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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples, a non-governmental organization on the roster

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

[13 August 2020]

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

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Turkey: Support for Daech members promotes violations of human rights and international humanitarian law

Turkish state support for Daech

From 2014 to date, the Turkish State has supported jihadist groups operating in the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) in various ways: facilitating their entry into or exit from Syrian territory, providing arms and medical care. This support has become explicit again with the evidence of the assistance provided by the Turkish secret service to the women of Daech to get them out of the camps where they are in the custody of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

In 2014, opposition parties in the Turkish parliament reported that Turkey had treated fighters of Islamist forces in public and private hospitals, including Major Abu Muhammad, who was treated in Hatay after being wounded in Idlib¹.

In 2015, the Turkish newspaper *Cumhuriyet*² published evidence that the Turkish secret service had supplied arms to Islamist groups in Syria the previous year, hidden in a truck carrying humanitarian aid, which arrived at the border escorted by the Turkish army.

In an interview with Anne Speckhard, published in March 2019, Abu Mansour al-Maghrebi, an emir of Daech who admitted to being its “ambassador” to Turkey, also confirmed that Turkey had facilitated the entry and exit of jihadist fighters into and out of Syria, who crossed its territory without any obstacles. In addition to this, trade agreements were concluded on the basis of which Daech sold Syrian oil to Turkey, which was one of the sources of financing that enabled its rapid progress³.

On 17 July 2020, the Turkish state news agency Anadolu Ajansi made public the 'rescue' of Natalia Barkal, a Moldovan woman, and her four children by the Turkish intelligence service, MIT⁴. The woman, a member of Daech, had been in the Al-Hol camp since 2019, when she was captured by the FDS after the Baghouz campaign, which ended the jihadist regime in northern and eastern Syria.

As for Barkal's activities after her capture, according to statements by the camp security forces, she was in the high-security zone of the camp as she was one of the most wanted prisoners and is said to have been part of and played a leading role in the "Hisba" structure, which was responsible for the reorganization of Daech and is credited with at least 30 killings of Daech members in the last 12 months in the camp.

It should be noted that there has been no extradition request from the government of the Republic of Moldova, despite the fact that, according to the Turkish state's announcement, the "rescue" operation took place jointly with the government of the Republic of Moldova, which at the same time thanked President Erdogan for his efforts.

In a statement, the Autonomous Administration stated that this was not the first time that Turkey had removed from the camps persons linked to the terrorist organisation⁵.

Recently, during the Turkish occupation of Afrin, Serê Kaniyê and Girê Spî, it has also been proved that the Turkish state is using jihadist gangs, grouped under the aegis of the Syrian national army, to carry out its imperialist project in northern and eastern Syria. In these areas, the Islamists did not come just to fight, but settled there with the support of the Turkish state. Since these areas were occupied, hundreds of thousands of people have been forcibly displaced from their homes. Arrests, kidnappings and killings are taking place regularly, and there is a lot of violence targeting women in particular. In addition, the wearing of the

¹ <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/chp-lawmakers-accuse-turkish-government-of-protecting-isis-and-al-nusra-militants-67750>.

² https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/video/video/291121/iste_MiT_TIR_larina_baskin_ani.html.

³ <https://www.hstoday.us/subject-matter-areas/counterterrorism/the-isis-ambassador-to-turkey/>.

⁴ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-rescues-5-moldovans-from-ypg-pkk-in-nsyria/1913604>.

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/smensyria/posts/1368963116626955>.

headscarf had been made compulsory and the Kurdish language had been banned from schools and institutions, Turkish having become a compulsory subject.

In addition, Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi, head of Daech since 2014, was in the village of Barisha, Idlib province, at the time of his death during a raid by the United States of America forces in October 2019. He was in an area controlled by Turkish-supported groups and only 6 km from the Turkish border, making it unlikely that Turkey did not know his location beforehand or that al-Baghdadi was not there with Turkish consent.

On the other hand, there is also evidence that the Turkish state has so far hired thousands of Daech mercenaries to fight in Libya in support of the National Accord Government (NAG). According to the Syrian Human Rights Observatory, the number of jihadists sent amounts to several thousand, some of whom were previously held in prisons in areas controlled by pro-Turkish groups⁶.

Smuggling of women out of Al-Hol camp

In recent months, the Turkish State's support for the Islamists has also manifested itself in the assistance provided to women members of Daech to escape from the camps where they are in the custody of the FDS. This active support for the escape of Daech members, who are considered dangerous, is illegal and in breach of all international agreements and violates the established procedures for the repatriation of Daech members of foreign nationality decided by the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria.

During the November 2019 war, Turkish planes bombed the Ayn Issa camp, allowing 859 foreign prisoners of Daech to escape. In addition, attacks during the invasion and the occupation itself gave strength to Daech's members in Hasekê prisons. Since then, escape attempts and riots have occurred quite often, with the threat this poses to society.

In this case, the security forces have known for some time that a group of Turkish intelligence services have been smuggling women from Daech out of the camps where they reside and charging their families money.

Other women linked to Daech have been arrested by the internal security forces in Al-Hol camp as they tried to escape. The women said that the smuggling was organized by the Turkish secret service and that they were hiding in water tanks belonging to international humanitarian aid organizations such as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) or United Nations Children's Fund⁷.

Elif Sancar, a Turkish citizen and member of Daech, and Fatma Ridvan, a Chechen woman who tried to escape, said they were fleeing because "Turkey wanted them". The Turkish secret service MIT organizes and finances the "liberation" of the jihadists through the notorious "Foundation for Humanitarian Aid" (IHH)⁸.

Threats and responsibilities

The terror and consequences of Daech's rapid advance are well known everywhere. In northern and eastern Syria, people remember the thousands of lives that were given in the struggle against it, not only to liberate the "Caliphate"-occupied territories in Syria, but also to end the global threat posed by Islamic fascist terrorism, especially to women's freedom.

The Autonomous Administration and the International Coalition have been calling for months for the repatriation of Daech's foreign activists and their families, captured in the joint operations of the FDS and the Coalition, and for the establishment of an international tribunal where they can be tried.

⁶ <https://www.syriahr.com/en/175607/>.

⁷ https://npasyria.com/en/blog.php?id_blog=3030&sub_blog=15&name_blog=UNICEF%20driver%20attempts%20to%20smuggle%20ISIS%20families%20from%20Syria%E2%80%99s%20Hawl%20camp.

⁸ <https://anfenglishmobile.com/features/turkish-coalition-helps-isis-members-to-escape-45611>.

The Turkish state's complicity with Islamist terrorism is a threat to the whole world and in the face of this, other states and international organisations can no longer remain silent. The members of the International Coalition, the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, must oppose the practices of the Turkish state and hold it responsible for the serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by its forces and the armed groups it protects and supports.

With regard to the foreign members of Daech who are on Syrian territory in the custody of the SDF, the United Nations and the countries of which they are nationals must take responsibility for them and begin their repatriation so that they can be tried by an international court.
