

Syriacs join opposition to topple al-Assad government

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A group of Syrian Syriacs have thrown their support behind the struggle against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad by forming an agreement with the leading representatives of the Syrian opposition, the Syrian National Council (SNC). In the agreement a democratic Syria is demanded, in which all peoples would have equal rights and could alternately come into power after the al-Assad regime falls.

Representatives of the Damascus-based Syriac National Council and the Brussels-based European Syriac Union said a part of the Syriac community stood with opponents against the al-Assad regime according to the agreement they had made with opposition groups like the SNC.

Bassam-Said Ishak, the Syriac National Council head, and the European Syriac Union's Turkey representative Tuma Çelik, both prominent figures supporting the opponents in Syria, spoke to the Hürriyet Daily News about the reasons for their allying with opponents to the Syrian regime. "As all the people of Syria, including Christians, Muslims, Sunnis, Kurds and Alevis, we are carrying out a mutual fight for the fall of al-Assad's dictatorship and for the acquisition of freedom and equal rights. The opposition movement is regarded as a Muslim-Sunni movement, which is a great mistake," Ishak said. "We are standing for the first time with Turkey, which supports the opponents," Çelik said. "Turkey not only regards the opponents as a Sunni movement, but also tries to represent it as an anti-Alevi one. This perception that they have tried to impose worries us, since we, as opponents, are struggling for a mutual ideal," Çelik said, criticizing Turkey's attitude.

"If any party steps back, then they would face our opposition. We struggle not only for the fall of the al-Assad regime, but also for the future of Syria democracy. We stand against anyone who blocks our way," Ishak said, when asked what if the agreement will lose its validity after al-Assad's fall.

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