

Committee on the Application of Standards

Date: 18 May 2026

If they so wish, Governments appearing on the preliminary list of individual cases have the opportunity to supply on a purely voluntary basis, written information before 18 May 2026.

► Information on the application of ratified Conventions supplied by governments on the preliminary list of individual cases

Syrian Arab Republic (ratification: 2003)

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

The Government has provided the following written information.

The Government wishes to express its appreciation to the International Labour Organization for its early notification mechanism and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to transparency and constructive engagement with the Organization's supervisory bodies.

Context: A fundamental transformation of circumstances

The Government underlines that the observations of the Committee of Experts for 2026 were based largely on information from the pre-liberation period (prior to December 2024), i.e. the era of the defunct regime. The Government, which assumed its responsibilities at the beginning of 2025, operates on an entirely new foundation: human rights, the rule of law and transitional justice. All responses below are grounded in concrete measures implemented since the liberation.

Article 3(a) and Article 7(1): Compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict and penalties

- **Critical development:** With the fall of the defunct regime and the dissolution of its affiliated militias, the phenomenon of compulsory recruitment of children has been brought to an end.
- **Strict safeguards:** The Government has taken immediate action. Service in the army and internal security forces is now entirely voluntary, and attaining the age of 18 is the sole and mandatory condition for such service.
- **Accountability and transitional justice:** A National Investigative Commission has been established to address crimes committed against children during the defunct regime era. This Commission is tasked with documenting past violations, including the crime of child

recruitment, and with submitting case files to the competent judicial authorities, which will try those implicated in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Article 7(2)(a): Preventing the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour and ensuring education

- Ensuring access to education: The Government has launched an emergency national education plan, the “All for Education” campaign (2025), to ensure the return of all out-of-school children. Concrete results achieved by April 2026 include:
 - rehabilitation and reopening of 2,236 schools;
 - return to school of over 500,000 children;
 - return to teaching of 38,000 teachers;
 - the proportion of girls in general education has reached 50.2 per cent, demonstrating the Government’s commitment to girls’ right to education as a key preventive tool against child labour and early marriage.
- Preventing the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour:
 - The National Case Management System (Decree No. 1483 of 14 July 2024) has been significantly operationalized. “Child labour situation” is now recognized as a primary entry point for intervention, whereby a child removed from labour is referred directly to intensive education or vocational rehabilitation programmes.
 - The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has launched its Strategic Plan for 2026–2028, the key components of which include: (i) an economic and social empowerment programme for women; (ii) a programme to promote decent work; (iii) enhancing corporate social responsibility; and (iv) a programme to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
 - Strengthening compliance through awareness-raising and the development of labour inspection services to enhance transparency and integrity. To this end, the following has been achieved: 794 awareness-oriented inspection visits in the industrial and commercial sectors; 370 visits in the agricultural sector; and 1,134 visits related to occupational safety and health.
 - A total of 29,456 workers have been registered with the social security system.
 - Capacity-building for labour inspection and social security staff has been carried out in collaboration with the ILO Office in Damascus.

Article 7(2)(a) and (b): Identification, rehabilitation and reintegration of children

- Combating begging as one of the worst forms of child labour: A National Committee to address begging has been established by a decision of the Council of Ministers. Fifteen joint security campaigns have been carried out since 30 November 2025, resulting in:
 - identification of 465 cases of begging involving children;
 - placement of all identified children in qualified social welfare centres (including the Al-Kiswah Institute for Beggars, following its renovation and rehabilitation), instead of punitive prosecution;
 - provision of psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation programmes for these children, in preparation for their reintegration into education or vocational training.

- Work has commenced on a national employment and vocational training strategy to ensure the availability of decent work opportunities.
- Social dialogue with workers' and employers' organizations has been adopted as a foundation for enhancing compliance, ensuring effective implementation of the law and updating applicable laws and regulations.
- Strengthening inspection and compliance: The Ministry has intensified unannounced inspection campaigns (as detailed under point 2 above).

Article 3(a): Sale and trafficking of children (including for sexual exploitation)

- Operationalizing mechanisms: The Government has reactivated the National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons (chaired by the Ministry of the Interior) and adopted a new National Action Plan (2024–2026) focusing on the protection of child victims of prostitution and sexual exploitation.
- Judicial prosecutions: Law enforcement authorities are dealing firmly with child trafficking offences. A total of 250 new arrests were recorded in the second half of 2025 concerning trafficking and smuggling of children, all of which are under investigation and prosecution before the competent judiciary.

Conclusion and request

The Government does not submit this note as a defensive response to the past, but rather as a progress report on achievements made in a record period of time. The circumstances on the ground upon which the Committee of Experts' observations were based have been fundamentally transformed. The Government affirms its full capacity and readiness to cooperate with the ILO and requests technical assistance in two specific areas: (i) the training of national trainers in the field of labour inspection and the governance of inspection activities; and (ii) providing technical, logistical and advisory support in the areas of policy development and strategy formulation for inspection, employment, vocational training and wages.

On the basis of the foregoing, we submit that the exceptional efforts undertaken by the new Government warrant the non-inclusion of Syrian Arab Republic on the final list of cases to be examined by the Committee during the 114th Session of the International Labour Conference.