



Interim Articles of Association (AOA) SYRIA CIVIL DEFENCE (SCD)

Chapter I: Name, Headquarters and Purposes

Article 1: Definitions and Interpretations

a. Definitions

1. Terms and expressions herein are interpreted according to the meanings adopted and credited by the international humanitarian law and the principles of the international organization for civilian protection and the statement of principles of the SCD, signed by 69 of the leaders of the SCD and publicised on October 2014.

2. The following terms, wherever mentioned herein, have the meanings specified for them unless context provides otherwise:

Civil Defence (CD)	Syria Civil Defence (SCD)
Articles of Association	SCD articles of association
General Assembly (GA)	Representatives of the directorates to the GA who are elected and delegated in advance by the volunteer women and men of the teams of the centres, the heads of the centres, the individuals, heads of the sectors inside Syria, heads of directorates and liaison officers
Board	The board elected by the GA to run the affairs of the SCD
Director of the SCD	The director of the SCD who is elected internally by the board of the SCD.
Directorate	The directorate of the CD in the province
Director, Directorate	The director of the CD directorate in the province
Liaison officer	A CD representative responsible for coordination and follow-up of documentations and reports on response operations
Sector	A CD sector that is affiliated to the SCD directorate in the province providing that it includes two centres at least

Head of Sector	The head of the sector in a given geographical area
Centre	A CD centre affiliated to a CD sector in a province
Director, Centre	The director of the centre in a given geographical area
Team	A group of volunteers (personnel / individuals) working during one shift
Leader of the team	The person who presides over a group of personnel and individuals inside the centre and during operations
Volunteer	He / she is the individual or the active personnel member who works for the SCD
Hero Fund (HF)	HF provides psychological (moral) and financial support to members of the SCD who sustain wounds to rebuild their health and professional lives, and it also provides care for the families of the martyrs of the SCD who were killed in their duty of rescuing civilians

Article 2: Headquarters of the SCD

a. The purposes and goals of the SCD are:

1. Protecting the civilian population against the dangers arising from hostilities or other disasters
2. Accelerating the recovery from the immediate effects of such events
3. Providing the conditions necessary for survival of the civilian population.

b. SCD Missions are:

1. **Warning:** CD conducts extensive community outreach and risk education. Activities include production and dissemination of a comprehensive Community Protection manual, activities at schools and for vulnerable groups (including women) and operating a public warning network or air raid sirens.
2. **Evacuation:** if fighting expands into civilian areas, the CD teams shall conduct evacuation operations to get civilians away from risks.
3. **Shelter management:** there was no network of shelters for protection from aerial attacks. Therefore, the teams developed public shelters that were made available for use by the civilian community.

4. **Repair of public essential services:** teams regularly repair public services, including power grids, water networks and roads.
5. **Rescue:** teams conduct search and rescue operations in emergencies in in the bombings and attacks locations.
6. **Medical services, including first aid:** teams are mostly the first organized response. They provide pre-hospital emergency life support for shocks, and they gather the patients to hand them over to frontline medical services. In many areas, the CD works with local first aid network.
7. **Fire-fighting:** teams provide fire-fighting services to communities.
8. **Identification and marking danger areas:** teams are called regularly to identify and mark UXO locations. Teams have been frequently responsible for the disposal of UXOs.
9. **Decontamination and other protective measures:** CD bears the responsibility of decontamination for civilians in the areas that come under chemical element attacks.
10. **Provision of emergency accommodation and supplies:** local community organizations provide aid. CD teams have played an active role as an organized response in building camps for the IDPs such as pitching tents.
11. **Emergency disposal of the dead:** SCD, working with local religious authorities, prepares communal graves and ensures that registration of the deceased has taken place.
12. **Preservation of the essential things for survival.**
13. **Aid in emergencies to protect public services in inflicted areas.**
14. **Managing the measures of emergency compensation** in case services are cut off.
15. **Complementary activities** needed to implement any of the aforementioned missions including and not limited to planning and organization.

Article 4:

The SCD provides services to citizens equally and on a volunteer basis for no profit, share of profits or interest to any of its members or any specific person directly or indirectly; or to achieve any political goals that are part of any agenda of any political party or armed groups; or to achieve sectarian goals.

Chapter II: Membership

Article 5: Founding Members

The founding members of the SCD are the volunteers and the leaders who were drawn from the field and from the Syrian people and its revolution in all the provinces.

