



We cannot tolerate the humanitarian chaos in Syria to escalate further

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Luca Jahier, EESC President

Statement by

As international and regional players gather in Brussels for the second Conference co-chaired by the EU and the UN on Supporting the future of Syria and the region, the newly elected President of the European Economic and Social Committee Luca Jahier urged the EU to do whatever it takes to bring change for the millions of civilians at risk in the war-torn country.



As the Syrian war enters its eighth year, the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate and the military operations on the ground keep on at relentless pace, including with the morally reprehensible use of chemical weapons, without any concern for civilian casualties. 400.000 people dead, over 13 millions Syrians are in need of humanitarian assistance, and more than 5 million Syrian refugees are displaced outside the country, as a strong reminder of the urgency.

"The protection of civilians is a legal obligation and a moral duty as well as a matter of urgency," said Jahier, calling for the international community to join the EU and the UN in their effort to garner political support for the UN-led political process and the constructive engagement of civil society.

Supporting High Representative Federica Mogherini, Jahier said the Conference must shift the focus now to diplomacy and peace-making. "Without constructive political talks we run the risk of further escalating the human tragedy of millions of Syrians, including women and children," he added.

"The future of Syria lies in the hands of the Syrian people and the EU should continue to work with Syrian civil society to promote democracy and human rights in support of peace and stability in Syria."

"There is no time to waste. As Europeans we know all too well that without peace, there is no life, only human tragedy. All actors meeting in Brussels today and tomorrow must earnestly show their strong support for the relaunch of the talks, work towards the improvement of conditions so that humanitarian aid reaches the vulnerable populations. The International community cannot tolerate the humanitarian chaos to escalate further," Jahier insisted.

"After eight years, we need to silence the weapons to pave the way for renewed dialogue."