EU - 2025 Day of Dialogue

Press and information team - SYRIA

Executive Summary

The European Union’s (EU) first Day of Dialogue in Damascus, held in 2025, represented a

pivotal moment in Syria’s post-conflict trajectory.

Marking a deliberate and historic return to

direct engagement within the Syrian capital after fourteen years of conflict, the event brought

together the Syrian Transitional Government (STG), the EU, and a broad spectrum of Syrian

civil society organisations (CSO) across six thematic roundtables. The overarching tone of the

dialogue was one of cautious yet resolute optimism - a shared recognition that while the path

to recovery is fraught with immense challenges, a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process

is both necessary and achievable.

The discussions coalesced around several critical priorities. Foremost among these was the

urgent need for comprehensive legal and institutional reform, recognised as the bedrock for

a stable and just future for the country. This included the imperative to replace outdated legislation

- most prominently the 1958 Civil Society Law - and to establish robust legal frameworks

for transitional justice and accountability. Equally significant was the unanimous call for

a strategic shift from emergency humanitarian relief to sustainable economic development,

emphasising self-reliance, job creation, and the integration of marginalised populations into

the economic fabric of a recovering Syria.

The central role of transitional justice and accountability in healing social wounds and fostering

genuine social cohesion was consistently underscored across sessions, with participants

stressing the importance of victim-centric approaches and transparent mechanisms. The

STG’s expressed commitment to these reforms - including the establishment of the National

Commission for the Missing (NCM) and the National Commission for Transitional Justice

(NCTJ) - was met with a clear demand from Syrian civil society for greater transparency, regular

communication, and concrete timelines for implementation. The EU’s announcement of

a EUR 139 million socioeconomic recovery package, prioritising vocational education, institutional

capacity building, and justice and accountability mechanisms, further solidified the

international community’s long-term engagement.

As a benchmark for future engagement, the Day of Dialogue laid the foundation for a new

paradigm of partnership between Syria’s state and civil society, and the international community.

It amplified the critical importance of inclusivity, ensuring that the voices and needs of

youth, women, persons with disabilities, and victims’ families are not merely acknowledged

but actively integrated into decision-making and policy formulation. While the dialogue illuminated

significant areas requiring further attention - notably the absence of specific legislative

timelines, the practicalities of addressing deep-seated sectarian tensions., the lack of

unified financing strategy for reconstruction, and the need for more concrete mechanisms for

diaspora engagement - it demonstrated a collective recognition that Syria’s enduring recovery

is inextricably linked to a unified, transparent, and accountable approach that prioritises

the dignity, rights, and well-being of all its citizens.

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See also

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