



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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UN conducts first airdrops of humanitarian aid in Syria

Briefing the Security Council on 24 February, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien announced that the United Nations had carried out its first humanitarian airdrop of 21 tonnes of items in the besieged town of Deir Ezzor. He also told the Council that following the agreements facilitated through discussions in Munich earlier this month, an aid convoy had reached 40,000 people in Madimayet, in rural Damascus. This followed the delivery by UN and Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoys of humanitarian supplies to over 100,000 people in the besieged town of Madaya, Zabadani, Foah and Kefraya. "Much as we try, the delivery of humanitarian assistance can only address the symptoms, not the root causes", Mr. O'Brien said, urging the international community and the parties to the conflict to seize the momentum created around the nationwide cessation of hostilities to bring a political solution to the crisis.

http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ERC_USG%20Stephen%20O%20Brien%20SC%20Statement%20on%20Syria_24Feb2016.pdf

Secretary-General welcomes agreement on nationwide cessation of hostilities

The Secretary-General welcomed the agreement announced on 22 February in Munich by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, as co-chairs of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) Ceasefire Taskforce, on a nationwide cessation of hostilities to come into effect on 27 February. Mr. Ban said he believes the agreement, if respected, would constitute a significant step forward in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). "Above all, it is a long-awaited signal of hope to the Syrian people that after five years of conflict there may be an end to their suffering in sight", he said. The Secretary-General strongly urged the parties to abide by the terms of the agreement. He added that the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria stands ready to support implementation of the agreement, both on the ground in Damascus and in Geneva. The United Nations further counts on the cooperation of ISSG members as all stakeholders jointly set the implementation mechanism in motion.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=9484>

Secretary-General and Security Council speak out against the bombings attacks in Homs and Damascus

Following bombings in Damascus and Homs on 21 February, which killed more than 120 people and injured hundreds, the Secretary-General and the Security Council both condemned the attacks, for which Da'esh/ISIL claimed responsibility. In a statement on 22 February, Mr. Ban extended his deepest condolences to the bereaved families and wished a speedy recovery to the injured. "Those responsible for these atrocious and deliberate attacks on civilians must be held accountable", he stated. In the same vein, the members of the Security Council reaffirmed their grave concern that ISIL, foreign terrorist fighters who have joined ISIL in Syria, and groups that have pledged allegiance to ISIL, Al Nusra Front or Al-Qaida, continue operating in Syria. They condemned the negative impact of their presence, violent extremist ideology and actions on the stability

of Syria, and neighbouring countries, with a devastating humanitarian impact on the civilian populations.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sgsm17558.doc.htm>

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12254.doc.htm>

UNRWA condemns explosions targeting civilians in Sayyida Zeinab

The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) strongly condemned the parties responsible for the explosions in the market area of Sayyida Zeinab in southern rural Damascus on 21 February, resulting in deaths and injuries to dozens of Syrian and Palestinian civilians. UNRWA staff extended their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved Syrian and Palestinian families. Among those killed were 31 Palestine refugees, including a twelve-year old UNRWA student, who was killed along with her mother; the thirteen-year old son of an UNRWA teacher as well as an UNRWA staff member who was killed with her six-month old son, her sister and her brother-in-law. The mother of an UNRWA teacher was also killed. In the strongest possible terms, UNRWA condemned the perpetrators of this mindless carnage, which was so deliberately calculated to kill and maim as many civilians as possible. Such atrocious acts, as outrageous as they are, must not distract from the pursuit of a negotiated, peaceful and durable resolution of the armed conflict in Syria.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa-condemns-explosions-targeting-civilians-sayyida-zeinab>

Majority of Syrian refugees arriving in Greece are fleeing violence

Over 90 percent of Syrians arriving in Greece made the perilous journey by sea to escape conflict and violence in Syria, according to a UNHCR survey released on 23 February. The UN refugee agency conducted this survey from 15-31 January 2016, interviewing a sampling of more than 400 Syrian and Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers who arrived on the islands of Chios, Leros, Lesbos and Samos. Other key findings include: 85% of Syrians interviewed were internally displaced before their journey to Greece; and 87% were traveling with family members. The majority of Syrians state family reunification as the reason for the choice of destination, which UNHCR says highlights the need for robust reunification procedures.

