



Syrian Crisis

United Nations Response



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

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Conflict continues to devastate the civilian population, UN Humanitarian Chief warns

The conflict in Syria continues to tear families apart, inflict brutal suffering on the innocent and leaves them pleading for protection and justice, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O'Brien told the Security Council on 30 May. While noting a drop in violence in some areas of the country, Mr. O'Brien underscored the deteriorating situation in north eastern Syria, calling for unrestricted humanitarian access. "With some 100,000 people displaced due to fighting around Raqqa since April, access is needed now through every possible modality. We need to see increased cross-border and cross-line access for humanitarian assistance into the area", he said.

[http://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/statement-and-speech/USG ERC Statement to SecCo on Syria 30May2017 FINAL.pdf](http://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/statement-and-speech/USG%20ERC%20Statement%20to%20SecCo%20on%20Syria%2030May2017%20FINAL.pdf)
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56868>

UNHCR calls for urgent access to Syrian refugees stranded between Algeria and Morocco

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) called on 30 May for urgent safe passage and admission for a group of Syrian refugees stranded in dire circumstances on the Algerian-Moroccan border. The 41 Syrian refugees have been stranded on the remote border since 17 April 2017. Both Algeria and Morocco consider the group not to be in their respective territory, however, UNHCR has called for action to bring the group to safety on humanitarian grounds and stands ready to offer its 'good offices' to coordinate this life-saving evacuation. The refugee agency urged the two countries to urgently address humanitarian needs, facilitate access to these refugees and allow them admission to safety and/or reunification with their families.

<http://www.unhcr.org/592d51e94.html>

Secretary-General António Guterres denounces attacks against health workers and medical facilities

Addressing the Security Council during a debate on the protection of civilians on 25 May, Secretary-General António Guterres said that increasingly parties to conflict are treating hospitals and health clinics as targets, rather than respecting them as sanctuaries. "This goes against the spirit of the Geneva Conventions, the fundamental tenets of international humanitarian law, and our basic humanity", he said. Referring to Syria, the Secretary-General noted that Physicians for Human Rights had documented more than 400 attacks on medical facilities since the conflict began. More than 800 medical staff had been killed. To date, more than half of medical facilities are closed or are only partially functioning, and two-thirds of specialized medical personnel had fled the country.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-05-25/secretary-generals-remarks-security-council-open-debate-protection>

Airstrikes, ISIL cause civilian casualties in Syria - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein said on 26 May that civilians who are suffering indiscriminate shelling and summary executions by ISIL, are also falling victim to the escalating airstrikes, particularly in the governorates of Al-Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor. The Human Rights Chief urged all air forces operating in Syria to take greater care to distinguish between legitimate military targets and civilians. "Because of the ISIL presence, we fear civilians are in an increasingly dangerous situation as the airstrikes and ground conflict intensify, possibly resulting in many more casualties, as well as retaliatory assaults by ISIL against densely-populated civilian areas," he noted.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21662&LangID=E>
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56844>

UN Food agency leverages technology to support refugees

The World Food Programme (WFP) is deploying cutting-edge technology to make cash-based transfers faster, cheaper and more secure. In Jordan's Azraq camp, about 10,000 refugees are now able to pay for their food by means of entitlements recorded on a blockchain-based computing platform as part of a pilot programme. "Blockchain technology allows us to step up the fight against hunger," said WFP's Director of Innovation and Change Management, Robert Opp. "Through blockchain, we aim to cut payment costs, better protect beneficiary data, control financial risks, and respond more rapidly in the wake of emergencies", he added. The agency's system relies on biometric registration data from the UNHCR for authentication purposes. Refugees purchase food from local supermarkets in the camp by using a scan of their eye instead of cash, vouchers or e-cards.

