



Michael Keating | Opening statement and panelist

Executive Director, EIP

Michael Keating is Executive Director of the European Institute of Peace (EIP). Until September 2018, he was the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia.

His career has been divided between the private and public sectors. Until 2015, he was an Associate Director at Chatham House in London. Between 15-2010, he worked as an advisor to conflict mediation bodies, including Intermediate and Search for Common Ground. From 10 – 2008, he served as the Executive Director of the Africa Progress Panel, a policy group chaired by Kofi Annan.

His UN career has included assignments in Kabul as deputy SRSG, in Lilongwe, Jerusalem/Gaza, New York, Geneva, Islamabad and Mogadishu. His private sector experience includes five years in financial publishing in the City of London; in television as associate producer on documentaries broadcast by the BBC, Channel Four; and running a management and communication consultancy.

He was born in Uganda, educated in the UK and has a Master of Arts in History from the University of Cambridge.



Paul Seils | Moderator

Director, EIP

Paul Seils is Director at the Peace Practice and Innovation unit at the European Institute of Peace (EIP). He is a lawyer by profession. For more than twenty years he has worked in conflict and post conflict situations around the world, working with victims, governments and international organisations, focusing on the relationship between sustainable peace and justice. He lived and worked in Guatemala for five years after the end of the civil war there, designing and leading an investigation into the state's genocide of Mayan groups in the 1980s. This proved a central element in the eventual prosecution of a former military dictator.

He has served, among other things, as the Head of Situation Analysis at the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC, the Chief of the Rule of Law and Democracy Unit at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, and Vice President of the International Center for Transitional Justice in New York. He has written on human rights and justice widely over the last two decades. He taught on the advanced Masters course at Leiden University from 2017-2015. He is currently a Visiting Professor with the School of International Relations at St Andrew's University, Scotland.

His primary focus today is on rights-based dividends in peace processes, and how practical, rights-based ideas of reconciliation can support peace processes in the short and medium term.



Mr. Ömer Önhon | Panelist

Former Ambassador, Consultant International Affairs, Director of Eurasia Center at TEPAV,

Former Ambassador, Consultant International Affairs, Director of Eurasia Center at TEPAV, Board Member Ankara Policy Center, Op-Ed Sharq Al Awsat. He served as the last Turkish Ambassador to Damascus.



Dr Mazen Kseibi | Opening statement

Member of SACD

Dr Mazen Kseibi was born in 1952. He graduated from Damascus University in 1979 with a degree in dentistry. He is a board member in Al-Birr Social Service Association in Homs. He is a founding member of the Syrian Association for Citizens' Dignity and currently member of SACD board of trustees.





Dr Najat Rochdi | Panelist

Office of the Special Envoy to Syria

Najat Rochdi is the current UN Deputy Special Coordinator for Lebanon, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon since the 1st of August 2020. Rochdi brings over 20 years of experience in development and humanitarian assistance and international coordination in conflict and post-conflict areas, including through her latest assignment as Senior Adviser to the Special Envoy for Syria and Director of Peer to Peer with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Geneva.

Prior to this, she served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator with the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Earlier, she served as Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Cameroon and Deputy Director of the Representative Office of the United Nations Development Programme in Geneva.

Rochdi holds a doctorate in applied Maths and Engineer in Information Systems from the National Institute of Statistics and of Applied Economics in Rabat and a Master's degree in Mathematics and Fundamental Applications from the University of Paris Sud 11. She is fluent in Arabic, English and French. Born in Morocco in 1961, she has four children.



Refik Hodzic | Moderator

Transitional justice expert

Refik Hodzic joined the European Institute of Peace (EIP) in 2017 as a Senior Advisor. Previously, he served as International Centre for Transitional Justice's Director of Communications from 2017-2011. While working with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia from 2004-2000 and 2010-2006, he served as the tribunal's Spokesman and Outreach Coordinator for Bosnia and Herzegovina. He also headed the public information and outreach section of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and worked in contexts as diverse as Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Colombia, Tunisia, Afghanistan and numerous other countries.

In 2004, Hodzic co-founded XY Films, an independent film and television production company producing documentary films dealing with the legacy of war crimes committed during the 1990s. He has published extensively in international media and academic publications on victims' rights and the role of media in international justice.



Hany Megally | Panelist

Deputy Director and Senior Fellow, Center on International Cooperation Commissioner on UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria

Hany Megally is a Deputy Director and Senior Fellow of New York University's Center on International Cooperation focusing on analysis to improve justice outcomes for victims/survivors in Syria and other conflict-related countries in the MENA region.

