



## **Syrian Crisis** **United Nations Response**



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

**No. 132/ 3 February 2016**

### **Special Envoy announces suspension of intra-Syrian talks until 25 February**

Five days after the start of intra-Syrian talks in Geneva, Special Envoy de Mistura announced a temporary pause. Speaking at a press stake out in Geneva on 3 February, the Envoy said that he had decided to bring a temporary pause and had fixed the date of 25 February for the next talks. "I have indicated that I am not prepared to hold talks for the sake of talks and the Secretary-General has said the same," Mr. de Mistura stated, noting that more work needed to be done by the stakeholders. "I find that this stage is very important to give an opportunity to those who have been insisting that the talks take place that they also address the issues which have been pending and unresolved," he added.

<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=4356>

The indirect talks convened by UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura started in Geneva on 29 January with a view to ending the five-year conflict. The Envoy began with a meeting with a delegation of the Government led by the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the UN, Bashar al-Ja'afari. This was followed on 31 January by a meeting with the delegation of the High Negotiations Committee (HNC) following their arrival in Geneva. At a press conference on 1 February, Mr. de Mistura noted that the Syrian people expected a tangible outcome from the talks. "When I meet Syrian people they tell me, please don't just have a conference, have something also that we can see and touch while you are meeting in Geneva," he said. Heeding the call for a meaningful participation of Syrian women and in line with Security Council Resolution 2254, Mr. de Mistura announced on 2 February the setting up of an independent Women's Advisory Board to the Office of the UN Special Envoy for Syria. The board will be composed initially of a group of 12 women chosen by several Syrian women's organizations through their own consultative process. Additional women's organizations will be able to contribute to the efforts of the board through a system of regular rotations.

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/%28httpPages%29/A45B5560F87E2336C1257F4700646029?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpPages%29/A45B5560F87E2336C1257F4700646029?OpenDocument)

### **UN agencies and partners seek US\$ 1.4 billion for Syrian children's education**

Ahead of a major donor conference in London, UN agencies and aid organizations making up the "No Lost Generation Initiative" called on 2 January for US\$1.4 billion to help 4 million children and youth inside Syria and in neighbouring countries access formal and non-formal education. "The scale of the crisis for children is growing all the

time, which is why there are now such fears that Syria is losing a whole generation of its youth," said Dr. Peter Salama, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa for UNICEF. The region's education crisis will be in the spotlight at a donor conference in London on 4 February, co-hosted by the UK, Germany, Kuwait, Norway, and the United Nations. Leaders from more than 30 countries are expected to attend the meeting, with the aim of raising new funding to meet the immediate and longer-term needs of those affected by the crisis. The "No Lost Generation" initiative includes the Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children, UNICEF, UNRWA and UNHCR.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/usd14-billion-needed-get-every-syrian-child-back-school-say-aid-agencies>

### **UNRWA calls for donor support for Palestine refugees in Syria**

The UN Works and Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) on 2 February appealed to donors for US\$414 million to meet the humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees affected by the Syria conflict. The agency's 2016 Emergency Appeal for the Syria Regional Crisis aims to support 450,000 Palestine refugees inside Syria, as well as the 60,000 who have fled to Lebanon and Jordan. "In the midst of the broader Syrian tragedy, and with just two days to go before the London donors' conference, it is critical that the plight of the Palestine refugee community is not underestimated or forgotten," said UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl. Over 60 per cent of those remaining inside Syria (280,000 people) are internally displaced, and an estimated 95 per cent (430,000) are in need of sustained humanitarian assistance.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-launches-2016-syria-appeal-critical-palestinians-not-forgotten>

### **UNHCR aid reaches Syrian town for the first time in three years**

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR), together with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), delivered crucial humanitarian aid to the town of Al-Mleiha, near Damascus, for the first time in three years. The town, where 26,000 people live in dire conditions, had been largely isolated by the prolonged fighting. "UNHCR is committed to delivering humanitarian assistance to all people in need all over Syria," said UNHCR's Representative in Syria, Sajjad Malik. The recent access to Al-Mleiha "boosts hopes for upcoming regular deliveries of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people in Al-Mleiha and other besieged and hard to reach locations."

