



Security Council

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Identical letters dated 5 December 2019 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to draw to your attention the following:

The Erdoğan regime that rules Turkey is continuing its systematic aggressive violations of the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and the property and cultural heritage of the Syrian people, in flagrant violation of international law, the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of friendly relations and good-neighbourliness among States.

In dozens of letters, my country's Government has drawn your attention to documented facts and information on the practices of the rogue Erdoğan regime, including its direct military attacks on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic and its support for terrorism over the years. It has facilitated the entry of tens of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters into Syria via its territory and provided them with various kinds of weapons, including chemical weapons and chemical substances. It has joined together with Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Nusra Front, and their affiliated terrorist organizations to loot and smuggle Syrian oil and Syrian antiquities to finance terrorism. It has also stolen machinery and merchandise from Syrian factories and property from Syrian citizens in the areas occupied by its forces or where its proxy terrorist organizations and entities are present.

Following its military attack against Syria on 9 October 2019, the Turkish regime and its proxy terrorist organizations have stepped up illegal excavations for antiquities and treasures in the occupied areas. That includes the following archaeological sites around Tall Tamr: Tall Halaf, Tall al-Siwan, Tall Abu Jaradah, Tall Sinan, Tall Junaydiyah, Tall Sawkar, Tall Fakhriyah, Tall Aluq, Tall al-Hija, Tall al-Silaji, Tall al-Shuwaykhat, Tall al-Burm, Tall al-Sharah, Tall Madan, Tall Abu Shakhat, Tall al-Laban, Tall Abu Hajar, Tall al-Tawilah, Tall Jihash and Tall Attas. It also includes the following important sites in the Ayn al-Arab area: Tall Khuwayrah, Tall Kharab Sayyar, Tall Sabiy Abyad and Tall Hammam al-Turkman.

The excavations are being accompanied by looting by the Turkish occupation forces and their proxies and the systematic destruction of archaeological strata as Syrian sites are being levelled with heavy bulldozers to uncover treasures and archaeological finds that have been buried for thousands of years. That is what the



Turkish occupation forces did at archaeological sites in Manbij and Afrin. Those sites include: Tall Ayn Darah, Tall Burj Abdalu, Tall Jindayris and the Nabi Huri site.

The Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns the Turkish aggression in all its forms as a flagrant violation of international law and a blatant violation of Security Council resolutions, all of which stress respect for the unity, integrity and sovereignty of Syria. Such aggression is also a violation by the Turkish regime of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its 1999 Second Protocol; the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property; the 1972 Convention on the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage; and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Secretariat and the Security Council to assume their responsibilities to expose, condemn and end the Turkish regime's aggression, and hold the perpetrators accountable.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Louay **Falouh**
Chargé d'affaires a.i
