

Q&A

Success story from SWN, Alice Mofareg

- Where and when were you born?

I was born in Swida, 1971

- How would you introduce yourself briefly?

I am a former Arabic teacher, a leftist secular trying to pair politics with civil work. I am a member in Syrian Women's Network and a member in negotiation team of The High Negotiations Committee.

- When did you leave Syria and where do you live today?

I had to leave Syria at the end of 2014 with my family after my second detention, I was released through the regional truce of Barzeh AlBalad. After moving in many places, I settled now in Germany as a political refugee.

- What is your role in Geneva talk?

My role is distinguished as a feminist politician working for human women rights, in addition to guarantee women participation in all transitional process stages until participation in constitution drafting for equal citizenship state. I am also responsible of human rights violations, detainees case in particular.

- What party or body do you represent?

I am representative of Communist Labor Party in National Coordination Committee for Democratic Change.

- How would you describe the current stage of Geneva talks today?

The suspension in the last round of talks summarizes the track of former rounds. We are negotiating under international resolutions' umbrella that provided political transition and the Syrian regime is supposed to comply. Special Envoy measures talks course, which remained within consultations framework and documents provided by the two parties, by matching them. The Syrian regime didn't comply to the minimum of these decisions which is implementation of humanitarian track to secure a healthy environment of negotiation. Instead, it is escalating violence breaking truce with Russian and Iranian support what turned Aleppo to front where a lot of massacres against civilians take place. The regime didn't accomplish any

progress in detainees cause, it also made obstruction of humanitarian access. That's why we lost trust in the regime. I consider this stage critical concerning negotiations resumption until negotiation focal points are completed, specifically between USA and Russia. That's why de Mistura didn't provide certain dates. Thus, we are afraid the international community moving towards half-solutions for political settlement which don't depend on a Geneva 1, so we remain caught within a game of international and regional interests.

- As a Syrian woman, what challenges did you face in order to reach negotiation table and working in political field in general?

Personal challenges can't be separated from Syrian public context, starting with systemic repression policies by the regime against any political opposition, and not ending by its attempts to separate politics from society.

On the other hand, political parties formed at the beginning of the Syrian revolution aren't institutional, they are demanding democracy as an objective and missing it sometime as organizational practice that would contribute in decision making representing all parts.

The quotas excluded women from opposition leadership assigning them in "vice" positions. Women role was stereotyped after revolution arming and islamization. There was a space for women to work in civil society field as leaders, so they prefer this field avoiding politics.

There is uncertainty of continuous political work because of political powers fragmentation and mistrust, so women avoid politics not to be burned in the scene.

- What do you advise any woman aims to work in political field?

I am not in a position to advise, but I would say that politics isn't an aim, rather it is an effort. Work won't be effective unless women are organized in political parties or bodies forming power pushing toward democratic transition in Syria.

- Your last word to SWN?

I would say a word about SWN, the network could establish a distinguished Syrian feminist state by its role in filed and in international scene by taking strong positions. It worked toward changing the stereotyped image of Syrian women considering them active partners in political transition. Many SWN women members have been participating in the first and second tracks in Geneva talks.