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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## **Written statement\* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[06 February 2019]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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## Terrorism in the Middle East

### Introduction

Maat for Peace, Development, and Human Rights association (Egypt) presents this report to illustrate the effects of terrorism on individuals and communities. Moreover, the negative effects of all kinds of terrorism on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This coincides with the 40<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council and commenting on the visit of Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism, Ben Emmerson, to Saudi Arabia in 2017. The visit was to assess the progress made by Saudi Arabia in counter-terrorism laws, policies and practices.

### Terrorism and its supporters in the Middle East:

Terrorism attacks strongly continue and spread through its members and groups in the Middle East in general and Saudi Arabia in particular. According to official documents, the Government of Saudi Arabia has informed the Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism that it faced 1,075 terrorist plots since 1987. 844 of these attacks have already occurred. Many of these attacks had destroying consequences. 231 attacks failed and 3,018 were killed and wounded.

The Special Rapporteur praised the efforts exerted by the Saudi Government to alleviate the suffering of victims of terrorism through comprehensive programs including financial, psychological, educational, and moral and employment support<sup>1</sup>.

Unfortunately, there are countries in the region that sponsor various forms of terrorism such as Qatar, Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Accordingly, the United States of America state Department's Counterterrorism Coordinator, Nathan Sales, called on Qatar to make greater effort to stop the financing of terrorism. US President Donald Trump has described Qatar in earlier statements as "a historical supporter of terrorism."<sup>2</sup>

Many reports from the US State Department, Department of the Treasury, centers and institutes, such as Foundation Funding for U.S. Democracy, conclude that Qatar is the largest country in the region that turns a blind eye to extremist and terrorist groups funding. Although Qatari national laws criminalize such practices, they are rarely activated.

Furthermore, Turkey continues to support the Muslim Brotherhood organization and hosts their conferences. Despite that the organization was classified in several Arab countries as a terrorist one. That was after proving, by undisputable evidence, that the organization plays a role in spreading chaos through the use of armed violence to seize power.

It is clear from Turkey's support to these groups, which threaten Arab security, that the Turkish leadership seeks to dominate the Arab countries through the use of terrorist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood. This is a clear mean to support the revival of the Sultanate on the Arab nation, which puts the Arab region in real danger.<sup>3</sup>

Talking about terrorism supporters, we cannot forget Iran. Iran has been trying, by all means, to create a state of instability in the Middle East. Iran has previously acknowledged the participation of Iran's Revolutionary Guards in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Also, Iran, according to the United States, provides funding, training, weapons and equipment to terrorists groups. Among the groups supported by Iran are Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the State of Palestine, and Hezbollah Brigades in Iraq. Reports indicate that Iran also provided weapons to Shiite armed groups in Iraq, Houthis in Yemen, and Taliban

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism: A/HRC/40/52/Add.2

<sup>2</sup> أحمد جمعه، الولايات المتحدة تطالب قطر ببذل جهد أكبر لوقف تمويل الإرهاب، م منشور على موقع اليوم السابع، <http://cutt.us/kzkTu> بتاريخ 14 نوفمبر 2018، ويمكن قراءة المقال كاملاً من خلال الرابط التالي:

<sup>3</sup> تركيا والإخوان .. تحالف إحياء السلطان، م منشور على موقع سكاي نيوز عربية، بتاريخ 3 أبريل 2018، وتم الغطاع عليه <http://cutt.us/aUiGq> بتاريخ 4 فبراير 2019، ويمكن قراءة المقال كاملاً من خلال الرابط التالي:

in Afghanistan .Not only that, but it transferred proxy wars to the sea, where the Iranian-backed Houthis attacked the coalition forces and Saudi merchant ships in the Red Sea.<sup>4</sup>

## Water terrorism as a form of terrorism in the Middle East

In the last century, terrorist operations were determined by the use of weapons or force. However, since the beginning of the previous decade other non-military forms of terrorism have appear. One of the most important of these forms is water terrorism.

