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EuroMed Feminist Initiative  
المبادرة النسوية الأورومتوسطية  
Initiative Féministe EuroMed

# Newsletter #03/2024

## Side-Event on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls in Syria 29<sup>th</sup> April, Brussels

On April 29, 2024, ahead of the Brussels VIII Conference on **“Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region,”** the Syria Gender Advocacy Group (GAG), Musawa, and EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI) organized a pivotal side-event focusing on **“Ensuring Mechanisms to Combat Violence Against Women and Girls in Syria During the Early Recovery Phase.”**

The event highlighted the ongoing precarious situation for women and girls in Syria, supported by findings from local dialogues held in Syria and the study **“Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Syria: Laws, Knowledge, Awareness and Attitudes,”** alongside the 2023 mapping of services for VAWG victims. These actions are part of the EU-funded project **“Implementing the Common Agenda to Combat Violence Against Women and Girls and Promote Inclusive Peacebuilding Processes in Syria,”** funded by the European Union (EU).

The side-event was opened by Ms. Agne Gleveckaite, Head of Political, Press and Information section, European Union Delegation to Syria. Discussions emphasized the crucial role of Syrian feminist and women’s rights organizations and local women’s initiatives in decision-making and policy design for Syria’s future to ensure women’s rights, needs, and concerns are addressed, preventing exclusion. Participants stressed that early recovery efforts should alleviate suffering and complement political solutions, ensuring fair distribution of resources and maintaining the unity of the Syrian State.

The Brussels Donors’ Conference was recognized as a strategic platform for amplifying Syrian women’s voices, with a gender perspective in all early recovery projects being essential to reducing the gender gap and combating VAWG.





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The Syria Gender Advocacy Group (GAG) and EFI urged the international community to take specific actions: set a minimum 30% quota in financial pledges for Syrian feminist organizations, ensure their participation in early recovery processes across various levels, develop gender-sensitive monitoring mechanisms, include comprehensive support services for VAWG victims, support a civil society action plan for UNSCR 1325, adopt a comprehensive approach to protect women and girls from violence in all relief programs, cooperate with humanitarian networks to address real needs, support programs aimed at changing social norms and preventing early forced marriages, and work with the Independent Foundation for Missing Persons (IIMP) and Syrian women's rights organizations to uncover the fate of missing persons and promote lasting peace.

In the closing Remarks, Ms. Birgit Van Hout, Director of Representation Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Brussels underlined the importance of maintaining and widening the support to victims and survivors of VAWG in Syria.

*Together, we strive to create a more equitable and inclusive future for Syria and the broader Mediterranean region.*