



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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De Mistura tells Security Council both parties have accepted need for political transition but big gaps remain

The Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, briefed the Security Council via video conference on the conclusion earlier on 27 April of the latest round of Intra-Syrian talks convened on the basis of Security Council resolution 2254. These talks ran from 13 to 27 April in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. de Mistura also released a mediator's summary outlining the process and substance of this round of talks, which focused on an agenda of political transition and the establishment of inclusive transitional governance. "The Syrian parties have now accepted the need for a political transition that will be overseen by a new and inclusive transitional governance that replaces the present governance arrangements in Syria," said Mr. de Mistura. He added however, that substantial gaps remain between the parties' respective visions of the transition and that there is a need to go into further detail with them to ensure a credible and inclusive transition. Mr. de Mistura also noted with alarm the increasing level of violence in Syria over the last two weeks and said that this and the continuing grave humanitarian situation on the ground, despite some modest but real progress, had impacted the conduct of this round of talks. Describing the nationwide cessation of hostilities as a precious achievement that has saved numerous Syrian lives and given credibility to the political track, Mr. de Mistura said that it must be urgently protected and reinforced. The Special Envoy further emphasised the life or death importance of regular and sustained humanitarian access to hundreds of thousands of vulnerable Syrians. In this respect, he stressed the importance of those with influence over the parties to press for safe and unhindered access by UN inter-agency convoys to all besieged and hard to reach areas, including but not limited to the towns of Douma, Darraya, Madamiyet Elsham and East Harasta. For these reasons, and to take stock of the outcomes from this round of Intra-Syrian talks, Mr. de Mistura recommended to the Security Council that a meeting of the International Syria Support Group should be held in the near future. (This is the full statement)

A mediator's summary issued today by the Special Envoy of the latest round of talks is being sent as an attachment. You can share it with the media. A link to it will be sent next week.

Secretary-General voices concern about attacks in Damascus and Aleppo

During a press conference with the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sebastian Kurz, in Vienna on 26 April, the Secretary-General expressed deep concern about the recent attacks in Damascus and Aleppo. He stressed that his Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, and others are working very hard to keep the cessation of hostilities on track. "The focus is very much on protecting civilians, improving humanitarian access and reducing the amount of violence. That is the essence and purpose of the cessation of hostilities which must be supported by all", Mr. Ban noted.

http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/speeches/statments_full.asp?statID=3016

UN's aid airdrops reach besieged city of Deir ez-Zor

A total of 12 high-altitude humanitarian airdrops over the besieged city of Deir ez-Zor for 100,000 beneficiaries were carried out in the month of April, a World Food Programme

(WFP) spokesperson told reporters in Geneva on 26 April. She said the agency's local partner, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, had distributed food to 50,000 people in the area and distributions were ongoing. Amounts per family had been limited to 10 kilograms of rice, chickpeas and beans, to reach as many people as possible. The agency hopes to expand the food items to be delivered in the future.

http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpBriefingsLatest_en%29/289015C96F73B847C1257FA100429777?OpenDocument

UNESCO conducts assessment of World Heritage site of Palmyra

UNESCO dispatched an assessment mission to the World Heritage site of Palmyra, led by the Director of the World Heritage Centre, from 24 to 26 April, to evaluate the damage to the archaeological site and identify emergency safeguarding measures. The mission, which was escorted by UN security, found considerable damage to the Museum.

Members of the mission also noticed the destruction of the triumphal arch and the Temple of Baal Shamin. They observed a minute of silence in memory of the victims murdered at the Amphitheatre. Following the mission's preliminary findings, UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova reiterated the central place of heritage in the international community's response to the Syria crisis: "Palmyra is a pillar of Syrian identity and a source of dignity for all Syrians. UNESCO is determined to ensure the safeguarding of this and other sites with all partners as part of broader humanitarian and peace building operations", she stated.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/unesco_experts_take_preliminary_stock_of_destruction_in_world_heritage_site_of_palmyra/#.VyDD9nrgWDI

UNRWA alarmed over situation in Yarmouk Palestine refugee camp

Following a recent bombing near Qabr Essit camp (Sayyida Zeinab), the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) voiced strong concern about the volatility of the situation, especially as February bombings in the area had claimed the lives of over 30 Palestine refugees. To minimize exposure of UNRWA staff and Palestine refugees living in the area, UNRWA closed its schools and cancelled afternoon classes on that day. It also restricted all staff movement in the area. Despite a reported lull in clashes in Yarmouk, UNRWA received reports of frequent sniper fire, which posed a high risk to civilian safety and severely curtailed freedom of movement. The Agency remained extremely concerned over the humanitarian needs of the population inside Yarmouk. To safeguard civilian life, UNRWA repeated its call for a complete stop of hostilities in Syria.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa-concerned-over-situation-yarmouk-camp-explosion-near-qabr-essit>

