

**Concept Note
Side Event
"Aleppo: Humanity Under Fire"**

**Thursday, March 9, 2017
Conference Room 12
10:30am – 12:00pm**

Background

Throughout the conflict in Syria, innocent civilians have often been caught in the crossfire. Presently, more than 600,000 Syrians live under siege, and are in desperate need of humanitarian aid and medical relief.

In the final months of 2016, the world stood by watching as the citizens of Aleppo were subjected to a brutal siege and constant bombardment by advanced weaponry.

Today, three doctors from the besieged part of the city are here not only to tell their stories, but to plead for help from the international community to allow humanitarian access into the besieged areas of the country. These doctors have been the victims of chemical attacks, siege, illegal munitions, and forced displacement. Yet they are still committed to doing everything they can to help save the lives of their fellow citizens.

They are here to discuss their experiences in Eastern Aleppo, and to describe what they believe could have been done differently to alleviate the suffering of its residents. They will also discuss the importance and necessity of humanitarian access, and how important it is for access to be granted to besieged areas, particularly in East Ghouta and Dara'a.

They also want to call attention to the plight of dialysis patients in East Ghouta, an area with a population of more than 350,000 which has been under siege for years, but in recent weeks has not received any aid convoys. As of last week, there were 30 patients undergoing kidney dialysis treatment who were in desperate need of supplies. However, no convoys have entered, and three of the patients have died due to lack of medication. Within the next few weeks, all of the remaining patients will die without proper treatment. The doctors, along with the Ambassadors present, are calling on the UN to enter the area with the necessary medication and supplies, and for the international community and authorities on the ground to provide the necessary protection.

The international community has the opportunity to intervene and save the lives of these innocent civilians. We all have a moral obligation to do everything possible to ensure their survival.

SAMS Participants:

Dr. Ahmad Tarakji, President
Dr. Farida, OBGYN, M2 Hospital
Dr. Abdulkhalek, Director, M3 Hospital
Dr. Abu Rajab, Director, M10 Hospital

Participant Biographies:

Dr. Abu Rajab was the director of M10 hospital, the largest trauma facility in Aleppo and a frequent target of airstrikes and artillery shelling. Dr. Abu Rajab was one of the few doctors to remain in Aleppo during the siege and survive. Dr. Abu Rajab and his few remaining medical staff were among the last to leave Aleppo, helping to evacuate 5 ambulances. Dr. Abu Rajab was also among the medical staff who treated five-year-old Omran Daqneesh.

Dr. Farida was the last remaining female OB-GYN in East Aleppo. She worked in both M2 and M3 hospitals, and trained her team of nurses to serve as midwives in order to respond to the high rate of pregnancy among the local population. Throughout the siege, she was a frequent guest on international media outlets to raise awareness of what was happening on the ground. She has continued to practice medicine in Idlib.

Dr. Abdulkhalek was the director of M3 hospital and the only ophthalmologist in East Aleppo. He also served as a leader of the Aleppo Health Directorate, and was one of three doctors who negotiated a plan for medical evacuations from the city