

The Syrian Arab Republic

**Permanent Mission of the
Syrian Arab Republic
Geneva**

[Emblem]

Statement by the Syrian Arab Republic

Fifteenth Session of the Forum on Minority Issues

Review, Rethink, Reform

Thirtieth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Minority Rights

1-2 December 2022

Thank you Mr. President.

Cultural diversity in Syria is a characteristic reinforced by the values of tolerance and moderateness which have distinguished Syrian society throughout the ages. These values are further reflected in the national frameworks, foremost of which is the constitution, which stresses the principle of non-discrimination, and enshrines the protection of this diversity as a national heritage within the framework of the territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. Thus, strengthening the resilience of Syrian society in facing challenges, many of which remain ongoing.

This forum is an annual opportunity for dialogue, and with the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Minorities, this current session has a special importance to review, rethink, and reform.

We would like to refer to the following:

1. The rights enshrined in the Declaration are matched by duties. Article 8 of the Declaration stresses that its provisions may not be interpreted as permitting any activity which contradicts the principles and purposes of the United Nations; including the sovereign equality among states, their territorial integrity, and political independence. In this context, we note that some statements have deliberately spread false allegations against the Syrian state, while promoting the separatist agenda of the "Qasd/SDF" militia. This group continues, under the auspice of the American occupying force, to cut off water and electricity, and to close schools in the Jazira region of Syria, among a wide range of other gross violations against the people there.
2. The Forum has so far failed to make a recommendation to hold countries that support terrorism and extremism accountable. These acts, along with acts of aggression, represent one of the main contexts for the committal of human rights violations, including the practices of demographic change, as illustrated by the Turkish practices in the north of Syria.
3. The Forum is a part of the United Nations, and its working methods are no exception. We stress the importance of addressing the flaws in its working, which are widening as a result of its use as a political platform, rather than as a platform for cooperation and dialogue on human rights.

Thank you Mr President.