



**International Convention on the  
Protection of the Rights of  
All Migrant Workers and  
Members of Their Families**

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**Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All  
Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families**  
Thirty-fifth session  
19–30 September 2022  
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties  
under article 73 of the Convention

**Replies of the Syrian Arab Republic to the list of  
issues in relation to its combined second and third  
periodic reports\***

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## **Replies to the list of issues in relation to the combined second and third periodic reports of the Syrian Arab Republic under the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families**

### **I. General Information**

1. *In addition to the information provided in the State party's report (CMW/C/SYR/2-3), please inform the Committee in detail about the domestic legal framework regarding the Convention, including:*

- (a) *Laws regarding the protection of migrant workers and members of their families under the Convention*

**Reply:**

1. *Labour Code (Act No. 17 of 2010)*

*Article 23*

(a) By decree of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, authorization may be given to open:

- (i) A private employment bureau;
- (ii) A private recruitment bureau for non-Syrian-Arab domestic workers or for Syrian Arab domestic workers, in line with rules and regulations issued by decree of the Prime Minister.

(b) A private employment bureau is an entity that undertakes to meet the labour requirements of employers who are registered with the bureau by directly contracting workers to perform specific tasks.

(c) The licencing requirements and operating conditions for the bureaux referenced in (a) (i) and (ii) of the present article are to be determined by decree of the Minister.

(d) Private employment bureaux shall:

- (i) Implement the Ministry's employment policy and respect the principles underpinning that policy;
- (ii) Submit a monthly statement to the public employment bureau of the governorate containing a list of registered unemployed persons and the names of jobseekers who have found job openings, the kind of work found, the location and the wage;
- (iii) Not register any unemployed workers unless they are Syrian Arab citizens or persons of like status.

*Article 24*

Private employment bureaux that are already operational on the date the present Code comes to force shall conform themselves to article 23 (c) within six months of that date.

*Regulations governing the employment of non-Syrian-Arabs*

*Article 27*

(a) The provisions regulating the employment of non-Syrian-Arabs contained in the present chapter shall be applicable to non-Syrian-Arabs be they employers, or workers in public sector entities, ministries, public agencies or administrations, public institutions, public facilities, local administrative or municipal districts or in any other public sector body,

in the private sector, the cooperative senior or the mixed sector or in civil society organizations or trade unions.

(b) Non-Syrian-Arabs may not work in the Syrian Arab Republic unless in possession of a work permit from the Minister or the Minister's authorized representative.

(c) The term "employment" as used in paragraph (a) of the present article refers to any kind of industrial, commercial, agricultural or craft work, or any work in the banking, service or technical sectors or other forms of work including domestic service and any skilled or unskilled profession.

#### *Article 28*

(a) The condition of reciprocity shall apply to the employment of non-Syrian-Arabs in enterprises that are subject to the present Code.

(b) The exemption of non-Syrian-Arabs from the condition set forth in the previous paragraph or from the condition of obtaining a work permit is to be determined by decree of the Minister.

(c) Employers recruiting non-Syrian-Arab workers who are exempted from either of the two aforementioned conditions are to inform the competent directorate accordingly within 15 days of the commencement of employment.

(d) For the purposes of the present Code, Palestinian Arabs who are covered under Act 260 of 1956 are to be treated on an equal footing with Syrian Arabs.

#### *Article 29*

The Minister shall determine by decree:

(a) The conditions for obtaining and extending the permit referred to in paragraph (b) of the previous article, the information to be included in the permit, the procedures for granting the permit and for revoking it before its expiry, and the relevant fees.

(b) The monetary guarantees employers are required to provide and the fee payable for the issuance or extension of a work permit or the replacement of one that has been lost or damaged.

(c) The professions and jobs that are prohibited to non-Syrian-Arabs.

(d) The maximum employment quotas for non-Syrian-Arabs in certain professions and jobs.

#### *Article 30*

The employment of non-Syrian-Arab workers in either of the following two cases shall be deemed to be a violation of present the Code:

(a) When workers are employed by an employer other than the one indicated on their work permit, unless they have received authorization from the competent directorate.

(b) When workers are employed in an activity other than that indicated on their work permit.

2. *Migration Act No. 2 of 2014*

3. *Legislative Decree No. 65 of 2013 as amended by Act No. 40 of 2017 regarding the employment of non-Syrian workers*

4. *Act No. 14 of 2021 to combat the smuggling of persons in Syria*

5. *Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 3 of 2010*

- (b) *Measures taken by the State party to harmonize its legislation with the provisions of the Convention*

**Reply:**

The Labour Code, which was enacted on 12 April 2010 as Act No. 17, includes many of the provisions enshrined in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted under General Assembly resolution 45/158 of 18 December 1990.

- (c) *The existence and scope of bilateral and multilateral agreements concluded with other countries pertaining to the rights of migrant workers and members of their families under the Convention, in particular with major countries of destination for Syrian migrant workers (para. 231), as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/1, para. 38). Please specify how these agreements protect migrant workers' rights in transit and destination countries, especially with respect to detention, repatriation, expulsion and family reunification procedures. Please provide information on any measures taken to strengthen the protection of Syrian migrant workers abroad, including by reviewing and amending these bilateral and multilateral agreements*

**Reply:**

Syria has signed a number of bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding concerning migrant workers. The scope of the agreements depends upon their provisions, which vary in each case.

Information about how the agreements protect migrant workers' rights in transit and destination countries will be provided in more detail during the discussion of the report.

2. *Please provide further information about the policies and strategies relating to the rights of migrant workers and members of their families in the State party, particularly with regard to the National Programme for Post-War Syria (para. 14). Please also provide information on the human, technical and financial resources allocated for the implementation of those programmes*

**Reply:**

An employment programme for comprehensive growth has been included as part of the National Programme for Post-War Syria – Strategy 2030. Its purpose is to develop the labour market by promoting full and productive employment while respecting decent standards of work and international labour and workers' rights, in line with national employment policy. The programme also seeks to favour the intake of returning former refugee workers, returning migrant workers and foreign migrant workers.

The programme is implemented in coordination with the relevant institutions – Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade, international organizations, civil society groups and trade federations and unions – and is funded from the general State budget. The implementation of this and other programmes is tracked by the Commission for Planning and International Cooperation, which has developed specific operational templates and indicators for that purpose.

