



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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May 28, 2020

**Letter from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the
United Nations, addressed to the President of the General Assembly**

Excellency,

I wish to bring to your attention, attached herewith, the explanation of position (see annex) of the draft resolution entitled “International Day to Protect Education from Attack” issued in document (A/74/L.66) under agenda item 117 of the General Assembly (Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit).

I should be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 117.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**Bashar Ja’afari
Ambassador
Permanent Representative**



**- H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
President of the 74th session of the United
Nations General Assembly-New York**



Permanent Mission of The Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations

Annex to the Letter dated May 28th 2020,

Explanation of position on resolution “International Day to Protect Education from Attack”

The Syrian Arab Republic thanks the President of the General Assembly for the circulation of the draft resolution titled “International Day to Protect Education from Attack” issued in document (A/74/L.66) under agenda item 117 of the General Assembly (Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit), and expresses its appreciation for his efforts to steer the work of the GA during these extraordinary and challenging times.

We are committed to a strong, engaged and fully functional General Assembly that ensures cooperation, effective multilateralism, and action-oriented solutions. We are of the strong opinion that everyone should have the right to education, and we are committed to providing inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels. Moreover, we believe that under no circumstances shall civilians be targeted, including schoolchildren, students and teachers, and that civilian objects, such as educational institutions should not be attacked. It is in this spirit that we join the consensus in the adoption of this resolution.

It is our understanding, however, that the General Assembly continues to operate under temporary arrangements due the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that according to GA decision 74\544 of 27 March 2020, the submission of any

draft resolutions and decisions must take place in accordance with the urgency that a certain resolution or decision entails. Therefore, it is most crucial that we avoid the presentation of resolutions or decisions that fall outside the scope detailed in the above-mentioned GA decision.

In this regard, the Syrian Arab Republic has serious concerns over the substance, procedural precision and process of consultations pertaining to this resolution, and therefore, would like to convey the following observations:

1. We believe that the draft resolution “International Day to Protect Education from Attack” is long, repetitive and contains paragraphs irrelevant to the procedural substance and soul of the resolution, which is mainly the celebration and observance of an International Day to Protect Education from Attack.
2. It was the understanding of many delegations that there would be no insertion of additional paragraphs after the last round of negotiations held on April 1st. However, we were surprised to see that additional paragraphs were introduced at a time where intergovernmental, open, and constructive consultations are needed the most for a genuinely multilateral decision-making process.
3. The Syrian Arab Republic also regrets that we - and a considerable number of other delegations - were excluded from the communications regarding the process of consultations on this resolution. Furthermore, we were not consulted before the final text of the draft resolution was presented, as we were not included in the mailing list of the sponsor of the draft resolution, which made it very difficult to keep up with the progress of the consultations process and the transition from one stage to another.

4. Despite the importance of the subject of the abovementioned resolution, we firmly believe that it does not comply with the conditions stated in decision 74\544, for the adoption of resolutions under the silence procedure, and is not of an essential nature to the current and prompt work of the General Assembly.

In addition to the above, the Syrian Arab Republic has certain reservations over the substance of the resolution and hence, distances itself from the following paragraphs:

- PP3 in the reference to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, since Syria is not party to it, and therefore, cannot accept any mentioning of the ICC.
- PP 14 dealing with the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, especially that her reports on the Syrian Arab Republic are full of grave fallacies and accusations both factually and legally, and don't genuinely fulfill the mandate assigned to her.

Once more, the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation and stresses the need to the comprehensive and transparent engagement of all member states in an inclusive process of negotiations that guarantees the full functionality of the General Assembly, and we kindly request the circulation of this letter as an official document of the General assembly under agenda item 117.

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