



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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UN political and humanitarian chiefs brief Security Council on situation in Aleppo

In an open briefing to the Security Council on the situation in Aleppo on 4 May, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman said that the government aerial bombardment of the city over the last two weeks had shown the worst of this war. Opposition shelling had also led to death and destruction. Mr. Feltman announced that the US and Russia had concluded arrangements to extend the nationwide cessation of hostilities to Aleppo, urging all parties to abide immediately and comprehensively by it. The Under Secretary-General noted that implementation of the agreement of a "day of silence", starting the previous night had proved challenging. Mr. Feltman also reiterated the Secretary-General's call for the referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. Also briefing the Council Members, Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien called for an end to the carnage in Aleppo and wider Syria and to seize the opportunity of the negotiations in Geneva. Describing life in Aleppo as horrendous, he said that people are living under daily threat and terror. "Those who remain in eastern Aleppo, roughly 300,000 people, live in constant fear over the next attack from the air, including from barrel bombs. The estimated 1.3 million people living in western Aleppo city are crowding into basements". The UN relief chief added that "those responsible for these repeated, unconscionable acts of inhumanity must understand that these acts cannot and will not be forgotten".

https://twitter.com/UN_DPA

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-37>

Special Envoy holds broad consultations to revive cessation of hostilities

As part of ongoing efforts to re-invigorate the cessation of hostilities across Syria, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura met with US Secretary of State John Kerry in Geneva on 2 May. On the same day, he met separately with the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Ahmed Mohammed al-Jubeir. On 3 May, the Envoy travelled to Moscow where he held consultations with Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov. Speaking to reporters afterwards, Mr. de Mistura said there was a chance to relaunch the cessation of hostilities by reinforcing and extending local truces. He also expressed the hope that the Intra-Syrian talks could soon resume if the cessation of hostilities were re-implemented and included Aleppo. During a media stakeout with the German and French Foreign Ministers following meetings in Berlin on 4 May, Mr. de Mistura said that "we need to see with our eyes that the cessation of hostilities takes place again. And the test is Aleppo now". He warned that the alternative would be catastrophic "as we could see 400,000 people moving through the Turkish border".

http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpPages%29/DBD964B5998BECBEC1257FA9005F6CA8?OpenDocument

UN humanitarian adviser sounds the alarm on endless violence and lack of aid access

Special Advisor to the Special Envoy for Syria Jan Egeland told the press in Geneva on 4 May that the fighting and bombardment in recent days, especially in and around Aleppo, are creating new areas with endless suffering and no access for humanitarian workers. Requests to reach besieged areas had only been granted for about 25 percent of the affected people, Mr. Egeland stressed. On the other hand, he said, during April, humanitarian workers reached more than 40 percent of all of the people in the besieged areas, compared to about 5 percent of people living in these areas in 2015. Altogether, Mr. Egeland added, 778,000 people in hard-to-reach and besieged areas have been reached. In a key achievement, virtually all civilians in the city of Deir Ezzour received aid from 22 air drops conducted successfully in recent days.

http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpNewsByYear_en%29/29EC8316BCC00CEDC1257FA90052A061?OpenDocument

Secretary-General urges all parties to recommit to the cessation of hostilities

The Secretary-General on 2 May expressed profound concern about the dangerous escalation of fighting in and around Aleppo and the intolerable suffering it is causing among civilians. He urged the warring Syrian sides to recommit immediately to the cessation of hostilities and to uphold their responsibility to protect civilians from the effects of the conflict. Noting the temporary re-launch of the cessation in Damascus and Lattakiya governorates, the Secretary-General stressed the need to expand these arrangements to other parts of Syria, with a special urgency for Aleppo. The Secretary-General reiterated his call on all concerned regional and international actors, in particular the co-chairs of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), to redouble their efforts in support of the Syrian parties to put the cessation of hostilities back on track. "The collapse of the cessation of hostilities will only bring more violence, death and destruction while further weakening efforts to find a negotiated solution to this brutal war", Mr. Ban warned.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=9668>

