



## Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



**A Weekly Update from the  
UN Department of Public Information**

**No. 127/30 December 2015**

### **Syria: UN and partners aid evacuation of injured from four besieged towns**

More than 460 people, including the seriously injured and their family members, were evacuated from four towns under siege in Syria on 28 December with the help of the United Nations and its Red Cross and Red Crescent partners following a local agreement. "The humanitarian community in Syria is keen to see the swift implementation of the next phases of the Four Towns Agreement, including humanitarian access to people in these towns," said the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the country, Yacoub El-Hillo. For his part, the UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura stressed that the UN's clear goal is to reach as soon as possible a nationwide ceasefire.

[www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=4309](http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=4309)

[www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52911#.VoPtBvkrLIU](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52911#.VoPtBvkrLIU)

### **UN envoy sets 25 January as target date to begin intra-Syrian peace talks**

The United Nations Special Envoy for Syria has set 25 January 2016 as the target date to begin talks between the parties aimed at ending the five-year-old conflict, his spokesperson announced on 26 December 2015. "In line with the clear parameters outlined in Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), the Special Envoy intends to complete his consultations in early January, with a view to initiating intra-Syrian talks on a target date of 25 January 2016 in Geneva," said a statement issued by the spokesperson for Staffan de Mistura. "He counts on full cooperation of all the relevant Syrian parties in this process. Continuing developments on the ground should not be allowed to derail it." In its resolution, the 15-member Council called for a Syrian-led political process facilitated by the UN to establish within six months "credible, inclusive and non-sectarian governance," setting a schedule for drafting a new constitution, with free and fair elections to be held within 18 months under UN supervision with all Syrians, including members of the diaspora, eligible to vote.

[www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52906#.VoP1LvkrLIU](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52906#.VoP1LvkrLIU)

### **On the record quote from UNRWA Spokesperson, Chris Guinness**

The UNRWA Spokesperson, said on 25 December: "UNRWA welcomes any developments that could end the armed conflict in and around Yarmouk, and ease the inhuman conditions that Palestine refugees and other civilians in Yarmouk continue to endure. Over the past three months, there have been persistent reports of negotiations for some form of truce or evacuation arrangement in Yarmouk. These reports are credible and UNRWA is taking them seriously, although they have not been officially or formally confirmed, and details have been vague. There are several thousand civilians living in deeply abject conditions in Yarmouk. As UNRWA is deeply concerned about their well-being, the Agency is seeking from the Syrian government further details of any negotiated arrangements that will affect the humanitarian situation of civilians in Yarmouk. In particular, UNRWA demands that any arrangements being negotiated in and around Yarmouk must include guarantees for a durable cessation of hostilities, for the protection of civilians, and for safe, uninterrupted humanitarian access for UNRWA and other humanitarian actors. UNRWA is redoubling its strong appeals to the Government of Syria and relevant actors to allow and facilitate humanitarian access to Yarmouk. This is

urgently needed to enable UNRWA to deliver food, clean water, winter supplies, healthcare, and other humanitarian assistance and services to civilians in Yarmouk. UNRWA stands ready immediately to respond to the humanitarian needs of the entire civilian population of Yarmouk."

### **UN condemns archaeological destruction at major World Heritage site of Bosra**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 24 December condemned the destruction of parts of the ancient Syrian city of Bosra in fighting two days earlier, alerting the world art market to potential trafficking in artefacts from the World Heritage site. "The destructions sustained by Bosra represent a further escalation in the horror of war and must be stopped at once to allow the concerned parties to consolidate the agreement reached on the ground to preserve the irreplaceable heritage of Bosra," UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova said of the site containing Roman, Byzantine and Muslim ruins, including a magnificent 2nd century Roman theatre.

[www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52904#.VoP1yvkrLIU](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52904#.VoP1yvkrLIU)  
[www.un.org/press/en/2015/db151224.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/db151224.doc.htm)

### **Conditions of Syrian refugees in Lebanon worsen considerably, UN reports**

Some 70 per cent of the over 1 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon now live below the Lebanese extreme poverty line, a big rise over 2014, and food insecurity is mounting, the United Nations reported on 24 December, calling for greater access to the domestic labour market to mitigate the crisis. "Each day represents a monumental struggle to meet the most basic needs," the 2015 UN Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon said, noting that the rise in those below the \$3.84-per-day poverty line rise represented "a striking increase" from 49 per cent in 2014. "We have reached a critical juncture. More than ever, refugees need our solidarity and support," said UNHCR Representative in Lebanon Mireille Girard, whose agency compiled the report together with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). "Without a robust and sustainable humanitarian response, refugees risk sinking deeper and deeper into poverty," she added.

