

Side Event of the  
Brussels VI Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region

# BUILDING DURABLE SOLUTIONS THROUGH DECENTRALIZED COOPERATION WITH THE NORTH EAST OF SYRIA

Date: **Wednesday, 4th of May, 2022**

Time: **4:30-6:00 pm CET**

Venue: online event on Zoom

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88331394694?pwd=UWh5bFplbFZJNGRIT09oc3dtcm14dz09>

Languages: English and Arabic



The North East of Syria (NES) is a region where the humanitarian and development community established strong partnerships both with local NGOs and Local Authorities to meet the needs of the local population, impacted by displacement (24% of the population are still IDPs), economic crisis, water shortage and food insecurity. **The Autonomous Administration of North East Syria (AANES)** consists of self-governing sub-regions that gained widespread support for their attempt to approve democratic, sustainable, pluralist and feminist policies in dialogue with other parties and with civil society. Despite security and political challenges, the AANES implemented a new social justice approach, abolished death penalty and generally promotes a model of democratic confederalism that is observed with strong interest by European municipalities. **Speakers and organizers of this side event will discuss the opportunity for the European Union to open channels of cooperation and knowledge-exchange with departments of the AANES, as a key strategy to support early-recovery programs and durable solutions in NES.**

In this webinar, the Italian NGO Un Ponte Per will gather speakers who can describe achievements of the “bridge” of peace built through decentralized cooperation projects between European and Syrian LAs in the past 5 years, starting with the transfer of knowledge and funds by the Italian National Association of Municipalities to NES, with financial support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Catalan speakers will present the long-standing experience of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) in supporting humanitarian and development projects in the NES, which started with significant support to the health sector with the Kurdish Red Crescent and then grew into a wider program on health waste management and waste recycling with the Department of Municipalities and the Environment of the AANES. Finally, in late 2020, the Danielle Mitterrand Foundation and UPP have launched the JASMINES initiative (Jalons et Actions de Solidarités, Municipalisme et Internationalisme avec le Nord-Est de la Syrie), with the aim of supporting transformative exchange between local administrations and civil society groups in France and NES. In particular, JASMINES initiative aims at developing paths of solidarity through peer-to-peer meetings for political and technical exchanges, field visits and delegations and decentralized cooperation projects. The initiative has been joined by some of the main French municipalities in 2021 which are now preparing to launch their first projects with NES. Official support by the European Union to such good practices would be key to deepen their impact and build durable solutions to the various dimensions of the Syrian crisis.

Facilitators:

**Martina Pignatti Morano**, Director of Programs, Un Ponte Per

**Jérémie Chomette**, General Director, Fondation Danielle Mitterrand

Speakers:

**Jihad Omar**, Co-chair of the Commission of Local Administrations and Environment in the Autonomous Administration of North East Syria (AANES)

**Ernest Maragall**, Vice-president of the Area for International Relations and Cooperation, Area Metropolitana de Barcelona (AMB)

**Antonio Ragonesi**, Head of International Relations, Italian National Association of Municipalities (ANCI)

**Antoine Back**, Deputy Mayor of Grenoble Municipality for Risk, Prospective, Territorial Resilience, Evaluation and Food Strategy