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Promotion and protection of the rights of children

**Security Council
Seventy-fifth year**

Identical letters dated 16 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit to you herewith a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic on 15 September 2020:

“The criminal militias of the Syrian Democratic Forces, which are aligned with the occupying American forces, have continued to violate the rights of the people of the areas where they are present in Hasakah Governorate. Their inhumane actions have recently escalated to an unprecedented degree. They have targeted the region’s entire educational system, including school pupils, students, schools, teachers and means of transportation. In so doing, they have confirmed that their aim is to spread ignorance and illiteracy through intimidation and by denying access to the basic tools that are needed to uphold the right to education. As a result, they have endangered the future of thousands of children and young people.

Since 2013, the violations committed by the group have taken on a systematic character. At that point, the militias started interfering with curricula. Then, in a direct and progressive escalation, they forcibly took control of schools and converted them into headquarters, military depots, prisons and tax-collection centres. Taking advantage of the support provided by the American occupation forces, they have threatened students and the civilian population and intimidated teaching and administrative staff.

The militias have sought to bring a gradual end to teaching. They have imposed curricula without regard for quality, content, age-group appropriateness or the sociocultural environment, not to mention the competence of the staff entrusted with the noble vocation of teaching.

Syrian civilians have steadfastly rejected those violations and have instead insisted on sending their children to public schools, so that they can follow the curriculum adopted by the Syrian Ministry of Education. The militias have used force in order to compel students, pupils and teaching staff to comply with their orders and those of their American overlords. They have resorted to various forms of

* [A/75/150](#).



intimidation and harassment. For instance, they have deployed armed patrols at the entrances to cities and at junctions to intercept pupils on their way to school in the morning. Some are detained or conscripted into the militias, which have adopted the tactic of recruiting children and using them in military operations. Vehicle owners are fined and their vehicles are impounded in order to prevent them from transporting students.

The militias have taken over a total of 2,285 schools by force of arms. Most recently, before the start of this school year, they took over 118 schools, leaving only 179 schools across all levels of education under the control of the Hasakah Board of Education. That situation will place a greater burden on the remaining schools and lead to overcrowded classrooms, not to mention long travel times that will claim a material and psychological toll. Those factors will exacerbate the current public health challenges.

Those ongoing and mounting violations show beyond a doubt that the terrorist militias' sole concern has always been, and will continue to be, to push through their terrorist and separatist agenda by repressing the local population, discriminating against them, denying them the basic necessities of life and endangering the future of their children. Those facts disprove the claims made by the militias and their Western sympathizers regarding the steps that have purportedly been taken to manage the educational process and protect and promote the rights of children. They also undermine the credibility of the United Nations human rights agencies, which face the genuine test of having to condemn the violations and put pressure on the militias' State sponsors in the hope of sparing the children's futures from the waste, ignorance and backwardness that the Syrian Democratic Forces militias and their American overlords and backers seek to impose."

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the General Assembly, under item 68 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Bashar Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
