



## Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

**No. 192/5 April 2017**

### **“Nobody is winning this war”, Secretary-General tells international conference**

In his opening remarks at the plenary session of the Brussels conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region, Secretary-General António Guterres urged the international community to take decisive steps to increase its support for the victims of the Syria conflict, and for the neighbouring countries that are providing a safe haven for millions of refugees. “Nobody is winning this war. Everybody is losing. It poses a danger to us all”, he said. “The need for humanitarian aid and the protection of Syrian civilians has never been greater. The humanitarian appeal for a single crisis has never been higher. United Nations agencies and our partners are determined to reach everyone in need through all possible means”, the Secretary-General stressed. Also addressing the conference on 5 April, Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura condemned the alleged use of chemical weapons in Khan Sheikhoun, near Idlib. “The international community needs to have a firm response to that, and based on a credible investigation”, he said, adding, “if one supposes this attack was to undermine the Astana process, the Geneva process and the Brussels conference, well we must do all what we can (...) We are horrified, we are outraged but we are not going to feel this is a way to divert our attention from what we need to do about Syria”, the Envoy stated.

Meanwhile, a statement issued on 4 April, stated that the Secretary-General was deeply disturbed by the reports of alleged use of chemical weapons in the Khan Shaeikhoun area. He expressed his heartfelt condolences to victims of the incident and their families.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-04-05/secretary-generals-remarks-opening-plenary-session-brussels>

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-04-04/statement-attributable-spokesman-secretary-general-alleged-chemical>

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpPages\)/5C6FE6978290BD24C12580F900559710?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpPages)/5C6FE6978290BD24C12580F900559710?OpenDocument)

### **UN senior officials speak out against alleged use of chemical weapons near Idlib**

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kin Won-soo briefed the Security Council on 5 April on the alleged chemical weapons attack in Khan Sheikhoun, in southern rural Idlib. If confirmed, he said, this would be the largest single chemical weapons attack in Syria since the Ghouta attack in August 2013. He said he has been in close contact with the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), who informed him that the OPCW has begun gathering information and is prepared to send a team to the area. Echoing the UN Secretary-General, UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake said that “the images of children

choking and dying in the streets of Idlib are as horrific as they are heart-breaking. If confirmed, these attacks must do more than provoke outrage, they must compel action by those with the power and the ability to bring an end to this devastating violence”.

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/unoda-web/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/high-rep-sec-co-briefing-5april2017-final-as-delivered.pdf>

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/ossg/noon-briefing-highlight>

[https://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_95522.html](https://www.unicef.org/media/media_95522.html)

### **More than 70 people killed by highly toxic chemical - WHO**

In a statement on 5 April, the World Health Organization (WHO) said that according to health partners in Khan Sheikhoun, at least 70 people had died and hundreds more had been affected by highly toxic chemical in an attack on the locality. Doctors in Idlib reported that dozens of patients suffering from breathing difficulties and suffocation had been admitted to hospitals in the governorate for urgent medical attention, many of them women and children. “These types of weapons are banned by international law because they represent an intolerable barbarism,” said Dr Peter Salama, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme.

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2017/toxic-chemicals-syria/en/>

### **UN Relief Chief stresses the need to keep food insecurity in check across Syria**

Speaking at a thematic session of the Brussels conference on 4 April, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O’Brien underscored the need to ensure that food insecurity across Syria is kept in check and that effective food assistance can be provided. “Multilateral action together does create the greater impact for affected people who are suffering and need our relief action”, he said, noting that peace is the best antidote to suffering.

[https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/usg\\_obrien\\_opening\\_remarks\\_syriaconf\\_brussels.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/usg_obrien_opening_remarks_syriaconf_brussels.pdf)

### **UNHCR warns funding cuts threaten aid to Syrian refugees**

The UN Refugees agency (UNHCR) warned on 4 April that vital assistance for millions of refugees and the communities hosting them could face substantial cuts due to a lack of funding. “The ongoing conflict remains the largest displacement crisis in the world. But despite the growing needs of those forced to flee their homes, many are instead facing potential cuts to services because of a lack of funding”, Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner for Refugees, said in a statement. “We recognize and applaud the donations made so far, but the simple truth is that funding isn’t keeping up with needs”, he added.