3. *Please provide information on the government ministry or institution responsible for intergovernmental coordination on the implementation of the Convention in the State party, including information on the available staffing and resources, monitoring activities and follow-up procedures. Please provide information on the mandate of this ministry or institution and the resources allocated to it for promoting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of migrant workers and members of their families under the Convention*

**Reply:**

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is the institution responsible for work, employment and occupational health and safety as well as for public sector employment,

empowering families, curbing poverty, supporting livelihoods and developing a system of social protection and security for the more marginalized and vulnerable groups in society.

4. *Please provide information on measures taken to collect qualitative information and statistical data, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and migration status, on labour migration movements to and from the State party, including returns, on other labour migration-related issues and on unaccompanied children and children left behind by migrant parents (para. 214). Please also provide information on measures taken by the State party to establish a coherent and comparable system of data collection on those issues, including measures aimed at making the information public*

**Reply:**

No precise data or statistics on this issue exist because travellers depart and arrive routinely and no account is taken of the kind of employment they do, the reasons for their travel or the echelons of society to which they belong. People travel without hindrance and are not asked about the nature of their work or the purpose of their journey.

5. *In the light of the information provided by the State party in 2016 during the second cycle of the universal periodic review, that the establishment of a national human rights institution was under way (A/HRC/34/5, para. 15; see also *ibid.*, paras. 109.27–109.29, and A/HRC/34/5/Add.1, paras. 109.27–109.29), please update the Committee on any progress made in that regard*

The reply to this matter will be given during the discussion of the report.

6. *Please indicate whether the State party plans to make the declaration provided for in articles 76 and 77 of the Convention and thereby recognize the competence of the Committee to receive communications from States parties and individuals (para. 96). Please also indicate whether the State party intends to ratify the International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), and the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 14)*

The reply to this matter will be given during the discussion of the report.

7. *Please inform the Committee about measures taken to provide migrant workers who do not know Arabic with information about their rights under the Convention, as recommended by the Committee in the previous concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 20). Please describe the measures taken by the State party to provide training that targets authorities dealing with migration and related issues on the rights of migrant workers and members of their families, to ensure that they are protected from arbitrary arrest and detention, forced labour, torture and ill-treatment, gender-based violence and violence against children, including sexual violence, and unlawful killings (paras. 110–112 and 131)*

**Reply:**

The entry of Arabs and foreigners into Syria takes place through formal channels and in line with laws and regulations that define the attributes required in order to enter the country, after the necessary approval has been obtained. If persons, having once entered Syria, wish to reside there they must apply to the Department of Immigration and Passports for a residence permit, having first obtained the necessary approval. The entry of foreign childminders and domestic workers is regulated by Legislative Decree No. 65 of 2013, which sets controls on the entry of workers, guarantees rights, envisages insurance and regulates recruitment, employment, the granting of residency permits, penalties for delays, etc.

8. *Please provide detailed information about the civil society organizations involved in the preparation of the State party's report, including the nature of the cooperation and their work (para. 219)*

**Reply:**

A committee was set up under Decree No. 19 of 5 March 2019 with the task of drafting the combined second and third periodic reports under the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The committee included representatives from:

- **The General Federation of Trade Unions:** The purpose of the Federation is to represent workers on committees and at international conferences, to encourage and unify the struggles of the Arab working class and to promote working class solidarity throughout the world.
  - The Federation works to organize all workers into trade unions while also seeking to draw existing unions under its aegis and to create the right conditions for them to join the Federation.
  - The General Federation of Trade Unions has an organizational structure in the form of a pyramid, with trade union committees representing groups of workers at its base and the General Federation at its summit. Between the base and the summit are the unions, then the governorate-level workers' federation and the occupational federations.
  - According to the aforementioned No. 84, as amended, any group of 50 or more workers is entitled to form a union committee, which has legal personality and is administered by an office. The committee is to consist of five members who are elected by affiliated workers via secret ballot.
  - A union is an organization of workers who work in the same profession and brings together all the trade union committees of that profession in a single governorate.
- **The Federation of Chambers of Commerce:** The Federation is the authority vested with oversight over the 14 chambers of commerce in Syria, and it represents the interests and needs of those chambers and their members. Officials of the Federation discuss trade-related matters with the Government and help to formulate policy, thereby ensuring that the chambers of commerce have a role in the formulation of vital legislative reforms. The officials also sit on ministerial committees where they provide assistance in the drafting of bills and the implementation of new laws.
- **The Bar Association.**

9. *Please provide information on the existence of private employment agencies in the State party recruiting migrant workers to work abroad, and the laws, rules and regulations pertaining to private recruitment. Please also provide information on the mandate, role and activities of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in regulating and controlling private employment agencies*

**Reply:**

(a) By decree of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, authorization may be given to open:

- (i) A private employment bureau;
- (ii) A private recruitment bureau for non-Syrian-Arab domestic workers or for Syrian Arab domestic workers, in line with rules and regulations issued by decree of the Prime Minister.

(b) A private employment bureau is an entity that undertakes to meet the labour requirements of employers who are registered with the bureau by directly contracting workers to perform specific tasks.

(c) The licencing requirements and operating conditions for the bureaux referenced in (a) (i) and (ii) of the present article are to be determined by decree of the Minister.

(d) Private employment bureaux shall:

(i) Implement the Ministry's employment policy and respect the principles underpinning that policy;

(ii) Submit a monthly statement to the public employment bureau of the governorate containing a list of registered unemployed persons and the names of jobseekers who have found job openings, the kind of work found, the location and the wage;

(iii) Not register any unemployed workers unless they are Syrian Arab citizens or persons of like status.

Under article 23 of Act No. 17 of 2010, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour issued Decree No. 2430 of 2021, which governs the mechanism for establishing employment bureaux for Syrian workers, both inside and outside Syria.

