



Executive Summary

Sarajevo Principles for Syria's Reconstruction

Sarajevo, September 2019





Disclaimer: The principles in this paper reflect the discussions of the workshop. This does, however, not mean that all participants agree on all points of this document.

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Sarajevo Principles for Syria's Reconstruction

An executive summary of the discussions in Sarajevo, September 7-11, 2019

1. The Syrian parliament as a whole parliament shall comprise two chambers, the chamber of the people and the chamber of the regions (or chamber of the governorates).
2. The first chamber shall represent the entire Syrian people. Its members shall be elected directly by the people in the constituencies. Elections shall take place using party-list proportional representation; the seats shall be distributed among the parties proportionately to their electoral success. A minimum of 30 percent of the representatives must be women. There shall also be quotas for people with particular needs and, as the case may be, measures to ensure that young people are also fairly and proportionately represented in parliament.
3. Each region shall be represented by five delegates in the second chamber. These delegates shall be elected in the regions.
4. Both chambers shall include seats reserved for small ethnic, religious and linguistic groups which are not otherwise represented. The constitution shall stipulate the number of these seats and the procedure for electing or appointing delegates to hold them. One proposal is for the second chamber to draw up a list of potential additional delegates and the first chamber to select five people from this list.
5. Both chambers shall meet separately from each other. Decisions shall be taken with a simple majority of the votes. Important decisions shall require a two-thirds majority in both chambers.
6. Parliament shall elect the president of the government; both chambers must approve the choice.
7. The current 14 governorates shall be organized into new governorates or regions. This step must take place at the beginning of the process, since it is a prerequisite for the appointment of the second chamber.
8. The constitution of Syria as a whole shall divide powers and responsibilities between the central state and the regions. The central state shall be responsible for defense and border protection, foreign relations and economic planning. The functions not mentioned in the constitution shall fall within the powers and responsibilities of the regions. The constitution of Syria as a whole shall lay down which functions are included in the powers and responsibilities of the municipalities. The constitution of Syria as a whole shall lay down the key principles of foreign relations. The government shall present its foreign affairs strategy to parliament; both chambers must approve this strategy.
9. The regions shall establish their own regional constitutions. These regional constitutions must not contradict the constitution of Syria as a whole.
10. The regional parliaments shall fulfil their functions within the scope of the functions assigned to them in the constitution of Syria as a whole. Regional laws must not contradict the laws of Syria as a whole.