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2017/4/58e347288/unhcr-warns-funding-cuts-threaten-aid-syrian-refugees-hosts.html>

### **UN Women calls for economic opportunities and political engagement of Syrian women**

On the eve of the opening of the Brussels conference on “Supporting the future of Syria and the region”, UN Women said it will draw attention to the acute vulnerabilities that women and girls continue to face due to gender inequalities. UN Women, along with partners, will seek to renew the international community’s support for women’s access to equal opportunities in economic and political engagement. The agency notes that the organizing of Syrian women early in the conflict at community levels has not easily translated into a voice of influence at the international level, or among key parties to the conflict.

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/4/news-brussels-conference-on-syrian-women>

### **Wrapping up the fifth round of intra-Syrian talks, Special Envoy appeals to parties to maintain political momentum**

Speaking to the media at the conclusion of the fifth round of Intra-Syrian talks in Geneva on 31 March, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura called all the parties to maintain the incremental momentum on the political process. "If both the government and the opposition are to move on the substantive matters, it takes time and we need to work towards a framework containing exactly a political package and a political settlement linked to Geneva Communiqué and Security Council resolution 2254 (2015)", he said. The Envoy noted that all sides had expressed readiness to return to Geneva for a sixth round of the talks at a date that he would announce after consultations with the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpPages\)/1DC82541A3B3849FC12580F50074E4BE?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpPages)/1DC82541A3B3849FC12580F50074E4BE?OpenDocument)

### **New UN report presents first assessment of the impact of war on Syria's agriculture**

The conflict in Syria has caused more than \$16 billion of lost crop and livestock production and destroyed farming assets. In a report published on 3 April, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) said that the fighting in Syria has caused huge damage and losses to agricultural production, but the sector can and should be kick-started now, dramatically reducing the need for humanitarian aid and migration. The report, "Counting the Cost: Agriculture in Syria after six years of crisis", presents the first comprehensive nationwide assessment of the damage of the war on the agriculture sector. "The survey shows that in the midst of conflict, agriculture provides a lifeline for the millions of Syrians, including internally displaced people still living in rural areas," said José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General.

<http://www.fao.org/emergencies/resources/documents/resources-detail/en/c/878213/>  
[http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/emergencies/docs/FAO\\_SYRIADamageandLossReport.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/emergencies/docs/FAO_SYRIADamageandLossReport.pdf)

### **UN Relief Chief urges parties to the conflict to regain a sense of humanity**

Briefing the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Syria on 30 March, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O'Brien said the last month has been some of the worst yet for civilians inside Syria. "The continued use of explosive weapons as well as ongoing military operations in populated towns and villages in Hama, Damascus, Idlib, Aleppo, Dar'a, Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates have killed and injured hundreds of civilians over the past weeks and displaced tens of thousands more." He added that "we have to maintain a laser focus on the fact that violence continues to rear its ugly head in various parts of the country, even if it largely disappeared from the world's TV screens since the evacuation of East Aleppo". He urged parties to the conflict to end the suffering and regain a sense of humanity.

[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ERC\\_USG%20Stephen%20O'Brien%20Statement%20to%20the%20SecCo%20on%20Syria%20-%2030March2017%20CAD.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ERC_USG%20Stephen%20O'Brien%20Statement%20to%20the%20SecCo%20on%20Syria%20-%2030March2017%20CAD.pdf)

### **More than 6 million civilians are affected by unexploded arms across Syria**

In a video message on the International Day of Mine awareness, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, Kevin Kennedy said that six years of conflict have left the country littered with unexploded arms, cluster ammunitions, landmines and unexploded ordnances. The UN estimates that 6.3 million men, women and children are living in areas contaminated by explosive hazards that threaten their lives, limit their movements and hamper the delivery of much needed aid by humanitarian workers. He stressed that mine action was critical for the humanitarian response in the conflict  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPXvC4ENJTo&feature=youtu.be>