10. *Please provide statistical data, disaggregated by sex, age and nationality, on the number of migrant workers and members of their families who have contracted SARS-CoV-2, the number who have received a vaccine for coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and the number who have died as a result of COVID-19. Please provide information on restrictions placed on the full exercise of the rights of migrant workers and members of their families in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including restrictive measures taken at borders in relation to their entry or exit from their countries of origin, transit or destination. Please also provide information on measures taken in relation to voluntary return to their countries of origin in the context of the pandemic. Please indicate the measures taken to ensure that the pandemic does not affect the process of asylum applications or migration procedures, including in relation to the suspension of procedures. Please indicate efforts taken on behalf of migrant workers and members of their families to:*

*(a) Include them in national pandemic prevention and response plans, especially in relation to ensuring access to a vaccine;*

*(b) Ensure their access to health-care services;*

*(c) Uphold the necessary sanitary measures to prevent contagion and maintain the desired level of health protection at their workplaces;*

*(d) Prevent infections in detention centres and provide health-care services to those who have been infected;*

*(e) Ensure that families of migrant workers who have died of the disease are informed of their deaths and receive their remains;*

*(f) Protect their rights in other respects and mitigate the pandemic's adverse effects, in view of the joint guidance note of the Committee and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the human rights of migrants.*

#### **Reply:**

Under the measures taken at borders, persons are required to present a negative PCR assay within 96 hours or a vaccination certificate. In the absence of either of these, they must undergo institutional quarantine.

- Persons who are infected – irrespective of their nationality, religion or ethnicity – are taken into hospitals run by the Ministry of Health or by the health-care sector. Swabs are carried out free of charge on persons admitted to hospital.
- Vaccine is provided to everyone on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, irrespective of nationality.

- It should be noted that the platform does not distinguish the vaccination status of migrants.

## II. Information relating to the articles of the Convention

### A. General principles

11. *Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that migrant workers and members of their families have the same rights as nationals to file complaints and to obtain redress, in particular with the labour commissions (paras. 220–224), as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 26). Please also provide information on the number, nature and outcome of complaints filed in relation to Decision No. 888 of 2016 regarding the employment of non-Syrians in the Syrian Arab Republic (para. 222). Please provide information about any measures taken to increase awareness among migrant workers and members of their families, including those in an irregular situation, about the availability of administrative and judicial remedies, as the Committee previously recommended (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 26)*

### B. Part II of the Convention

#### Article 7

12. *Please clarify whether the Labour Code extends protection from discrimination to all migrant workers and members of their families, in particular to domestic migrant workers (para. 88). Please update the Committee on measures taken to ensure that, in particular, non-Arab migrant workers and members of their families are not discriminated against in practice, as recommended in the Committee's previous concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 24)*

#### Reply:

The principle of equality and non-discrimination is upheld in the Constitution of the Syrian Arab Republic and a number of pieces of domestic legislation. One of these is the Labour Code (Act No. 17 of 2010), which includes the following provisions:

#### Article 2

(a) The present Code prohibits any breach or infringement of the principle of equality of opportunity or equal treatment on any grounds whatsoever. In particular, it prohibits discrimination against workers on the basis of race, colour, gender, marital status, belief, political opinion, trade union membership, nationality, social descent, clothing or dress style, without prejudice to personal freedom. This applies to any matter relating to employment, the organization of work, vocational training, wages, promotion, eligibility for social benefits, disciplinary measures and actions, and dismissal.

(b) Any action, conduct or measure on the part of an employer that is inconsistent with the provisions of the previous paragraph of the present article is to be deemed null and void. Workers who have been harmed have the right to bring a case before the courts under the present Code in order to demand compensation for any material or moral damages they have suffered.

(c) Any distinction, exclusion or preference based on the objective criteria of the qualifications required for a particular position or on the nature of the work, cannot be considered as discrimination.

(d) The provisions of the present article do not apply to persons with disabilities unless, in the light of the worker's physical condition, the doctor engaged by the enterprise in question decides otherwise.

Article 67 of the Code reads as follows:



*Article 67*

(a) Employers may not dismiss workers for any of the following reasons:

(i) If a worker who is a union representative performs, organizes or takes part in trade-union activities.

(ii) If a worker is engaged in electoral activities.

(iii) If a worker lodges a complaint or takes part in legal proceedings against an employer for violation of the law or of labour regulations.

(iv) On grounds of race, colour, gender, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, religious community, political opinion, nationality, social descent, clothing or dress style, without prejudice to personal freedom.

(b) Dismissal on the aforementioned grounds is considered unjustified and, in such cases, the competent courts are to rule that the worker is to be reinstated and paid full wages for the period of suspension.

*Article 75*

Without prejudice to article 2:

(a) Employers are to apply to all their workers the principle of equal pay for work of equal value without discrimination on grounds of race, colour, gender, marital status, belief, political opinion, trade union membership, nationality or social descent.

(b) Work of equal value means work that requires equal academic qualifications and equal professional skills, as attested by a work experience certificate.

**C. Part III of the Convention****Articles 8–15**

13. *Please provide information on the number of migrant workers who have left the State party since the outbreak of the armed conflict, including Syrian nationals and foreign migrant workers*

**Reply:**

No precise data or statistics on this issue exist because travellers depart and arrive routinely and no account is taken of the kind of employment they do, the reasons for their travel or the echelons of society to which they belong. People travel without hindrance and are not asked about the nature of their work or the purpose of their journey.

*Please provide information on any cases identified in the State party of exploitation of migrant workers and members of their families, both in regular and irregular situations, in particular children subjected to forced labour and those working in the agricultural sector and as domestic workers*

**Reply:**

Responsibility in this regard lies with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (Labour Inspection Department) with quarterly inspection plans being drawn up by the social affairs and labour directorates in the governorates. The plans are then adopted centrally while tours of inspection also take place to companies on the basis of complaints from workers. The tours serve to investigate the complaints and to interview the workers and inform them of their legal and contractual rights. Employers found to be in violation face fines, and steps are taken to ensure that the violation ceases.

The Ministry, represented by its directorates at the governorate level, also plays an important role in resolving labour disputes relating to dismissal or notice of dismissal. In that regard, it acts as an administrative mediator seeking a friendly solution between the worker and the employer.

It is important to stress the fact that the Labour Code (Act No. 17 of 2010) regulates labour relations between workers and employers via a written contract of employment that specifies the name, address and details of the worker; the name and details of the employer; the duration of the contract, wages, working hours and other matters. The purpose of this is to protect workers' rights and to ensure that they are duly registered with the General Social Insurance Foundation.