Water terrorism can be defined as negatively affecting the water supply of a state or group in order to pressure them quickly and forcefully. This kind of terrorism may take several forms, including:

- Targeting water installations or dams to cause massive floods.
- **As an example**, ISIS opens parts of the Fallujah Dam in the Euphrates River to stop the progress of Iraqi forces in 2014, which led to the sinking of a large area of agricultural land in central Iraq<sup>5</sup>.
- Contaminating drinking water so that all those who drink will suffer from serious diseases and viruses.
- **Namely**, Israel's polluting of water in the Gaza Strip as a result of the permanent blockade, which results in an electric outage for long hours. This affects sewage systems. Moreover, Israel targets the Palestinian water installations. These practices lead to the spread of diseases caused by drinking water pollution, especially among children.<sup>6</sup> In addition to that, Israel polluted Jordanian water through Yarmouk River in 2009, by injecting Israeli factory oil into the water<sup>7</sup>.
- Sealing and seizing water from some areas.
- **For example**, Turkey's seizure of the Euphrates River from Syria. This led to the closure of the "Freedom Dam" gates due to a severe shortage of water. This endangered the lives of the inhabitants of the eastern south of " al-Tabqah" area .Due to lack of drinking water and irrigation water<sup>8</sup>.
- The construction of dams to prevent the supply of water.
- **As an example**, Iran's construction of a large number of dams and reservoirs. In addition to the implementation of several projects to transfer water to the central and eastern provinces in Iran. Thus depriving the western provinces of Iraq from their share in water<sup>9</sup>.

## Recommendations

Maat believes in the important role of civil society organizations in the use of human rights mechanisms and tools to promote human rights, thus it recommends that:

- The Human Rights Council takes serious steps towards state sponsors of terrorism, not just issuing condemnations or verbal warnings that do not lead to concrete results on the ground.

<sup>4</sup> أمانى يماني، تقرير أمريكي: إيران ليست دولة طبيعية، م منشور على موقع مكة نيوز، بتاريخ 29 سبتمبر 2018، ويمكن قراءة <http://cutt.us/CYqDr> المقال كاملاً من خلال الرابط التالي:

<sup>5</sup> <https://goo.gl/1mHAvQ>حازم بدر، تنظيم " داعش " يستخدم سدود العراق سلاحاً في يده، مُتاح على:

<sup>6</sup> <https://goo.gl/srspmK>أسامة الكلوت، مائة غزة سبب رئيسي لوفيات الأطفال، مُتاح على:

<sup>7</sup> <https://goo.gl/g1XiS3>الأردن تحتج لدى إسرائيل على تلوث ميا نهر اليرموك، مُتاح على:

<sup>8</sup> نبيل السمان، الصراع على مصادر المياه " عقدة " إضافية بين أنقرة ودمشق وبغداد، م منشور على موقع الشرق الأوسط، بتاريخ 27 يوليو 2018، وتم الإطلاع عليه بتاريخ 4 فبراير 2019، ويمكن قراءة المقال كاملاً من خلال الرابط التالي: <https://goo.gl/fkTCCP>

<sup>9</sup> Banafsheh Keynoush, "Water Diplomacy" It is Not Enough to Fix Iran-Iraq's Water Dispute" ,international institute for Iranian Studies, Sep.2018, available on: <https://goo.gl/zyV9rx> ,accessed on (4/2/2019)

- Conduct further investigations into the support of Qatar, Turkey and Iran for terrorism. Also, represent all those responsible for human rights violations ,resulting from such support, to legal accountability and imposing international sanctions on them.
  - Serious consideration of the situation of the countries that have been subjected to water terrorism, working on providing a fair share of water to those areas that have suffered such terrorism. The United Nations and its organs should take serious measures against the States, groups or individuals found to be involved in such acts.
  - Establish serious and concrete steps to eliminate terrorist groups around the world and educate young people about the dangers of terrorism on individuals and communities through local and non-governmental organizations.
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