Article 6: Membership Conditions

a. Any person has the right to apply for membership in the SCD provided that they meet the following requirements:

1. Be a holder of the Syrian nationality for a period of no less than five years or persons of equal legal conditions
2. Be able to read and write
3. Be between 18 and 35 years old and be physically fit to carry out the duty
4. Not to be a member of any military faction
5. Has good conduct and reputation
6. Get two recommendations from two trusted persons from his locality
7. Has complete legal capacity
8. Serve the goals of the SCD and contribute in implementing its works and activities
9. Approves the articles of association of the SCD in writing.

b. Pledging Allegiance

SCD members pledge allegiance as follows:

I, (.....name.....), share the SCD values of protection and aid to all people. I undertake the implementation of all the missions I am assigned with the spirit of basic values of the SCD: impartiality, humanitarianism and indiscrimination, and I pledge myself to work with devotion.

Article 7: Losing membership

Membership drops in any of the following cases:

a. Withdrawal

b. Death

c. Lack or loss of capacity

d. Suspension: the SCD administration may suspend any member by a decision it takes according the provisions stipulated herein if the member:

1. Did any action that may inflict material damage on the SCD or the name thereof
2. Manipulated their SCD membership directly or indirectly for personal gain or interest;
3. Breached the articles of association of the SCD and continued to do so despite being warned in writing about the need to stop the breach.



Chapter III: General Assembly (GA)

Article 8: GA

The GA consists of the active volunteers according the definition provided in Article 1 Chapter I herein.

Article 9: GA Meetings

a. The General Assembly holds two ordinary meetings annually at least. The GA may be called for extraordinary meetings upon necessity.

b. The board calls the GA for a meeting wherever it decides, with a written notice handed over to the directorate of the province. The call, with an attached agenda, shall be made at least two weeks ahead of the meeting.

c. The Board should notify the heads of the directorates in writing at least a month before the meeting, providing the date, location and agenda of the meeting of the GA; otherwise, the meeting shall not be considered legal.

d. The board shall send, to the directorates, copies of the decisions made by the GA within a period of 15 days as of the date of making the said decisions.

Article 10: Head of the Meeting

The head of the SCD shall preside over GA meetings. In case of absence, a deputy thereof shall preside over the meeting; and in the absence of the deputy, the GA shall elect a board member with a decision made by the absolute majority of the attending members.

Article 11: Holding Meetings

a. Quorum in Ordinary GA Meetings

The GA meeting shall be legal with the attendance of the majority of the GA members. In absence of the legal quorum to hold the meeting in the first day as scheduled, the meeting shall be delayed 15 days as of the date of the first meeting, and the absent members who did not attend the first meeting shall be notified about the new date. The second meeting shall be legal with the attendance of no less than the quorum of the GA specified herein.

b. Quorum in Extra-ordinary GA Meetings

The GA extraordinary meeting shall be legal with the attendance of two thirds of the GA members. In absence of quorum in the first day as scheduled, the call for the meeting shall be dropped, and the convention of another extraordinary meeting may be called for.

Article 12: GA Meeting Agenda

a. Agenda in Ordinary GA Meetings

The GA in an ordinary meeting discusses the following:

1. Annual report by the board on the CD activities in the past period
2. Ratification of concluding financial statements
3. Ratification of the reports submitted by the auditor
4. Ratification of the annual budget project
5. Election of the board with representation from all provinces with a secret ballot
6. Suspension of the board or any member thereof in case a justification is available
7. Appointment of an auditor who is not a board member
8. Ratification of the general policy of the CD and the strategic plans
9. Monitoring over the management of the CD funds
10. Discussion and approval of internal systems, directions, financial and administrative and human resources policies of the SCD, including the ones that are related to the activities of the directorates in the provinces.

b. Agenda in Extraordinary GA Meeting

1. Any issue pertaining to the position of the SCD. Decisions thereto are taken with absolute majority
2. Modification of the articles of association of the SCD with respect to its goals and purposes
3. Integration of the SCD in the executive body of the government within the future consensual national project.

Article 13: GA Decisions

a. While taking paragraph b in article 12 above into consideration, decisions in the ordinary GA meetings are made with the absolute majority of the GA attendees, and with the majority of two thirds of the attendants in extraordinary meetings.

b. A GA member may not participate in voting if the topic presented to the GA is making an agreement with them, filing a lawsuit against them or waiving off a lawsuit between the SCD and them; or when they have a personal interest in the decision voted on unless the voting process is about the election of the board or other SCD commissions or committees.