Escalating violence in Aleppo causes numerous deaths among civilians

The recent escalation of violence in Aleppo has led to the deaths and injury of hundreds of people, many of them children, as well as damaging schools, hospitals, and hindering humanitarian aid operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on 3 May. In Aleppo city, another hospital was damaged on that day, leading to reports of at least 3 deaths and 15 injured. This followed an attack on the Al-Quds hospital in the eastern part of Aleppo city on 27 April, which resulted in about 20 fatalities, including at least three doctors. "We strongly condemn attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure and the violence that is leading to more unnecessary suffering. Such attacks are an inexcusable violation of human rights and humanitarian law", OCHA stated.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/db160503.doc.htm>

Attacks on medical facilities are inexcusable, says Secretary-General

Speaking on 3 May at a Security Council debate on protection of civilians with a focus on health facilities in conflict zones, the Secretary-General underscored that intentional and direct attacks on hospitals are war crimes. "No government should stand by and watch the erosion of safeguards for the protection of civilians in conflict. The international community must never become numb to flagrant abuses", he said. According to

Physicians for Human Rights, in Syria alone, there have been more than 360 attacks on some 250 medical facilities, resulting in 730 deaths among medical staff. Calling such attacks shameful and inexcusable, the Secretary-General said that when so-called surgical strikes end up hitting surgical wards, something is deeply wrong. He added that even wars have rules.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=9671>

“Monstrous disregard for civilian lives” in Syria as hospitals and markets bombed, UN human rights chief

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein on 29 April lamented that latest reports of civilian deaths and injuries, including bombings of Syrian marketplaces and medical facilities, revealed a “monstrous disregard for civilian lives by all parties to the conflict. The Human Rights Chief urged all sides to step back from a return to all-out war. “Urgent action is needed by all relevant actors to ensure the protection of civilians and their right to life, and to fight the impunity that has done so much to encourage the multitude of horrendous breaches of international humanitarian law and international human rights law,” Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein stated. “In the context of such an abysmal situation, the persistent failure of the Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court is an example of the most shameful form of realpolitik. There is currently no disincentive for any of the many war criminals in Syria to stop contributing to the wild spiral of killing and destruction that has engulfed the country.”

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19900&LangID=E>

International community should be ashamed of the humanitarian situation in Syria, Security Council is told

Briefing the Security Council on 28 April on humanitarian access in Syria, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O’Brien described the human toll and suffering after five years of conflict as “sickening”. “Deliberately deprived of food and medicine, many face the most appalling conditions of desolation, hunger and starvation. We must all be ashamed that this is happening on our watch”, he told Council members. Mr. O’Brien said that while the recent cessation of hostilities had provided a much needed moment of respite, recent developments on the ground showed a worrisome deterioration with an increase in fighting. “It is the duty of the Security Council to ensure that every possible avenue is explored to end the violence. I reiterate the call for sustained, safe, unconditional and unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance. The parties to the conflict, the Security Council, and the co-chairs of the ISSG must exert every effort to revive the cessation of hostilities,” Mr. O’Brien noted.

https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/USG_ERC%20Stephen%20O'Brien%20Statement%20on%20Syria%20SecCo%2028April2016%20CAD.docx.pdf

Syrian refugee carries the Olympic torch in Brasilia

In the run-up to the Olympic Games, a 12-year-old Syrian refugee, Hanan Dacka, held the Olympic flame at the start of a relay across Brazil. The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said Hanan was selected for the honour by the Rio 2016 Organizing Committee, after her name was put forward by the agency in Brazil. Hanan is the second Syrian refugee to carry the flame, after her compatriot Ibrahim Al-Hussein bore the torch last week through a centre for refugees in Greece. “By carrying the Olympic Torch, people from all over the world will know that refugees are real people, and that we can do positive things,” she said before taking up the torch.

