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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 Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, 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.

[21 August 2018]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Use of mercenaries by the State of Qatar in Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic: its impact on the right to self-determination and their responsibility for human rights violations

Preface

Maat association has followed up the worsening political and humanitarian situation in Libya and Syria. The situation that emerged with their democratic transition following the popular revolutions. Due to that, Syria and Libya became a fertile ground for the growth of terrorist groups and ignited the civil war, and the egregious violations of human rights. During the previous period, there have been strong indications of interventions by the State of Qatar through mercenaries. Qatar formed the terrorist groups in Syria and Libya, with its financial, logistical, political and media support. Which were directly responsible for disrupting the political process and creating obstacles to the democratic transition in addition to violating the right of citizens of both countries to live in safety. The activities of mercenaries supported by Qatar in both Libya and Syria contribute to deepening divisions and fuelling conflicts.

Qatari intervention in Libya

Qatar supports terrorist groups with money and arms, it is estimated that Qatar has provided around 750 million euros to these terrorist groups, as the Libyan Fighting Group, the banned Ansar al-Sharia, the Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council, the Mujahideen Darnah Shura Council and the Defense squads of Benghazi¹.

A video was leaked on the International Information Network and some satellite channels of al-Qaeda member Abdul Hakim Belhadj in Libya, in which he spoke of a Qatari delegation of 30 intelligence officers who assisted him during the events, which confirming the full cooperation between Qatar and al-Qaeda in Libya².

The Qatari military presence in Libya was revealed by the Qatari armed forces chief of Staff, Major General Hamad bin Ali al-Attiyah, during the meeting of "Friends committee for supporting Libya" on 26 October 2011.³

This Qatari recognition was confirmed by Libyan President of the Transitional Council of Libya Mustafa Abdul Jalil, who referred to the key role played by the State of Qatar in managing the battle with the authorities. "Qatar was a key partner in all the battles we fought, a key partner and a genuine actor," he said.⁴

The financial support of Qatar for the terrorism in Libya has been extended to a number of political and religious figures in the Libyan Interior. That financial support aimed at spreading terror and violence, such as Alsalabi and Abdelbaset Ghweila, who are known to belong to the Muslim Brotherhood, which is classified as a terrorist group. French media investigations were revealed in the year 2015, Qatar, with the help of Turkey, pays the salaries of two pilots fighting in the "Fajr Libya" forces⁵.

After the killing of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in October 2011, Qatar also supported the "Raph Allah al-Sahati" Battalion of Ismail Alsalabi, brother of Ali Alsalabi, in Benghazi. The group, along with Ansar al-Sharia group in the city, claimed responsibility for numerous assassinations and car bombs.

In addition to supporting the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group in Darnah, the bulldozers were sent from the port of Misurata to the fighters of the Mujahideen Darnah Shura Council. The relationship between Qatar and the Military Council of Misurata is well known. As, the council's leaders and some of the city's officials, such as Abdul Rahman al-Suweihli, have several visits to Doha⁶.

This was confirmed by the leaders of the Libyan army's statements. Haftar said in a statement issued on 28 May 2017 that the army was monitoring the Chadian, Sudanese and African communities in general and the Arab community in Libya. Those communities had entered the country as a result of the lack of border control, with the support of some

1 Qatar and the financing of extremist militias in Libya, Sky News Arabia, June 5, 2017. <https://goo.gl/tMkmbh>

2 Major scandal, Qatar and the terrorist Abdul Hakim Belhadj seized 160 billion from the central bank of Libya, day 7, May 27, 2017. <https://goo.gl/A2aJcB>

3 Libya: Qatar's role in toppling the regime of Colonel Gaddafi, Africa news portal, 3 June 2017.

4 Ibid.. <https://goo.gl>

5 Quand le Qatar et la Turquie payent des pilotes mercenaire pour bombarder en Libye, Mena Defense, 9/12/2015. <https://www.menadefense.net/2015/12/09/qui-est-le-contractor-blanc-qui-pilote-des-mirages-en-libye/>

6 Qatar and the financing of extremist militias in Libya, a former reference.

Regional states and states that supporting terrorism. Some of those persons had received funds from Qatar as well as other States and some terrorist militias inside Libya, He added⁷.

The Libyan army spokesman, Colonel Ahmed al-Mesmari, also provided evidences which confirming the support of Qatar for terrorists, by providing them with troops and weapons in the fight against the Libyan army. A video was displayed showing an armoured vehicle raising Qatari flag fighting alongside the armed militia, against the Libyan army forces in 2014. ⁸

The National Human Rights Commission of Libya, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, was invited to open an international investigation into the intervention and financial and military support of the State of Qatar for extremist terrorist groups and organizations in Libya⁹.