[www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52893#.VoP2c\\_krLIU](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52893#.VoP2c_krLIU)  
[2015 UN Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon](http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/db151224.doc.htm)

### **UN Radio in Arabic**

United Nations and its partners evacuated hundreds of people from several regions in Syria  
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/date/2015/12/28/>

de Mistura plans to start Syrian talks on January 25  
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/187925#.VoP7TfkrKUK>

UNESCO condemns the destruction in the ancient city of Bosra , Syria  
[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/187851#.VoP7I\\_krKUK](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/187851#.VoP7I_krKUK)

Vulnerability of Syrian refugees in Lebanon increases, while humanitarian agencies face shortage of funding  
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/187775#.VoP72vkrKUK>

Dramatic increase in the proportion of Syrian refugees under the poverty line in Lebanon  
[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/187759#.VoQBG\\_krKUK](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/187759#.VoQBG_krKUK)

### **UN TWITTER (@UN)**

@OCHA\_Syria: 30 December  
New wave of displacement with over 9000 IDPs from #Sheikh\_Miskeen #Syria, see UN cross-border response from #Jordan <http://ow.ly/WsiTg>

@OCHA\_Syria: 30 December

With continued conflict in #Syria & elsewhere, 2015 likely to break records for forced displacement says @Refugees <http://ow.ly/WrKLX>

@OCHA\_Syria: 29 December

Evacuation of injured people from #Syria by land & air with help of @RedCrossLebanon, ICRC #Lebanon, @IHHen #Turkey <http://ow.ly/Wpo3S>

@UN\_News\_Centre: Dec 28 December

#Syria: @UN and partners aid evacuation of injured from four besieged towns <http://bit.ly/1IzpA8Q>

### **Ongoing UN social media campaigns:**

**#4Syria campaign** was launched on 20 March 2015 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to highlight the Syria conflict, now in its fifth year. The campaign calls for an end to the conflict and seeks to raise funds for UNRWA programmes supporting Palestine refugees in Syria as well as those displaced outside the country. It features testimonies of Palestine refugees, as well as documents highlighting emergency work carried out by UNRWA in the region. View the campaign at: <http://www.unrwa.org/syria-crisis/syria4thanniversary>

**#myvoicemyschool** is a youth advocacy project born in the classroom. Palestine refugee youth in Syria study and discuss quality education with their peers in the UK and Belgium. Through live video conversations and customized teaching materials, students and teachers explore how education can help them achieve their aspirations. Each class will define and develop an advocacy project to promote and share their ideas. <http://www.unrwa.org/myvoicemyschool>

**ShareTheMeal** is a smartphone application launched by the UN World Food Programme in November 2015 to support refugee children who have fled the conflict in Syria to neighboring countries. The free app is available for iOS and Android app stores worldwide. Users can make donations and start sharing meals with hungry children. Contributions will benefit Syrian refugee children in Jordan who are part of WFP's school meals programme. <http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/wfp-launches-free-app-smartphone-users-help-feed-syrian-refugee-children>

### **Relevant links to UN Secretariat, Agencies, Funds and Programmes on Syria DPI Focus Page on Syria:**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=146&Body=Syria&Body1=>

#### **UN System agencies :**

UN Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/>

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/media/index.html>

WFP: <http://www.wfp.org/countries/syria>

OCHA: <http://unocha.org/syria> , [twitter.com/ocha\\_syria](https://twitter.com/ocha_syria) , [facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria](https://facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria)

WHO: <http://www.who.int/countries/syr/en/>

UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4f86c2426.html>

OHCHR: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/NewsSearch.aspx?CID=SY>

UNRWA: <http://www.unrwa.org/>

#### **UN on social media:**

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UN>

Flickr: [http://www.flickr.com/photos/un\\_photo/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/)

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/unitednations>

Tumblr: <http://united-nations.tumblr.com/>

**Photo galleries:**

UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c25d.html>

UNRWA: <http://www.unrwa.org/photogallery.php>

OCHA: <http://www.unocha.org/media-resources/photo-gallery>

UNICEF: [http://www.unicef.org/photography/photo\\_2013.php#UNI82253](http://www.unicef.org/photography/photo_2013.php#UNI82253)

IRIN: <http://www.irinnews.org/photo/>