### **US \$3.4 billion needed to provide life-saving assistance for 13 million Syrians**

Over 13 million people in Syria will need humanitarian assistance as this conflict enters its seventh year. The cost to provide these essential goods and services will be \$3.4 billion, according to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). "People in Syria continue to suffer from the enormous humanitarian consequences arising from the conflict. Inside Syria, some 13.5 million people need humanitarian assistance, including 4.7 million people living in besieged or hard to reach areas where aid seldom reaches," said the Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, Ali Al-Za'tari, and the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, Kevin Kennedy on 30 March. The 2017 Syria HRP describes how the humanitarian community will respond to the crisis along three strategic objectives: saving lives and alleviating suffering; enhancing protection, and building resilience.

<http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/syria-us-34-billion-needed-provide-life-saving-assistance-13-million-people>

[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/syr\\_wos\\_operational\\_plan\\_hrp\\_2017.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/syr_wos_operational_plan_hrp_2017.pdf)

### **UN Radio in Arabic**

Secretary-General reiterates that the use of chemical weapons constitutes a serious violation of international law

الأمين العام يؤكد مجددا أن استخدام الأسلحة الكيميائية يشكل انتهاكا خطيرا للقانون الدولي

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238405>

4/4/2017

UN Relief Chief renews call for safe, rapid and continuous access to all those in need in Syria

أوبراين يكرر المطالبة بالوصول الآمن والسريع والمتواصل إلى جميع المحتاجين في سوريا

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238395>

4/4/2017

ICRC investigates allegations of use of chemical weapons in Khan Sheikhoun

اللجنة الدولية المعنية بسوريا تحقق في ادعاءات استخدام أسلحة كيميائية في خان شيخون

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238344>

4/4/2017

Steffan de Mistura: The attack on Idlib came from the air

ستيفان دي ميستورا: الهجوم على إدلب جاء من الجو

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238375>

4/4/2017

Lack of funding threatens all areas of assistance for Syrian refugees and host countries  
نقص التمويل يهدد جميع مجالات المساعدة للاجئين السوريين والدول المضيفة

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238303>

4/4/2017

OPCW expresses its deep concern over allegations of chemical weapons attack in Idlib

سوريا: منظمة حظر الأسلحة الكيميائية تعرب عن بالغ قلقها إزاء مزاعم هجوم بالأسلحة الكيميائية في إدلب

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238294>

4/4/2017

Refugee agency helps Syrian children to embroider dolls to tell their stories and dreams

لاجئون يساعدون لاجئين . . دمي مطرزة تروي قصص وأحلام الأطفال السوريين

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238186>

3/4/2017

FAO: A study on Syrian agriculture reveals the need to start reviving farming now, despite massive destruction

الفاو: دراسة حول المزارعين السوريين تكشف عن ضرورة البدء في إنعاش الزراعة الآن على الرغم من الدمار الهائل

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238172>

3/4/2017

Kuwait and UNHCR sign an agreement to help Syrian refugees

الكويت ومفوضية اللاجئين توقعان اتفاقا لمساعدة اللاجئين السوريين

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238165>

3/4/2017

Special Envoy de Mistura: "We have not reached the desired stage yet"

دي ميستورا: لم نصل بعد إلى المرحلة المرجوة

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/238116>

31/3/2017

Stephen O'Brien tells the Security Council that attacks on civilians and infrastructure have become the hallmark of the war in Syria

ستيفن أوبراين: الهجمات على المدنيين والبنية التحتية أضحت العلامة المميزة للحرب في سوريا

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/237934>

30/3/2017

## **Twitter**

United Nations Retweeted António Guterres- 5 April

Humanitarian needs have never been greater in Syria –

@AntonioGuterres to #SyriaConf2017 <http://bit.ly/2o36nWL>

António Guterres @antonioguterres-5 April

With war in 7th year, Syrian suffering is deepening. International community must step up humanitarian support. #syriaconf2017

EU External Action@eu\_eas – United Nations Retweeted- 5 April

.@FedericaMog with @antonioguterres at #syriacnf2017: "It's a day when the multilateral approach is more needed than ever" #FutureofSyria