In a statement, the committee said that Qatar had provided support to the so-called "Mujahideen Darna Shura Council", a terrorist organization of al-Qaeda, and the "the Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council". The Benghazi Revolutionary Shura Council allied with the Ansar al-Sharia terrorist group and al-Qaeda-affiliated "the Defense Squads of Benghazi" that associated with the Ansar al-Sharia terrorist. Qatar has gone beyond political and military support to media support, whether through the recruitment of its channels and media outlets to enhance terrorist groups reputation, and to describe their elements as "revolutionaries" and anyone who stands against their project by "anti-revolutionary forces". Or by financing large media projects such as "Alnabaa Channel" that owned by Abdelhakim Belhadj and "Tanasuh" channel, which claimed to be owned by Sadiq al-Ghani.¹⁰

Fueling chaos in Syria

Libya has become a transit point for money, arms and mercenary fighters to Syria with Qatari support and funding through Turkey. Qatar, through its agents in Libya, Abdul Hakim Belhadj and Mahdi al-Haarti, was able to establish the "Brigade of the nation" in the Syrian governorate of Idlib.

"Alhaarti" appeared in a video in which presenting gifts to the fighters of the "Nation Brigade", new 4x4 vehicles, topped by al-Qaeda flags. "Bel Hadj" and "Alhaarti" were able to lure hundreds of terrorists to move from Libya to Syria to fight there, through Qatari support.¹¹

Qatar has contributed to the escalation of the conflict since its inception and throughout the Syrian crisis, through the support and arming of terrorist groups. In particular the "Ahrar al-Sham", which is close to al-Qaeda, and most of its fighters with the terrorist "Jabhat al-Nusra". Qatari Foreign Minister Khaled al-Attiyah praised "Ahrar al-Sham", saying: "It is a pure Syrian group"¹². The British newspaper the Telegraph quoted security experts as the organization of "Ahrar al-Sham" around the Syrian uprising against Assad to an "Islamic" uprising.

Terrorist organizations in Syria, such as "ISIS" and "Jabhat al-Nusra", supported by Qatar, have committed widespread systematic violations. as they were targeting civilians with artillery, in addition to cases of kidnappings and executions, the use of children in combat, the illegal banning for humanitarian assistance and torture. Funding by the government of Qatar of terrorist groups in conflict zones in a number of Syrian towns and villages, has also contributed to the closure and demolition of a large number of schools and educational institutions, and the denial of education and educational attainment to millions of Syrian students.

It should be noted that the magazine "Foreign Policy" has issued a report titled "Accusations against Qatar are incalculable." But some of them enough to show a sufficient picture, "in which Qatar policies in the region described as destructive and contributing to destabilization. According to the report, Qatar has transformed the Arab Spring into an opportunity to spread extremism, by funding the Brotherhood and their leadership in Egypt, and by trying to dispute the Egyptian president's legitimacy Abdel Fatah al-Sisi. Qatar has surpassed the role of financier in Libya and Syria, and has armed the extremist groups in Libya and Syria, in contradiction to US policies in both crises¹³.

7 Hafter accuses Qatar of supporting terrorism in Libya, the Arab news website, May 29, 2017. <https://goo.gl/ETFDfZ>

8 Uncover new evidence of Qatari terrorism in Libya, Sky News Arabic, July 5, 2017. <https://goo.gl/dB9KXH>

9 Claims for a comprehensive international investigation into Qatar's intervention in Libya, Arab News website, June 3, 2017. <https://goo.gl/79pRHN>

10 How did Qatar finance terrorist groups in Libya? previous reference.

11 How Qatar used Libya to support terrorists in Syria, Sky News Arabic, June 10, 2017. <https://goo.gl/uC3Jh1>

12 Al-Attiyah responds exclusively to CNN on the Russian intervention in Syria and supports Qatar for "Ahrar al-Sham" and Saudi Arabia's support and statements not to exclude the military option, CNN in Arabic, September 11, 2016. <https://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2015/10/20/me-201015-qatari-fm-intv-0>

13 Qatar and the Arab Spring, from financing extremists to arming them, the Arab News website, May 29, 2017. <https://goo.gl/P8Vhdk>

Many reports of the US State Department, the Treasury Department, Centres and Institutes such as Centre of the penalties and secret financing and the Foundation for Democracy Support, stated that Qatar is the largest country in the region that condones funding for extremist and terrorist groups. Although there are Qatari laws criminalizing such practices, but Qatar do not apply those laws.

Recommendations

- -The need to stop the Qatari authorities from supporting terrorist organizations and entities, and ending interference in the internal affairs of States, which has led to chaos and terrorism in the region.
 - -The need to establish a UN commission of inquiry into the crimes committed by the Qatari authorities against the Libyan and Syrian people, by sending foreign fighters "mercenaries", to fight alongside armed militias.
 - -The need to prosecute the Qatari authorities for the crimes committed in Libya and Syria, and to provide compensation to these States for all the terrorist acts that have carried out against them.
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