



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



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

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### **Intra-Syrian talks restart in Geneva**

As a new round of talks opened in Geneva on 13 April, Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura met with the delegation of the High Negotiations Committee (HNC). In a press conference afterwards, the Special Envoy said that despite several serious incidents, the cessation of hostilities is still holding. "We need to make sure, at any cost, that the cessation of hostilities, in spirit and in substance, continues to give hope to the Syrian people because that is what made all of them believe that, in fact, even if they have to wait for the Intra-Syrian talks, their lives are at least improved", he told reporters. Mr. de Mistura appealed to all stakeholders to reaffirm their support and protect the cessation of hostilities, noting that at the beginning of the second round of talks, that would be a significant help.

<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=4474>

### **Ahead of talks Special Envoy briefs Security Council on regional consultations**

Before the resumption of the Intra-Syrian talks, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura briefed the Security Council on 12 April on his consultations in Tehran where he met with Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. The Special Envoy also held meetings with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem in Damascus on 11 April, and with Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Judeh in Amman on 10 April. Speaking to reporters on 11 April, Mr. de Mistura noted that the next phase of discussions in Geneva would focus on political transition, governance and constitutional principles. The issues of increased humanitarian access and the cessation of hostilities to all besieged areas were also discussed during the Envoy's visits. "We did raise and discuss the importance of protecting and maintaining and supporting the cessation of hostilities, which is, as you know, fragile.....and we need to make sure that it continues to be sustained even when there are incidents to be contained", Mr. de Mistura said.

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/%28httpNewsByYear\\_en%29/145DF0625B2B6CF3C1257F920040B191?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpNewsByYear_en%29/145DF0625B2B6CF3C1257F920040B191?OpenDocument)

### **Chemical weapons investigative team presents progress report to Security Council**

The Head of the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the UN and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Virginia Gamba, briefed the Security Council on 13 April on progress made in the implementation of resolution 2235, on chemical weapons in Syria. Since its last report in March, the investigative team visited Syria and countries in the region to discuss relevant information on nine cases under the Mechanism's investigation. The visits to the region will continue during the course of the investigation. A progress report on the ongoing work of the investigative team is expected in June, followed by a comprehensive report in August.

<http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp>

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2235%282015%29](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2235%282015%29)

### **WFP air drops aid in besieged city of Deir ez-Zour**

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) delivered 20 metric tons of food by air on 10 April to benefit 2,500 people in the besieged city of Deir ez-Zour. The urgently needed supplies were dropped from high altitude by a WFP-chartered aircraft. Over 200,000 people have been living under siege in Deir ez-Zour in dire need of humanitarian assistance. The air drop was the first time WFP food assistance reached besieged parts of the city since March 2014. Another successful airdrop, including food items for 2,000 people for one month, was carried out on 12 April in Deir ez-Zour.

<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/wfp-food-assistance-arrives-air-besieged-people-deir-ezzor>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53665#.Vw5bnXrgWDk>

### **Torture of children is an unbearable reality in Syria – UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein expressed alarm at the torture of children and the suffering inflicted on them, particularly in Syria. "Even very young children are spared no suffering – including the use of specific machinery to inflict pain; mock executions; the obligation to witness pain being inflicted on other children or family members; and sexual mutilation and assault," Mr. Zeid said at a meeting of the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture in Geneva on 8 April. He reminded that children are entitled to specific protection because of their heightened vulnerability, stressing that States have an obligation to help child victims of torture work towards recovery and find redress.

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19797&LangID=E>

### **UNESCO to dispatch assessment team to Palmyra**

Amid the ongoing destruction and rapidly evolving situation of World Heritage sites in Syria, UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova told UNESCO's Executive Board on 7 April that an international damage assessment mission will be sent to Palmyra as soon as security permits. "In times of turbulence, our coordination role is more important than ever. We can make this a symbol of unity for the international community. We will also convene an international coordination conference on emergency safeguarding measures for Syrian heritage", she said. UNESCO was informed that the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums of Syria had started a very preliminary damage assessment survey of the site and the museum in Palmyra.

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1475>

### **UN Radio in Arabic**

New air drop of humanitarian aid is conducted in Deir ez-Zour

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197177/#.Vw5iOfkrKUK>

Special Envoy de Mistura met with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister to discuss next round of Intra-Syrian talks

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197155/#.Vw5isfkrKUK>

UNHCR expresses deep concern about violence at the border between Greece and Macedonia

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197025/#.Vw5jGvkrKUK>

Young Syrian girl, Jana, among thousands of children at risk of torture  
[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197007/#.Vw5jV\\_krKUK](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197007/#.Vw5jV_krKUK)

Special Envoy de Mistura confirms from Damascus that the next round of talks will address the political transition  
[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197010/#.Vw5jn\\_krKUK](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197010/#.Vw5jn_krKUK)

WFP air drops aid, reaches besieged population in Deir ez-Zour  
[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/196973/#.Vw5kD\\_krKUK](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/196973/#.Vw5kD_krKUK)

## **UN TWITTER**

Video: @WFP\_MENA delivers food by air for people trapped in besieged city of Deir ez-Zour, Syria [http://youtu.be/mttw\\_v1R29c](http://youtu.be/mttw_v1R29c) ht @OCHA\_Syria -13 April

This year, UN + partners delivered aid to 446,000 people in besieged & hard-to-reach areas in Syria <http://bit.ly/1SabbE5> via @OCHA\_Syria-12 April

