RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

18 December 2003

SYR42261.E

Syria: Eligibility criteria for obtaining the amnesty from military service issued in October 2002; whether this amnesty can be applied to a person who had previously failed to complete his military service; the procedure for obtaining this amnesty

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

On 31 October 2002, President Bashar al-Assad issued Decree No. 56 for the year 2002, which provided a general amnesty to those who had committed war crimes and those who had evaded or deserted military service prior to the issuance date of the decree (AFP 31 Oct. 2002; SANA 31 Oct 2002; see also AI 2003). To obtain this amnesty, military service evaders and deserters were required to "carry out their military service within the four months following promulgation of the decree" (AFP 31 Oct. 2002).

Additional information on the decree and the amnesty available in October 2002 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

A similar decree, Decree No. 22 for the year 2003, was issued on 2 July 2003 (SANA 2 July 2003; Al-Sharq Al-Awsat 3 July 2003; AP 2 July 2003; AFP 2 July 2003; ibid. 15 July 2003; Al Bawaba 3 July 2003). The full text of this decree is attached to this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References


Al Bawaba. 3 July 2003. "Syrian President Amnesties Deserters." (Dialog)


Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) [Damascus, Internet version, in Arabic]. 2 July 2003. "Syrian President

Additional Sources Consulted

Although willing to assist, the Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic, in Ottawa, could not provide the requested information within time constraints without consulting the relevant authorities in Syria.


*Europa World Year Book 2002*

IRB Databases

A Researcher from the Dayan Center for Middle Eastern Studies did not respond to a letter requesting information.

WNC/Dialog

**Internet sites, including:**

Al Bawaba

Amnesty International

AsylumLaw.org

BBC

*Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2002*

European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI)

GlobalSecurity.org

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

The Middle East Network Information Center (MENIC)

*Middle East Review of International Affairs* (MERIA)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)


Syria Gate

SyriaLive.net

Syrian Arab Republic, Ministry of Information

Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC)

Syria Online

United Kingdom, Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)

War Resisters' International

*World Factbook 2003*

**Search engine:**

Google
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