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## **Dear colleagues, dear families: parents and children of Syria,**

FICE-International members from all over the world are shocked by the information, published in UN's 72-page report **Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic**, issued on February 23, 2012, outlining the case that during the Syrian uprising the country's regime has committed "gross human rights violations" and that "such violations originated from policies and directives issued at the highest levels of the armed forces and the Government."

The report states that a "number of military commanders and civilian superiors may reasonably be suspected of responsibility for crimes against humanity because of their knowing failure to take all necessary and reasonable measures within their power to prevent or repress the commission of relevant crimes by their subordinates or to submit the matter to the competent authorities."

### ***A great number of people have been arrested:***

- "According to the Violations Documenting Centre, which gathers the names of detainees and the place and date of their arrest from families and local coordination committees [run by opposition groups], more than 18,000 detainees, including more than 200 women and girls and more than 400 boys, remained in detention at 15 February 2012."

### ***A great number of people have left the country and prefer to live in extremely bad conditions than to stay and die in their own country:***

- "According to estimates, 70,000 people have been arbitrarily displaced within the country. More than 20,000 Syrians found themselves in a precarious situation as refugees in other countries."

### ***Of all of the groups in disadvantage the children are the most unprotected and vulnerable!***

- "As the violence intensified, children continued to be the victims. The State authorities made no visible efforts to protect children's rights. According to a reliable source, more than 500 children have been killed since March 2011, with the highest number of children killed in December 2011 (80 deaths) and January 2012 (72). The largest group was adolescents aged between 16 and 18 years. Snipers and other State forces killed or wounded children, including those aged 10 years and younger. Many children were killed when the army shelled residential areas in Homs and other cities in January and February 2012."

Is it possible for us to help the children in the country? FICE's members are professional educators, pedagogues and social workers. Right now it is impossible to go there. At a later point we could set up different activity workshops in the refugee camps.

Can we stop the war in Syria and protect the children? We can't – we are not an army.



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We can tell the world however, that we absolutely reject the violence against children. We will support the efforts of the international community to improve the situation of Syrian children in all areas of life. We will follow closely the implementation of children's rights in the crisis regions and alarm the International Institutions on the need of particular support!

Dear National Sections of FICE-International, if you have any opportunity to help in any way the children of the world – do it – especially for the Syrian refugees in your country!

Dear colleagues, inform us about all difficulties, good or bad outcomes in the support work with children from this region.

All we can do right now for the ones that are still in Syria is give them our moral love and support.

*Dashenka Tashkova - President of FICE-International*