**Title**: An Oral Intervention to the United Nations Human Rights Council

**Subtitle**: STJ and The Advocates for Human Rights welcomed the work of the International Commission of Inquiry on Syria and demanded research into the use of Syrians as mercenaries in foreign conflicts

*On 6 July 2021, Syrians for Truth and Justice and The Advocates for Human Rights addressed the United Nations Human Rights Council during the presentation of an oral update by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic covering recent developments in the country. We joined numerous countries and nongovernmental organizations in thanking the Commission of Inquiry for its work and calling for accountability in Syria. We look forward with continuing to collaborate with the Commission of Inquiry to monitor ongoing human rights violations in Syria.*

*The text of our statement is reproduced below. You can watch the full session on* [*UN Web TV*](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1o/k1ombluxag)*.*

Madam President,

The Advocates for Human Rights and Syrians for Truth and Justice welcome the oral update of the Commission of Inquiry on Syria.

Syrians for Truth and Justice monitors human rights violations in Syria.

Our commitment to human rights monitoring stems from the idea that impartial and independent human rights documentation is the first step to achieving justice in Syria, and in the long run, the first step toward a sustainable peace achieved through the processes of transitional justice.

We commend the Commission’s willingness to highlight violations committed by all parties in the conflict and to elevate the stories of all victims.

We remain, however, concerned about continued human rights violations in Syria which require the Commission’s attention and action.

The Commission of Inquiry must clearly address the Turkish occupation of northern Syrian territories as occupation, in order to encourage Turkey to assume its responsibilities in protecting the civilian population against human rights violations committed by armed groups it supports - violations that the Commission has previously documented.

Additionally, the Commission must address the growing number of Syrian mercenaries and recognize that if we want to stop the use of Syrian mercenaries in foreign conflicts, we must begin with addressing recruitment processes in Syria.

STJ looks forward to continuing its partnership with the Commission as we work toward impartial and independent justice in Syria.

Thank you.