Article 14: GA Meeting Records

The decisions of the GA are registered in the minutes of the sessions, signed by the director and secretary of the SCD. The minutes shall list the names of the SCD members who have the right to attend, the ones who attended, the decisions made and the number of votes cast for them.



Chapter IV: The Board

Article 15: SCD Administration

A board whose members' number equals the number of the provinces runs the SCD so that a representative represents each province. Nominated representatives make up for the director and deputy director positions to represent their provinces. The GA members elect them with secret ballot according the provisions herein. It remains so until the future political system of Syria is clearly stable.

Article 16: Conditions of Board Membership

A board member has to meet the following conditions in addition to the conditions required for a volunteer active member:

- a. No less than 25 years old
- b. To have spent no less than a year as a volunteer in the SCD
- c. Be witnessed in revolutionary activity
- d. Be a holder of intermediate school diploma as a minimum for the current elections' term exceptionally. In future elections, a high school diploma is the minimum

Article 17: Vacancy of a Position

- a. If the position of any board member during their term got vacant for any reason, the GA members from the province, whose board representative's position has become vacant, elect a new board member.
- b. Provisions of article 7 herein shall be applied on the suspension of membership of the members of the board.

Article 18: The Powers of the Board

The powers of the board include running all the affairs of the CD, the following in particular:

1. Running the affairs of the SCD, including full supervision over all the directorates in all the Syrian provinces
2. Appointment of the heads of directorates and senior positions as well as procedures pertaining thereto
3. Supervision over the main offices of the SCD that answer directly to the SCD administration
4. Supervision over the development of internal systems, policies, financial and administrative directives and their divisions as well as presentation of the said items to the SCD General Assembly for ratification

5. Supervision over the design of the annual budget, writing of the annual report and drafting of the concluding financial statements and presentation of which to the SCD General Assembly
6. Formation of specialized administrative committees, supervision over their programs, determination of their powers, establishment of bases for their work and monitoring them so that they aid the board of the SCD
7. Delegating any of the board members or a group thereof to sign on behalf of the SCD administration in financial, administrative and judicial matters;
8. Naming the banks in which the SCD deposits funds
9. Management of the SCD movable and immovable assets according to the policies issued by the GA
10. Supervision of and monitoring over the HF that cares for the wounded CD members and the families of CD martyrs and appointment of the trustees to the HF board of trustees (See the HF policy attached)
11. Supervision over the White Helmet Friends Organization and its branches in friend states as well as selecting and assigning board members as representatives of the SCD to it (See the special basic systems of the White Helmets Friends Organization attached)
12. Other missions or powers delegated to it by the GA.

Article 19: Board Meetings

The board convenes at least once a month to discuss SCD affairs. A board meeting is legal with the attendance of %51 of its members or through communication means in case they failed to attend. Decisions are taken with the absolute majority of the attendees. If a deadlock exists, the director of the SCD has the deciding vote.

Article 20: The SCD Director, Deputy Director and Secretary Election

The board, in the first meeting immediately after the meeting of the GA, shall elect from its members a director and a deputy director; a secretary for the SCD shall be elected in the same meeting. The same procedures shall be applied in case one of the positions becomes vacant.

Article 21: SCD Director Missions and Powers

The powers and missions of the director of the SCD the following:

- a. Presiding over the meetings of the board and managing the SCD
- b. Representing the SCD before official, local, regional and international actors;
- c. Supervising the board and affiliated committees thereof
- d. Other missions stipulated herein or delegated to them by the SCD General Assembly or the SCD Board.

Article 22: Missions and Powers of the Deputy Director of the SCD

The deputy director of the SCD shall act on behalf of the director in case of absence.

Article 23: SCD Secretary Missions and Powers

The missions and powers of the SCD Secretary include drafting the agenda of the GA and the Board monthly meetings, writing the minutes and keeping the registers and records thereof.

Article 24: Attendance of Meetings

- a. Board members may not be absent in board meetings unless they provide a justification prior to the meeting
- b. Board members should be notified about the meeting with a uniform form signed by a board member
- c. Board members who fail to attend three board meetings in a row without a justification lose their membership in the board. In such cases, the board shall apply the legal procedures provided for in article 17 herein.

Chapter V: SCD Resources and How to Manage Them

Article 25: SCD Resources

a. The financial resources of the SCD consist of the following:

1. All the efforts of the members, the volunteers and individuals provide from their own money to the SCD for the goals and purposes of the SCD
2. Donations, presents, financial and tangible grants from international donors, international organizations, governments, NGOs, the people of friend states and the private sector
3. HF support to the wounded and the families of the martyrs of the SCD
4. Support and aid from the branches of the WH Friend organizations in friend states
5. Wills and endowments
6. Revenues and profits of any service projects for civilians in coordination with active actors in residential areas collected for the fund of the SCD
7. Other resources that the board approves.