Since 2017 he has been a serving Commissioner on the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Syria. He came to CIC after being the Chief of the Asia, Pacific, Middle East, and North Africa Branch at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva.

Previously, he was Vice-President for Programs at the International Center for Transitional Justice, which he joined in 2003.

He has nearly forty years of experience in the field of human rights, transitional justice and conflict resolution, and beginning his professional career at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International in 1977. From 1984 to 1994, he headed the Middle East Research department at Amnesty International, based in London. Subsequently, he ran the Ford Foundation's social justice program in the Middle East from the Foundation's Cairo office, and from 1997 to 2003 he was the Executive Director of the Middle East and North Africa Division of Human Rights Watch.





Dr. Abdul Hamid Al Awak | Panelist

Ex-Judge, Assistant Professor at Mardin Artuklu University

Dr. Abdul Hamid Akil Al-Awak was born in Syria in 1966. He has PhD degree in Constitutional Law and Political Regimes.

Al-Awak is a professor at Mardin Artuklu University - Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations. He wrote many books, articles, and studies.



Dr. Mervan Nezhan | Panelist

Member of SACD

SACD trustee of Syrian association for citizen's dignity.

Worked as a doctor in SAMs organization (Syrian American Medical Society) in Syria.



Dr. Maha Yahya | Panelist

Director of the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center

Maha Yahya is director of the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, where her work focuses broadly on political violence and identity politics, pluralism, development and social justice after the Arab uprisings, the challenges of citizenship, and the political and socio-economic implications of the migration/refugee crisis.

Prior to joining Carnegie, Yahya led work on Participatory Development and Social Justice at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA). She was previously regional adviser on social and urban policies at UN-ESCWA and spearheaded strategic and inter-sectoral initiatives and policies in the Office of the Executive Secretary which addressed the challenges of democratic transitions in the Arab world.

Yahya is the author of numerous publications, including most recently Unheard Voices: What Syrian Refugees Need to Return Home (April 2018); The Summer of Our Discontent: Sects and Citizens in Lebanon and Iraq (June 2017); Great Expectations in Tunisia (March 2016); Refugees and the Making of an Arab Regional Disorder (November 2015).



Yasser Al Farhan | Panelist

Free Syrian Lawyers Association (FSLA)

Researcher and trainer in the area of International law, and a human rights lawyer.

He founded The National Committee in Defense of Detainees and Missing Persons, and headed the organization for 3 years.

Former member of the "Legal Commission" and the "Political Committee" of the Syrian Coalition.

Currently working as a consultant for "Al-Mizan" Organization for Legal and Human Rights Studies.





Silja Aebersold | Panelist

Free Syrian Lawyers Association

Silja Aebersold is a Swiss lawyer and legal advisor to the Syrian Initiative to Combat Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.

For the past six years, she has worked in civil society organizations to advance justice and accountability for Syria, including by documenting war crimes and other atrocities, training Syrian lawyers on principles of legal documentation and strategic litigation, and supervising projects in support of Syrians affected by sexual and gender-based violence. She holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of St. Gallen, a Master of Laws from the University of Lucerne, and a Doctorate from American University Washington College of Law.



Haya Atassi | Moderator

Member of SACD

Haya Atassi is currently the media and communications manager at the Syrian Association for Citizens' Dignity (SACD) with more than 9 years of experience in Middle Eastern politics and civil society.

Haya graduated from the American University of Beirut with a degree in Political Studies and minor in Human Rights and Transitional Justice, followed by a Master in International Relations, specializing in Turkey, Europe and the Middle East, from Bogazici University in Istanbul.

Haya delivered a speech at the UN headquarters in New York in 2018, representing Syrian youth, as part of her advocacy work to encourage the inclusion of youth in any talks on the future of Syria.

She co-authored in a study titled "The Prevalence and Impact of PTSD among Syria Refugees" published in 2016. She is fluent in Arabic, English and Turkish.

Haya is a certified fashion designer and holds a diploma in Luxury Brand Management from the Lebanese American University.



Dr. Hala Al Ghawi | Panelist

Member of SACD

Dr. Hala is a Syrian physician, M.D with a master's degree in general and laparoscopic surgery.

2012 to 2015 she started voluntarily working in the Zaatari refugee camp. She also contributed in creating a foundation for Syrian doctors, who established and supported a range of field hospitals in different regions in Syria. And found multiple medical centers in Jordan to provide free medical care for Syrian refugees, and treat victims of war and torture.

Alghawi is a co-founder of Syria Bright Future organization in 2012, and a co-founder of Families For Freedom Movements which campaigns for the release and justice of those forcibly disappeared in Syria. In addition to being an activist in women's empowerment and protection.

