



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

No. 148/25 May 2016

Attacks against civilians in Jableh and Tartous spark strong condemnations

The Secretary-General condemned on 23 May the terrorist attacks that claimed on the same day the lives of dozens of civilians in the coastal cities of Jableh and Tartous. He also voiced great concern about the escalating military activity in many areas in and around Damascus. The violence, particularly in Daraya, Aleppo and Idlib, and in the northern countryside of Homs, especially Al-Houla, is causing mounting civilian casualties. Mr. Ban renewed his call on all parties to refrain from attacks on civilians. Echoing the Secretary-General, the Security Council on 24 May condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks for which ISIL (also known as Da'esh) claimed responsibility. The Security Council members reiterated their condemnation of indiscriminate attacks on civilians by any party to the Syrian conflict. In a statement, they supported the International Syria Support Group's expression, in its May 17 statement, of its serious concern about growing civilian casualties in recent weeks, making clear that the attacks on civilians by any party are completely unacceptable. The Security Council expressed its full support for the efforts of Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura and called for a new round of negotiations between the parties, under the auspices of the United Nations, to be convened at an appropriate time. In a statement on 24 May, the UN-mandated Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria also expressed outrage at the attacks in Tartous and Jableh. "These attacks bring chaos and terror to areas of the country where some degree of normal life was still possible," said Commission Chair Paulo Pinheiro. "The Commission stands in solidarity with the Syrian people in demanding that all parties to this war reject such reprehensible violence and take every possible step to protect civilians," Pinheiro added. The Commission stressed that attacks targeting protected locations or which fail to distinguish between civilian and military targets may amount to war crimes, noting it was essential that perpetrators of such crimes be held accountable.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=9728>

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12372.doc.htm>

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20009&LangID=E>

Secretary-General discusses Syria crisis with Turkish President

In a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on the margins of the World Humanitarian Summit on 23 May in Istanbul, the Secretary-General discussed the situation in Syria, including the root causes of the refugee crisis and scaling up international efforts to combat the threat posed by Da'esh. Mr. Ban stressed the need for improved humanitarian access as well as actions against persistent violators of the cessation of hostilities, in the hope that the next round of talks in Geneva could take place soon and focus on transitional arrangements.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/db160523.doc.htm>

Humanitarian aid is not reaching civilians in besieged areas, Jan Egeland

In an interview to the UN News Centre, the Special Advisor of the Special Envoy for Syria, Jan Egeland, stressed that the humanitarian sector is failing to protect civilians from violence. Mr Egeland, who attended the World Humanitarian Summit in his capacity as Secretary-General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, noted that "via besieged areas in Syria, and Fallujah in Iraq to Yemen, to many parts of Africa, we are failing millions of people, we are not reaching them. That is a theme we need to focus on at the humanitarian summit. We're doing lots of good work for tens of millions of people but there are still millions we are not even reaching", he added.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54022#.V0XS4uTgW3Y>

Nearly 70 percent of UN relief agency's schools in Syria affected by the conflict

A new report by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) found that nearly half of the 692 schools run by the agency across the region have been impacted, attacked or rendered inoperable by conflict or violence in the last five years. According to the report released at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul on 24 May, at least 70 per cent of 118 UNRWA schools in Syria "have at some stage of the war been rendered inoperative, either because they were impacted by violence or because we have used them as centres to house the displaced." Speaking at the summit, UNRWA Chief Pierre Krähenbühl emphasized the courage and determination of UNRWA teachers, specialists and principals, who preserve access to learning for half a million Palestine refugee boys and girls despite these extremely adverse conditions.

http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/schools_on_the_front_line.pdf

UNESCO Director General deplores severe damage at historic Byzantine Church of Saint-Simeon

The Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, deplored on 18 May severe damage to the historic Byzantine Church of Saint-Simeon possibly caused by an airstrike on 12 May. UNESCO received reports and photographs showing extensive damage to the church, including the remains of the pillar of Saint Simeon Stylites. "I reiterate my call on all parties to the conflict to abstain from using cultural property for any military purpose, across all of Syria, to avoid exposing such property to further damage", Ms Bokova stated. "The conflict in Syria is causing incalculable human suffering and loss. The destruction of Syria's unique cultural heritage is part and parcel of the humanitarian and security crisis. Its protection is therefore an integral part of wider efforts to end violence, protect human life and move to peace", she added. The Church of Saint Simeon Stylites is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Ancient Villages of Northern Syria. The site provides remarkable testimony to rural life in late Antiquity and during the Byzantine period.

