



IPI MEETING BRIEF

DIARIES OF THE SYRIAN REVOLUTION **A Talk with Syrian Author Samar Yazbek**

The conflict in Syria is, among other things, a struggle to control a narrative. While the regime of Bashar al-Assad tries to frame it as a fight against terrorists motivated by sectarian impulses, his opponents talk of a revolution against oppression and for democracy. On her first speaking engagement in the United States, Syrian exile Samar Yazbek revealed the keys to this struggle while presenting her latest book, *A Woman in the Crossfire: Diaries of the Syrian Revolution*.

During the event at IPI, Yazbek offered her views on what is going on inside Syria and how the world is responding:

1. The world is guilty of an “immoral silence,” watching the bloodshed in Syria “live” as if it were a spectacle. The regime needs to be overthrown, she said, but diplomatic efforts are futile because the regime will only use them to buy time and continue killing and fragmenting the country.
2. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad “will not step aside until he leaves Syria as a burnt mound of rubble.” There is also a whole group of interested parties fighting each other in Syria who are blocking a solution.
3. The international community should support grassroots opposition movements working on the ground instead of arming extremists. The apparent lack of unity in the Syrian opposition is only an excuse for nonintervention. The Local Coordination Committees have produced real examples of leadership and organization and could become a model for political parties.
4. Interests, as opposed to sectarian rivalries, fuel the conflict. It is for this reason that many businessmen, many of them Sunni, support the regime. However, the government is conspiring to create a sectarian conflict with words and deeds.
5. It is true that many Syrian rebels are observant Muslims, but religion is their cultural background and not a political roadmap. There are also Jihadists among the fighters, some from other Arab countries, but these are a minority and do not mix with the others.
6. Women have played a prominent role in the revolution. Some of the most important factions are led by women, including Alawite women.

For more information and a video of the event, click [here](#).