

**Brussels VII Conference**

**Ministerial meeting**

**15 June 2023**

***Remarks by ASG Catherine Marchi-Uhel,  
Head of the International, Impartial and Independent  
Mechanism on Syria (IIIM)***

**Mr. President,**

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As many of you have stressed, accountability is an indispensable element to charter a way towards lasting, sustainable peace.

Since we last met, a year ago, the IIIM has helped to achieve important, tangible results in its role as a justice facilitator.

Core international crimes committed in Syria are being prosecuted in an increasing number of competent jurisdictions. We have already worked with 15 of them, and supported 142 distinct investigations.

This year alone, we have seen several convictions in cases supported by the IIIM in Sweden and Germany.

In France, we have supported investigations that have led to recent indictments for complicity in crimes against humanity and war crimes of three senior security officials.

We are also prepared to provide information and analysis relevant to the joint application just filed last week by Canada and the Netherlands against Syria at the International Court of Justice under the Convention against Torture.

These cases are an important message to all Syrians:

There *are* opportunities for justice and ways to make the voices of every Syrian heard, including those of women, children and the most marginalized.

And there *are* ways to honour those no longer able to speak- those who perished, and the countless missing persons, who are in the hearts and minds of all the Syrians we meet.

Our collective efforts must continue, for the future of Syria, and the region.

While I am very pleased to report that our work has greatly evolved, with multiple justice opportunities successfully seized, I must stress that this scale of success was only possible thanks to the voluntary contributions made by 40 Member States in the past.

If we are to maintain, the pace, volume and quality of our support to jurisdictions, and our two-way engagement with our many civil society partners, victims and survivors, additional voluntary contributions are necessary

We will need to receive predictable, multi-year funding commitments to retain the highly specialized workforce, expertise and partnerships that we have built.

I call on all Member States to continue their vital support to our work.

Our mission has only just started, and we look forward to seizing further opportunities for comprehensive and inclusive justice, together.

We owe it to the victims and survivors of crimes committed in Syria, and we owe it to all Syrians, in the country, the region and beyond.

Thank you.