Thanks to @UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador @AshleyJudd for sharing updates on #UN4RefugeesMigrants work  
<https://twitter.com/AshleyJudd/status/719423243707424768> -11 April

Humanitarian aid to Syria - @UNOCHA infographic updated today has details of inter-agency convoys. #SyriaTalks [pic.twitter.com/m42T4yQa59](http://pic.twitter.com/m42T4yQa59)-7 April

## **FACEBOOK**

Mohammad and Sahar from Syria found a second chance for their young family – thanks to five Canadian couples who have sponsored their resettlement to British Columbia. UNHCR shares their stories.  
<https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR/posts/10154921281888438>- 10 April

Ever wondered how a child feels when forced to flee home?  
This is the heart-wrenching story of Mustafa, a 13-year-old Syrian refugee.  
#actofhumanity #GlobalGoals  
<https://www.facebook.com/unicef/videos/vb.68793499001/10153960107774002/?type=2&theater>-9 April

"Those who are displaced want nothing more than to return home; those facing food insecurity want to be able to work to feed their families; those deprived of an education want the opportunity to learn; those who have suffered violence want to live in peace. They want what everyone deserves -- the opportunity to live a life of dignity".  
-- Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the people he met on his multi-country "Mission for Humanity". Read his latest LinkedIn Pulse piece in full here.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/mission-humanity-ban-ki-moon?trk=mp-reader-card>  
-7 April

## **INSTAGRAM**

The kindness of strangers and the warmest of welcomes to #Canada!  
Syrian #refugees Mohammad and Sahar found a second chance for their young family – thanks to five Canadian couples who, moved by scenes of suffering on television, have privately sponsored their resettlement to British Columbia. The sponsors, approved by the Canadian Government, take on the costs and obligations that go with resettling the family. They also offer friendship.

The goal of the sponsorship program is to help Mohammad and Sahar (pictured with their family and sponsors) reach the day when they won't need help any longer -- when English conversations and bus schedules won't present the same challenges they do now and when they will be able to talk to their children's teachers without an interpreter.

@unrefugees/Jimmy Jeong #SyriaCrisis

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BEEG7sHTDOR/?taken-by=unitednations>-11 April

"People here have always been supportive and kind to me, they help me with my studies, and in return, I help the younger brothers and sisters." Razan's home has been the Islamic Charity Association Orphanage in Homs since she was just eight years old. "I'm the eldest here, I'm 20, and I study physics at the University of Homs." The Syrian war is taking a heavy toll on hundreds of thousands of young children inside Syria. The orphanage currently provides a haven for 56 children ranging from 2 to 20 years. Nearly 100 years old, the orphanage one of the few care facilities in Homs that provides shelter, care and education for children who have lost parents due to the crisis.

This year, #UNHCR is increasing aid and psycho-social work at the orphanage.

Despite her current situation as an orphan inside #Syria, Razan (pictured) considers herself lucky to be surrounded by people who care. Her dream is to work for the

#UnitedNations to help other vulnerable people. @unrefugees/ Quasi Alazroni

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BD9hs16TDCd/?taken-by=unitednations>-8 April

### **Social media campaigns**

**#ActofHumanity:** UNICEF launched on 29 March a series of animated films entitled "Unfairy Tales" to help frame positive perceptions towards the tens of millions of children and young people on the move globally. The Unfairy Tales are part of an initiative, #actofhumanity, emphasising that children are children, no matter where they come from, and that every child has rights and deserves a fair chance.

UNICEF will engage audiences with social media messaging to use the hashtag #actofhumanity to share stories about refugees and migrant children. The Unfairy Tales, plus the real stories behind the animation and other media assets can be seen at:

<http://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AMZIF3BZ9S>

**#RememberUs - #Syria5Years** is an advocacy and fundraising campaign to tell the story of Palestine refugees in Syria after five years of armed conflict. In the last five years, the Palestine refugees of Syria have been experiencing tremendous hardship with over 60 per cent of the 560,000 registered with UNRWA displaced throughout Syria and further afield. Through the campaign, UNRWA remembers the victims to the Syrian conflict, in particular the Palestine refugees, many of whom have lost their communities, family members, houses and livelihoods. To date, 16 UNRWA staff members have lost their lives in the armed conflict in Syria. This is the largest death toll for any single United Nations agency working in Syria.

<http://www.unrwa.org/syria5years>

Arabic: <http://goo.gl/vVRZRw>

**#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>

**#IamSyrian** is a global engagement campaign on social media platforms launched by the World Food Programme (WFP) at the London Syria conference in February 2016. It offers global citizens the opportunity to show solidarity with the Syrian people by sharing their stories, sending messages of support and demonstrating how the world continues

to care about their plight. The campaign will culminate in an exhibition at the UN General Assembly in September 2016.

<https://www.facebook.com/WorldFoodProgramme/photos/a.59121880177.81015.28312410177/10153310768060178/?type=3&theater>

**#Unite4Heritage** is a global movement run by UNESCO that aims to celebrate and safeguard cultural heritage and diversity around the world. Launched in response to the unprecedented attacks on world heritage sites, the campaign calls on everyone to stand up against extremism and radicalization by celebrating the places, objects and cultural traditions that make the world such a rich and vibrant place.

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1254/>

### **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 :**

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/>

UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/>

UNESCO Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage Project:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/areas-of-action/culture/syria/emergency-safeguarding-of-the-syrian-heritage/>

UNESCO Observatory of Syrian Cultural Heritage <https://en.unesco.org/syrian-observatory/>

UNESCO Bridging Learning Gaps for Youth: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/bridging-learning-gaps/>

#### **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/>