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

Written statement* submitted by Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

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

[3 February 2019]

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



Write with the Pencil of Peace, a Project in Khuzestan Province

Khuzestan province, located in southwest of the Islamic Republic of Iran, is one of the major oil-producing regions of the country which is known for its rich historical background and ethnic diversity. However, there are residents in the rural and marginalized areas of Khuzestan who suffer from poverty, educational shortcomings and environmental issues and their social and economic talents and abilities have been overlooked. There is no doubt that effective and equitable education can make significant contributions to social cohesion and peace. Education is particularly important when it comes to effectively disenfranchised groups. Based on its vision, Imam Ali Popular Students Relief Society (IAPSRS) decided to start a project to aim both the educational needs of the children in this province and at the same time draw attention to education as the right tool for developing peace in the world.

Social activists in IAPSRS are working together, in unity and solidarity, to take up the pencil of peace and this time, write alongside Khuzestan. 'Write with the Pencil of Peace' is a project started in Khuzestan suburbs in order to identify deprived neighbourhoods, know more about educational shortcomings and children who don't have access to education and find out about underequipped schools and their challenges, in order to be able to draw up a map of the cultural and economic poverty in southern Iran.

The Project consists of the following steps:

- Volunteer members of IAPSRS were dispatched to Khuzestan province to arrange preliminary visits to Khorramshahr, Andika and Eazeh cities and villages. Meanwhile, local research teams were also formed with participation of local residents.
- Meetings were held to recruit volunteers for field research and identifying children who are deprived of education.
- Project is designed with focus on education and its main goal is supplying textbooks, stationery and other school equipment and educational resources.

In the end, we emphasize that education is one of the most powerful means of spreading awareness, peace and freedom. We need to build sustainable peace through which basic needs of every child are addressed properly. Appropriate contents and pedagogy in school can even help rebuild societies after conflicts. In particular, integrated schools could promote inclusion, build tolerance, and positively influence the identities of minority groups.
