



SAVE IDLIB

Newsletter #1

February 2020

About SBC

The Syrian British Council (SBC) was established early 2019 by a group of Syrian British citizens to be a voice for Syrians, British nationals and UK residents who are committed to the establishment of a free and democratic Syria. United in our shared values of democracy and universal human rights, we work with our partners to inform the British government policy towards achieving this aim. SBC engaged in many activities to address its mission to advocate, raise awareness and lobby in support of a free, civil and just Syria.





Goals and Objectives

In the UK:

- To influence the British Government policies on Syria.
- To build and maintain a narrative on the Syrian revolution that meets Syrians aspirations.
- To keep Syrians tied to their home country and to encourage them to exert efforts to rebuild a just Syria.

In Syria:

- To engage with efforts that eliminate sufferings in Syria and to challenge policies that are incompatible with Syrians' aspirations for freedom, justice and democracy.
- To highlight Syrian voices and achievements and to cater to Syrians' aspirations.

Internationally:

- To establish complementary and productive relations and collaborations among all Syrian representative bodies and initiatives globally.
- To coordinate with Syrian and international bodies that work to achieve a just peace in Syria.



Areas of Work

1. Advocacy:

SBC works to draw the attention of the UK Government and the British people to issues pertaining to the Syrian conflict as well as those affecting the Syrian people (both those residing within the UK as well as those inside Syria and in neighbouring countries).

Petition to the PM on Idlib

On 13 Feb 2020, SBC sent a petition to the Prime Minister in regard to the Humanitarian situation and Civilian Protection in northwest Syria.

[More details.](#)



Action Alert

Write to your MP

In the line of its advocacy mission, SBC posted an Action Alert on 23 Dec 2020 asking people to take action to stop the Assad offensive on northwest Syria.

[More details.](#)

On 15 Feb 2020, SBC posted a sample letter on its platforms urging people to take an action and write to their MPs in support with civilian protection in Idlib.

[More details.](#)



2. Lobbying:

SBC allocates the utmost priority to lobbying as an effective mechanism to achieve its objectives. SBC works to lobby with various levels of influential individuals and entities, that have interest and/or influence with regards to the Syrian cause. SBC works closely with the FCO and UK Government through regular meeting to discuss the updates and the suggests ways to support Syria and the Syrian cause.



Meeting with officials from the US government

On the 29 Jan 2020, SBC Met with Representatives of the US Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor to discuss the human rights situation in Syria and the atrocities taking place there, particularly in Idlib and the northwest. SBC gave updates on the humanitarian situation and people's suffering because of Assad regime and its allies brutal practices.

[More details](#)

SBC coordinates with different organizations who share the same vision towards future Syria in order to unite the efforts to advocate for the Syrian cause

Based on the current coordination between the Syrian American Council (SAC), SBC shared a petition on 30 Jan 2020, which was initiated by the Syrian American Council in order to push for actions in the US and on the UN level.

[More details.](#)

On the 16th of February 2020, SBC took part in a press conference that was held by the SAC's mission to the Rehanli/Turkey. SBC expressed our full solidarity with the people of Idleb and shared some of our efforts to help bringing an end to their suffering.

To see the press conference click [here.](#)



SBC works in daily coordination with Advocacy Groups in Syria and in the middle east. In January 2020, SBC was working closely with the humanitarian and advocacy actors in Idleb and Turkey to get daily updates from the ground and to speak up about the realities of the recent Assad offensive on northwest Syria. We reposted few daily reports and statements by various actors including Idleb Health Directorate.

- ✓ [Update](#) of the Humanitarian Situation in Idlib/ January 30
- ✓ [Daily Report](#) on the Humanitarian and Medical Situation In Idlib Governorate from Idleb Health Directorate

On 29 Jan 2020, SBC started sorting frequent coordination meetings with different Syrian organizations in the US and in France represented by SAC and other organizations all trying to propose solutions to end people's suffering in the Syrian northwest, particularly Idlib. SBC works on lobbying with different politicians in the three countries to advocate for actions aim to stop the military campaign in Idlib.

[More details.](#)





3. Awareness:

SBC works to raise awareness about realities happening in Syria and about the Syrian culture and identity. It aims to rebuild a just and transparent narrative about the Syrian crisis. Here are some of the events and discussions that SBC organized to convey key messages and raise awareness towards the humanitarian situation in Syria.

Syria in the Age of Disinformation

On 30 March 2019, SBC took part in organising a one-day conference on the impact of fake news campaigns on Syrians who have been victimised. The conference shed light on the current situation in Syria as well as the inconsistent Western policy towards the Syrian crisis. The conference was attended by more than 100 participants with 18 speakers who took part in four panel discussions:

- The humanitarian response and civil society in Syria in a new phase of the conflict
- Justice for Syrians in the age of disinformation
- Towards a consistent and effective policy on Syria
- Syrian Diaspora, Why? When? What's Next?

