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The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Special Procedures Branch, Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, and with reference to its previous Note verbale no. 205 dated 10/11/2020, regarding the situation of more than one million Syrian citizens who are suffering the lack of safe drinking water as a result of interruption in the functioning of Alouk water pumping station, would like to draw the kind attention of the Special Rapporteur to the following facts:

- The Turkish occupation forces has, once again, cut off the water from Alouk pumping station, which is the main source that provides drinking water to more than one million people in the city of Al-Hasaka and adjacent residential areas since 30 November 2020 to date.

- The city of Al-Hasakah continues to suffer from repeated interruptions of drinking water, as there were so far 17 water supply interruptions since 9 October 2019 when Turkey has occupied the city of Ras Al-Ain, where Alouk water station is located.

- This comes within the framework of systematic Turkish practices aiming at forced displacement of Syrian citizens in the areas that it occupies to force demographic changes in line with its expansionist and colonial goals, regardless of the humanitarian needs of the people in those areas.

- These Turkish practices violate all provisions of international human rights law that guarantee the right of every person to have access to safe drinking water as a basic right that all States must respect. A right which is closely linked to the right to life and the right to health, especially under the challenges related to Covid-19 pandemic

which requires doubling efforts and measures to secure public health services. They also impose heavy restrictions on the people of the region and deprive them of their livelihood.

- Furthermore; these practices are inconsistent with the firm and stable obligation to avoid any action that could lead to arbitrary suspension of water supplies or may lead to its pollution. And to the obligation not to use water as a mean to achieve political, military and economic gains, which what Turkey is exactly doing, either directly or through its affiliated terrorist groups.

- Cutting off water from more than one million people is a flagrant violation of the principle of protecting basic civilian objects and ensuring their work and continuation. Against this backdrop; this practice is clearly a war crime that can be added to the Turkish regime's crimes of aggression against Syrian territory and occupying parts of it.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the Special Rapporteur to continue to monitor these repeated criminal practices by the Turkish occupation forces against the Syrian people and to shed light on their catastrophic consequence, in accordance with his mandate, and urge him to call on the Turkish regime to respect basic rules of international law, and to promptly re-pump water from the Allouk station and desist from repeating this crime.

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation the assurances of its highest consideration.



**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Special Procedures Branch.
Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation.**