:48
Malgré les appréhensions des ONG, qui



3. « No safe/dignified return: #BACKTOWAR

In Q4 2020, Half Of Syria started working with a contracted up-and-coming engaged illustrator, in order to prepare its new initiative: a series of illustrations and comics to visualize the data and findings from 3 reports carried out by We Exist! members: the Refugee Protection Watch research « *Trapped in between Lebanon and Syria* » (<https://www.paxforpeace.nl/publications/all-publications/trapped-in-between-lebanon-and-syria>), a report about compulsory military service in Syria and its consequences on the lives of Syrians by Basmeh & Zeitooneh, and a report about return and the experience of Syrian women in Lebanon by Women Now for Development. These 3 reports are based on interviews with displaced Syrians, some who returned to Syria. The objective of this initiative is to **highlight the worsening conditions for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the push back factors, as well as the current unsafe conditions for return in Syria**. The hashtag #BACKTOWAR will be used to highlight that **the conditions for a safe and dignified return of refugees to their areas of origin can not be guaranteed**.

This initiative will be held in 2 parts: first, conditions in Lebanon and then the situation in Syria. A professional videographer was also engaged in order to film interviews of Syrians in Beirut, exclusively for Half Of Syria.



BANKING RESTRICTIONS & SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE

We Exist! has coordinated a research carried out by Impact, on economic sanctions and how overcompliance is hindering the humanitarian work in and on Syria.

Since 2014, humanitarian action in Syria has been severely hampered by the strengthening of the fight against the funding of terrorism, with the extensive control over all financial transactions mainly to the middle east added to restrictions created by multi-lateral sanctions on many sectors, banks have introduced higher compliance measures that affected NGOs working around the Syrian crisis in the first place.

The research (available online <https://www.impact-csrd.org/invisible-sanctions/>) « *Invisible Sanctions: How over-compliance limits humanitarian work on Syria* » was written by Dr. Joseph Daher, who interviewed people working in NGOs affected by sanctions and wider financial regulations, including antimoney laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CFT) in Turkey, Lebanon, Iraqi Kurdistan, and in INGOs and NGOs (Syrian and non-Syrian) in some European countries working on Syria and within the country.

Multiple sanctions regimes and international anti-terrorist regulations have pushed the banks to follow strict procedures when they provide their services to NGOs and INGOs working on Syria. This, combined with economic and political pressures in the neighboring countries where these NGOs operate, has made it extremely difficult for the NGOs to move or access funds to support their programs, and eventually affected their ability to help the Syrian population in desperate need for support. The report includes:

- Key findings on the challenges and obstacles facing NGOs and INGOs working on Syria in their dealings with banks to transfer funds for their operations;
- Analysis of key issues encountered by humanitarian organizations posed by the various sanctions regimes, particularly those imposed by the US;
- The effects of the existing sanctions regimes and banks' over-compliance on the NGOs' ability to deliver vital humanitarian services in the country;



- Recommendations for State actors, the neighboring countries, the EU, the banks, on how to reduce the obstacles facing humanitarian work on Syria.



The research was shared with diplomats as well as media representatives. The French newspapers Libération wrote an article about it (https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2020/06/24/syrie-l-aide-humanitaire-victime-des-sanctions-internationales_1792279/?fbclid=IwAR2yNZBM44YSyMLtWgtaVX6i9ZZ32axfFCf8Ajh39WbbsLKCVdJsgA6o48Q).

L'entrée en vigueur depuis une dizaine de jours de [la loi César \(Caesar Act\) prévoyant de nouvelles sanctions américaines](#), y compris indirectes contre les entreprises ou personnes qui collaborent avec le régime de Damas, aggrave les restrictions. Face à cette situation, un rapport est présenté ce jeudi à Bruxelles, à la veille de la conférence annuelle organisée la semaine prochaine par l'Union européenne sur le soutien à la Syrie. Réalisé par l'organisation Impact en collaboration avec [We Exist](#), un regroupement d'ONG syriennes, il met en évidence les «*sanctions invisibles*» résultant d'une «*application excessive*» par les institutions financières des restrictions aux transferts d'argent, limitant ainsi l'action humanitaire pour la Syrie.

A side event to the Brussels IV Conference

On Thursday, 25 June 2020, in light of the Brussels IV Conference, We Exist!, along with its members Impact and Dawlaty, and in partnership with the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), held a virtual side event on « *The Impact of Financial and Funding Barriers on Syrian Civic Space* ». The event was hosted and moderated by We Exist!. It was attended by Syrian civil society, international organisations, and representatives of United Nations and European Union institutions and member states. It was based on our study and a policy brief released by Dawlaty. This webinar highlighted the impact of donor policies and financial restrictions on Syrian civil society across Syria and in neighbouring countries, and ways to mitigate those through constructive steps and mechanisms. A press release followed the event (<https://weexist-sy.org/press-release-syria-mitigating-the-negative-impacts-of-financial-barriers-on-civic-space/>).



