

**Statement Badael Foundation: women's and girls' rights, women journalists and HRDs, Discriminatory laws and gendered impact of enforced disappearances.**

This statement is delivered on behalf of the Badael Foundation, and was prepared jointly with Dawlaty, Syrian Female Journalists Network, Urnammu for Justice and Human Rights, The Syrian League for Citizenship, Women Now for Development and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. We are a group of feminist and women rights organizations.

Syrians from all backgrounds are affected by the conflict, women and girls are disproportionately impacted on several levels. Women Human Rights defenders (WHRD) and women journalists still face several risks including arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances and violence, including sexual violence in detention.

The Syrian Constitution and legal framework contain several laws that are discriminatory against women and girls. Although legislative reforms to amend some discriminatory legal articles have been introduced since the last review, they are still far from achieving effective change. The pre-existing patterns of violations against women and girls, are greatly exacerbated by the conflict.

Tens of thousands of civilians remain forcibly disappeared or in arbitrary detention. While most of those are men, the impact on the women whose male heads of households are detained or disappeared, is multifold.

Besides the economic hardship due to the disappearance of the main breadwinner for the family, wives of the forcibly disappeared find themselves unable to inherit, travel with their children, or remarry, as these require either the husband's consent or proof of his death. Women also face difficulties in registering their children due to the inequality in the right to pass on their nationality.

We urge you to recommend that Syria

- Lifts all reservations on Cedaw, including articles 2 and 9, and amend all national laws accordingly in order to repeal and/or amend all discriminatory laws including Article 192 and 489 of the Penal Code, as well as Article 18 on marriage of minor girls
- (also to recommend that Syria) Guarantees full guardianship of children to women whose husbands have been missing or forcibly disappeared, and guarantee women's access to property rights in the absence of their husbands. These entail amending current discriminatory provisions under the Personal Status law to ensure equality.
- (also for Syria to) Amends Article 3 of the nationality law to ensure the right of women to pass on their nationality to their children

Additionally, the Syrian Government must;

- Immediately disclose the fate of the forcibly disappeared, and publish official lists and statistics on detainees and their whereabouts, including the names of those who died in detention facilities run by the government or affiliated militias; and provide their families with reports on the true causes of death and details of their burial sites.
- And, cease the widespread practice of torture, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, sexual violence and extrajudicial killings; as well as Investigate and hold to account, persons involved in grave human rights violations and provide gender-sensitive remedy to the victims.