<http://www.unhcr.org/56b0d8b16.html>

### **UN human rights chief says war crimes should not be part of any amnesty in Syria**

No amnesty should be considered for those suspected of having committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Syria, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights told reporters in Geneva on 1 February. "In the case of Syria, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is there to remind everyone that where allegations reach the threshold of war crimes against humanity, amnesties are not permissible," said Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. "Clearly when looking most recently at the forced starvation of people in Madaya – and there are 15 other besieged towns and cities – this is not just a war crime but a crime against humanity if proven in court, and these are very serious issues," he added.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53137#.VrI9JObqW3Y>

## **Secretary-General and Security Council condemn bombing attack in southern Damascus**

The Secretary-General and the Security Council strongly condemned the bombing near the Sayidda Zainab Shrine in southern Damascus on 31 January, which killed over 60 people. In his statement, Mr. Ban noted that it coincided with the start of the intra-Syrian talks, and stressed that the Syrian people expect to see credible negotiations in Geneva. "They deserve more than false choice between extremism and repression," he said. The Secretary-General also stressed the need for both the Syrian Government and the opposition to agree on immediate improvements to the dire humanitarian situation in Syria. The deadly attack was also condemned in the strongest terms by Security Council members, who voiced grave concerns that ISIL and other entities associated to ISIL or Al-Qaida continue to operate in Syria.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=9431>

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12232.doc.htm>

## **Aid agencies warn that over 12,000 people face acute shortages in two besieged towns**

An estimated 12,500 people are besieged in the villages of Foah and Kafraya in north-western Syria, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on 31 January. While the United Nations and the Red Cross/Red Crescent delivered assistance to the enclave in October 2015 and on three occasions in January, there are increasing reports of acute shortages of food, basic commodities and medical supplies. Local sources report that up to 70 per cent of the farmland is now inaccessible due to sniper activity. Prices of food and other basic staples have increased sharply.

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/syria/document/flash-update-foah-and-kafraya-31-january-2016>

## **UN Radio in Arabic**

Special Envoy de Mistura sends invitations to women representatives of civil society in Syria to participate in the talks

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190780/#.VrIqh7IrKUK>

UNRWA launches appeal to help the Palestinians who are suffering from a critical situation in Syria

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190744/#.VrIqwrIrKUK>

Special Envoy de Mistura stresses the importance of improving the situation on the ground while the talks continue in Geneva

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190677/#.VrIrbIrKUK>

Sigrid Kaag meets Syrian refugees and host communities in the Bekaa, Lebanon

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190664/#.VrIr27IrKUK>

Secretary-General calls for holding accountable the bombing perpetrators in Sayidda Zeinab district, Damascus,

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190698/#.VrIsArIrKUK>

Italy donates million euros for food aid to Palestine refugees in Syria

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190625/#.VrIta7IrKUK>

Human Rights Commissioner calls for zero amnesty for perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190613/#.VrItmLIrKUK>

Special Envoy and Deputy Envoy meet the delegations of the High Negotiations Committee and the Syrian government separately

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190597/#.VrIt67IrKUK>

Special Envoy de Mistura: The best way to discuss the implementation of important measures concerning the Syrian people is by coming to Geneva

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190501/#.VrIuqrIrKUK>

Syrian talks begin today in Geneva

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190384/#.VrIvkrIrKUK>

Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura delivers a message to the Syrian people

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/190359/#.VrIv9rIrKUK>

### **UN Twitter**

#SupportSyrians - It's time to help farming families stay on their land -

@FAOemergencies <http://bit.ly/1DjzV3P> pic.twitter.com/5QVPFXoPw1 -3 February

Ban Ki-moon at @Cambridge\_Uni: I call for a strong show of solidarity at tomorrow's #SupportSyrians conference.

[https://twitter.com/un\\_spokesperson/status/694847296887001089](https://twitter.com/un_spokesperson/status/694847296887001089) - 3 February

News: Syria Envoy de Mistura establishes Independent Women's Advisory Board to his Office <http://ow.ly/XR84L> #womenofSyria #SyriaTalks - 3 February

"Women & civil society orgs can provide vital ideas & insight to the #SyriaTalks" - UN Envoy <http://ow.ly/XR84L>

[https://twitter.com/UN\\_Women/status/694605757111664640](https://twitter.com/UN_Women/status/694605757111664640) - 2 February

See new @OCHA\_Syria plan for people in Syria, refugees + host communities

<http://bit.ly/205huqV> #SupportSyrians pic.twitter.com/GT11YRmj4R

- 2 February

.@OPCW Director-Gen on Syria: "Nearly 2 decades after CWC entered into force, the treaty is facing a major test" <http://ow.ly/XNM88> - 2 February

