

**Thank you Mr President of the session.**

My name is Izz Al-Din Saleh. I am speaking to you on behalf of the Synergy Association for Victims, which is a Syrian organisation that seeks justice for victims.

Prior to the start of the conflict in Syria, both the Kurdish people and those from the Yazidi religious minority group were prohibited from enjoying equal citizenship rights. These groups were subjected to systematic persecution and discrimination, which resulted in them being denied the Syrian nationality and constitutional recognition.

Once the conflict began in 2011, and as a result of the deep sense of impunity felt by all the parties to the conflict, particularly in the areas under Turkish control, such as Afrin and Ras al-Ayn, significant humanitarian violations persisted. The majority of Kurds, Yazidis, Armenians, Syrians and others were expelled.

These practices have been confirmed by the International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which further verified that some of the violations appeared sectarian in nature, particularly in relation to the targeting of Yazidi religious sites in Afrin.

**Mr President, ladies and gentlemen:**

Despite the atrocities suffered by minorities in the areas under Turkish control, the Turkish government has for some days been using its combat aircraft to bomb civilian structures and vital facilities in the northeast of Syria. It is further threatening and promising new military operations, in full knowledge that previous Turkish operations were fraught with human rights violations.

We call on this forum to reject the military escalation in the north of Syria, as well as to affirm and condemn the violations committed by all parties to the conflict. Furthermore, to guarantee actuation of a comprehensive accountability process, which is neither biased nor politicised.

Lastly, we call on the United Nations to take effective steps to represent the communities of victims from the northeast of Syria at all levels of the political negotiations on Syria, as well as to guarantee constitutional recognition of all ethnic groups and religions in the country.

Thank you.