

International Women's Day

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Cairo, Egypt, March 8, 2013 – Today, March the 8th, 2013, International Women's Day marks two years of the uprising in Syria. The regime's murderous brutality towards women of Syria during this period, has exposed the chasm between the image it presented to the world and reality.

For over four decades, the Assad regime portrayed itself as a secular, moderate government that protected the rights of minorities and women. However, beneath the symbolic gestures, the regime has made Syria's women easy targets for abuse, in its efforts to control and leverage power over the entire population.

After its failure to terrorize unarmed protestors and quell their demands for justice through brutal violence, the regime attempted to crush the popular uprising by targeting women. However, its actions served only to galvanize and unify the opposition. Women are increasingly participating across all spectrum of the revolution, and in positions of authority over men in many instances.

"Syria's women are fundamental to our struggle. They do not need to be granted their rights, they are taking them in the same way Syria is taking its dignity back from the regime," said Suhair Attasi, Vice President of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces.

The actions of the regimes' militias demonstrate a clear intention to subdue Syrians through the torment and attacks on their women. One example has been the use of rape as a systematic strategy to humiliate and control the population. Countless women have been tortured and killed, while thousands have been imprisoned by the Assad regime for peaceful political activities.

The horrific scale of the regime's brutality is best expressed in numbers: more than 70,000 civilians have been killed, more than a million people fled their homes in fear, and more than 4 million people are displaced and in need of aid to stay alive. Despite the scale of this devastation, the Syrian people, with women at their forefront, remain in high spirits and with full resolve to see their revolution through.

The future Syria that we will build together, will live up to the values embodied in International Women's Day by respecting women and men as equal citizens.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the National Coalition is arranging interviews for journalists with members Rima Flihan and Suheir Attasi. The interviews will be granted on a first-come-first-served basis.