The Code requires employers to register all their workers for social insurance.

The Code also requires an employer who employs more than 15 workers to draft internal regulations for his company along with a list of sanctions, and to have these approved by the Ministry of Labour. The employer is further required to place the regulations on public display so that workers are able to see them.

The Code includes provisions to ensure that workers can submit complaints confidentially and it requires labour inspectors to investigate those complaints and to make workers aware of their legal rights and their rights under the Convention.

As a way of ensuring that employers do not exploit the vulnerability of workers, and oblige them to sign pre-approved resignations, the Code imposes the requirement for resignations to be registered by the worker or his legal representative in the presence of the employer at the offices of the competent labour directorate, and the Code states that a resignation is not valid unless duly registered.

Decree No. 888 of 2016 regulates the work of non-Syrian-Arabs in the Syrian Arab Republic. It envisages adherence to the principle of reciprocity and to bilateral labour agreements while forestalling competition for the Syrian labour force.

According to article 12 of Agriculture Act No. 50 of 2004:

- (a) Arab workers are to be treated on an equal footing with Syrian workers in the application of the present Act, on condition that they obtain a work permit from the Ministry.
- (b) Foreign workers who are licensed to stay are allowed to work, on condition of reciprocity and that they obtain a work permit from the Ministry.

***Please inform the Committee about the measures taken to bring national legislation into line with the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)***

**Reply:**

The Labour Code (Act No. 17 of 2010) regulates work in Syria. It prohibits forced labour and it stipulates that the working relationship between worker and employer is to be based on a written contract between the two parties.

Article 15 of Act No. 17 of 2010 states:

(a) Without prejudice to ILO conventions, the Ministry is to regulate the employment of Syrian workers and persons of similar status outside the Syrian Arab Republic and to secure their welfare and rights through bilateral and multilateral agreements.

(b) In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry is to monitor the implementation of international agreements regarding Syrian workers abroad, and strive to settle any disputes arising therefrom following discussions in the Advisory Council on Labour and Social Dialogue referred to in article 177 of the present Code.

Article 46 of the Act states:

An individual employment contract is a contract by which a worker undertakes to work for an employer, under the authority and supervision of that employer, in return for a wage.

Article 47 states:

(a) Employers are to draw up written employment contracts with their workers. The contracts are to be in Arabic and to be drafted in three copies, one each for the two parties involved (a further copy in a foreign language is to be produced if the worker is not Arab),

while the third copy is to be deposited by the employer with the competent social security directorate within three months of the effective date of the contract.

(b) In the absence of a written contract, workers may establish their rights by all means of proof and the employer may similarly seek to establish the contrary.

(c) Workers are to be issued with a receipt for all the original documents and certificates they have handed to their employer.

Article 184 of the same Act states:

A collective labour agreement is an agreement regulating working conditions, employment terms and any other matters aimed at securing the welfare, health and safety of workers. Collective labour agreements are concluded between, on one side, one or more trade unions, the governorate-level workers' federation or the General Federation of Trade Unions and, on the other side, an employer, a group of employers or one or more organizations.

**14. Please indicate the measures taken to protect children against the worst forms of labour, including in work related to the conflict. Please provide information on activities carried out by the labour inspection system in this regard and inform the Committee about any violations related to child labour, including any sanctions imposed on the perpetrators and assistance provided and compensation awarded to the victims. Please provide information on Act No. 10 of 2018 on the creation of redevelopment zones designated for reconstruction and how it has negatively affected migrant workers and members of their families. In particular, please inform the Committee about any measures taken to ensure that migrant workers and members of their families who have left the country or have been displaced owing to the conflict can assert ownership of their real estate property, including information on the number of cases in which the 30-day time frame for appointing a legal agent or representative to claim the property on their behalf has been applied to them.**

Children's Act No. 21 of 2021

#### Article 36

(a) It is prohibited to employ a child under the age of 15.

(b) It is prohibited to exploit children economically or to make them perform any work that is likely to be hazardous, to interfere with their education, to be harmful to their health or to have a negative effect on their physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

(c) It is prohibited to make children work overtime for whatever reason or to keep them in the workplace after working hours. Moreover, they may not work at night, on weekly rest days, public holidays or religious feast days, in accordance with the law.

(d) Before being engaged in employment, children are to undergo a medical examination to ensure that they are fit and healthy for the work they are to do. The medical examination is to be repeated on an annual basis.

#### Article 37

The Ministry is to cooperate with the competent authorities in the following:

(a) The monitoring of children's places of work and the verification of their working conditions by labour inspectors.

(b) Provision of appropriate vocational qualifications and training for children.

(c) Provision of health and psychological support to children who have suffered harm by work.

- A review document was prepared on monitoring, reporting and referral mechanisms for the protection of children, which covers nine different cases: recruitment of child soldiers, sexual aggression, child labour, trafficking in children, homelessness and begging, registration of children, children lacking family care, and children who drop out of school. The document focuses on the review and assessment of monitoring, reporting and referral mechanisms, on the establishment of new mechanisms capable

of ensuring rapid and flexible response to various types of protection for children and on capacity-building for professionals in this field.

- A national plan to reduce child labour has been developed and is being implemented in collaboration with ILO and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), including a range of activities and studies aimed at helping children and their families eliminate the worst forms of child labour.
- The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour has implemented social protection programmes. These involve a series of programmes targeting children and comprising family tracking, reunification of children, psychological and social support programmes in emergencies, and programmes for the implementation of the early childhood strategy. A project was implemented for social protection in cooperation and coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and civil society, with a view to creating an effective system for social protection which is in line with international standards.
- Act No. 10 of 2018 has no bearing on the establishment of property. It serves merely to preserve the rights of the effective owners of real estate plots who are in possession of title deeds. It also takes account of the right of occupants to secure alternative housing.
- As a result of concerns about certain provisions of the Act and in order to address some loopholes it contained, a number of amendments were issued in Act No. 42 of 2018 concerning time limits for establishing proof of ownership and for appeals, and their associated procedures. The purpose of the amendments is to give citizens sufficient opportunity to make requests regarding their property and their in-kind and real estate rights when a redevelopment zone is designated. The amended Act is an expression of constitutional principles regarding the protection of property and it serves not only to preserve property but also to establish official property registers. The registers then act as a basis for the work of committees charged with assessment, dispute-resolution and property distribution. The amendments also open the way for rights holders to raise objections before the ordinary courts after the judicial committees have finished their work, if they were unable to raise their objections before the dispute-resolution committees.