<http://www.unhcr.org/5728cd996.html>

Displaced families and Syrian refugees in Iraq receive food aid through cash cards

The World Food Programme (WFP) launched on 28 April a cash card programme to provide food assistance to thousands of displaced Iraqi families and Syrian refugees across Iraq. The electronic cards, known as SCOPE, allow WFP to provide both cash and voucher assistance to people in need to buy food from local shops. "This programme is a turning point in WFP's food assistance operations in Iraq. We now use innovative technology to deliver a faster humanitarian response that is reliable, flexible and scalable," said Jane Pearce, WFP Representative and Country Director in Iraq. To date, the agency has distributed more than 12,000 digital cards to displaced Iraqis and Syrian refugees. By the end of the year, WFP aims to reach over one million displaced Iraqis and over 72,000 Syrian refugees across Iraq.

<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/wfp-launches-cash-cards-displaced-families-and-syrian-refugees-iraq>

Cate Blanchett named Goodwill Ambassador for refugees

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, announced the appointment of Academy Award winning actress Cate Blanchett as a global Goodwill Ambassador on 2 May. The announcement followed a mission by Blanchett to Jordan to witness the ongoing humanitarian operation for people displaced by the Syria conflict. She met Syrian refugee families to hear first-hand about the perilous journeys they had undertaken and the daily challenges they face.

<http://www.unhcr.org/5727776f6.html>

UN Radio in Arabic

Special Envoy de Mistura hopes to that cessation of hostilities will be restored in Syria
<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199702/#.VynvCtzXLIU>

Food aid reached a larger number of Syrians in besieged areas

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199689/#.VynvldzXLIU>

A Syrian refugee carried the Olympic torch in Brasilia

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199619/#.VynwgNzXLIU>

Secretary-General underlines the responsibility of all States to protect the health services in armed conflict: Even wars have rules

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199575/#.Vynyw9zXLIU>

Ban Ki-moon calls for expanding cease-fire arrangements in Syria, especially in Aleppo

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199495/#.Vynze9zXLIU>

Special Envoy de Mistura calls for a restoration of cessation of hostilities in Syria

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199478/#.Vynz49zXLIU>

US Secretary of State John Kerry: intensive consultations underway to restore cessation of hostilities in Syria

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199443/#.Vyn009zXLIU>

UNICEF and WHO urge all the parties in Syria to put an end to attacks on health facilities and personnel

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199335/#.Vyn039zXLIU>

High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid says recent attacks in Syria reveal brutal disregard for lives of civilians by all parties

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199289/#.Vyn1rNzXLIU>

Ban Ki-moon condemned the air strikes on the Al-Quds Hospital in Aleppo and calls for accountability for those crimes

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199236/#.Vyn2NtzXLIU>

UN Relief Chief O'Brien renewed his call to the Security Council to improve humanitarian access in Syria

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199197/#.Vyn2gNzXLIU>

ICRC: Aleppo is on the brink of a humanitarian disaster

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/199121/#.Vyn3gtzXLIU>

Twitter

#SyriaTalks: UN envoy "cautiously hopeful" for re-launch of truce in Syria
<http://bit.ly/23mKvQF> -3 May

Syria: Ban Ki-moon is profoundly concerned at dangerous escalation of fighting in/around Aleppo - @UN_Spokesperson <http://j.mp/1pWTD19> -2 May

Displaced families & Syrian refugees receive @WFP cash cards in Iraq
<http://ow.ly/4nc8MM> pic.twitter.com/R5LJsR0jFo -2 May

It's a daily struggle to put food on the table for most #Palrefs in #Syria. #RememberUs
<https://goo.gl/UHARAA>
<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/726658373987479552>

Facebook

"Intentional and direct attacks on hospitals are war crimes. Denying people access to essential health care is a serious violation of international humanitarian law." -- Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Security Council, following last week's air strike in Aleppo, Syria that destroyed a hospital, killing at least 20 people, including three children. The strike also killed the area's one and only paediatrician, Dr. Mohammad Wassim Maaz -3 May

Since January 2014, the conflict in Iraq has triggered mass waves of displacement of more than 3 million Iraqis. With new digital cash cards, the World Food Programme is trying to provide food assistance to 1.5 million displaced Iraqis and 70,000 Syrian refugees across the country.