10.20.30: A MENA REGION ACTIVISTS MEETING



In November 2020, We Exist! Advocacy alliance initiated its new project: « 10.20.30 », a meeting to gather activists from various MENA region countries in order to discuss the current challenges and future opportunities for the civil society in the region.

We believe that transnational efforts and networks in this region can help support progressive politics for rule of law, citizenship, economic justice, gender equality and less violent paths for badly needed reforms. This could happen if we can create a new common space for knowledge-sharing and joint actions among civil society organizations and activists. **The year 2010 was the beginning, we are now in 2020; we hope to work together to shape a common vision for 2030.** This “pilot” meeting had two major objectives:

1. Mapping the situation in all participating countries with a focus on common challenges and opportunities.
2. Considering initial proposals for joint actions and activities.

We gathered **16 participants from 9 different countries** (Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Sudan). Over the 2 days, we have had 4 sessions:

1. Introduction: participants introductions, overview of the situation in each participating country, elaborating on common challenges;
2. Citizenship & its relationship to regionalism, sectarianism and nationalism;
3. Economic issues & economic justice;
4. Closing session: looking ahead at opportunities and possibilities of joint action.

The meetings were organized and hosted by We Exist! and Impact, in collaboration with Khaled Mansour. A second meeting will follow in 2021.



« SYRIEN N'EST FAIT » FESTIVAL

« Syrien n'est fait » is a cross-disciplinary art festival dedicated to the Syrian contemporary art scene. Held in Paris each summer since 2016, it is unique in France. For almost a week, the festival showcases the finest of Syria's artists and intellectuals and latest film and music. Its perspective on the events in Syria sends a distinctive message: there is a need to collectively question our shared assumptions and misrepresentations; to honor the artistic contributions of Syrians as so much of their culture is under threat.

Created by the Network of Syrian CSOs in France (the CODSSY - Collectif de Développement et de Secours Syrien, a member of We Exist!) the festival was then coordinated by ASML/Syria. In 2020, We Exist!, having previously collaborated with the festival, took over its coordination and hosting for its 5th edition (online). **The network's ambition within the next 1 to 3 years, is to take the festival to a European level, while helping it grow into an independant structure.**

The 2020 edition took place online, in early December; its theme was **Justice & Documentation**. A website was created (www.syriennestfait.com); it includes the overall information about the festival, as well as a dedicated space for the #5 online edition. All activities were streamed in the website's virtual interactive spaces. Dedicated virtual rooms were designed and named after icons of the Syrian uprising. The festival included performances of various types: contemporary dance, live music concerts, conferences about theatre and cinema, a webinar on Justice & Accountability, movie screenings, etc. The webinar on Justice & Accountability was fully organized and facilitated by We Exist!. Despite the challenge of taking place online, the festival was judged quite successful by the team and spectators. Furthermore, We Exist! took the situation as an opportunity to include artists and an audience in Germany, to start its expansion in Europe.

All performances can be found on the website or on the festival's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/syriennestfait>).



ANNEXES



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SY
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N'EST
FAIT

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Pour
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justice
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faite

5^e Édition
Festival d'art engagé du 9/12/20 au 11/12/20

>> en ligne sur www.syriennestfait.com

Concerts • cinéma • théâtre • danse • expositions • webinars

PROGRAMMATION ; 9/12/20 > 11/12/20

EXPOSITION(S) ET PROJECTION(S) PERMANENTE(S)

Exposition « Street art, lignes en révolution »

[Galerie Nour Hatem Zahra]



Le street art vu comme moyen de contestation sociale et politique, et comme moyen de rébellion, n'était pas ancré dans l'esprit syrien avant 2011. De nombreux militants pacifiques l'ont ensuite adopté. Avec le temps, il est devenu l'une des techniques de contestation pacifique les plus importantes. Cette exposition propose de découvrir cette évolution du street art en Syrie, indissociable de la révolution.

Réalisée par l'artiste Tammam Alomar, en collaboration notamment avec Kesh Malek, Rabia Thawra, Le peuple syrien connaît son chemin, et les artistes Milad Amin et Aziz Al Asmar.

Exposition « Ghazal en pleine création »

[Galerie Fadwa Souleimane]



Mise en lumière et documentation du processus de création de « Ghazal » de la Compagnie Jours Dansants. Des photos et vidéos prises lors de leurs résidences artistiques, ainsi que des capsules audios des témoignages de femmes syriennes lus par les acteurs et actrices du

projet, permettront de suivre le processus de création de ce projet artistique pluridisciplinaire, qui sera ensuite présenté en live lors de l'édition 2021.

