International Committee of the Red Cross

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**ICRC: Syria’s Decade of Loss –Samira’s Story**

Samira Watar was forced to leave her home in Aleppo and start life anew as the conflict in Syria intensified. After spending a few years in Lebanon, she found a way to get to Spain, where she now lives with her husband and two children.

But even in the bustling streets of Madrid, Samira feels lonely. “When I was in Aleppo I had many friends that I met every day because of my work in the barbershop the women, but the war kept us away from each other.”

Samira says she grew closer to her mother after her father passed away, but feels a sense of loss for not being able to be with her. “My mother is the most important person in my life, and my sisters too, but among the brothers always there is a special brother among them. I miss him dearly and I hope one day we will be together.”

Sadly, Samira is not alone. According to a recent survey conducted by the ICRC, around 54% of young Syrians like Samira, report having lost contact with their relatives during the country’s decade of crisis.

“Many times I remember them and long for them, and beautiful days I spent with them. I am very sad because I am alone here.”

Before leaving Aleppo, Samira used to work a local beauty salon. There, she learnt the craft and developed an interest hairdressing. “My dream was to have a salon of my own.”

But Samira’s salon dream was left on the wayside after her move to Madrid. In her new home, she is trying to learn Spanish and struggling to find a job. Meanwhile, she takes care of her two young children of school-going age.

“What I find very difficult is finding a job, especially with wearing the hijab, and sometimes people may not accept me, they look at me in a very strange way that annoys me.”

Samira’s journey is an example of a life turned upside down by the conflict in Syria. And while a lot has changed, one thing she still carries is her hope and determination to make the best of her circumstances and face life’s challenges with a spirit of light-hearted positivity.

**SHOTLIST**

Location: Madrid, Spain

Filming date: Arabic

Languages: Arabic

On-screen Credit: ICRC

Length: 10:11

Format: HD mp4

Cameraperson: Ana Gonzalez

Producer: Ana Gonzalez

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**00:00** GVs of Samira’s street.

**00:18** Preparing her children and taking them out to school.

**Soundbites Samira Watar, Syrian refugee**

**01:00** *“I remember one time when we were all asleep, I used to sleep a lot to forget the fear, that day suddenly a large shell exploded. I thought it fell on my head, I woke up in horror, I did not know what to do. Until this day when I remember that day I get anxious and scared but when I remember there is nothing and I’m safe I thank GOD*

**01:33** Samira takes a bus to drop her children to school.

**03:02** Samira preparing food and drinks and eating with her husband.

**Soundbites Samira Watar**

*03:49 “Communication between us is really difficult. Talking with them or seeing them on video is really hard because the internet in Syria is not good.*

*04:03 We communicate with whatsapp through voice calls and sometimes they send me photos.*

*But they rarely send photos because the internet is expensive and it’s really hard.*

*That’s why I tell them it’s enough that I can at least hear their voice.*

*04:22 These days I call my mother every day, but I really miss the rest of the family and I'd love to talk to them but it's difficult due to their circumstances.”*

04:30 Samira and her husband looking through photo albums.

**06:02 Soundbites Samira Watar**

***“****My brother had a baby… a new born. It was really hard that I didn’t get the chance to see them. I couldn’t see them. My niece got married. There have been lots of occasions that I would have loved to attend. But sadly, I couldn’t.”*

06:20 Samira on the metro

**Soundbites Samira Watar**

07:29 “*Most of the time, I miss seeing them and I keep remembering the good days when we were all together. I feel sad being away from them and alone here. Most of the time I feel lonely.*

07:43 I try to go out for walks… I walk and walk and walk. I try to go to parks and look at the green and nature. Or I might go to a mall; I don’t buy things, I just look around. Just so I can forget.”

**07:58 Samira walking around Madrid and going to the shops**

**09:55 Soundbite Samira Watar**

*“It has been very difficult to find a job, especially wearing the hijab. Sometimes people don’t accept me; they look at me in a very strange way”*

**10:11 ENDS**