<https://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/wfp-launches-cash-cards-displaced-families-and-syrian-refugees-iraq> -3 May

"The next round of talks is going to take place, because we need and we want to keep the momentum. "But let's be frank: they will be meaningful only if and when the cessation of hostilities is brought back to the level we saw in February and in March"- UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura on the #SyriaTalks

<https://www.facebook.com/UN.Geneva/videos/vb.117939301585215/1046587205387082/?type=2&theater>-28 April

From Greece to Switzerland...

This week the Olympic Flame passes from a Syrian athlete and refugee Ibrahim who is currently living in Athens - and who will compete at Rio 2016 - across Europe to UN Geneva where this Friday it will be carried by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Watch the uplifting video below from our colleagues at UNHCR to find out what happened when Ibrahim took the torch to a refugee camp in Athens, and follow our live

coverage from 9am Friday 29 April when the famous torch of The Olympic Games will illuminate the Palais des Nations in Geneva and the United Nations will be presented with the prestigious Olympic Cup.via UN Geneva

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

-28 April

For most Palestine refugee families in Syria, it's a daily struggle to put food on the table. Our food assistance programme eases this burden a little; each food parcel is sufficient to feed a family of four for 10 days. #RememberUs #Syria5Years © 2015 UNRWA Photo by Taghrid Mohammad

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1082663648446868/?type=3>

In Lebanon, Palestine refugees are marginalized and have limited rights. Our Legal Aid Unit provides legal counselling, referrals for civil court cases and awareness sessions to Palestine refugees from both Lebanon and Syria in an effort to improve their situation. UNRWA Photo by Kate Brooks

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1082662738446959/?type=3>

INSTAGRAM

#UnitedNations and #Syria Red Crescent convoys (pictured) deliver 50 truckloads of food, health and emergency supplies, along with @unfao vegetable seeds, to 61,000 people in the besieged towns of Madaya, Zabadani, Foah and Kafraya. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, the #UN Security Council adopted a resolution to strengthen protection in war zones for health care workers, the sick and wounded, hospitals and clinics. "Intentional and direct attacks on hospitals are war crimes. Denying people access to essential health care is a serious violation of international humanitarian law," said Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Last week's air strike in #Aleppo destroyed a hospital, killing at least 20 people, including three children. The strike also killed the area's one and only paediatrician, Dr. Mohammad Wassim Maaz. 📷 @unocha Syria

#NotATarget #SyriaCrisis #Syria5Years

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BE95P2VzDJx/?taken-by=unitednations-3> May

Congratulations to newly-appointed @unrefugees Goodwill Ambassador Cate Blanchett! "There has never been a more crucial time to stand with refugees and show solidarity," said Cate. "We are living through an unprecedented crisis, and there must be shared responsibility worldwide." The announcement came as Cate returned from a mission to Jordan to meet people displaced by the conflict in #Syria and witness the ongoing humanitarian operation to assist them.

In Jordan, Cate met Syrian refugees like Abu Mohammed and his family. She heard about the perilous journeys they had taken, and the challenges they face every day. She described the world being "at a fork in the road" when it comes to responding to the needs of refugees. "As a mother, I want my children to go down the compassionate path," she said. "There's much more opportunity, there's much more optimism and there is a solution down that path." Regram @unrefugees #UNHCR/ @jordi.matas

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BE82YvFzDC-/?taken-by=unitednations-3> May

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 "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, 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/>