



To members of the UN Security Council voting on the renewal of UNSCR 2165,

Syrian NGO Alliance (SNA) – an alliance of 22 Syrian NGOs providing humanitarian assistance in accordance with international humanitarian standards, coordinate leadership and advocate on behalf of the Syrian people – write to you ahead of UN SC meeting to discuss the renewal of UNSCR 2165. We appreciate the commitment of UNSC members to the provision of Cross Border assistance provided by UN Agencies. The renewal is paramount to our work and assistance provided from areas outside the control of Government of Syria.

As of December 2019, 4.3 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, and almost half are in acute need of humanitarian assistance and took refuge in areas outside the control of the Government of Syria; they can only be reached through Cross Border.

The crisis in Syria took its toll on civilians all over Syria and in particular North Western areas as a result of the ongoing escalation in attacks and the continuous displacement in these areas. They now live in densely populated areas that could no longer cope with the extra pressure on depleted resources.

The timing of recent escalation meant Internally Displaced Civilians are having to survive the harsh winter weather with limited available resources in addition to attacks on humanitarian facilities. In Idlib, 70% of three million people in protracted displacement with the majority are women and children, who can only be reached through cross-border operations. Almost half a million additional people have been displaced from southern Idlib and northern Hama to northern Idlib since the escalation began in April 2019.

Aid agencies are already struggling to meet their basic needs, including shelter, sanitation and clean water; our aim as aid agencies is to reduce the number of deaths never mind stopping deaths from happening as a result of extreme weather conditions.

Cross-border assistance, authorized under Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017) and 2449 (2018), remained a vital part of the humanitarian response. In October and November 2019, 1,955 trucks (39 consignments) delivered general food assistance for over 1 million people (monthly average).

The volatility and insecurity that persist throughout Syria makes it crucial for the renewal to take place in line with Core Humanitarian Standards. We also call for all four named border crossing points to be maintained and to include a fifth border crossing from Tal Abyad. This comes as a result of recent developments following the departure of some NGOs who previously served these communities.



In the absence of timely access via cross-line, it is vital to maintain the cross-border access as it has proven its effectiveness on numerous occasions over the past few years.

A non-renewal of 2165 or the renewal for 6 months would lead to the disruption of much needed life-saving humanitarian aid in addition to lack of strategic response.

UN aid amounts to about one fifth of the total cross-border aid volume whilst the rest comes from NGOs, as such, Resolution 2165 remains key to the Syria relief operation, in large part, due to the leadership, coordination, logistics and political cover offered by the UN.

The resolution is crucial for millions of Syrians in northern Syria, many of whom depend on humanitarian assistance that could only be reached through the cross-border mechanism. A non-renewal means disruption to humanitarian assistance in northern Syria.

We, therefore, urge you to:

1. Approve the previously agreed 4 crossing points in addition to the fifth one.
2. Renew the resolution for a minimum of 12 months to ensure effective humanitarian response planning and to minimize uncertainty and disruption to operations.
3. Call for the protection of Humanitarian Facilities and Aid Workers who play major role with supporting people in need.

Syrian NGO Alliance,

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