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/regional-response/single-view/news/director-general-of-unesco-deplores-severe-damage-at-church-of-saint-simeon-world-heritage-site-in-syria-1/#.V0Xnb7cpC71>

UN Radio in Arabic

Abdullah, 11, continues to receive dialysis care thanks to Kuwaiti support for kidney patients in Syria

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202319/#.V0Xmp_krKUK

UNESCO Chief condemns the air attack on the World Heritage Site, Saint-Simeon monastery

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/201215/#.VzyuWfkrLcs>

Facebook

Abdul Rahman and his family, originally Palestine refugees from Yarmouk camp, moved from collective shelter to collective shelter before they found shelter in the UNRWA Damascus Training Centre. He talks about his struggles to keep up with his studies and the alternative schools and safe learning spaces provided by UNRWA that have helped him continue his education even within the context of protracted conflict and repeated displacement.

Through its Education in Emergencies (EiE) programme, UNRWA has been actively working to ensure access to quality education for Palestine Refugees affected by the ongoing conflict in Syria, both for children in Syria and for those who have fled to neighboring countries, particularly Lebanon and Jordan. Currently, there are a total of 45,541 Palestine refugee students in Syria supported through EiE in 99 schools operated by UNRWA in addition to 21 recreational and eight safe learning spaces.

UNRWA also provides adequate psychosocial support to children enrolled in UNRWA schools.

#ShareHumanity #UNRWAatWHS

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/videos/1099071733472726/>

Aya Kassem is a young Palestine refugee in Syria who had her leg amputated three years ago after a mortar exploded nearby as she was walking home from kindergarten in Jaramana, Damascus.

She underwent a number of operations and has had to learn to walk again with an artificial leg provided by UNRWA. Watch Aya prepare to go to school as she recalls the incident that changed her life forever.

#ShareHumanity #UNRWAatWHS

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/videos/1097071803672719/>

Twitter

At @WHSummit, #SyriaCrisis adviser @NRC_Egeland discussed latest aid issues

<http://bit.ly/1sNSr2n> #sharehumanity pic.twitter.com/kZGFgIma0X

-25 May

51,543 #Palestine refugees students from #Syria are supported through @UNRWA

#Education in Emergencies programme #ShareHumanity

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/735062002972938240>

-24 May

Feeling & being safe is vital for children during conflict. Check out the safe learning spaces in #Syria: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iUJThJTINE>

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/735060570337075200>

-24 May

Nearly half of @UNRWA #schools impacted, attacked or rendered inoperable by conflict or violence in the last 5 years <http://goo.gl/8glyox>

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/734752524071096320>

-23 May

"#Education is what gives me #hope" says 8-year-old Palestine refugee Batoul

<http://goo.gl/b3OvL9> #ShareHumanity

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/734708476727922688>

-23 May

Did you know that there are 99 @UNRWA schools operating in #Syria? Learn more:

<http://unrwa.org/whs> #ShareHumanity

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/734694387863552000>

-23 May

After a mortar shell explosion, 8 y.o. Aya's leg prosthesis helps her to return to school in #Syria <http://goo.gl/xkSmHI> #ShareHumanity

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xEwvBGR7Frg-23>

-23 May

INSTAGRAM

Every bag holds a story. Meet Hana, Rania and Reem, three mothers from #Syria who are seen here holding bags they made along with @small_projects_istanbul and signed for all attendees at the World Humanitarian Summit in #Istanbul. #ShareHumanity @alexandrake

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BFx9VtGTDJc/?taken-by=unitednations>

-24 May

Social media campaigns

@ShareTheMeal: In April 2016, the World Food Programme launched its phone application to support fundraising efforts for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon. ShareTheMeal's fundraising aims to 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 in March 2016 a series of animated films entitled "Unfair Tales" to help frame positive perceptions towards the millions of children and young people on the move globally. The Unfair Tales are part of an initiative, #actofhumanity, emphasising that every child has rights and deserves a fair chance. UNICEF will engage audiences through the hashtag #actofhumanity to share stories about refugees and migrant children.

<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 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/>