



Syrian Crisis **United Nations Response**



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

No. 149/01 June 2016

Inter-agency convoys deliver critical assistance to besieged towns in Rural Damascus

On 1 June, inter-agency convoys delivered critical life-saving assistance to two besieged towns in Rural Damascus: Darayya and Moadamiyeh, according to the UN spokesperson. He said that this is the first time that the UN has been able to deliver any assistance to Darayya since November 2012. The Darayya convoy delivered medicine, nutritional items for children and vaccines to some 4,000 people, while technical teams were assessing needs on the ground for future deliveries. The humanitarian situation in Darayya is dire, characterized by severe shortages of food, medicine, medical equipment and supplies, health facilities and personnel. The UN is strongly advocating for another convoy to Darayya containing food in the days to come. The Moadamiyeh convoy is the first of three planned convoys, bringing food to some 22,000 people. It is the fifth convoy to the town this year, but the first time the UN has had access since March. Earlier, on 25 May, a joint United Nations-International Committee of the Red Cross-Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy delivered much-needed humanitarian assistance to the hard-to-reach area of Houle in Homs. Food, nutrition, hygiene kits, and educational materials were delivered to 71,000 people. This is the third humanitarian convoy to Houle this year. Since the beginning of 2016, inter-agency operations have reached more than 800,000 civilians in need in besieged, hard-to-reach and priority cross-line areas. Many of these people have been reached more than once.

http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp?d_month=6&d_year=2016

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

UN concerned over fate of 8,000 Syrians trapped by fighting in northern Aleppo

The United Nations is deeply concerned over the fate of an estimated 8,000 Syrians trapped by fighting around the towns of Mare'a and Sheikh Issa in northern Aleppo Governorate following advances in the last three days by Da'esh into areas controlled by non-state armed groups. An unknown number of people are also unable to flee due to fighting and the closure of the main road leading north towards the town of Azaz in northwestern Syria. The UN is deeply concerned that many civilians in these areas are at risk of attack. In a statement issued on 30 May, the UN Resident Coordinator for Syria, Yacoub El Hillo, and the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, Kevin Kennedy, called on all parties to the conflict to ensure the unhindered movement and protection of civilians trying to reach safety, as well as their access to life-saving assistance at their current locations or on their way to other destinations.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/joint-statement-residenthumanitarian-coordinator-syria-and-regional-0>

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

Seriously thinking of air dropping humanitarian aid to besieged areas, says the Special Envoy

UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura said on 26 May that as decided at the Vienna meeting of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), if by 1 June some of the areas besieged either by the government or the opposition were not accessible, they would seriously take into account the option of "air drops, air lifting, air bridging". Speaking to the media in Geneva, after the meeting of the Humanitarian Task Force, he termed air dropping humanitarian aid as the "the cheapest, the most effective, the most deliverable" option. Also addressing the media with him, Senior Adviser Jan Egeland said that the month of May had been much more difficult than they had hoped. "We were supposed to have procedures with the government and with armed opposition groups that would make it possible for us to reach a million people by land in addition to the 110,000 people by air in Deir-ez Zor." Of the one million people, he said so far they had reached only 160,000 people.

<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=4545>

Fears for displaced and encircled civilians as ISIL offensives escalate in north

Two United Nations experts on internally displaced persons and summary executions urged immediate protection for thousands of civilians caught up in ISIL offensives in the Aleppo region of northern Syria. In a statement issued on 1 June, the experts voiced their concern at the prospect of massive new displacement of populations in the region and the targeting of trapped and vulnerable civilians including those already internally displaced and highly vulnerable due to the conflict. In recent days, according to the UN in Syria, ISIL has rapidly seized a number of villages and advanced to within two kilometres of Azaz town, putting at risk those internally displaced living in camps near the Turkish border and other vulnerable communities.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20043&LangID=E>

UN envoy for Syria tells Security Council peace talks will resume 'as soon as feasible'

The United Nations envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura told the Security Council on 26 May that he intends to begin the next round of intra-Syrian talks 'as soon as feasible, but certainly not within the next two to three weeks.' A note for the press, issued by the Office of the Spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, said that the Special Envoy briefed the Security Council in closed-door consultations, the first such discussions since the conclusion of the latest round of talks in Geneva and since the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) met in Vienna on 17 May. Meanwhile, the note said, Mr. de Mistura will maintain close and continuous contact with the Syrian parties as well as the members of the ISSG before determining the "appropriate time" to reconvene the parties to Geneva.

