



Public Statement About Cross-Border Aid to Northern Syria

13th of July, 2021

The Syrian British Council (SBC) welcomes all international efforts that led to the prevention of the complete closure of the cross-border aid operations into northern Syria, in particular the tireless efforts of the British Government, through all its missions and delegations. We also would like to thank all parliamentarians who responded to our requests and raised this vital issue in Parliament.

However, we believe that this decision still does not reflect the aspirations of a wide spectrum of Syrians and humanitarian actors. UNSCR 2585 offers a temporary, access-based humanitarian intervention rather than a sustainable, needs-based one. It excluded entire regions of Syria, by failing to reinstate al-Yarubiyah and Bab al-Salam border crossings as two of the main crossings for the UN mandated cross-border aid operations. Additionally, this resolution reinforces the politicisation of humanitarian support by linking the fate of millions of civilians to political manoeuvres and international agendas within the narrow corridors of the Security Council. Finally, UNSCR 2585 lays the foundation for cross-line aid deliveries, which was proven to increase the Syrian regime's monopolisation over humanitarian aid to areas outside of its control, especially since this regime has a long history of manipulating and politicising UN aid to starve millions of civilians as a brutal method of warfare.

Over the past three months, the SBC held a series of meetings with a number of UK policymakers, such as the Syria Desk in UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) from both houses of Parliament. We also raised this issue in bilateral meetings with Ministers and Shadow Ministers in the UK government. SBC was also part of a number of coordination platforms and meetings with several Syrian and international humanitarian NGOs to investigate the potential impact of the non-renewal of the cross border resolution, explore alternatives, and push for a complete reinstatement of cross border aid.

Therefore, our council pledges to continue these efforts in advising British policymakers, in addition to coordinating with Syrians, inside and outside the UK, with the aim of reaching sustainable, non-politicised, needs-based humanitarian support mechanisms which promote equitable access to life-saving aid in northern Syria.

**Syrian British Council (SBC)
London, 13/07/2021**