



## **Syrian Crisis** **United Nations Response**



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

**No. 163/7 September 2016**

### **Investigative panel calls on parties to return to the negotiating table**

In a report issued on 6 September, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria noted that following a brief respite in fighting resulting from February's cessation of hostilities, there has been a tragic increase in violence targeting Syrian civilians, crushing hopes of peace. "The relief brought by the cessation of hostilities agreement is ample evidence that only the exercise of political will by relevant stakeholders, including in the international community, can reduce the suffering of the Syrian people", the panel stressed, urging parties to return to the negotiating table. "It is imperative that the key parties negotiate an end to this conflict, while bearing in mind that any peace agreement must necessarily provide justice for the victims", said Commissioner Carla Del Ponte.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20456&LangID=E#sthash.zXw2CrAN.dpuf>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/IICISyria/Pages/IndependentInternationalCommission.aspx>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54856>

### **Secretary-General discusses situation in Syria in meeting with Turkish President**

Meeting on the side lines of the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China, with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on 3 September, the Secretary-General discussed the situation in Syria, and particularly in Aleppo. They also talked about the status of negotiations for a political solution and the latest report of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism on chemical weapons attacks. During the meeting, the Secretary-General emphasized the key role of Turkey in the fight against Da'esh.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/readout/2016-09-03/readout-secretary-general%E2%80%99s-meeting-he-recep-tayyip-erdogan-president>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54840>

### **UN Humanitarian chief visits refugees in northern Jordan, calls for more burden sharing measures**

Visiting refugees stranded on the Jordanian-Syrian border on 2 September, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O'Brien saw the dire conditions that more than 70,000 people, mostly women and children, are living in with no access to food and water. Speaking to reporters in Amman after meetings with Jordanian officials in an effort to resolve their plight, the UN Humanitarian Chief urged the international community to ensure more robust burden-sharing measures to support the Government of Jordan to address the impact of the crisis and preserve development gains. Mr. O'

Brien hailed the efforts of the Jordanian authorities in responding to the needs of Syrian refugees since the beginning of the crisis.

<https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/USG%20remarks%20to%20the%20press%20Amman%202Sept2016.pdf>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54834>

### **A year on from Aylan Kurdi's death, Mediterranean drowning rates rising, says UN refugee agency**

During a press briefing in Geneva on 2 September, a UN Refugee agency (UNHCR) Spokesperson warned that the number of people who have perished in the Mediterranean Sea is soaring. "A year ago today, the world was moved by the photograph of Syrian toddler Aylan Kurdi who drowned when his family was desperately trying to reach safety in Europe. Since Aylan's death, 4,176 people have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean - an average of 11 men, women and children perishing every single day", he added. According to UNHCR, 2016 has been to date the deadliest year on record in the Central Mediterranean Sea.

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2016/9/57c938b97/year-alan-kurdis-death-mediterranean-drowning-rates-soaring.html>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54828>

### **Special Envoy de Mistura to present political initiative next week**

Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura told reporters in Geneva on 1 September that he intends to present a "quite clear political initiative" in the week preceding the UN General Assembly with a view to restart peace talks before the Security Council's next meeting on Syria on 21 September. "That is the target date for making sure that everyone is actively involved in producing some positive outcome on this conflict", he noted. On the negotiations on a cessation of hostilities between the International Syria Support Group co-chairs, Russia and the United States, Mr. de Mistura said "the discussions are ongoing at the very senior military, security and diplomatic level" between the two nations.