<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=4547>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54057>

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

Mediterranean death toll soars in first 5 months of 2016: UNHCR

At least 880 people are believed to have drowned last week in a spate of shipwrecks and boats capsizing in the Mediterranean Sea, the UN refugee agency said on 31 May.

UNHCR told a press briefing in Geneva that the latest figures were arrived at following new information received through interviews with survivors brought ashore in Italy. "As well as three shipwrecks that were known to us as of Sunday, we have received information from people who landed in Augusta over the weekend that 47 people were missing after a raft carrying 125 people from Libya deflated," UNHCR spokesperson William Spindler detailed.

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/5/574db9d94/mediterranean-death-toll-soars-first-5-months-2016.html>

UNHCR flags concerns over refugee sites in northern Greece

On 27 May, the UN refugee agency said it was "seriously concerned" over what it termed sub-standard conditions at several sites in northern Greece where refugees and migrants were evacuated this week from the makeshift site at Idomeni. "We urge the Greek authorities, with the financial support provided by the European Union, to find better alternatives quickly," UNHCR spokesperson Melissa Fleming told a press briefing in Geneva. She stressed that UNHCR agreed that the makeshift site at Idomeni on the Greek border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where refugees had been staying in abysmal conditions, needed to be evacuated, and noted that this had been completed without the use of force.

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2016/5/57484e9f0/unhcr-flags-concerns-refugee-sites-northern-greece.html>

Thousands of Iraqis seek refuge from Mosul fighting in war-torn Syria

The UN refugee agency said on 27 May that the past month had seen a spike in numbers of Iraqi refugees risking the dangerous crossing into Syria in a desperate bid to escape ISIL-held Mosul, the pending battle to retake it, and fighting in surrounding areas. Briefing the media in Geneva, the UNHCR spokesperson said that since the beginning of May, a total of 4,266 refugees have arrived at the Al-Hol camp located 14 kilometres from the Iraqi border in Syria's north-eastern Hasakah Governorate. In anticipation of further arrivals in the coming weeks, the first of five UNHCR airlifts of emergency items such as tents and blankets arrived from Jordan to Qamishli in the far north of Hasakah Governorate on 26 May. The total amount of aid arriving will be enough to provide support for up to 50,000 people, including refugees and the immediate host community.

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2016/5/57480e834/thousands-iraqis-seek-refuge-mosul-fighting-war-torn-syria.html>

UNHCR concerned about fighting in northern Syria affecting thousands of vulnerable civilians

In a statement issued on 28 May, UNHCR expressed its deep concern about the plight of some 165,000 displaced persons reportedly massing near the Syrian town of Azaz in northern Syria. People have started to flee due to heavy fighting in northern Aleppo. Fleeing civilians are being caught in cross-fire and are facing challenges to access medical services, food, water and safety.

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2016/5/574957b44/unhcr-concerned-fighting-northern-syria-affecting-thousands-vulnerable.html>

UN relief chief calls for more assistance for 'distressing and dire' situation of Syrians

Following a visit to Hatay in southern Turkey, the top United Nations humanitarian official called for greater assistance for Syrians in need, both inside the country and across the region, warning that the humanitarian situation for millions of people remains "unrelentingly distressing and dire." "The people of Syria continue to suffer. The violence, fear and deprivation force Syrians to make the impossible choices of leaving their homeland for a tolerable life in another part of the country or across the border or continent," Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, said in a press release.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/emergency-relief-coordinator-urges-greater-humanitarian-support-syrians>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54068>

Refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than others

A new policy paper, 'No more excuses', jointly released by the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report and UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on 20 May, ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit, reveals new data showing that only 50% of refugee children are in primary school and 25% of refugee adolescents are in secondary school. [The paper](#) calls for countries and their humanitarian and development partners to ensure urgently that those forcibly displaced are included in national education plans and to collect better data to monitor their education status and progress. On Syria, the paper says that based on available data concerning displaced persons outside refugee camps, only 53% of school-aged Syrian refugees in Jordan and 30% in Turkey are enrolled in school.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/refugee_children_are_five_times_more_likely_to_be_out_of_school_than_others/#.V0iUQbcpC70

UNRWA deplores increased violence in Khan Eshieh camp

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) expressed grave concern over the hostilities in Khan Eshieh camp, which were imperilling the lives and safety of the camp's residents, it said in a statement on May 30. It also strongly condemned the killing of six year-old Ahmad Zuheir Suleiman T'uheimr, a Palestine refugee in Khan Eshieh camp in southern rural Damascus on 27 May.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa-deplores-increased-violence-khan-eshieh-camp>

UNRWA receiving only half of its requirements for Syria

Speaking to the UNRWA Advisory Commission meeting on 30 May 2016, the Commissioner-General, Pierre Krähenbühl, said while the core financial shortfall is improving, the same cannot be said for the Syria emergency and the appeal for the occupied Palestinian territory. He said that despite being one of the most effective humanitarian actors in the region, UNRWA continues to receive only half of its requirements in the case of Syria.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/statement-unrwa-commissioner-general-pierre-kr%C3%A4henb%C3%BChl-unrwa-advisory>

Syrian Arab Republic: 2016 UN Inter-Agency Humanitarian Operations (as of 18 May 2016)

Since the beginning of 2016, the UN and partners successfully delivered multi-sectoral assistance through inter-agency operations, reaching over 791,000 civilians in besieged, hard-to-reach and other priority crossline locations with dire humanitarian needs. Many of these people were reached more than once. A total of 44 UN inter-agency convoys have been undertaken, reaching over 679,000 people. UNRWA has also delivered 25 convoys with multi-sectoral assistance to 19,000 people in YBB*, including thousands of residents in and from Yarmouk.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syrian-arab-republic-2016-un-inter-agency-humanitarian-operations-18-may>

http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2016_un_inter-agency_operationsas_of_18_may_2016_0.pdf

UN Radio in Arabic

United Nations expresses concerns about people besieged in northern Aleppo

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/203115/>

Mediterranean Sea claims the lives of 880 people in one week

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/203131/#.V08DP_krKUK

Stephen O'Brien stresses that humanitarian access in Syria should not depend on political negotiations, and the Syrian ambassador talks about "confusion" regarding humanitarian access

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202939/#.V08EcfkrKUK>

O'Brien in Turkey, urges more aid to Syrians, inside and outside their country

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202881/#.V08E6vkrKUK>

UNHCR expresses concern about the situations of new camps for refugees and migrants in northern Greece

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202767/#.V08FfvkrKUK>

Staffan de Mistura: the new round of Syrian talks will not take place for 2 or 3 weeks

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202632/#.V08F_PkrKUK

Egland: Syrian children may die because of the obstacles to distribution of aid

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202552/#.V08GkPkrKUK>

Abdullah, 11, continues his dialysis sessions, thanks to Kuwait support for kidney patients in Syria

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/202319/#.V08Hw_krKUK

Facebook

A project in Germany teams up newly arrived Syrian refugees with local volunteers, helping them to find their feet and start anew in the country.

In just 18 months, Start with a Friend has matched 400 pairs.

Meet them here.

<https://www.facebook.com/unitednations/posts/10154226033195820>

-27 May

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 - for Syria and signed for all attendees at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. #ShareHumanity
Photo: OCHA/Alexandra EURDOLIAN

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

-25 May

Did you know that UNRWA assistance is the primary source of livelihood for 80 per cent of Palestine refugees from Syria displaced to Lebanon? You can help:

<http://www.unrwa.org/donate> #RememberUs #Syria5Years

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1082945655085334/?type=3>

-29 May

UNRWA disabilities programme provides support to over 40,000 Palestine refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Learn more:

<http://goo.gl/2mfcbZ>

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1101371483242751/?type=3>

-28 May

Live interview with Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl, from UNRWA

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/posts/1099699483409951>

-24 May

Twitter

Watch & share these @unwomenarabic stories of #womenofsyria refugees regaining hope & dignity: <http://ow.ly/xeSy300CSCh> #UN4RefugeesMigrants

-31 May

.@UNReliefChief calls for more assistance for "distressing & dire" situation of Syrians
<http://ow.ly/uppE300EHdp> pic.twitter.com/Z8ajATjePh

-30 May

Latest: 1000s of Iraqis seek refuge from Mosul fighting in war-torn Syria
<http://trib.al/tC9jCw9> via @refugees pic.twitter.com/wX1hFZWESM

-28 May

120,000 #Palestine refugees have left #Syria (of 560,000), 60% of those left behind are displaced" @PKraehenbuehl

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/737550307719143425>

+10,000 @UNRWA students accessed self-learning materials through #Education in Emergencies in 2015! <http://unrwa.org/whs> #ShareHumanity

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/735794877519142917>

"Let us remember the stories behind the figures, the real tragedies and the strength that people show us" @PKraehenbuehl #ShareHumanity

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/735109746248781824>

"Conflicts need to end. They need to be resolved politically." defends @PKraehenbuehl #ShareHumanity

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/735108021156773889>

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/>