



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Forty-fourth session

30 June–17 July 2020

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the  
Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

### **Note verbale dated 15 July 2020 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council**

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council, and has the honour to attach herewith a letter dated 15 July 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council (see annex), and kindly requests that the present note verbale and the annex thereto be translated into the official languages of the United Nations and circulated as a document of the forty-fourth session of the Council, under agenda item 2.



**Annex to the note verbale dated 15 July 2020 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council**

[Original: Arabic]

**Letter from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office at Geneva to the President of the Human Rights Council**

Ms. Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger,

President of the Human Rights Council,

I am writing to you, at the instruction of my Government, to inform you about the new flagrant attacks by the Turkish regime on the Syrian people and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, which constitute a threat to international peace and security. The Human Rights Council must highlight these violations, which contradict the principles and purposes of the United Nations, are conducive to the spread of terrorism and constitute a grave threat to human rights.

Since the Turkish attack on Syrian territory in the east of Syria on 9 October 2019, armed terrorist groups and mercenaries supported by the Turkish Government have continued to operate in the city of Ras al-Ain, killing innocent Syrian citizens, looting their property, stealing the contents of their homes and shops, burning their crops, seizing wheat and barley, and displacing thousands from Ras al-Ain towards the city of Al-Hasakah and surrounding villages.

The Turkish occupation forces have also recently repeatedly committed the crime of cutting off water from the Alouk water station, which is the main source of drinking water for more than one million people in the city of Al-Hasakah and the surrounding residential areas. These forces continue to prevent Syrian government employees from entering and managing the plant, which amounts to a war crime and genocide, especially in the light of the urgent need for water faced by the people of the area to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The Turkish Government is carrying out these illegal and inhuman practices to achieve political and military gains, without taking into account the minimum urgent humanitarian needs of the people of the region. These actions are also in violation of all the international conventions and agreements that guarantee the right of all persons to have access to safe drinking water and not to be subjected to the arbitrary suspension of water supply or pollution of water. The provision of water is a fundamental human right that all States must respect.

The Turkish Government's use of water resources as leverage against the Syrian Government to achieve political and military objectives, and its reduction of the number of hours of electricity production in conjunction with cutting off water at the Alouk plant, could become a serious humanitarian and environmental disaster that threatens the entire region.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic expresses its strong condemnation of these crimes and repeated attacks against the Syrian people and the territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, which constitute a flagrant violation of Syrian sovereignty and of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law relevant to the protection and promotion of human rights. The Syrian Government reiterates that it maintains its legitimate right to respond to repeated Turkish crimes, violations and attacks, and its right to seek compensation for all damages resulting from these actions. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic renews its request to the Human Rights Council to condemn the violations committed by the Turkish regime against the Syrian people and its repeated attacks on Syrian territory.

I hope that this letter will be issued as an official document of the current session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 2.

**Hussam Edin Aala**  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative