



Syrian Crisis **United Nations Response**



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

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UN aid official warns access to besieged areas remains limited

With a cessation of hostilities largely holding in Syria, "the situation is encouraging, but areas under siege remain particularly vulnerable," UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria Yacoub El Hillo said in an interview with DPI on 19 April. "They are able to move around and go about their daily activities in a much more normal way," Mr. El Hillo noted, despite "a lot of abnormality" from five years of conflict. "Today, 80 per cent of the Syrian people are poor, they live on less than \$2 a day [...] that's why the needs are huge. And because of the length of this crisis, their ability to cope has also been highly eroded", he said. Mr. El Hillo called on the parties to end the siege in Deir ez-Zor and other parts of Syria, which he called a violation of international humanitarian law that "must come to an end."

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53729#.VxeTSXrgWDk>

UN appeals to allow medical supplies on aid convoys

A UN inter-agency convoy delivered humanitarian aid to two besieged towns, Saqba and Hazzeh, and to two hard-to-reach towns, Beit Sawa and Hammura, on 19 April. The convoy carried basic relief items for 28,000 beneficiaries. However, certain medicines and supplies, including surgical items, were not allowed to be in the humanitarian convoy. In a statement, the UN renewed its appeal to the Syrian Government to allow the inclusion of all necessary medical supplies to convoys.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/db160419.doc.htm>

Special Envoy de Mistura to take stock of Intra-Syrian talks

Following the announcement on 18 April by the opposition delegation that it was suspending its participation in the Intra-Syrian talks, Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura told reporters in Geneva that consultations and discussions would continue. "They (the High Negotiations Committee) told us their intention to remain in Geneva, and possibly at my own suggestion, to pursue technical discussions, with myself and my team, particularly on the issues related to resolution 2254 and the political transition. They do realize that this requires time and cannot be solved in one week or three days", the Envoy noted. Mr. de Mistura said that he would take stock of the discussions on 22 April on how and when to move forward. While voicing concerns about the increase in fighting, particularly in Aleppo, he stressed that the cessation of hostilities was still holding in many areas.

http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpPages%29/9C713FAB5641C6DDC1257F9A0026C2E5?OpenDocument

UNESCO condemns the murder of Syrian journalist Zaher al-Shurqat

The Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, condemned on 18 April the killing of Syrian journalist Zaher al-Shurqat in Gaziantep, Turkey. The journalist was shot on 10 April and died from his injuries two days later. "It is essential that journalists covering conflict areas be able to do their work without fearing for their lives. I call on all parties to the conflict in Syria to respect the civilian status of journalists in keeping with the Geneva Conventions", Ms. Bokova stated. Zaher al-Shurqat worked for the online

broadcaster Aleppo Today for whom he notably presented the Lines of Fire programme that covered the conflict in Syria.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/regional-response/single-view/news/director_general_condemns_murder_of_syrian_journalist_zaher_al_shurqat/#.VxaHKnrgWDk

UN refugee agency hails Pope' solidarity with Syrian refugees

The UN refugee agency welcomed on 16 April Pope Francis' demonstration of solidarity with refugees on his visit to the Greek island of Lesbos and by offering a home to three Syrian families. Pope Francis travelled back to Rome from Lesbos with 12 Syrians, including three women, three men and six children. The Vatican is sponsoring the group's move to Rome and ensuring a home for the refugees, who had arrived on Lesbos on 18 March, and had been awaiting relocation to another European country. "The Pope's latest gesture is a powerful demonstration of solidarity. It must inspire governments and societies in a world where the desperate plight of record numbers of forcibly displaced is too often met by barriers, rejection and fear," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi.

So far, only 2,958 relocation places have been pledged by EU member states despite EU commitments to relocate 66,400 persons from Greece, and only 615 persons have been transferred to EU countries under the relocation scheme.

<http://www.unhcr.org/571273ff6.html>

UNDP and Japan support project to improve power supply in Syria

The UN Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Arab States and the Government of Japan on 15 April signed a US\$11.5 million agreement to restore reliable electricity to Syrian communities affected by the conflict. The one-year agreement will be implemented by UNDP Syria and builds on ongoing support by Japan. As part of the project, two power plants will be rehabilitated in Hama and Tartous Governorates. This project builds on joint work by UNDP and Japan in 2015, which provided emergency spare parts to the Jandar power plant in Homs Governorate, generating approximately 25 per cent of the country's electricity supply.

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2016/04/15/undp-and-japan-agree-to-expand-support-for-restoring-access-to-electricity-in-syria.html>

UNRWA voices concerns about intense fighting in Yarmouk refugee camp

The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) expressed its strong concern on 14 April about the humanitarian consequences of intense fighting between extremist armed groups inside Yarmouk in the past two weeks. "Given the situation of extreme insecurity, UNRWA strongly deplores this latest interruption of this vital humanitarian support to desperate civilians in Yarmouk, the agency said. UNRWA called on the concerned parties to cease hostilities and to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law to respect and to protect the lives of civilians in Yarmouk. For eight consecutive weeks from 13 February to 7 April, UNRWA, with the facilitation of the Syrian government, undertook 21 cross-line missions into Yalda, serving 6,000 Palestine refugee families from Yarmouk, Yalda, Babila and Beit Saham.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa-expresses-concern-over-situation-yarmouk>

UN Radio in Arabic

UNHCR welcomes Jordan decision to grant work permits for Syrian refugees
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197971/#.VxehNvkrKUK>

Irina Bokova condemns the attack on Syrian journalist Zahir Sharqat in Gaziantep, Turkey

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197841/#.Vxeho_krKUK

Special Envoy de Mistura expresses disappointment about the lack of access for an aid convoy

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197585/#.VxeievkrKUK>

UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria stresses the need to address the root causes of humanitarian crises, including the Syria crisis

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197545/#.Vxei6 krKUK>

UNRWA calls on the parties in Syria to cease hostilities in the Yarmouk refugee camp

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/197470/#.VxejbfkrKUK>

TWITTER

United Nations Retweeted UN Refugee Agency @Refugees

New measures could see 78,000 Syrian refugees able to work legally in Jordan in short term <http://trib.al/A6Lm4Or> - 20 April

UN News Centre @UN_News_Centre – 20 April

Even as some guns go silent in #Syria, access to besieged areas is limited, says @OCHA_Syria <http://bit.ly/1VBYHGI>

United Nations Retweeted UN Geneva @UNGeneva

Update on ongoing #SyriaTalks in Geneva by Staffan de Mistura, UN #Syria Envoy
Transcript: <http://goo.gl/aA6Teg> - 19 April

New @OCHA_Syria info on UN Inter-Agency Humanitarian Operations in Syria.

#SyriaTalks info: <http://www.unog.ch/Syria> pic.twitter.com/1REpm0kxt6-14 April

FACEBOOK

UNHCR uses SMS and social media to ensure two-way communication with over 80,000 Syrian refugees in Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan. Find out how this is improving daily life in Za'atari here.

http://innovation.unhcr.org/labs_post/social-media-and-sms-outreach/ -17 April

Watch the World Food Programme in action as it airdrops food to the besieged people of Deir Ezzor in Syria. For the last two years, over 200,000 people have been living under siege in the city and are in dire need of food and humanitarian assistance.

<https://www.facebook.com/unitednations/insights/?section=navPosts> -15 April

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 have privately sponsored their resettlement to British Columbia. Meet Mohammad, Sahar and family and their Canadian sponsors and read their inspirational story here.

<https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR/posts/10154921281888438> -14 April

INSTAGRAM

High above #Syria, the #UnitedNations World Food Programme airdrops 20 tonnes of food to the besieged people of Deir Ezzor. These food items included beans, chickpeas and rice -- enough to feed 2500 people for a month.

For the last two years, over 200,000 people have been living under siege in Deir Ezzor and are in dire need of food and humanitarian assistance.

Support from the governments of Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the U.S. makes these airdrops possible.

Regram @wfpusa / 📷 #WFP

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

Social media campaigns

#ActofHumanity: UNICEF launched on 29 March a series of animated films entitled "Unfair Tales" to help frame positive perceptions towards the tens of millions of children and young people on the move globally. The Unfair 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 Unfair 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, 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/
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/>