

UN strongly criticizes Finland for violating rights of children abandoned in Syria camps

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The file photo shows the al-Hol camp, which holds relatives of suspected Daesh terrorists in the northeastern province of Hasakah, Syria. (AFP)

United Nations, October 14 (RHC)-- A United Nations rights watchdog has rebuked Finland for violating the rights of Finnish children who were abandoned in Syrian prison camps. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) denounced Finland for violating the rights of Finnish children by leaving them in life-threatening conditions in Syrian camps, which are housing suspected Daesh Takfiri

terrorists and their families.

Composed of 18 independent experts, the committee issued its findings in a 14-page document after considering a case on behalf of six Finnish children held at al-Hol camp, which is located close to the Syria-Iraq border.

“Finland has the responsibility and power to protect the Finnish children in the Syrian camps against an imminent risk to their lives by taking action to repatriate them,” the CRC said in a statement.

Back in 2019, the case was brought to the CRC. Later, three of the children were able to leave the camp along with their mother, and finally reached Finland. “The remaining three child victims, currently between five and six years old, are still detained in closed camps in a war-like zone,” the statement said.

Located on the southern outskirts of the town of al-Hol in Syria’s Hasakah province, the infamous camp is under the control of the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a coalition of anti-Damascus militants. Besides the internally displaced, families of Daesh terrorists also reside there. U.S. occupation forces and its allied militants are actively present in the province.

“The situation of children in the camps has been widely reported as inhuman, lacking basic necessities including water, food and healthcare, and facing an imminent risk of death,” said CRC member Ann Skelton.

The CRC, whose opinions and recommendations are non-binding, further said Finland had not given due consideration to the children’s best interests when assessing their relatives’ requests for repatriation.

Furthermore, the petition from Finnish children’s relatives also said 33 other Finnish children were held at the al-Hol camp without access to legal assistance. “We call on Finland to take immediate and decisive action to preserve the lives of these children, and to bring them home to their families,” Skelton said.

This is the second time the CRC has reviewed the situation of children in refugee camps in northern Syria. Previously, it found rights violations against 49 French children held in Kurdish-held camps of Rawj, Ayn Isa, and al-Hol. The parents of these children were allegedly collaborating with Daesh.

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