Dr. Alghawi is a Country Director of MedGlobal's programs in Syria and Turkey.

She has been a participant in a forensic documentation training program and network of Syrian doctors with PHR since 2013 and received a PHR Award in 2016.

Alghawi was a briefer in the security council 2019.





Dr Rouba Mhaissen | Panelist

Founder of Sawa for Aid and Development

Dr Rouba Mhaissen is a Syrian-Lebanese economist, activist, community mobilizer, and development practitioner who works on development issues in the MENA region, particularly forced migration and the Syrian refugee crisis. She is the Founder and Director of Sawa for Development and Aid (founded in 2011), a civil society organization that supports Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the internally displaced in Syria, and Sawa Foundation UK (founded in 2016), that supports forced migrants in Europe and the Middle East. This work focuses on protection, education, capacity building, skills and advocacy with affected communities in Syria and the region.

Rouba Mhaissen received her BA in Economics from the American University of Beirut, her MSc in Development from the London School of Economics, and an MPhil/PhD in Gender and Economic Development from the School of Oriental and African Studies. She also holds two degrees in Exponential Technologies from Singularity University (Silicon Valley). She has taught at SOAS, University of London and is currently a lecturer at the American University of Beirut.

She is the recipient of numerous awards relating to her work on gender issues, human rights as well as Syria-related work; these include the Queen Elizabeth Award (2011), the FCO Marsh Award for Peacemaking and Peacekeeping (2016), The AUB Most Distinguished Alumni Award (2017), and the Forbes 30Under30 list for Policy and Law (2017), as well as the Vital Voices Global leadership Award for Human Rights (2019) and the Rafto prize for Human Rights (2019).



Fadel Abdul Ghany | Panelist

Chairman and Founder of the Syrian Network for Human Rights

Fadel Abdul Ghany is a Civil Engineer with a Master's in international law (LLM)/ De Montfort University/ Leicester, UK.

Over the past eleven years, he has advocated human rights through managing SNHR, via hundreds of investigations and research-reviewed papers on human rights violations.

Abdul Ghany spoke at many international events including speaking at the UN Security Council and Human Rights Council, as well as many events on the sidelines of the UNGA meetings, including high-level events attended by many foreign ministers, diplomats, and journalists.

He gave many presentations to decision-makers in bilateral meetings with officials of many civilized countries in the world who are active in the Syrian file, through special visits to several foreign ministries and official offices such as the USA, Germany, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, and the White House.

He worked as an independent consultant in the human rights file during several peace negotiations' meetings in Geneva. He has trained dozens of Syrian Yemeni and Iraqi human rights activists media workers and leaders on the rule of International Customary Law.



Riyad Alvar | Panelist

Sednaya

A human rights defender and a Co-Founder for the association of detainees and missing ones in Sednaya prison (ADMSP)

Former detainee for 21 years in Syrian detention centers, for 15 years forcibly disappeared in Syria.

And a survivor of torture and conflict-related sexual violence.

A Saz Player, a survivor theatre actor, and a nonstop advocator for human rights causes.





Nerma Jelacic | Panelist

Director for Management and External Relations, Commission for International Justice and Accountability, CIJA

Ms. Jelacic oversees relationships with policy, political and diplomatic actors as well as civil society and the media. She is also responsible for securing the resources necessary for the functioning of the organisation in addition to sound project management. Ms. Jelacic joined CIJA in 2014 from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, where she ran communications and outreach programmes for over six years. With twenty years' experience in transitional justice and efforts to redress violations of international law, she has been deployed as a consultant on transitional justice issues in a number of conflict-affected settings including Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Uganda, and Egypt. She was the first director and co-founder of the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an award-winning media NGO specialising in investigation of war crimes, organised crime and corruption. Widely recognised as an expert on adapting transitional justice models to the realities on the ground, Ms. Jelacic specialises in securing governmental, media, victims' and larger public support for and understanding of the concepts of justice and accountability. Having worked as a London-based journalist in the 1990s, most notably for The Observer and The Financial Times, Ms. Jelacic is also a seasoned investigative reporter specialising in the subjects of war crimes and organised crime.



Samer Aldeyaei | Opening statement

Executive Director FSLA

Samer Aldeyaei a Syrian lawyer and Executive Director of the Free Syrian Lawyers Association. from 2012, Aldeyaei is a prominent human rights defender who dedicated his entire time tirelessly to human rights activism defending democratic values, justice, and human rights.

Mr. Aldeyaei joined efforts with a group of Syrian lawyers and participated in establishing FSLA.

