**Briefing by Mr Hadi Albahra, Co-Chair of the Syrian Constitutional Committee, after the end of the work of the third day of the meetings of the Constitutional Committee**

**Geneva**

**October, 20 2021**

I forward my deepest condolences to our people in Idlib, especially in Aِِِِِِِِriha, who were killed today. They are innocent civilian children, women and men. This incident affirms that a comprehensive ceasefire in Syria is a basic demand. It is not possible to engage in a serious political process before establishing a kind of cessation of violence in the whole of Syria. I also forward my deepest condolences to all Syrian civilians who were killed in all over Syria from 2011 till this day.

At the beginning of the session, there were several interventions, during which the members affirmed their regret over the violence that is happening. They also stressed the United Nations Special Envoy to intensify his efforts to seek a comprehensive ceasefire in Syria. They asked him, especially during the presence of the main delegations from Russia, Turkey, Iran, the United States and most of the European Union’ countries in Geneva. They asked the Envoy to try to communicate with them to activate efforts in this direction. After that, discussions started.

And there was a clear indication that there are some forces in all over Syria that have become allied against any political process in Syria. This is a situation created by the war economy. Some parties are benefiting from the state of bloodshed, destruction, mess, and war in Syria.

Simultaneously, those parties are affected by any political solution in Syria that ends the bad situation and leads to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015). Therefore, we find that there is a coincidence of these two incidents on the same day and at the same time, one of them in Damascus and one of them is in Idlib, with consideration to the big difference between the two incidents. People targeted in Idlib are innocent civilians who have nothing to do with any military action of any kind.

Today, the committee discussed an important paper presented by members of civil society delegation, on the rule of law in the Syrian state. The rule of law is one of the foundations of the state of law. They indicated the need for all state institutions to be subject to the law and the need to implement all laws emanating from the constitution.

Yesterday, there was a paper presented by representatives of the Syrian Negotiation Commission looking at the issue of the army, the armed forces, the police and the security forces, and the principles to which they should be subject in the Syrian state in the future. The paper was discussed in the meetings, and there was an objective discussion, notes on the paper were taken. Representatives of the Syrian Negotiation Commission are redrafting it to resubmit it tomorrow to be discussed on Friday again in the plenary meeting.

Before that, a paper was presented regarding the sovereignty of the state, and this paper contained many points of disagreement, but the discussion was objective, and representatives of the Negotiation Commission presented their criticism. They had clarified their notes in terms of the constitutional formulations and the constitutional content. They presented their paper reflecting their definition of a constitutional provision regarding the sovereignty of the Syrian State.

The representatives of the Syrian Negotiation Commission will also send a written response to this paper, with details of why amendments were proposed to it and the paragraphs that should be deleted or the paragraphs that should be added to this paper.

Majority of the foreign countries with interest in the Syrian crisis have their delegations present in Geneva during the constitutional committee’s small body meetings, at the level of representatives of the ministries of foreign affairs and special representatives to Syria. There is an interest in the work of the Syrian Constitutional Committee and waiting for the outcome of this round. This session will prove the interest of all parties whether that they are serious about reaching the drafting of the constitution, or they are wasting time and they do not produce anything. So now we cannot judge the seriousness of all parties. We will wait for the last session on Friday. On Friday, the intentions of each party will be clear, and the effort it has made will be clear, whether to reach an understanding or to waste time.