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear\\_en\)/31D076AADAEBE974C12580220028E752?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/31D076AADAEBE974C12580220028E752?OpenDocument)

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54823>

### **Despite humanitarian community's efforts to deliver aid in Syria, critical gaps remain—OCHA report**

In a report published on 1 September, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that as the Syrian conflict is entering its sixth year, the already catastrophic humanitarian situation continues to worsen amid aid access constraints and a deepening economic recession. Since January, over 900,000 people – an average of 5,000 per day – have been newly displaced and the number of people without basic food to meet their needs has risen from 6.3 million to 6.7 million (a 6 per cent increase). The report also found that half of the country's pre-crisis population has been forced from their homes, with one third of the remaining population now displaced within Syria and over 4.8 million seeking refuge in neighbouring countries and elsewhere.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syria-2016-humanitarian-response-plan-monitoring-report-january-june>

## **UN's top relief official: World body is impartial in its humanitarian work in Syria as it is elsewhere**

The top United Nations relief official today outlined how the humanitarian work of the world body in war-torn Syria is guided by impartiality and the key imperative of saving lives. "Impartiality in humanitarian terms means that we provide life-saving and life-sustaining assistance to civilians based on their humanitarian needs without consideration of where they are, which side in the conflict they may sympathise with, their nationality, social status, gender, age, religious belief or any other consideration," the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, wrote today in a letter to the editor published in the UK newspaper *The Guardian*.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54818>

## **UNRWA students pass Baccalaureate exams as education remains under fire**

The final exams this year came as a relief to young Syrians and Palestine refugees as the conflict continues. Gathered at the UNRWA Palestine School and the Said al-Ass Institute in Damascus on 5 September, they expressed how difficult it was for them to prepare for their official exams amid the intensified fighting, especially in Yarmouk and Khan Eshieh.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/features/unrwa-students-pass-their-baccalaureate-exams-education-remains-under-fire>

## **UN Radio in Arabic**

UN Independent Investigation panel: Syrians are "desperate" amid an increase in fighting

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/213868/#.V88ZVPkrKUK>

القتال في زيادة وسط "الأيأس" يشعرون السوريون: أمميون مدققون

06/09/2016

Mediterranean drownings continue to rise a year after tragic death of Syrian child Aylan Kurdi

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/213562/#.V88Y3fkrKUK>

المساوية أي لان الطفل وفاة من سنة بعد ارت فاع في الامتوسط الأب يض البحر ضحايا

02/09/2016

UN Humanitarian Chief: "We are here to find the best ways to help people stranded on the Jordanian border"

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/213650/#.V88YFPkrKUK>

الحدود على العالقةين لمساعدة السبل أفضل لإيجاد هنا ونحن "جدا مشروعة الأم نية الأردن مخاوف": أوبراين

02/09/2016

UN envoy to Syria to present political initiative

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/213424/#.V88X4 krKUK>

المساعدات توزير يزال لا ف يما وروسيا المتحدة الولايات محادثات لتأجيل تطلع لسوريا الأممي الامبعوث معلقا

01/09/2016

## **Twitter**

UN News Centre @UN\_News\_Centre - 6 September

As peace talks stall, violence soars once again in #Syria – new @UN report warns.  
<http://bit.ly/2c5kAcT>

United Nations Retweeted

UN Syria Commission @UNCoISyria - 6 September

Our 12th report to the @UN\_HRC (A/HRC/33/55), released today, 6 September, is now online:

[http://ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20456&LangID=E ...](http://ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20456&LangID=E...)

United Nations Retweeted

OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 5 September

Despite humanitarian community's efforts to deliver aid in #Syria, critical gaps remain

<http://ow.ly/kKrY303UjN2>

OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 4 September

Immense needs outstanding across #Syria

2016 Humanitarian Response Plan Monitoring Report <http://ow.ly/9Anr303Srcn>

### **Facebook**

School provides stability and a sense of normalcy for students, especially those coping with fear and violence in Syria. UNRWA works to ensure that its students have access to quality education and psychological support. Watch the video to see how the European Union supports UNRWA students in Syria. <http://bit.ly/2bDJHCM> #Back2School  
<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/videos/1171378919575340/>

UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl expresses deep appreciation for the extraordinary contributions of UNRWA staff in Syria and the sacrifices they continue to make to serve Palestine refugees in spite of the risks of the armed conflict.

<http://bit.ly/2cpIgwA>

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1171384689574763/?type=3&theater>

### **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](http://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](https://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/](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](http://www.unicef.org/photography/photo_2013.php#UNI82253)

IRIN: <http://www.irinnews.org/photo/>