

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 6 September 2021 18:00 GMT +03:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	The negative Impacts of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Food Security
CONVENED BY	Ms. Mary Nassr - Rev.Dr. Haroution Selimian
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/41528/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Syrian Arab Republic

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

12	0-18	6	19-30		31-50	1	51-65		66-80		80+
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PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

12	Male	8	Female		Prefer not to say or Other
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NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

0	Agriculture/crops		Education		Health care
	Fish and aquaculture		Communication		Nutrition
	Livestock		Food processing		National or local government
	Agro-forestry		Food retail, markets		Utilities
	Environment and ecology		Food industry		Industrial
	Trade and commerce		Financial Services		20 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
	Large national business		Member of Parliament
	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
	Small-scale farmer		Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer		United Nations
	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
	International Non-Governmental Organization		Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
	Indigenous People		Consumer group
	Science and academia		20 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

The content was designed to contribute to the Summit's agenda as well as give the Syrian people a voice. It is not easy to manage an independent dialogue in an active conflict that has continued for a decade, so we decided to interview several families in their own homes on the same theme- of whether and to which extent sanctions affected food security. The main question asked was how were sanctions affecting them and what is their message be to the UN Food Systems summit? This is not simply a video, but a way to allow the Syrian people to express the extent of their suffering from unilateral coercive measures. What makes this video an important tool is for it to announce to all the world that Syrian People's lives matter and that the voice of Syrian civilians suffering from coercive unilateral measures should be heard. At the same time as we also discussed the negative impacts of economic sanctions on Human Rights, especially for the right to food. We utilized statistics published by the United Nations agencies and local organizations working with the UN to highlight the exponential increase in the price of essential food items since sanctions were imposed. The sanctions had clearly compounded the mal-effects of conflict. This is shown in the link to the video recorded for this meeting.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Our dialogue has the intention to highlight the big gap in the UN Food Systems conference as far as food security in conflict zones is concerned. An issue that has been largely neglected in the international sphere, despite its significance, especially in case where countries in conflict zones are additionally subject to unilateral coercive measures. Hence this event was an important opportunity for participants to expand their opinions and share ideas and concerns about the negative impacts of economic sanctions on their daily lives and in particular on food security. Moreover, we also discussed how we might find a mechanism to protect the right to food of people living in Syria and how ongoing sanctions, a war-torn economy, and the effects of a depreciated Syrian pound have contributed to high numbers of acutely food-insecure Syrians. The Dialogue tried to reflect the suffering of millions of people some of whom were engaged in this Dialogue as illustrated by the discussion in the video. Those who were in the Dialogue meeting considered it as a vital window for civil society around the world and to the meeting of the United Nations Food Systems Security to ensure that they hear the voice of the citizens of Syria.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Encourage conveners to follow up on the discussions and action plan discussed after the dialogue.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

☒

Yes

☐

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The focus of the dialogue was to illustrate the negative impact of economic sanctions on the right to food, especially since Syrians are still suffering from the effects of conflict and a war-torn economy. Moreover, the Dialogue discussed ways that could be beneficial to provide sustainable solutions to food security.

The Dialogue highlighted the difficulties, which the Livestock keepers are facing to buy standard quantities of cattle feed, which affects their productivity. Sheep and goat keepers face limited access to grazing land and high feed prices. In the poultry sector, producers of broilers and eggs are experiencing challenges in securing inputs, consequently creating massive fluctuations in the prices of broilers and eggs. Furthermore, food processors are facing higher costs of raw materials, transportation, fuel, and shortages of labor.

The very poor purchasing power of Syrian households was one of the key points raised in the Dialogue. Despite the availability of food items in the markets, they remained unaffordable for Syrian families whose purchasing power has collapsed as a direct consequence of economic sanctions.

The Dialogue achieved the following outcomes:

- Formation of a Network of concerned citizens (both Syrians and some from outside) against unilateral coercive measures, which will meet regularly.
- To continue to highlight the negative impact of coercive measures on the food security and the right to food of Syrians.
- To make suggestions to the UN food Systems Security Organization of key issues arising from discussions in the video and in our Dialogue available here.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
✓	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
✓	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

✓	Finance		Policy
	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
✓	Human rights		Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
			Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

There was concern about the neglect at the international level of universal coercive measures on food security in Syria as well as food security in general in conflict zones. In the MENA region alone more than 200 million people are affected by the effects of coercive sanctions and also by conflict.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Topic: The negative impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM) on food security.

- Consequences of UCM on the food security in Syria:

1- The collapse of purchasing power among Syrian Households.

2- High inflation and a collapse of the Syrian currency.

3- A serious lack of fuel needed for factories and for households.

4- Restrictions to imports of essential materials including fodder and agriculture materials.

In addition, the unilateral coercive measures targeting the financial sector such as banks have a severely damaging effect on all sectors of the economy including on those so-called exempted items such as medicine and food other than causing price inflation.

According to the WFP, food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social, or economic access to food. Syria has been in a protracted conflict for more than a decade. At the same time, Syria has been targeted by unilateral coercive measures, from western countries notably the US, the UK, and the EU, which have worsened people's lives in Syria and in the surrounding countries.

All these factors have created obstacles for Syrians to earn their livelihood. As Syrian citizens, we would like to advocate the following key issues for consideration

a. The humanitarian impact of any unilateral sanctions must be regularly reviewed and assessed through conducting a comprehensive investigation on the negative impact of these measures on human rights, on the UN's sustainable development goals, and on food security in particular.

b. Despite warnings from the WFP, OCHA, and FAO about the humanitarian situation in Syria, little research has been undertaken on the dangerous consequences of economic sanctions. There has not been any serious attempt made either by the EU or the USA to review or lift the unilateral coercive measures. We argue that this cannot be ignored anymore; millions are on the brink of famine.

c. Widespread food insecurity cannot be dealt with through humanitarian aid alone. Syrian people need sustainable solutions. For example, restrictions on imports should be lifted together with some direct economic support for modest projects that will allow Syrians to provide food for themselves.

d. Countries imposing sanctions need to compensate the Syrian people for losses caused by their political actions as, in the food and agricultural sectors. The food and agricultural sector needs to be neutralized from the impact of economic sanctions, with all needed inputs to be secured so as not to have to face mounting food insecurity.

e. Unilateral measures may be taken by States or regional organizations ONLY in compliance with international legal standards: that is, they are taken with the authorization of the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. This can only take place in response to a breach of peace, a threat to peace, or an act of aggression.

Otherwise, any measures taken against Syria need to be in full compliance with the rules of international law in compliance with international responsibilities. Otherwise, we damage the value of international law and collective security.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Despite the presence of diverse stakeholders, there were no major areas of divergence during the Dialogue. There was a broad consensus on the main issues.

All participants agreed on the main findings of the Dialogue, especially on the necessity that the food and agricultural sector needs to be neutralized from the impact of economic sanctions, with all needed inputs to be secured so as not to have to face mounting food insecurity.

There was also consensus on the ideal vision of a sustainable, equitable food system where all people can have access to nutritious and safely produced food that are the goals of the UN meeting on Food Systems security.

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KEYWORDS

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|---|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Finance | | Policy |
| | Innovation | | Data & Evidence |
| ✓ | Human rights | | Governance |
| | Women & Youth Empowerment | | Trade-offs |
| | | | Environment and Climate |

ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **The negative impacts of UCM on the food security**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-negative-impacts-of-the-unilateral-coercive-measures-on-the-food-security.pdf>

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Syrian people's voice**
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p_SEEmeoR6ghiTfjk-VrhhL8AyRWGpOz/view