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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the Al-Ayn Social Care Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 May 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Enhancement of Human Rights in the Light of Current Challenges

1. Introduction:

Al-Ayn Social Care Foundation is an NGO working in Iraq on taking care of and sponsoring orphans. Its activity stems from the fact that this country is the cradle of civilization and historically the origin of civil laws. It cannot be a place for evil and injustice or a center for exporting homicide and devastation to the world. It should regain its bright image and shoulder the mission of upgrading the reality of man in it, exactly as civilized countries do.

Al-Ayn Foundation was established in 2006 and started its activities in serving orphans and providing them with financial aids that can help them overcome the stage of orphanage.

The Foundation was awarded a registration certificate under no. 1Z71970 by the Iraqi Ministerial Cabinet in mid-June, 2011 and was also granted the 'Public Interest Status' under the Ministerial Cabinet's resolution no. 470 in November, 2013.

Al-Ayn has spent over USD 110 million on 60,000 orphans since its establishment in cash money as monthly aids to families, or as monthly sponsorships to cover the basic needs of children, as will be detailed later. Besides, the Foundation offer aids in form of children's games, clothes, school requirements including bags, stationery, and shoes distributed on feasts, beginning of academic years and every season over registered orphans.

We should note here that the foundation has not follow a policy of founding orphanages, since such a policy would lead to raising them away from their relatives. The foundation wants to ensure that orphans are raised among their relatives including mothers, grandfathers, uncles, etc.

Following the hard events of June, 2014, the foundation had to address a new issue, i.e. the displaced people. The foundation is now running a complex of 300 residential units for lodging the displaced. All the requirements of those families, including potable water, schools, and kindergartens, are met. The foundation is also planning to establish a new residential complex for the displaced comprising of 100 units complete with all infrastructure facilities, schools and markets.

2. Services Rendered by Al-Ayn Foundation

2.1. Financial Aids:

Over the past eleven years, the Foundation provided its services to more than 60,000 orphans through adopting a mechanism that we will consider later, 43,000 of whom are currently beneficiaries of the foundation's services, and the number is daily increasing. Some of them are no longer beneficiaries because they no longer meet the standards adopted by the foundation; e.g. they are now grown up and self-dependent, or married, or their standard of living has become better because of an inheritance or for other reasons.

The Foundation now pays monthly aids to 55% of the sponsored orphans. The other 45% of the orphans are paid by sponsoring donors as will be shown in the diagram of sums.

Please see diagram no. 1 in the appendix.

The Foundation pays a monthly payment of USD 40 to each orphan. The payment is made once the orphan is approved for sponsorship by the Foundation.

In course of its growth and the increasing number of donors interested in serving orphans, the Foundation opened the door for orphan sponsorship. The amount for each sponsorship ranges from USD 60 to 100 per month.

In the first year of its activities, the number of sponsored orphans was 1,161. Now the number has gone up to 43,000 orphans. The total amounts spent on orphans over those years totaled USD 10,955,768.

Tables (2) and (3) illustrate the increase in the numbers of the sponsored orphans and in the funds spent.

The staff now involves more than 600 employees and more than 600 volunteers.

Table (4) in the appendix.

2.2. Aids in kind:

They include:

- a. Clothes, shoes, bags, and school stationery. They are usually distributed according to their relevant seasons. At the beginning of the academic year, clothes are given with their colors familiar in Iraq, school bags, stationery and other school requirements. On special occasions such as Eids of Fitr and Ad'ha, clothes and shoes are given to orphans. The Foundation always makes sure that every orphan receives his/her Eid clothes, in addition to the clothes of each season (winter or summer) as relevant.
- b. Foods that available including meat, legumes, oil, etc.
- c. The Ramadhan's basket is provided according to the number of the families, be they of orphans or displaced. In 2015-2016, more than 47,254 food baskets, 17-dollar worth each.
- d. Household requirements, as estimated by the follow-up visits made by social workers of the foundation once every 3-6 months. The requirements may include air-conditioners, heater, cookers, refrigerators and even carpets.
- e. Toys and games as made available by the foundation or the donors. Such games must not encourage violence. In special cases, and to achiever, bicycles are given as presents. Some interactional games are also available. Such aids in kind are provided by the Foundation or received from donors through special committees controlling the quality and specifications of games that should be no less than those that the donor provides for his/her own children. Second-hand items or those that appear to be against the public decency cannot be accepted.

3. Health Care Center

Through follow-ups, it appeared that financial aids and aids in kind do not cover all that the orphans need. There are still some health issues to be dealt with. Therefore, the Foundation set up a health department and then developed to be a health center when its activities grew broader as shown in the coming tables. This center is intended to be an independent health institution in the future that will be named Al-Ayn Health Institution that we hope to cover not only orphans, but also to families which lost their bread-winners.

Al-Ayn has spent funds of approx. USD 709,513 over the last years to cover costs of surgeries performed inside and outside Iraq besides medical treatments for various diseases.

Tables 5, 6, and 7 in the appendixes show the aides offered by the Foundation in this respect.

4. Psychological Guidance and Rehabilitation Center:

A need to found a psychological guidance and rehabilitation center within Al-Ayn Foundation rose after some psychological cases in children appeared due to some terrorist acts that they experienced. All these cases were documented during the visits of the social workers. The project was initiated after a 16-year girl from an afflicted family who savagely lost her father due to a terrorist attack, attempted to commit a suicide.

Therefore, a priority was given to this subject. Specialists from inside and outside Iraq were invited to establish psychiatric rehabilitation centers. A unique project is now being established in Najaf Governorate with an estimated cost of USD 8000,000 that may help diagnose and cure such psychiatric cases through creating proper conditions for children.

The Foundation also conduct various activities through visiting the families of the orphans, holding educational sessions for widows, making handcraft workshops, birthday celebrations for children and other activities in order to make them feel they are the focus of attention.

5. Al-Ayn's Charity Projects:

The Foundation undertakes some projects in the service of orphans and their families, including residential projects, investments, psychological guidance and rehabilitation centers and vocational training workshops:

- a. Residential projects: The Foundation has a group of projects including:
 - Residential houses and flats for the families of the orphans, and camps for the displaced, as shown in tables 8 and 9.
- b. Vocational training projects dedicated to those who missed educational opportunities after leaving their homes due to terrorist acts and they were obliged to work to provide sustenance to their families. The Foundation is now achieving many projects for vocational training under the name 'Al-Anjum Al-Zahira', with the help of which an orphan can get a vocational qualification degree and enter the labor market. Please see table 10 for more details.
- c. Investment Projects with revenues dedicated to orphans:
 - Hotels and Suites.

- Buildings rented for companies or other parties as offices, furniture trading businesses, shops, residential flats, or clinics as shown in tables 12 & 13 which illustrate the increasing rate of already achieved projects or those still under construction.

6. Recommendations:

1. A body concerned with orphans care is to be set up. The founders of such a body should be a group of NGOs so that serving orphans would not be used for political or partisan purposes, and the huge number of orphans would be absorbed under an international methodology that goes in line with all international laws and agreements.
2. We recommend the establishment of social, educational, psychiatric rehabilitation centers all over the governorates. Such centers will work on engaging those segments again into the community to make them good citizens.
