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Syrian Arab Republic: UN experts urge repeal of dispossession laws

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GENEVA – UN experts* today urged the Syrian Transitional Government to suspend the application of the laws that resulted in systematic disposessions and displacement under the previous regime and to initiate a process in the People's Assembly to review and replace them with new regulations.

"Under the previous regime, Decree No. 66 (2012) and Law No. 10 (2018) privileged property interests of a wealthy minority at the expense of the housing rights of families of average or modest means. These legal instruments led to the widespread displacement and dispossession of thousands of families for the benefit of a privileged elite," the experts said.

They called on the Transitional Government and the newly established People's Assembly to ensure that the future Constitution proclaims and protects the right to housing in line with international law.

"Syria has a historic opportunity to transform one of the world's largest displacement crises into an inclusive and sustainable recovery. The country needs and deserves international support to achieve this goal," the experts said.

"We welcome efforts for reconstruction and resolution of arbitrary displacement and dispossession. However, we fear that redevelopment plans are facing administrative and financial delays and failing to address the deprivation of internally displaced persons, refugees, and the families of the missing and detained."

The experts noted that the 2025 Constitutional Declaration proclaims the right to property, and the importance of private and family life (Articles 13, 14 and 20), but remains silent about the right to adequate housing.

The Constitutional Declaration establishes that "all exceptional laws that have harmed the Syrian people and are inconsistent with human rights" are to be deemed cancelled (Article 48). "While the Transitional Government has not presented an exhaustive list of laws fitting this description, we can only conclude for now that the previous legislation remains the law of the land," the experts said.

"A transitional justice approach to peace and reconciliation in Syria requires addressing the socio-economic root causes of the conflict and discredit of the political class," they said. "A future constitutional settlement for Syria should proclaim and protect the right to adequate housing, in line with international human rights law."

"These laws cannot lay the foundations for the reconstruction of a society aiming for a future of peace. International human rights standards must be at the forefront of the social, institutional and architectural reconstruction of modern Syria."

The experts have written to the Transitional Government of Syria raising these concerns.

***The experts:**

- Koldo Casla, the [Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing](#)
- Paula Gaviria, the [Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons](#)
- Bernard Duhaime, the [Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence](#)

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