<http://www.unhcr.org/56cc4b876.html>

Deputy Secretary-General meets with Syrian refugees in Turkey

Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson travelled to Gaziantep, Turkey on 21 February to meet with Syrian refugees and local authorities. During his visit, he witnessed the impact of the Syrian conflict on countries in the region and heard many eyewitness accounts of refugees who have fled across the border. From Gaziantep, Mr. Eliasson travelled to Ankara, where he met with the Prime Minister and Government officials to discuss the response to the refugee flows resulting from the Syrian conflict, among other issues.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/db160222.doc.htm>

Civilians bear the brunt of Syria conflict, warns human rights investigation commission

Nearly six years after the onset of the Syria conflict, civilians bear the brunt of intensifying hostilities conducted by an ever-increasing number of warring parties. As their country is reduced to ruins, Syrian men, women and children – often the objects of deliberate attack – are fleeing their homes in an often perilous search for safe haven. In its latest report to the Human Rights Council issued on 22 February, the Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria details the catastrophic destruction of civilian infrastructure caused by the war, including medical and educational facilities, public spaces, and power and water installations. The report also examines the rending of Syria's social fabric and increasing divisions and distrust between communities. "We are

seeing an overwhelming yet consistent intensification of external military involvement in Syria by all parties, with devastating consequences for civilians and various communities. With the intensification of airstrikes, there are few safe places for civilians," said Commission Chair Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro. The report draws on 415 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses inside and outside the country, collected between July 2015 and January 2016.

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/A-HRC-31-68.pdf>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17078&LangID=E>

Investigation on chemical weapons use in Syria to start in March, says head of Joint OPCW-UN panel

Speaking to reporters after briefing the Security Council on 22 February, the head of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism on Chemical Weapon Use in Syria said that the list of potential cases should be finalized by the first week of March so that the investigation of cases deemed as possibly leading to the identification of perpetrators can begin. During a closed-door session, the head of the OPCW-UN body, Ms. Virginia Gamba, submitted the first report to the Council covering the period from 24 September 2015 to 10 February 2016. "The panel initially identified six potential cases for further investigation, while a seventh case was added during the briefing to the Security Council," she noted. On the next steps, she added that the investigative team will be divided into two groups and will work in parallel. It will report to the Security Council every two months, until the Mechanism mandate ends in September 2016.

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/142

UN Radio in Arabic

UN Security Council condemns bombings in Homs and Damascus

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192676/#.Vs3XXPrkKUK>

New UNHCR survey confirms that Afghans and Syrians arriving in Greece are fleeing conflict and violence

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192657/#.Vs3XjfrkKUK>

More than a hundred thousand refugees and immigrants arrived to Europe in less than two months

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192638/#.Vs3Xv_krKUK

Deputy Secretary-General meets Syrian refugees in Turkey

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192572/#.Vs3YSPkrKUK>

Virginia Gamba: we will be investigating seven cases of potential chemical weapons use in Syria

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192571/#.Vs3Yc_krKUK

Ban Ki-moon: the cessation of hostilities agreement in Syria would be an important step in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2254

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192541/#.Vs3Y6_krKUK

Commission of Inquiry on Syria: All the warring parties fail to respect international humanitarian law

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192526/#.Vs3ZHvkrKUK>

Secretary-General condemns bombings in Damascus and Homs
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192522/#.Vs3ZTvkrKUK>

Special Envoy for Syria condemns terrorist acts in Damascus and Homs
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192491/#.Vs3ZgfrKUK>

Preparations are underway for air dropping aid in Deir al-Zour, Syria
http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192393/#.Vs3aP_krKUK

Special Envoy back to Geneva from Syria to participate in a working group meeting on cease-fire
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192378/#.Vs3a7vkrKUK>

Humanitarian aid arrives to tens of thousands people in besieged areas
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/192241/#.Vs3bUfkrKUK>

