



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
17 February 2022

English only

---

## Human Rights Council

### Forty-ninth session

28 February–1 April 2022

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 Al-Ayn Social Care Foundation, 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.

[7 February 2022]

---

\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.



## **Al-Ayn Social Care Foundation's Written Statement For The 49th Human Rights Council Session**

Al-Ayn Social Care Foundation is an organisation committed to ensuring that every orphaned child living in poverty has access to the tools and opportunities they need to overcome their difficult experiences. We believe that when a child fulfils their potential, their own future is transformed as well as their families', their communities', and society's at large. We now support over 75,000 orphaned children in Iraq and are expanding our operations into Afghanistan and Ghana.

As an organisation, we believe that education, along with lifelong learning, is a key means for ensuring that orphaned children are able to not only survive, but thrive, in spite of the difficult circumstances they find themselves in. Through our efforts on the ground in Iraq, we have observed that once orphaned children have completed their education, they often lack the practical skills needed to find jobs and support themselves. Therefore, in 2018, we opened our first vocational training centre, the 'Luminous Stars' centre, aiming to equip orphaned youth with the knowledge and ability to contribute meaningfully to society whilst gaining a sustainable livelihood. We now run 4 such centres across Iraq, with 11 more currently being built.

Various workshops are run at the centres, including in the areas of information technology, mobile phone repairs, male barbering, female hairdressing, sewing, cooking, handicrafts and more. Individuals receive compensation for attendance and completion of the training programmes, and are offered an area of training based on their own interests. As we aim to provide a holistic model of vocational education, attendees are also supported in developing their entrepreneurial skills, through teaching them how to set up a business, deal with customers, manage finances, as well as how to market and advertise a product or brand. In addition, attendees receive interest free loans to help them start their own businesses which they can pay back when they have the financial means to do so. This comprehensive vocational training package is a pioneering project in Iraq. So far, 93 cohorts have completed these training courses resulting in a total of 426 graduates.

Two such graduates are S. aged 16, and Dhiya, aged 22. S. helps to look after a family of 4, whilst Dhiya looks after a family of 8. Both individuals, and their siblings, were provided with care by Al-Ayn initially. Both went on to complete IT skills workshops at Baghdad's Luminous Stars centre. Both excelled to such an extent that they have now been recruited by Al-Ayn as employees, using their own experiences and skills to help other orphaned children in need.

Another graduate, Mohammed Hassan, aged 19, supports his 4 siblings. Only a few months after completing his mobile phone repairs workshop at one of Al-Ayn's centres, he opened his own phone shop and now employs another member of staff.

These are examples of orphaned individuals, coming from destitute backgrounds, who have been able to break the cycle of poverty thanks to the training they received through Al-Ayn. Not only have they positively transformed their own lives but those of others in their societies by providing valuable services, as well as, in some cases, becoming business owners and employers.

As Al-Ayn continues to expand its vocational training offering through the building of 11 more centres across Iraq, we continue to strive to protect the dignity of orphaned youth. This is in line with Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, by which State Parties agreed that education should be directed to the full development of the human personality and, importantly, the sense of its dignity. We remain guided in all that we do by the fundamental principles outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, for example, the right to education. Our aim is to give orphaned youth a complete education that is appropriate to every stage of their development and allows them to feel fulfilled and optimistic about their futures, in the same way that we are optimistic about their futures.

We look forward to working with partners in the international community to achieve our shared goal of creating a world where all children and youth, regardless of their background and circumstances, can meet their full potential.

---