As a way of achieving the maximum degree of justice when assessing and evaluating real estate plots, the Act requires that the owners be represented before the value assessment committee by experts of their own choosing.

Act No. 33 of 2017 regulates title deeds to real estate properties. Moreover, a legislative decree was issued in 2016 concerning the suspension of the registration of in-kind rights in property registries that were closed due to the emergency security situation.

As a way of guaranteeing ownership rights, Legislative Decree No. 12 of 2016 was issued regarding the endorsement of digital copies of entries in the property register regarding real estate plots.

#### **Articles 16–22**

15. *Please clarify whether immigration-related offences are criminalized in the State party and describe the corresponding due process safeguards, including access to a lawyer and an interpreter, in situations of investigations, arrests, detentions and expulsions of migrant workers and members of their families for immigration-related offences, in particular of children (paras. 47 and 103)*

#### **Reply:**

Immigration-related offences and sanctions are addressed in section VIII (arts. 31–40) of Act No. 2 of 2014.

Syrian law gives all workers, whether Syrians or foreigners, the right to bring legal action and to have recourse to the courts.

According to article 51 (3) of the Constitution of the Syrian Arab Republic: “The right to bring legal action, to file an appeal, to seek a review and to conduct a defence before the courts is protected by law. The State undertakes to provide legal aid to persons unable to procure legal assistance for themselves, in accordance with the law.”

Article 5 of the Code of Civil Procedure (Act No. 1 of 2016) states that Syrian courts are competent to hear cases against non-Syrians who have no home or residence in Syria in the following circumstances:

(b) If the case concerns mobile or real estate property that is inside Syria or that is the result of a contract that was concluded and implemented, or meant to be implemented, inside Syria.

For its part, article 2 of Act No. 17 of 2010 reads:

(b) Any action, conduct or measure on the part of an employer that is inconsistent with the provisions of the previous paragraph of the present article is to be deemed null and void. Workers who have been harmed have the right to bring a case before the courts under the present Code in order to demand compensation for any material or moral damages they have suffered.

Article 204 of the Act states:

If an individual labour dispute arises concerning the application of the present Code, the worker or the employer may have recourse to the competent court, composed as set forth in the following article, in order to seek a settlement to their dispute.

*Please also provide information on immigration detention centres, conditions of detention for migrant workers and members of their families and efforts to improve those conditions, including whether persons detained for immigration-related reasons are held in separate facilities or together with convicted persons or persons detained pending trial*

*Please update the Committee on measures taken to implement the Committee’s previous recommendation that the State party only detain migrant workers in an irregular situation as a measure of last resort and with respect for the rules of due process (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 28)*

**Reply:**

The Ministry of the Interior has a holding centre for Arab and foreign detainees, where all necessary facilities are available.

*Please also provide information on the measures taken to facilitate access to detention centres by domestic, regional and international organizations, in order to monitor the human rights situation and provide humanitarian assistance to detainees, including that offered by the International Organization for Migration and other partners*

The reply to this matter will be given during the discussion of the report.

### Article 23

16. *Please respond to allegations received by the Committee that migrant workers and members of their families, including those in an irregular situation, are not always given access to consular services, or that consular or diplomatic authorities are not always notified when migrant workers and members of their families are deprived of liberty or face expulsion, as mandated under articles 16 (7) and 23 of the Convention. Please update the Committee on measures taken to ensure that Iraqi nationals who have sought refuge in the Syrian Arab Republic since 2003, and who are not granted refugee status, are accorded the rights provided for in Part III of the Convention, as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 30)*

The reply to this matter will be given during the discussion of the report.

*Please also provide up-to-date information, including disaggregated statistical data, on migrant workers in an irregular situation and members of their families who have been expelled or are subject to expulsion procedures, and indicate whether expulsion orders can*

*be legally challenged and whether such administrative or judicial remedies have suspensive effect*

**Reply:**

- Embassies and consulates are open to Syrians abroad and facilitate all their bureaucratic transactions.
- Administrative decrees can be appealed before the administrative courts. The methods of appeal are defined in law.

#### **Articles 25–30**

17. *Please indicate what measures have been taken to ensure the enjoyment by migrant workers, in law and in practice, of legal and labour protection concerning remuneration and conditions of work, including safety and health regulations, and that migrant workers enjoy the same treatment as nationals in respect of remuneration and other conditions of work, as required by article 25 of the Convention (paras. 167–170)*

**Reply:**

The Labour Code (Act No. 17 of 2010) is applicable to Syrian and non-Syrian workers.

Article 206 of Act No. 17 of 2010 states: “The competent court shall promptly resolve individual labour disputes on the basis of the provisions of the present Code and the individual employment contract concluded between the parties.”

Article 207 of the Act reads: “The ruling handed down by the competent court is subject to appeal before the court of appeal, the ruling of which is definitive. The court is to apply to Code of Procedure.”

According to article 208: “(a) If a dispute concerns a dismissal or a notice of dismissal, the worker concerned, or the trade union at the worker’s request, can – within 10 days of the notification of dismissal or notice of dismissal – ask the competent directorate to mediate a settlement to the controversy.

(b) The competent directorate is to mediate between the employer and the worker in an attempt to resolve the dispute between them, within a maximum period of one month.

(c) If mediation fails, the worker has the right of recourse to the courts.

(d) If the worker seeks legal recourse, the aforementioned court shall, while proceedings last, order the employer to pay the worker 50 per cent of his monthly wage. Such payment is not to exceed the minimum wage payable for the profession in question and is not payable for more than one year.”

*In particular, please update the Committee on any measures taken to guarantee, in law and in practice, that migrant domestic workers are entitled to the same salary as Syrian domestic workers*

**Reply:**

- Article 24 of Legislative Decree No. 65 of 2013 stipulates:

(a) Heads and clients of bureaux are required to treat workers in a humane and ethical fashion and must abide by the provisions of international treaties ratified by the Syrian Arab Republic as well as by domestic laws and regulations related to human rights.