He served as the Head of Public Relations and contributed to build an extensive network of lawyers across Syria.

In 2014, Mr. Aldeyaei assumed his position as the Executive Director of FSLA. In role, Mr. Aldeyaei directed FSLA efforts at national and international levels to bring about justice to the Syrian people.

Mr. Aldeyaei is a regular participant in high level meetings and justice conferences and a member of many legal expert groups in Syria.

He holds an LL.B. from Damascus University and a certificate of International Law from American University Washington College of Law.



Qutaiba Idilbi | Panelist

Founder of Sawa for Aid and Development

Qutaiba Idilbi is Syria Fellow at the International Center for Transitional Justice, researching the framework of political imprisonment in Syria.

His past research experiences include researching refugee entrepreneurship markets in Jordan and Turkey with Building Markets, analyzing security policy in the Middle East at the Global Policy Institute, and developing governance and security atmospheric reports for the U.S. Joint Special Operations Command with Pechter Polls and for USAID's Office of Transitional Initiatives with Caerus Associates.

Qutaiba was also Co-Founder and Vice President of People Demand Change (PDC), where he managed and evaluated governance, civil society strengthening, and peacebuilding programs in Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon.

He currently serves as a board member for multiple organizations providing educational support for Syria's displaced.





Alexander Tyler | Panelist

Senior Liaison Officer in Geneva for the Middle East & North Africa region, UNHCR

Alex Tyler has worked for UNHCR as a protection, coordination and operations specialist for 23 years, primarily in refugee and displacement emergencies as well as repatriation and reintegration operations.

He is currently the Senior Liaison Advisor in UNHCR's Middle East and North Africa Bureau, focusing on strategy, advocacy and fundraising for UNHCR operations from Mauritania to Iraq.

Alex has been involved in the Syria crisis since 2013, supporting the inter-agency and host government response that assists over 6 million Syrian, Iraqi and other refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt.

He has been particularly involved in protection advocacy related to the voluntary repatriation of Syrian refugees. He was previously posted in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Somalia, Kenya and Thailand and Jordan. Alex is from the UK and is married with three children.

He has a MA from Cambridge in Law and from SOAS in Development.



Ussama Uthman | Panelist

Chairman of Board of Directors, CAESER Files Group

Mr. Ussama Uthman worked during the first years of the revolution in the field of documenting the crimes of the Syrian regime.

He left Syria and continued his documentation and judicial work, as well as working as a data analyst for several Syrian and international human rights organizations.

He is currently the head of the US-registered organization of CFSG Caesar Files.

He presented the file of torture victims in the prisons of the Syrian regime, known as the Caesar file, to the Federal Public Prosecutor in Germany, which later became the legal basis for all trials in the European Union against the Syrian regime.

He sponsored many exhibitions of victims' photos in European countries, northern Syria and the United States of America.

In cooperation with human rights offices in the European Union, he prosecuted the regime, and contributed in supporting the efforts that led to the adoption of the Caesar Act to protect civilians in America



Mazen Gharibah | Panelist

Executive Director of the Syrian British Consortium (SBC)

Mazen Gharibah: A Syrian academic and political activist.

He is the Executive Director of the Syrian British Consortium (SBC), a senior researcher at the Conflict Research Programme and a research fellow at the Middle East Centre in London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

He has a Master's degree in Governance, Development and Public Policies from the University of Sussex.





Dr Yaser Al-Eeti | Panelist

Member of SACD

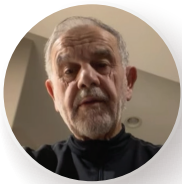
Yasser Aleiti was Born in Damascus in 1968. He had a Bachelor's degree in Medicine from the Faculty of Medicine at Damascus University 1992, and a Diploma in Internal Medicine from University of London.

He is a trainer in the areas of leadership, thinking, and self-building, and a certified trainer from the FranklinCovey Foundation for Training and Consulting.

Aleiti was a Former member of the General Secretariat of the Damascus Declaration for Democratic Change, and a Former member of the Revolutionary Command Council in Damascus.

Now he is a Chairman of the Board of Directors of the (Bina) Foundation, a civil society organization registered in Turkey and concerned with capacity building and community development for Syrians. In addition to that he is the head of the New Syria Movement (a Syrian political movement, under establishment).

He wrote and published several books in the areas of public health, Emotional Intelligence, leadership and Critical thinking.



Talal sunbuli | Panelist

Member of the Board of Advisers of the SAC

Practicing gastroenterologist in Chicago, founder of the Syrian American Council, a Syrian American advocacy organization in United state since 2006.

Member of the Board of Advisers of the SAC

