

TIME RECEIVED	REMOTE CSID	DURATION	PAGES	STATUS
August 13, 2014 12:55:33 PM GMT+02: 0041227384275	0041227384275	92	3	Received
13/08 2014 12:32 FAX 0041227384275	MISSION DE SYRIE			001/003

Mission Permanente
de La
République Arabe Syrienne
Genève



الجمهورية العربية السورية
البعثة الدائمة لدى مكتب الأمر المنحلة
جنيف

N° 187/14

Geneva, 13 August, 2014

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office at and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and in reference to the thematic paper entitled *(Surrounded by death: Former Inmates of the Aleppo Central Prison- the Syrian Arab Republic)*, would like to inform the following:

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic would like to convey its great astonishment and resentment regarding the information contained in the thematic paper, which includes misrepresentation of facts and misleading conclusions in an attempt to defaming Syria by blaming it for the tragic situation that the inmates of Aleppo Central Prison suffered from, in a way that aims at covering up the crimes of the terrorist armed groups and the states which have been supporting and financing them.

As Syria rejects the misleading information and biased conclusions, it reminds the (OHCHR) of some facts and events it had previously shared it to clarify the reality of what happened in the prison:

The ordeal of the inmates and the prison's guards started when Jabhat Al-Nusra, an organization affiliated to Al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups engaged in policies of starvation and siege, for more than a year, in addition to practices such as continued shelling resulting in the demolition of large parts of the prison, cutting off electricity and water and destruction of the sanitation networks which made a large part of the prison out of service, including the kitchen and the hospital.

the siege, which led to the death of a number of prisoners and prison's guards (20 inmates and 57 guards). Besides, 225 inmates and 100 of the prison's guards were affected by the terrorist attacks and the diseases that spread during the siege.

The Syrian Government had exerted great efforts to break the siege. In cooperation with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross it was able to deliver quantities of water, food and medicines to the prison, yet this wasn't enough to enhance the humanitarian situation, because the terrorist groups prevented the entry of the humanitarian supplies and confiscated them.

Contrary to what the paper states, the ordeal ended only when the Syrian Arab Army broke the siege, and secured the evacuation of all inmates, not vice versa.

The judicial authorities studied the files of the inmates, as a result, (363) prisoners were released; others were moved to hospitals for treatment. Those who haven't been released were transferred to an alternative prison equipped appropriately to accommodate them. Since the first week of their arrival, an appropriate place was allocated to enable them to contact their families. The inmates were allowed family visits twice a week.

Syria has provided the (OHCHR) with this information in a documented and detailed way, but these facts were disregarded in order to blame the Syrian Government for what happened in the prison, and to justify the practices of the terrorists. An example of distorting the facts is that the paper referred to the spread of diseases in the prison describing it as a continuation of a previous situation, but in fact the spread of the diseases was due to the siege and the disruption of entry of medicines by the terrorist groups.

The paper tries falsely to prove the terrorist groups innocent when it justifies the difficulties in delivering the humanitarian supplies as a result of "the sustained fighting between Government forces and armed opposition groups".

The misrepresentation of facts and the attempts to defame Syria in this paper comes within the politicization of humanitarian and human rights files in Syria by some states and senior UN officials to serve well-known objectives. This is reflected in total silence regarding the tragedy of the siege imposed on Aleppo Central Prison in order to avoid criticising the terrorist groups. The paper makes recommendations to the government, ignoring that all human rights violations and war crimes are committed by the terrorists groups themselves.

We strongly condemn the manipulation of facts in this paper and its attempts to cover up the crimes of the terrorists groups by referring to terrorist entities, such as Jabhat Al Nusra, listed on the UN list of terrorism, as "opposition armed groups".

The thematic paper reiterates the biased approach against Syria, and it falls within the attempts to distract the attention that the main reason behind what is happening in Syria is terrorism, which is supported and financed by well-known states.

This irresponsible approach will make the (OHCHR) lose its credibility, pushing member states to stop dealing with it.

Finally, the Syrian Government reaffirms that it will continue to handle the situation of all the prisoners who survived from the siege in accordance with the national legal rules and procedures, and in full commitment to its international obligations, including the prevention of all forms of torture.

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurance of its highest consideration.

Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights

Palais Wilson