Over 500 people evacuated for medical reasons from besieged areas

Briefing reporters in Geneva on 21 April, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura said that "modest but very real" progress had been achieved on the humanitarian track of the crisis in Syria. He noted that since the start of the cessation of hostilities (in February) more than 500,000 civilians had been reached. Additionally, some 515 people had been evacuated for medical reasons on 20 April from the besieged areas of Zabadani, Madaya, Kefraya and Foah, with the very active participation of the Syrian Arab Red Cross (SARC) and "with a lot of homework done by the UN." "Another [example] of modest but real progress is the fact that Khawla Mattar – a woman, I want to underline, because we should remember that when we have the privilege of having courageous colleagues like her – led a convoy for the first time since 2012 to Darayya," Mr. de Mistura said, stressing that Darayya, a suburb of the capital, Damascus, "has become a symbol of inaccessibility."

http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpPages%29/874B54F08514FEE2C1257F9D006E9957?OpenDocument

UN Radio in Arabic

A Syrian refugee carries Olympic flame in Greek refugee camp

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/198948/#.VyD2-fkrJQI>

OCHA is concerned about the situation in Aleppo and its effect on civilians

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/198871/#.VyD3d_krJQI

UNESCO sends a team of experts to Palmyra to assess the damage to archaeological sites

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/198667/#.VyD4A_krJQI

Special Envoy de Mistura says "modest, but real" progress achieved on humanitarian track

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/198282/#.VyD4tfkrJQI>

TWITTER

The humanitarian situation in [#Syria](#) continues to deteriorate: <http://goo.gl/b1FKkw>
[#RememberUs](#) [#Syria5Years](#)

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/724894832259403776> - 26 April

For @UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador @AshleyJudd, #RefugeesWelcome is more than just a hashtag. #SyriaCrisis <https://amp.twimg.com/v/e1f1a74b-95ad-4bac-af73-5048165673bf> ...-26 April

#UNHCR running weekly job fairs for Syrian refugees in Jordan <http://trib.al/G3Iwqdf>
via @Refugees pic.twitter.com/QPEPksrcaU-22 April

Supporting [#Palestine](#) refugees through the [#Syria](#) crisis: <http://goo.gl/C8Aaq2>
[#RememberUs](#) [#Syria5Years](#)

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/723087548235419652> - 21 April

Female-headed households make up around 30% of the [#Palref](#) families who fled to [#Jordan](#) from [#Syria](#). [#RememberUs](#)

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/723088585151270913> - 21 April

Over 60% of the [#Palestine](#) [#refugees](#) registered with UNRWA in [#Syria](#) have been displaced. [#RememberUs](#)

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/723089186513805312> - 21 April

15 UNRWA health centres and 11 health points throughout [#Syria](#) serve [#Palestine](#) [#refugees](#). [#RememberUs](#)

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/723090411414134784> - 21 April

FACEBOOK

It's [#WorldImmunizationWeek](#)! Childhood vaccinations help children reach their full health potential. In the first quarter of this year UNRWA vaccinated nearly 16,000 children in Syria. These vaccinations will protect them against life threatening illnesses including TB, polio, measles, mumps and rubella.

Learn more: <http://goo.gl/RgSAZv>

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1082434735136426/?type=3&theater-25> April

515 people have been medically evacuated from besieged areas in Syria, the UN Special Envoy has confirmed. Staffan de Mistura briefed the press at UN Geneva following his meeting with the ISSG Humanitarian Access Task Force.

Read what he said here: <http://ow.ly/4mWPKK>
<https://www.facebook.com/unitednations/insights/?section=navPosts-21April>

INSTAGRAM

"I am carrying the flame for myself, but also for refugees everywhere, for Syrians, for #Greece, for sports." Syrian refugee athlete Ibrahim, who lost part of his leg in Syria's war, has been chosen to carry the the Olympic Games' torch through an Athens refugee site on Tuesday.

Ibrahim was selected to take part in the Olympic torch relay, on behalf of refugees worldwide, as part of its journey to the Rio 2016 Olympics.

Since arriving in Greece, Ibrahim has worked to rebuild his life. He swims three days per week and is also part of a wheelchair #basketball team that meets five times per week, and travels across the country for competitions. Ibrahim does all this despite working 10-hour overnight shifts at a cafe. "It's not just a game for me," Ibrahim says of his training schedule. "It's my whole life." Regram @unrefugees

#SyriaCrisis #Syria5Years #refugees #UNHCR

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BEjY-h7zDCO/?taken-by=unitednations-23April>

Social media campaigns

@ShareTheMeal: On 27 April, WFP announced its award-winning phone application would support fundraising efforts for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon. ShareTheMeal's fundraising goal in Lebanon will support 1,400 refugee children aged 3–4 in Beirut for a full year. Through the app, smartphone users can join thousands of other people in making donations and support a selected community and monitor progress. Since November 2015, the app has been available globally and has received several awards for its design and innovative character.

www.sharethemeal.org

#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](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/>

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/>