En partenariat avec la Compagnie Jours Dansants.

MERCREDI 9 DÉCEMBRE

18h - 18h30

Opening et vernissage des expositions permanentes

[Galerie Nour Hatem Zahra]

Retrouvez l'équipe du festival en live pour inaugurer cette 5^e édition de Syrien n'est fait en ligne.

18h30 - 19h

Danse « In Motion »

[Studio Bassel Shehadeh]



© Rezvan Zahedi

Le collectif Nafass nous propose une performance inspirée de cet isolement que nous connaissons tous. Avec cet isolement, nous avons l'opportunité de redonner forme à nos idées créatives, de transcender l'incertain, de briser la peur de l'inconnu et de traduire nos sentiments à travers les ondes du corps et de l'âme...

En partenariat avec l'atelier des artistes en exil.

19h - 20h30

Webinar « Cinéma et documentation en Syrie »

[Salle Razan Zaitouneh]

Ce webinar va étudier la relation entre le cinéma documentaire et le contexte socio-politique en Syrie, plus particulièrement depuis 2011.

Avec Cécile Boëx, maîtresse de conférences à l'EHESS et Mohammad Ali Atassi, documentariste, journaliste et fondateur de Bidayyat. Modération : Qutaiba Barhamji, réalisateur et monteur.

21 - 22h

Concert The Last Postman (live)

[Salle Adnan al-Zeraei]



Fondé à Istanbul début 2015, The Last Postman est un groupe syrien d'indie musique basé à Berlin. Composé de Muhammad Bazz, Louay Kanawati, Bahila Hijazi, Hekmat Alkassar et Mohamad Mousalli, ils ont sorti leur premier album « Two Years Later » en 2016.

22h - 23h

Film documentaire « Six histoires ordinaires »

[Salle May Skaf]



Meyar Al Roumi réalise « Six histoires ordinaires » (59 min) en 2007, filmant six chauffeurs de taxi qui se livrent dans l'habitacle intime de leurs véhicules et nous embarquent dans les déambulations de leurs histoires quotidiennes. Héros éphémères et spontanés, ils font état de leurs difficultés et de leurs visions des choses dans la fugacité de la rencontre cinématographique.

JEUDI 10 DÉCEMBRE

18h - 19h30

Webinar « La production théâtrale en Syrie »

[Salle Razan Zaitouneh]

Ce webinaire va aborder le mouvement de la production théâtrale en Syrie depuis le début des années 2000 et plus particulièrement depuis 2011, pour expliquer le lien entre le mouvement théâtral et le contexte politique dans le pays.

Avec Simon Dubois, chercheur à l'Institut Français du Proche-Orient à Amman. Modération : Ammar al-Mamoun, journaliste et essayiste syrien.

19h30 - 20h

Court-métrage « Suleima »

[Salle May Skaf]



Jalal Maghout a réalisé « Suleima » en 2015, adaptant une interview d'une femme syrienne qui a participé à la révolution depuis le commencement et fut détenue deux fois. Son mari désapprouvant son engagement, elle décide de le quitter.

20h - 21h

Concert Anas Maghrebi (live)

[Salle Adnan al-Zeraei]



Anas Maghrebi est un musicien et producteur syrien basé à Berlin. Chanteur du groupe Khebez Dawle, Anas officie également en solo. Son style musical varie entre musique organique, lyrique, folk et électro, surtout synth-wave et trap.

21h - 23h30

Film documentaire « Still recording »

[Salle May Skaf]

Réalisé en 2018 par Saeed Al Batal et Ghiath Ayoub, « Still Recording » (128min) dévoile le quotidien de Douma (Ghouta orientale), alors assiégée par les forces du régime. Un quotidien rythmé par les bombardements, les enfants qui poussent dans les ruines qu'on graffe, les rires, un sniper qui pense à sa maman, la musique, la mort, la folie, la jeunesse, la débrouille, la vie.



En partenariat avec Arizona Distribution.

VENDREDI 11 DÉCEMBRE

18h - 19h30

Webinar « Justice & Responsabilité »

[Salle Razan Zaitouneh]

Alors que se tient actuellement en Allemagne le procès de Coblenz, soit le premier procès au monde pour des exactions ayant eu lieu pendant le conflit syrien, plusieurs associations syriennes proposent de faire un point sur les compétences juridictionnelles de la France, de la Cour européenne, ou sur la compétence universelle.

Organisé par We Exist! aux côtés de Syrians for Truth and Justice, Women Now for Development et le Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression.