(b) Heads, employees and clients of bureaux are prohibited from discriminating against or ill-treating their workers on grounds of race, colour, gender, belief, nationality, social descent, clothing or dress style, in all matters relating to employment or pay.

- Article 25 of the Decree stipulates: “Under pain of the penalties set forth in relevant law and legislation, heads, employees and clients of bureaux are prohibited from degrading, humiliating, torturing, beating, insulting or exploiting their workers, or making them do duties other than domestic work.”
- As concerns non-Syrian domestic workers, Legislative Decree No. 65 of 2013 envisages full adherence to ILO conventions and human rights treaties ratified by the

Syrian Arab Republic. It further requires that domestic workers be treated in a humane and ethical fashion and that they not be degraded, humiliated, beaten, insulted or exploited.

*Please also include information on measures aimed at promoting the rights of Syrian migrant workers and members of their families residing abroad*

Article 23 of Act No. 17 of 2010 states:

(a) By decree of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, authorization may be given to open:

(i) A private employment bureau;

(ii) A private recruitment bureau for non-Syrian-Arab domestic workers or for Syrian Arab domestic workers, in line with rules and regulations issued by decree of the Prime Minister.

(b) A private employment bureau is an entity that undertakes to meet the labour requirements of employers who are registered with the bureau by directly contracting workers to perform specific tasks.

(c) The licencing requirements and operating conditions for the bureaux referenced in (a) (i) and (ii) of the present article are to be determined by decree of the Minister.

(d) Private employment bureaux shall:

(i) Implement the Ministry's employment policy and respect the principles underpinning that policy;

(ii) Submit a monthly statement to the public employment bureau of the governorate containing a list of registered unemployed persons and the names of jobseekers who have found job openings, the kind of work found, the location and the wage;

(iii) Not register any unemployed workers unless they are Syrian Arab citizens or persons of like status.

Under article 23 of Act No. 17 of 2010, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour issued Decree No. 2430 of 2021, which governs the mechanism for establishing employment bureaux for Syrian workers, both inside and outside Syria.

- Migrant workers and other workers enjoy the same rights as Syrian citizens.
- Article 2 of the Labour Code (Act No. 17 of 2010) states:

*Article 2*

(a) The present Code prohibits any breach or infringement of the principle of equality of opportunity or equal treatment on any grounds whatsoever. In particular, it prohibits discrimination against workers on the basis of race, colour, gender, marital status, belief, political opinion, trade union membership, nationality, social descent, clothing or dress style, without prejudice to personal freedom. This applies to any matter relating to employment, the organization of work, vocational training, wages, promotion, eligibility for social benefits, disciplinary measures and actions, and dismissal.

(b) Any action, conduct or measure on the part of an employer that is inconsistent with the provisions of the previous paragraph of the present article is to be deemed null and void. Workers who have been harmed have the right to bring a case before the courts under the present Code in order to demand compensation for any material or moral damages they have suffered.

(c) Any distinction, exclusion or preference based on the objective criteria of the qualifications required for a particular position or on the nature of the work, cannot be considered as discrimination.

(d) The provisions of the present article do not apply to persons with disabilities unless, in the light of the worker's physical condition, the doctor engaged by the enterprise in question decides otherwise.

Thus, the Syrian Labour Code prohibits discrimination in treatment between Syrian and non-Syrian workers.

Articles 27–30 of the Labour Code and Decree No. 888 of 2016 regulate the procedures whereby non-Syrians can obtain a permit to work in the Syrian Arab Republic.

18. *Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure, in law and in practice, that children of migrant workers have full access to primary and secondary education, regardless of their migration status (paras. 172, 179–181 and 206). Please also provide information on the measures taken by the State party to ensure, in law and in practice, that all migrant workers and members of their families have adequate access to health-care services, including urgent medical care (para. 171)*

**Reply:**

Migrant workers and other workers enjoy the same rights as Syrian citizens, and their children are admitted into school without hindrance.

19. *Please provide data, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and migration status, on the levels of school enrolment and attendance among children of migrant workers, in particular those in an irregular situation, in the State party's education system (para. 180). Please indicate whether the health-care services described in the report (paras. 169–171) also apply to migrant workers and members of their families who are undocumented or in an irregular situation. Please provide information on the number of children of Syrian migrant workers abroad, including those that are undocumented or in an irregular situation, who have been registered in accordance with the amendments to the Civil Status Act (paras. 175–177)*

**Reply:**

Migrant workers and other workers enjoy the same rights as Syrian citizens, and their children are admitted into school without hindrance.

The regularization of the situation of Syrian migrants is done in accordance with current law and regulations, and they are provided with every facility to enable them to return to their country.

#### **Article 32**

20. *In the light of the ongoing armed conflict in the State party, please provide information on measures taken to ensure that migrant workers and members of their families are able to transfer their earnings and savings upon termination of their stay in the State party (paras. 182–184). Please also provide statistical information on the evolution, amounts and significance of funds sent by migrant workers to and from the State party, as well as their geographical distribution, both through the official banking system and the informal one, in particular the hawala system. Please provide information on measures taken to implement the Committee's previous recommendation and remove the maximum amount of remittances allowed to be made by migrant workers in Syria (CMW/C/SYR/CO/I, para. 36). Please describe the importance of Syrian migrant workers and members of their families abroad, the links they maintain with the State party, including their families there, and their role for the balance of payments and the economy of the State party*

### **D. Part IV of the Convention**

#### **Articles 40–41**

21. *Please provide information on measures taken to ensure the freedom to join an independent trade union for migrant workers in a regular situation, including those not belonging to the General Federation of Trade Unions (para. 93). Please provide data,*



*disaggregated by age, sex and country of residence, on the number of Syrian migrant workers and members of their families residing abroad who exercised their voting rights during the 2014 presidential and the 2020 parliamentary elections, and provide information on steps taken to facilitate their exercise of their voting rights (para. 62)*

The reply to this matter will be given during the discussion of the report.

