

الاتلاف الوطني لقوى
الثورة و المعارضة السورية



National Coalition of Syrian
Revolution and Opposition Forces

Representative Office to the United Nations

Friday 11 October 2013

Dear Ms. Tamara Alrifai,

Thank you for your e-mail on 10 October, sharing with the Syrian Coalition an advance copy of your report on suspected human rights abuses in Syria. We are deeply concerned with the reports of the abuses being performed by armed opposition groups, including extra-judicial killings as well as kidnappings and other violations of human rights in the rural Latakia governorate.

The Coalition has consistently condemned all abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. In this specific instance, it is important to note that the Coalition has explicitly and repeatedly disavowed the main perpetrators identified in this report, namely the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) as well as Jaish al-Muhajireen wa al-Ansar.

The Coalition works closely with the Free Syrian Army and international NGO's within Syria to help ensure that international human rights law is followed by those groups that we are affiliated with. We have repeatedly reaffirmed our commitment to holding all perpetrators of such abuses to account in accordance with international law, and have repeatedly called on the UN Security Council to refer Syria to the International Criminal Court.

In cases where individuals, who are associated with the FSA and the Syrian Coalition, are suspected of having committed abuses, we seek to apply rigorous standards to bring them to justice. The Syrian Coalition and Free Syrian Army will therefore continue to demonstrate our willingness to provide human rights monitors, including members of the independent Commission of Inquiry, with free and unfettered access throughout all territories under our jurisdiction, so that these individuals may be held accountable.

The crimes presented in this latest report are grave violations of human rights that must be addressed. Human Rights Watch must, however, remain vigilant in its reporting as the Syrian regime continues to exercise a nation-wide, systematic and brutal campaign of human rights violations.

As long as the conflict is allowed to continue there is a real risk that extremist groups will grow in strength and that the human rights situation in Syria will worsen. Ultimately, the only way to protect Syrian civilians and ensure the integrity of international human rights law will be for the international community to end this conflict and help ensure that a transition to democracy in Syria can take place.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Najib Ghadbian

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