<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/blockchain-against-hunger-harnessing-technology-support-syrian-refugees>

All refugees want to go home someday' – UNHCR spokesperson and author Melissa Fleming

"I envy the mountains and the trees and the rocks because they will be able to breathe Daraa's air and I won't." Those were the thoughts going through Doaa Al Zamel, when she and her family reached the Jordanian border. It was November 2012, one year and eight months since the violence in Syria first began. Doaa is a refugee from Syria who now lives in Sweden. She survived one of the worst refugee shipwrecks on the Mediterranean Sea. In August 2014, aboard an overloaded ship carrying more than 500 refugees, Doaa became an unlikely hero. As Head of Communications and Chief Spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Melissa Fleming listens to stories of people fleeing for their lives every day. Although she has met many refugees and gotten to know several stories of resilience, when she came across Doaa's story, she couldn't sleep at night.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56846>

UN Radio in Arabic

أوبراين يدعو إلى تنفيذ مذكرة أستانة فيما يستمر القتال بتمزيق الأسر السورية

Humanitarian Chief O'Brien calls for implementation of Astana agreement, while fighting continues to tear Syrian families apart

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/243463>

2017-05-30

مفوض حقوق الإنسان: سقوط الكثير من الضحايا المدنيين في سوريا بسبب الضربات الجوية وداعش
High Commissioner for Human Rights warns of civilian casualties in Syria due to air strikes and ISIS

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/243151>

2017-05-26

اليونيسف: من الكوليرا في اليمن إلى قصف المستشفيات في سوريا، يهدّد النزاع حياة أكثر من 24 مليون طفل في الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا

UNICEF says: From cholera in Yemen to bombing hospitals in Syria, the conflict threatens the lives of more than 24 million children in the Middle East and North Africa

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/242876>

2017-05-24

Twitter

OCHA Syria@OCHA_Syria- 31 May

In #Syria, protection space is shrinking, humanitarian conditions are worsening and despair is rising @UNReliefChief <http://ow.ly/4PFH30cbdOu>

Stephen O'Brien @UNReliefChief – 30 May

My full remarks to the UNSC on #Syria today: [https://www.unocha.org/story/syria-astana-produced-promising-step-agreement-simply-has-succeed-un-humanitarian-chief ...](https://www.unocha.org/story/syria-astana-produced-promising-step-agreement-simply-has-succeed-un-humanitarian-chief...)

OCHA Syria @OCHA_Syria- 30 May

The @UN ready to work with all parties towards workable agreement to make a difference for 2.6 million people #Syria <http://ow.ly/d7xz30caEsw>

Stephen O'Brien@UNReliefChief- 30 May

What future does a country have when its next generation is a lost generation? #Syria #UNSC

UNRWA@UNRWA- 30 May

My Voice My School

Thanks 2 @MyVoiceMySchool exchanges with #UNRWA peers in Ein El Hilweh, Joy grows more aware of her opportunities and world needs. #SDG4

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/869433212765847553>

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/869440748999000065>

UNRWA@UNRWA- 29 May

Ein El Hilweh #UNRWA students are very happy to be back to #school after violence in the camp interrupted classes. #nolostgeneration

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/869070809922281472>

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/869078370880966656>

OCHA Syria@OCHA_Syria – 28 May

Read in #ArRaqqa latest situation update about 23,544 people displaced this week & more on the humanitarian response <http://ow.ly/F6iv30c6x81>

UNRWA @UNRWA- 28 May

In these first 10 days of #Ramadan, let's show that we are #forPalestinerefugees. Donate here to show you care: <https://ramadan.unrwa.org/en>

UN Refugee Agency@Refugees- 27 May

Where are Syrian refugees going? 80,000 are in @ZaatariCamp - see it from above

#SearchingforSyria <http://www.searchingforsyria.org/en/where-are-syrian-refugees-going/>
...

António Guterres@antonioguterres- 25 May

Attacks on civilians, including humanitarians, are unacceptable and must end. My remarks to the Security Council: <http://bit.ly/2qgg8nd>

Social media campaigns

#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

@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

#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, 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/>