## **E. Part VI of the Convention**

### **Article 64**

22. *Please provide information on the measures taken to promote sound, equitable and humane conditions in connection with the international migration of workers and members of their families and describe the measures taken to address irregular migration of nationals of the State party, in particular unaccompanied or separated children, including through multilateral and bilateral agreements, policies and programmes aimed at enhancing legal migration channels and at addressing the root causes of irregular migration. With reference to the Committee's concluding observations (CMW/C/SYR/CO/1, para. 32), please provide qualitative information and statistical data concerning the measures taken to enforce the prohibition of the withholding by employers of migrant workers' passports and any investigations conducted and sanctions imposed on employers in case of infraction of this prohibition (paras. 226–227). Please also elaborate on the steps taken by the State party to reconsider its practice of withholding the passports of non-Syrian women artists during their stay in the State party (para. 228; and CMW/C/SYR/CO/1, para. 32), and provide information on the circumstances in which migrant workers or members of their families are required to present their passport during their stay in the State party*

### **Article 67**

23. *Please provide information on measures taken to facilitate the voluntary return of Syrian migrant workers and members of their families from abroad, including cooperation programmes in place between the State party and relevant States of employment (paras. 12, 16, 65 and 103). Please also inform the Committee about programmes that promote adequate economic conditions for the resettlement and reintegration of migrant workers and members of their families upon return to the State party*

### **Article 68**

24. *Please inform the Committee whether the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act (Decree No. 3 of 2010), or other legislation as relevant, criminalizes all forms of trafficking in accordance with the Convention (para. 233).*

#### **Reply:**

Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 3 of 2010 criminalizes all forms of trafficking in persons.

#### **Please also provide information about:**

*(a) Measures taken to stop the forced recruitment and use of child soldiers by all parties to the armed conflict, and to ensure their rehabilitation and social reintegration;*

#### **Reply:**

Measures intended to stop forced recruitment were discussed as part of the national plan to combat trafficking in persons. This involves addressing the issue of school dropout in coordination with the Ministry of Education and incorporating an anti-trafficking culture into the school curriculum. It also involves activating the media and promoting partnerships with grass-roots organizations and civil society associations with a view to curbing trafficking and forced recruitment in areas controlled by armed terrorist groups.

- Article 46 of the Children's Act No. 21 of 2021 states that it is prohibited to recruit or involve children in combat operations or other related acts.

- The State is to take action to favour the physical and mental rehabilitation of child victims of recruitment, with a view to reintegrating them into society.
- Article 47 of the Act stipulates: “The State is to ensure that children are protected against trafficking in any form.
- The State is to set up special centres for the rehabilitation of child victims of trafficking.”

#### **Article 48**

Restorative justice for children means the legal provisions, procedures and measures taken vis-à-vis children who are in conflict with the law. Such justice safeguards children’s rights and well-being and is intended to favour their reform, rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

#### **Article 49**

The State is to work to ensure that restorative justice is available for all children who are in conflict with the law.

*(b) Steps taken to stop trafficking, slavery and violence, including sexual exploitation, from occurring in the territory of the State party, in particular of women and girls, including women and girls belonging to ethnic, national or religious minorities (paras. 113–120);*

#### **Reply:**

Article 2 of Anti-Human Trafficking Act No. 3 of 2010 states:

“The purpose of the present Legislative Decree is:

- (i) To prevent and combat trafficking in persons especially women and children.

Article 3 states: “Without seeking to criminalize or punish, the authorities responsible for implementing the present Legislative Decree are to ensure the welfare of trafficking victims in general, and of women and child trafficking victims in particular, with a view to their social reintegration.”

#### *Article 8 (1)*

Current criminal law and the Criminal Code envisage aggravating factors in the following circumstances:

- (i) If the victim of an offence is a woman, a child or a person with special needs;
- (ii) If the perpetrator uses or threatens to use a weapon;
- (iii) If the perpetrator is an antecedent of the victim, the victim’s spouse or guardian or has authority over the victim, or if the perpetrator is a law enforcement official;
- (iv) If the offence is committed by more than one person or the perpetrator is a member of a criminal gang;
- (v) If the offence concerned is an international offence.

#### *Article 15 (2)*

- (i) The competent authorities are to take steps to protect trafficking victims and to meet their needs, with a view to favouring their physical, psychological and social recovery. To that end, they are to cooperate, as necessary, with official institutions, grass-roots organizations, trade unions and civil society groups.

- (ii) Those steps must:

- (a) Take account of the fact that women are present when conducting investigations involving female victims of trafficking;

(b) Ensure that persons are not held in facilities that are unsuitable for their status as crime victims;

(c) Ensure that they can access physical and mental medical care and the necessary material assistance;

(d) Maintain confidentiality, not disclose victims' names or the places they are being cared for and not release information that would identify them or their family members;

(e) Provide advice and information in a language the victim understands, especially with regard to their legal rights.

***(c) The number of investigations, prosecutions and convictions, type of sentences imposed on perpetrators, and assistance and compensation provided to victims in trafficking cases;***

***Reply:***

In the course of 2020, 19 criminal investigations were opened and 86 persons were arrested: 3 for departing the country unlawfully; 4 for the transportation and smuggling of persons (1 Syrian and 3 Palestinians); and 79 for entering the country unlawfully (72 Bangladeshis, 4 Ethiopians, 2 Indians and 1 Egyptian). There were no organized networks or gangs, and the crimes were concentrated at two points to and from Lebanon. In addition, there were persons who operated systematically to smuggle persons from Syria into Turkey via crossing points under the control of armed terrorist groups in the governorate of Idlib.

In the course of 2021, 8 criminal investigations were opened and 22 persons were arrested: 9 Bangladeshis and 2 Ethiopians for entering Syria unlawfully; 1 person for departing the country unlawfully; and 10 persons, all Syrians, for the transportation and smuggling of persons. There were no organized networks or gangs. In addition, 6 persons were arrested for smuggling via crossing points under the control of armed terrorist groups in Idlib.

In the course of 2020, 63 criminal investigations were opened: 57 involving sexual exploitation, 5 involving forced labour and 1 involving organ trafficking. In all, 66 persons were arrested, including 50 for trafficking offences involving sexual exploitation, 4 victims and 4 persons who had used victims' services. In addition, there were 2 victims in case involving the sale of a kidney. The office of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in Damascus has been contacted with a view to the issuance of a red notice.

