

When the Sound of Silence Breaks the Walls of Negotiation Rooms

WILPF

Let us tell you the story of five brave Syrian women who came to Geneva to stress the demands that many Syrian families have struggled for many years in trying to elevate: the fate of Syrian detainees. These five women are known as Families for Freedom. They are families and relatives of detainees and forcibly disappeared activists and Syrian nationals. Most of them have also been detained themselves. They have stood outside the Palais des Nations in Geneva this afternoon to make their voices heard on the margins of the Syria talks that were scheduled to start today. They did not come to Geneva for personal demands; rather, they are actively advocating on behalf of every Syrian family that has been affected by this ghastly phenomenon.

They are demanding that the Syrian regime and other warring parties release a list of all detainees along with their current locations and statuses, and to immediately stop torture and mistreatment. In the case of death of a detainee, they call for a death certificate along with a report on causes of death and burial location must be presented to the families. They are also actively calling for all international stakeholders to exert pressure on the Syrian regime to allow international humanitarian organisations to immediately deliver food and medical aid, and to grant international rights groups access to detention facilities to closely monitor living conditions in order to guarantee civil detention facilities to meet healthy living standards.

Last but not least, Families for Freedom demand abolishing exceptional courts, especially field, war and counter-terrorism courts and guarantee fair trials under a supervision from the United Nations.