SYRIA IN THE AGE OF DISINFORMATION

📅 Saturday 30 March 2019 ⌚ 9:30 – 17:00 📍 SOAS University of London

#SyriaFakeNews

Organised by



In partnership with



"THERE SIMPLY HASN'T BEEN A FILM LIKE IT BEFORE"



THE TIMES

FOR SAMA إلى سما

AN INTIMATE AND EPIC JOURNEY INTO THE FEMALE EXPERIENCE OF WAR

PR'S DISTRIBUTION PRESENTS A CHANNEL 4 NEWS AND ITN PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHANNEL 4 AND FRONTLINE PBS "FOR SAMA" EDITED BY CHLOE LAMBOURNE, SIMON MCMAHON MUSIC BY NAINITA DESAI PRODUCTION MANAGERS JENNY SMITH
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS GUY DE PEAR, NEVINE MADRID, SHOBAN SINNETON, GEORGE WALDRON, HANEY ABONSON, KATH, DAN EDGE FILMED & PRODUCED BY WAAD AL-KATEAB DIRECTED BY WAAD AL-KATEAB AND EDWARD WATTS

KCL GLOBAL BRIGADES PRESENTS

FOR SAMA is both an epic journey into the female experience of war. The film tells the story of Waad al-Kateab's life through five years of the uprising in Aleppo, Syria as she gets married and has a daughter,

TUESDAY 4TH FEBRUARY

6:30-8:30PM

WATERLOO CAMPUS

'For Sama' Screening, KCL

'For Sama' is a film that gave a realistic picture of the situation in east Aleppo in 2016. SBC has participated in a panel discussion that followed the screening which took place at King's College London. The panel discussion highlighted the importance of this kind of documentation of the war crimes in Syria.

[More details.](#)



February 2020

The Current situation in Idlib – A conversation with the front line reporter Hadi Al Abdullah

To raise the awareness towards the situation in northwest Syria, SBC and the Syria Solidarity Campaign organized an a meeting with Hadi Al Abdullah, a Syrian front line reporter, journalist and activist who has risen to prominence through his coverage of the Syrian revolution and the Syrian conflict. Hadi joined SBC on 23 Jan to discuss the current situation in northwest Syria, the humanitarian impact of the recent escalation in Idlib, the potential scenarios in northwest Syria and the responsibilities of the international community to avert possible catastrophes in the region.

[More details.](#)

4. Research and Policy:

SBC is committed to base its advocacy and lobbying activities on evidence. Thus, we conduct research on issues related to the Syrian cause to shape our approach and inform our activities. We also aim to engage in shaping Syria related policies in the UK and worldwide. SBC issues research outputs, policy briefs, statements and press releases accordingly.

Urgent actions needed to stop the massacre in Idlib 11 Feb 2020

On 11 Feb 2020, SBC issued a statement calling for urgent actions to protect civilians in Idlib. SBC believes that the Turkish-Russian de-escalation agreements during the past periods are falling apart, and therefore there should be international parties monitoring these agreements. SBC hereby urged the British Government and its allies, and the international community to intervene to protect civilians in Idlib.

[More details.](#)



Syria's North-Western People Are Under threat. UK & Allies - Act Now before it is Too Late

On 23 Dec 2019, and in light of the Assad regime offensive on southeast Idlib taking over Maret Al Noman city, SBC called on the UK government, and its international partners, to once and for all, take decisive action to stop the Assad regime and its foreign allies from carrying out what could be an atrocity at a genocidal scale.

[More details.](#)

SBC expresses grave concerns with the UN Constitutional Committee for Syria

On 06 Oct 2019, SBC issued a statement reminding all stakeholders that the establishment of a new constitution will do nothing to end the conflict since that the Syrian conflict goes beyond the constitutional issues. Focusing on the constitution implies the risks of mischaracterising the narrative of the war, as if to suggest that people have been killed because of it. Priority should rather be given to addressing the factors that ignited the war—namely the regime's totalitarianism and its brutal system of repression.

[More details.](#)



SBC calls for civilian protection in Idlib

SBC issued a statement on 24 July 2019 calling on the international community to honour its legal responsibility to protect civilians and to uphold international humanitarian law. SBC called on the United Kingdom in particular, to initiate global action to stop Russia and the Assad regime from continuing to massacre civilians, impunity for war criminals must not become the norm.

[More details.](#)

SBC Raises Concern over the Designated Area Offence

On 20 May 2019, SBC wrote to request the Home Secretary to address the issue of NGOs and dual British-Syrian nationals with relatives still residing in some parts of Syria which may be affected by the Designated Area Offence legislation. SBC expressed concerns that such law will discourage many from continuing their humanitarian efforts, leading to an exacerbation of an already destabilising humanitarian crisis. The Designated Area Offence must not be allowed to create a chilling effect to those currently in the NGO and humanitarian sector.

[More details.](#)



Britain Must Assert its Power to Prevent Idlib Catastrophe and Second Refugee Exodus

On 08 May 2019, SBC issued a statement about the power that the UK Government can use to put pressure on Assad regime to stop its escalations against the civilians. The statement welcomed the British, French and US forces' joint precision missile strikes on three of Assad regime's chemical weapons facilities in April 2018.

[More details.](#)

SBC rejects OCHA proposals to shift Syrian aid decision-making operations to Damascus

On 01 May 2019, SBC reminded OCHA of Assad regime's track-record of manipulating and preventing the delivery of humanitarian aid. SBC stressed that any move to cement the Syria response base to regime-held territory would be seen as rewarding the regime with a status of legitimacy.

[More details.](#)



Stay in touch

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