Several organized networks have been uncovered, which exploited girls and recruited people to commit human trafficking offences involving sexual exploitation in Lebanon. These networks have been broken up, with some members being arrested and others prosecuted.

In the course of 2021, 27 criminal investigations were opened, including 34 investigations involving sexual exploitation and 3 involving forced labour. In all, 39 persons were arrested: 32 traffickers, 4 persons who had used victims' services and 3 victims.

***(d) Measures taken to strengthen the capacity to identify and provide protection to victims of trafficking;***

***Reply:***

Safeguards are in place that are intended to encourage victims to report what has happened to them. These include the confidentiality of investigations, appropriate places of detention and impunity for victims.

- Persons involved in the fight against trafficking in persons are given appropriate training.
- Mechanisms have been set up to monitor persons who fall victim to human trafficking outside the country.
- Guides and training programmes have been prepared regarding how to recognize, identify and interact with trafficking victims.

Article 14 of Act No. 3 of 2010 stipulates:

- (i) The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is to establish homes for the care of trafficking victims.
- (ii) Funds are to be allocated to that end from the budget of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.
- (iii) The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is to define the internal regulations of care homes and to supervise their operation.
- (iv) Care home proprietors are to be appointed by decree.
- (v) The Minister of Social Affairs and Labour is to appoint appropriately specialized and qualified persons to act as manager and staff of homes. The selection is to take account of applicants' academic and linguistic skills and their familiarity with the kind of work to be done in the home.

Article 15 of Act reads:

- (i) The competent authorities are to take steps to protect trafficking victims and to meet their needs, with a view to favouring their physical, psychological and social recovery. To that end, they cooperate, as necessary, with official institutions, grass-roots organizations, trade unions and civil society groups.
- (ii) Those steps must:
  - (a) Take account of the fact that women are present when conducting investigations involving female victims of trafficking;
  - (b) Ensure that persons are not held in facilities that are unsuitable for their status as crime victims;
  - (c) Ensure that they can access physical and mental medical care and the necessary material assistance;
  - (d) Maintain confidentiality, not disclose victims' names or the places they are being cared for and not release information that would identify them or their family members;
  - (e) Provide advice and information in a language the victim understands, especially with regard to their legal rights.
- (e) ***Measures taken to provide adequate training and capacity-building for law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, labour inspectors, service providers, teachers, embassy and consular personnel and other relevant professionals in the State party;***

***Reply:***

- Workshops and training courses for persons involved in the fight against trafficking in persons are conducted under the supervision of officials, judges and academic figures from the ministries involved in combating trafficking: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Endowments and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Article 14 (5) of Act No. 3 of 2010 stipulates:

- (v) The Minister of Social Affairs and Labour is to appoint appropriately specialized and qualified persons to act as manager and staff of homes. The selection is to take account of applicants' academic and linguistic skills and their familiarity with the kind of work to be done in the home.

Article 17 (2) of the Legislative Decree states: "The Minister of the Interior is to appoint appropriately specialized and qualified persons to act as manager and staff of the Anti-Trafficking Department. The selection of applicants – be they military personnel or civilians – is to be done so as to ensure that both sexes are represented and that they have appropriate academic and linguistic skills as well as familiarity with the kind of work to be done in the Department.

- (f) ***The annual budget dedicated to detecting and eliminating trafficking in persons and to providing protection to victims of trafficking;***

**Reply:** Budget allocations for the Anti-Trafficking Department and for police units that work to combat trafficking are included in the budget of the Ministry of the Interior. Those units hand over arrested persons to the Department, which then refers them to the courts.

The establishment of a mechanism for a victim assistance fund was discussed at meetings of the National Committee.

**(g) *The mandate, activities and results achieved by the operations of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons (para. 233)***

**Reply:** The plan of the National Committee comprises four principal themes:

- (i) Prevention and awareness-raising;
- (ii) Protection and assistance for victims;
- (iii) Prosecution and punishment;
- (iv) Promotion of international cooperation and partnerships.

The National Committee holds periodic meetings at which it takes decisions intended to promote efforts to combat trafficking offences.

- Article 17 of the Decree No. 3 of 2010 states: “(i) A specialized anti-human trafficking department called the ‘Anti-Trafficking Department’ is to be set up in the Ministry of the Interior.”

Under article 18 of the same Decree defines the functions of the Department:

- (i) Proposing policies and operational programmes for approval by the Minister of the Interior.
- (ii) Organizing and running a database in which to collate information, investigations, data, statistics, etc. concerning human trafficking, and making it available to the competent authorities.
- (iii) Exchanging information with States, international organizations and other bodies involved in the fight against trafficking.
- (iv) Developing and implementing specialized training programmes for persons involved in the fight against trafficking in persons.
- (v) Taking measures to monitor national territory and border crossing points in order to combat international human trafficking.
- (vi) Cooperating with official and grass-roots organizations in order to use the media to raise public awareness about the dangers of this offence.
- (vii) Taking steps to alert the authorities to the presence of persons who appear, prima facie, to be the principal offenders, accomplices or victims of human trafficking.
- (viii) Coordinating international cooperation with relevant organizations and with counterparts in other States, in application of international treaties to which Syria is a party or of the principle of reciprocity, and coordinating with other stakeholders with a view to achieving the goals of the present Legislative Decree.

**25. *In view of the large number of nationals who have left the State party since the beginning of the armed conflict, please describe the action taken by the State party, including through the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements, to improve the protection and assistance of Syrian migrant workers and members of their families abroad, including efforts to promote the regularization of their situation.***

***Reply:***

Recently – in fact, on 21 June 2021 – the Syrian Arab Republic was involved in Operation Liberterra to combat migrant smuggling and the trafficking of persons and of vulnerable migrants. This led to the arrest of certain members of organized criminal groups and of other persons implicated in such offences. Positive results were achieved at both the national and the international levels. Moreover, a tripartite meeting was held involving Syria, Lebanon and INTERPOL, which served to identify the most important persons wanted by the Syrian authorities for their involvement in sexual exploitation and human trafficking, who are present on Lebanese territory.

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