19h30 - 21h

Théâtre « Chroniques d'une ville qu'on croit connaître »

[Salle Zaki et Mihyar Kordelo]

Mis en scène par Wael Kadour et Mohamad Al Rashi, ce spectacle (75min) s'inspire d'une histoire vraie. A Damas, au début de la révolution, une femme se suicide une nuit de l'été 2011. Partant de ce fait, la pièce pose alors une question : comment une syrienne, de quelque bord politique

qu'elle soit, a-t-elle pu choisir de ne pas savoir ce qui allait se passer dans son pays alors que le mouvement révolutionnaire risquait de faire tomber le régime d'un jour à l'autre ?



© Nabil Boutros

21h - 22h

Concert Osloob & Abo Gabi (live)

[Salle Adnan al-Zeraei]



Osloob et Abo Gabi, deux grands habitués de Syrien n'est fait, nous font le plaisir d'un nouveau live. Le rappeur palestinien Osloob et le chanteur syro-palestinien Abo Gabi ont entamé leur collaboration en 2019. Mélangeant musique électronique, mawwal, tafrid soufi et rap, ils s'inspirent également de poèmes de Mahmoud Darwich, Amal Danqal et Al-Hallaj.

En partenariat avec l'atelier des artistes en exil.

22h - 23h

Film « Le chemin de la maison »

[Salle May Skaf]

Dans « Le chemin de la maison » (64min), film autobiographique réalisé en 2018, Wael Kadlo nous parle de sa quête pour mieux comprendre l'état fragmenté de sa famille, son combat contre le cancer, son exil vers le Liban, tout en questionnant la crise sociale et politique qui parcourt la Syrie.



En partenariat avec Wind Cinema.



Syrians call upon the world to act urgently to stop the intensified bombing of civilians in Idlib.

Brutal attacks continue deliberately targeting civilian infrastructure and homes. They are happening in tandem with threats of military invasion, the fear of which has stampeded more than sixty thousand civilians (most of them already violently displaced more than once by the Syrian government).

This Russian-backed blitz comes despite many ceasefires and de-escalation agreements - including the Sochi Agreement, which was worded so as not to provide any mechanism to prevent such humanitarian catastrophes from taking place.

This military onslaught has targeted civilian areas where there are no armed groups or military installations: homes, public streets and squares, markets, schools, bakeries, mosques, and medical centres, especially in southern Idlib, including Ma'arrat An Nu'man. Those fleeing this vengeful violence are noncombatants, who have lost absolutely everything. These targeted airstrikes raze private homes and other civilian infrastructures, in order to prevent displaced Syrian families from returning to their dwellings or communities.

Traumatized and now destitute families face enforced displacement yet again. Women, children, and the elderly are bearing the brunt of this Assad regime and Putin-led war of annihilation.

The suddenly forced displacement of tens of thousands of IDPs can cause strain on host communities - themselves lacking in resources and the financial ability to support their own basic needs. Because of widespread bombing and the targeting of internally-displaced persons' camps, like the strike on Qah camp, desperate families are unable to find safe shelter anywhere.

The targeting of civilians, the forced emptying of cities by airstrikes and shelling, the destruction of homes and other private property are all grievous violations of international law. In particular, they violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians, which prohibits the collective or individual forcible transfer of people from their areas of residence.

These horrific violations of international law need an immediate and united response from International community and those of conscience in the world, to:

- Stop the deliberate targeting and the forced displacement of civilians. After all, the technology is available to recognize the noncombatant status of families, with the imperative to cease from targeting them.



- Call upon all parties and states/ governments involved in the Syrian conflict, especially Russia, Turkey and Iran as guarantors of the de-escalation agreement, to commit to protecting the lives of civilians across northern Syria.
- Agitate to make the UN Security Council responsible in monitoring adherence to international humanitarian and human rights laws and to hold perpetrators accountable for war crime violations - even if member states complicit in this massacre have seats in the UNSC.
- Insure immediate protection to displaced civilians and provide immediate shelter, medical and food resources.

Statement signed by 948 individuals and 27 NGOs:

Hurras Network
Syrians for Truth and Justice-STJ
"Shaml" Syrian CSOs Coalition
The Day After
The Syrian Forum
SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ACCESS CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
CODSSY
URNAMMU
Alseeraj Svergie
Alameen for Humanitarian Support
ASML/Syria
مزايا النسائية - Mazaya Women Org.
Dawlaty
Free doctors of northe syndecate
Door Beyond War
مكتب التنمية المحلية ودعم المشاريع الصغيرة (LDSPS)
Space of hope Organization
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الرابطة السورية لحقوق اللاجئين - Association of Syria Refugees
Hope Revival Organization
Alape
Souria Houria
Independent

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