Article 26: The Financial Year and the Records of the SCD

- a. The financial year of the SCD starts as of 1 January and ends as of 31 December of each Gregorian year; if the SCD management started the SCD financial year in the second half of the year, the first financial year thereof shall end as of the end of the next financial year
- b. The funds of the SCD are deposited in the banks named by the board. Their accounts shall have no bank secrecy in answering any inquiry by competent legal and official parties
- c. While heeding what this articles of association stipulates, the board prepares internal directives that regulate the financial affairs of the SCD and specifies the policies regarding the withdrawal of any deposited funds, the minimum for petty cash and the accredited signatures on the bonds as well as other financial issues
- d. In all cases, none of the SCD funds shall be spent except for the purposes of the SCD, and no SCD money shall be spent on any other matter
- e. The SCD, in its main offices, keeps organised records and financial registers according to the established book keeping procedures
- f. The SCD records shall be audited annually by an external auditor, providing that the auditing process takes places within three month of the end of the financial year of the SCD.

Chapter VI: Governance

Article 28: Governance (Good Governance)

a. The SCD, in its implementation of the operations, missions and activities, shall adopt the practices, standards, regulations and directions that enhance good governance and the principles of transparency through:

1. Applying criteria and practices that aim at making the SCD and its board, volunteers, members in the directorates, sectors and centres respect laws, regulations and public norms, seek to achieve public interest and participate in community safety processes and prevent any action that may be reflected negatively on public interests
2. Adopting criteria and practices that make the SCD and its board and employees abide by the articles of association of the SCD, internal directives and policies that go in line with international humanitarian law, and the statement of principles of the SCD
3. Adopting strict criteria and practices for conduct that limit conflicts of interest in financial, administrative and technical affairs and necessities and ensure confidentiality of the SCD and all actions thereof as long as they do not conflict with provisions of enforced legislation;
4. Adopting strict regulations and administrative directives that enable the board to achieve monitoring and supervision over the operations, missions and activities of the SCD, enforcing administrative and legal accountability as well as separation of responsibilities and powers to ensure the presence of the right type of monitoring
5. Adopting strict financial and administrative directives and regulations to ensure continuous financial control over the SCD resources and spending thereof as well as ensuring the commitment of the SCD with resources mentioned herein
6. Adopting practical regulations and directives that control the recruitment process in the SCD through the recruitment policy in human resources by depending on competence and merit and securing a suitable work environment for the employees
7. Adopting criteria that controls the process of fund-raising of donations and grants for the SCD to enable the SCD through which to forge bonds of trust with donors and funders and gain their support
8. Adopting advanced criteria to enhance integrity and transparency to achieve the goals and mission of the SCD and to carry out its tasks and operations.

b. The SCD shall strive to preserve the vitality and integrity of volunteering and help enhance people's trust in it through financial transparency and documented information. To achieve this and to prevent manipulation of the SCD in any form of illegal actions, the SCD commits to:

1. Take due care to identify the identity of donors and legal status and activities thereof as well as the purpose and nature of the relationship they want to start with the SCD
2. Exert due effort to avoid dealing with unknown actors; phony or fake names; or dealing with fake banks or companies
3. Heed the provisions of the international humanitarian law, the code of conduct and statement of principles of the SCD until the future national legislative body in Syria issues legislation to govern the receipt of funding from foreign actors.



Chapter VII: Integration in the Future Executive Syrian Authority

Article 29: Integration of the SCD

The SCD shall be integrated in the future executive Syrian authority that gains any consensual national agreement by the all the fabric of the Syrian people for the transitional period or by any consensual national roadmap.



Chapter VIII: General Provisions

Article 30:

- a. The CD may form a coalition with other CD organisations to implement joint professional and technical programs to achieve its goals and purposes.
- b. The CD may join an established union or participate in establishing a new union according to enforced laws and regulations for this purpose.

Article 31:

The SCD has the right to own real estate, lands and other property such as movable or immovable assets; or sell, mortgage, rent or donate any of which according to the provisions stipulated herein.

Article 32:

The provisions of the international humanitarian law, the principles of the international organisation for civilian protection and the SCD statement of principles and enforced international agreements and regulations and directions by virtue thereof shall be applied on any case not provided for herein.