TWITTER

This is what January looked like for Palestine refugees in Syria - more @unrwa info is here: <http://goo.gl/VdGJVy> pic.twitter.com/Ko0oQbUBYC--23 February

Ban Ki-moon welcomes agreement by International Syria Support Group on nationwide cessation of hostilities in #Syria <http://bit.ly/1QxqC8H> -23 February

Almost 5 years on, Syria is a country destroyed with civilians paying the biggest price. New #COISyria report <http://ow.ly/YBYEY> -22 February

New @refugees video from Homs: Syrian returnees face challenge of rebuilding their homes from the rubble: https://youtu.be/zOS1va7eFWk?list=PLtPw-Y91GlmXB_t-2Q7v3ZZ0Ok19ty9xp 22 February

5700 families will receive thermal blankets by the end of our 2nd week of humanitarian operations in #Yalda, #Syria.
<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/701742243049291778> - 22 February

This is what January looked like for Palestine #refugees in #Syria: <http://goo.gl/VdGJVy>
<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/701745759423750144> - 22 February

There is no military solution to the Syrian conflict - Jan Eliasson met w/ refugee families in Turkey this weekend <pic.twitter.com/RFOhB3xBR2> -21 February

Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson met with families at Nizip refugee camp outside Gaziantep in Turkey. <pic.twitter.com/d3QfGqr4aG>- 21 February

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<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/701745759423750144> - 22 February

31 trucks delivered food to ppl of Moadamiyeh, Syria for 1st time in 19 months - @WFP
<http://ow.ly/Yt9x9> pic.twitter.com/Bv2by7fSZa- 18 February

UN FACEBOOK

As the Syrian conflict is entering its sixth year, civilians are bearing the brunt of intensifying hostilities conducted by an ever-increasing number of warring parties, with aerial bombardments by pro-Government forces leaving "few safe places," a new United Nations Human Rights Council-mandated report issued on Monday has found.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/IICISyria/Pages/IndependentInternationalCommission.aspx>--23 February

"Don't lose hope. Life is like walking around a block. There is always a turning point. You may not be able to see it now, but you will one day turn the next corner and things will get better. The three first words of the UN charter are 'We the Peoples.' You are at the center of all the work that we do. It is about your lives, your opportunities and your future."

These are the words refugees at the Nizip refugee camp outside Gaziantep in Turkey heard from Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson this weekend.

"There is no military solution to the Syrian conflict. The UN's first priority is therefore to find a political solution to end this terrible nightmare," he said. 21 February

<https://www.facebook.com/unitednations/photos/pcb.10153990943485820/10153990921595820/?type=3&theater>

Syria update: this week the World Food Programme managed to deliver food to over 81,000 people living in 5 besieged areas, including Madaya, Moadamiya, and Zabadani in rural Damascus and Foah and Kafrayah in rural Idleb.

This is a huge step forward. Some of these areas have been besieged for over a year. 19 February

<https://www.facebook.com/WorldFoodProgramme/photos/a.10153267434550178.1073741864.28312410177/10153267435080178/?type=3&theater>

UN INSTAGRAM

Syrian children living in the Nizip #refugee camp near Gaziantep in #Turkey.

This photo was taken during #UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson's visit to the camp this weekend, where he met families and heard their accounts - first-hand encounters of the #syriacrisis, the escape, life in the camp and hopes for a better future. Eliasson reassured the refugees: "Don't lose hope. You are at the center of all the work that we do. It is about your lives, your opportunities and your future." Photo: Hanna

Grahn, Office of the Deputy Secretary-General, #UnitedNations

#Syria #refugeecamp #SyriaCrisis - 22 February

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

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](#)" 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- #Myvoicemyschool, running for a second year, is an educational project linking Palestine refugee youth in Syria with their peers in England and Belgium. Through live video conversations and customized teaching materials, students and teachers explore how education can help them meet their future aspirations.

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.995861277127106.1073741879.105171192862790/995861320460435/?type=3&theater>

#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 neighbouring 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, [facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria](https://www.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/

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

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