

The President of the Security Council presents her compliments to the members of the Council and has the honour to transmit herewith, for their information, a copy of a **letter dated 5 September 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations** addressed to the President of the Security Council, and its enclosure.

This letter and its enclosure will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2018/816.

5 September 2018



Kingdom of the Netherlands

H.E. Mrs. Nikki R. Haley
Permanent Representative of the United States
of America to the United Nations
c/o Office of the President of the Security Council
Dpa-scsb3@un.org

Permanent Mission of the
Kingdom of the Netherlands to
the United Nations
666 Third Avenue, 19th floor
New York, NY 10017
United States of America
www.netherlandsmission.org

Contact

Peggy Visser
T +1 646 379 9617
E Peggy.visser@minbuza.nl

Date

05 September, 2018

Our reference

NYV/2018/959

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to request the distribution of the enclosed Concept Note as an official document of the Security Council.

The open Arria formula meeting entitled '*Syrian Voices on Preventing a Deathtrap in Idlib*' will be held on Friday 7 September from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in CR7 in the United Nations headquarters. The meeting is co-hosted by the Permanent Missions of France, the Republic of Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of The Netherlands.


Yours sincerely,

Karel J.G. Van Oosterom
Ambassador
Permanent Representative





Mission permanente de la France
auprès des Nations unies



Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Poland
to the United Nations
in New York



PERMANENT MISSION OF SWEDEN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
New York



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

Concept Note: Security Council Arria-Formula Open Meeting

Syrian Voices on Preventing a Deathtrap in Idlib

Co-hosted by the Permanent Missions of France, the Netherlands,
Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom

Friday, 7 September, 2018, 12:00 – 1:00 pm, CR7

Objective

Highlight the dire humanitarian situation in Idlib and the possible consequences of a further military escalation, and provide Syrian voices with a platform to inform an international response.

Background

In his statement on 29 August 2018, the UN Secretary-General expressed deep concern about the growing risks of a humanitarian catastrophe in the event of a full-scale military operation in Idlib province and urgently appealed to the Government of Syria and all parties to exercise restraint and to prioritize the protection of civilians.

In a statement on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator to the Security Council on 28 August, the Security Council was called on *'to avoid any further escalation of violence and an ensuing humanitarian catastrophe'; a 'worst-case scenario in Idlib will overwhelm capacities and has the potential to create a humanitarian emergency at a scale not yet seen through the crisis'*.

While Idlib is the last of the de-escalation zones agreed upon in Astana by Russia, Iran and Turkey, it is today at risk of facing a new military episode. It is therefore crucial to hear from Syrian political and civil society leaders on possible credible actions to be taken to protect civilians in Idlib as a matter of urgency.

Moving forward, the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly should also provide an opportunity to recommit to a political solution to the Syria conflict, in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions including UNSCR 2254 (2015) and the Geneva Communiqué, and to sustain the international response to the humanitarian and resilience needs of those affected by the crisis both inside Syria and across the region.

Format

The Arria formula meeting *"Syrian Voices on Preventing a Deathtrap in Idlib"* will feature representatives of the Syrian Negotiation Commission and Syrian civil society, including Hadi al-Bahra, Bassma Koudmani, Fadwa Ojyli, Hind Kabawat and Bahjat Hajjar.

Media

This event will be webcast and open to the press. Participants and the audience will join the conversation using the social media hashtags #EyesOnIdlib, #Idlib, and #WithSyria.