UN-brokered #SyriaTalks officially start in @UNGeneva w/ opposition meeting

<http://bit.ly/203SAII> pic.twitter.com/Rv01Mf5qFT- 1 February

UN-sponsored #Syriatalks begin; agencies amplify calls for access to besieged civilians

<http://bit.ly/1NFM0As> - 29 January

Special Envoy for Syria de Mistura's msg to women, men & children ahead of

#SyriaTalks <https://youtu.be/6p6pyHPOHGQ> pic.twitter.com/OF72XmNAFF- 29 January

See full message to the women, men & children of Syria, ahead of #SyriaTalks here:  
<https://youtu.be/6p6pyHPOHGO>  
<https://twitter.com/UNGeneva/status/692759427787661312>- 28 January

Help end "siege and starvation as a weapon of war" - @UNReliefChief urges Security Council <http://bit.ly/1QDiy4z> #SyriaCrisis-- 28 January

### **UN FACEBOOK**

As the world looks to the #SyriaTalks in Geneva and the international conference to #SupportSyrians in London this week, it is important to remember that women's voices are essential to achieving lasting peace.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen/photos/a.10150211048801905.306630.124025261904/10153321014966905/?type=3&theater> - 3 February

"The talks have started"

UN Syria Envoy Staffan de Mistura says the Intra-Syrian Talks in Geneva have officially begun. Read the Special Envoy's remarks to the press at UN Geneva on Monday night in full here: <http://goo.gl/7E8z7D> #SyriaTalks

<https://www.facebook.com/UN.Geneva/videos/vb.117939301585215/992057220840081/?type=2&theater>- 2 February

Syria is the world's biggest humanitarian crisis – and billions of dollars in international aid is needed to support people caught up in conflict. On Thursday, 4 February, the UK, Germany, Norway, Kuwait and the United Nations will co-host a conference on the crisis, bringing together world leaders from around the globe to rise to the challenge of raising the money needed.

<https://www.supportingsyria2016.com/>- 29 January

"You know that the United Nations will never abandon the Syrian people. We need you to feel that this time is the right one, we will do all that we can, God willing. As salam aleekom."-- United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura in a new video message to the women, men and children of Syria, ahead of the Intra-Syrian Talks at UN Geneva.

<https://www.facebook.com/UN.Geneva/videos/vb.117939301585215/989955937716876/?type=2&theater>- 28 January

### **UN INSTAGRAM**

#UnitedNations Special Envoy for #Syria Staffan de Mistura speaks to journalists from across the world at the UN Office at #Geneva, where the Intra-Syrian Talks have started. In a special video message ahead of the talks on ending the five-year crisis, the Mr. de Mistura told the people of Syria: "You have seen enough conferences, two of them already taken place. This one cannot fail. We've heard your voices, we heard when you have been telling us so many times wherever we met you, you Syrian people, you women, men and children of Syria, saying: Enough, 'khalas, kefaya,' enough killing, murdering, torturing, prisons." "You know that the United Nations will never abandon the Syrian people. We need you to feel that this time is the right one, we will do all that we can, God willing. As salam aleekom." Regram @ungeneva #UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré #SyriaTalks #UNGeneva

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BBKm0RITDBU/?taken-by=unitednations>- 30 January

## **Social media campaigns**

### **Joint appeal to end suffering in Syria #SyriaCrisis**

More than 120 humanitarian organizations and UN agencies issued a joint appeal on 21 January, urging the world to raise their voices and call for an end to the Syria crisis and to the suffering endured by millions of civilians. The appeal outlines a series of immediate, practical steps that can improve humanitarian access and the delivery of aid to those in need inside Syria. People can "[\*sign the appeal\*](#)" simply by liking, sharing, and retweeting it.

<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/more-100-humanitarian-organizations-and-un-agencies-urge-public-join-them-speaking>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWBni3P4Ok8>

**#MyVoiceMySchool-** On 25 January in London and 27 January in Brussels, the #MyVoiceMySchool project will connect European students with Palestine refugee students to discuss the importance of education in their lives. The calls are taking place a few days ahead of the 'Supporting Syria and the Region, London 2016' conference on 4 February. The #MyVoiceMySchool project has connected Palestine refugee students in Homs, Damascus and Rif Damascus with peers in Brussels and London.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/european-and-palestine-refugee-students-syria-connect-skype-advocate>

**#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>

**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/>