United Nations@UN- 5 April

United Nations Retweeted Stephen O'Brien

#Syriacnf2017 in Brussels calls for vital assistance for millions of refugees & their host communities <http://bit.ly/2o6Vi7l>

UN Refugee Agency@Refugees- 5 April

We're at #syriacnf2017 to reconfirm the international community's commitment to assisting Syrians in need <http://trib.al/drpd1cd>

United Nations@UN- 5 April

Access to education, shelter & basic needs at risk. The situation for @refugees is getting desperate. <http://trib.al/sXDRwEZ> #syriacnf2017

OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 4 April

Explosive hazards hamper ability of humanitarians to deliver aid in #Syria said Kevin Kennedy <http://ow.ly/fyil30ayuu9> #mineaction2017

OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 4 April

Explosive hazards hamper ability of humanitarians to deliver aid in #Syria said Kevin Kennedy <http://ow.ly/fyil30ayuu9> #mineaction2017

WFP Middle East @WFP\_MENA – 4 April

Thanks to the #EU & other vital donors, @WFP reaches 4 million people inside war-torn Syria w/ food every month. #SyriaConf2017 w/ @eu\_echo

United Nations4 - April

At #SyriaConf2017, @UN\_Women calls for economic opps & political engagement of women of Syria <http://ow.ly/d0bX30ax0Wn> #ItTakesaWoman

WHO@WHO- 4 April

Shipments of medicines and protective equipment are on their way to #Idlib, #Syria, from WHO warehouse in Turkey

WHO@WHO- 4 April

WHO concerned by today's reports of large number of civilian casualties in #Idlib area, #Syria

WHO @WHO- 4 April

10 things you should know about the crisis in #Syria <http://goo.gl/wNyUD0>  
#SyriaConf2017

United Nations@UN- 3 April

New @FAOnews report is 1st nation-wide assessment of impact of war in Syria on agriculture <http://ow.ly/3vK730avbPh> #SyriaConf2017

Food production in #Syria at a record low and about half the population is unable to meet daily food needs @FAOnews <http://ow.ly/9Brx30avka8>

## **Facebook**

United Nations- 5 April

"Nobody is winning the war in Syria; everyone is losing. Time to end the horror and ease the suffering."

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres at the Brussels Conference on Supporting Syrians and the Region on Wednesday, calling on the international community to step up humanitarian support.

#syriaconf2017

United Nations shared UN Geneva's video- 1 April

The fifth round of talks aimed at eventually reaching a peace agreement in Syria ended in Geneva last night.

Watch UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura brief the press on progress and challenges, and go over the next steps of this process.

#SyriaTalks

## **Social media campaigns**

**#Shareyourwarmth**- UNRWA launched its winter fundraising campaign #shareyourwarmth in December 2016 to support the needs of this vulnerable population affected by the Syrian crisis and bring respite during the cold months.

<http://www.unrwa.org/galleries/photos/families-face-hardship-during-winter-khan-dunoun-shelter>

**#My Voice-My School** is an UNRWA project launched in 2015 and implemented by Digital Explorer to connect schools in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon with schools in Europe and USA through Skype exchanges. Through live video conversations and customized teaching materials, students and teachers explore how education can help them meet their future aspirations. [www.unrwa.org/myvoicemyschool](http://www.unrwa.org/myvoicemyschool)

**@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. Through the app, smartphone users can join thousands of other people in making donations and support a selected community and monitor progress. Since the launch of the campaign, nearly 7.5 million meals have been shared.

[www.sharethemeal.org](http://www.sharethemeal.org)

**#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/>

**#NoLostGeneration:** The initiative was launched by UNICEF and partners in 2013 to focus attention on the plight of children affected by the Syrian crisis. By articulating real concerns about the possible 'loss' of a generation of children to the effects of violence and displacement, the initiative put education and child protection at the centre of the response inside Syria and across the refugee hosting countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt).

<http://nolostgeneration.org/about>

## **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://facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria)

WHO: <http://www.who.int/countries/syr/en/>

UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4f86c2426.html>

UNFPA: <https://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/crisis-syria>

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)