



Syrian Crisis

United Nations Response



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

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Eighth round of intra-Syrian talks resumed following brief recess

On 5 December, the UN Spokesperson announced that the eighth round of intra Syrian talks resumed that afternoon with a meeting between Staffan de Mistura, the UN Special Envoy, and the delegation of the Syrian National Council. The spokesperson added that on the humanitarian front, the UN is deeply concerned for the well being and protection of civilians in Raqqa city and surrounding areas where 34,000 people have reportedly returned. He said that there continue to be reports of explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices resulting in casualties daily. Raqqa city reportedly also urgently requires food, water and other assistance. Humanitarian partners remain unable to access the city until the clearing of mines and other unexploded ordnance is completed.

www.un.org/press/en/2017/db171205.doc.htm

UN Special Envoy for Syria releases paper on the 12 Living Intra-Syrian Essential Principles

The Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, on 30 November released a paper on the 12 Living Intra-Syrian Essential Principles, which was distributed to delegations in parallel meetings. A statement issued by his office said that these are points of commonalities regarding the end-state of Syria, which were last shared with the parties in a version offered for their consideration by the Special Envoy during round 4 of the talks. Since that time, the Special Envoy had received valuable proposals regarding the content of the 12 points from the government and the opposition, and he and his team had consulted painstakingly and carefully on all material received. He had also received useful insights on principles during consultations with the Women's Advisory Board and Syrian civil society through the Civil Society Support Room. In light of this, the Special Envoy shared with the two delegations a document entitled Special Envoy's 12 Living Intra-Syrian Essential Principles.

[www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear_en\)/4D0DEF7205415334C12581E9002A5C7B?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/4D0DEF7205415334C12581E9002A5C7B?OpenDocument)

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2017-12-01/note-correspondents-statement-behalf-un-special-envoy>

UN appeals for urgent efforts to enable safe evacuations from besieged Ghouta

Jan Egeland, the UN Special Advisor for Syria, on 30 November appealed for greater and more urgent efforts to enable safe evacuations of some 500 people, including 167 children, besieged in eastern Ghouta, on the outskirts of Damascus. "Men with power are sitting with lists of children that are in urgent need of being evacuated, if not they will, many of them, die; and we still do not have the green light," said Mr. Egeland, expressing the hope that the evacuations are possible with the Government's approval despite insecurity. On 29 November, briefing the Security Council, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator had also underscored the direness of the situation there and called for urgent humanitarian access to ensure that the most vulnerable can be provided much needed support. Similarly, at the daily noon briefing at UNHQ on 4 December, the UN spokesperson noted the UN's continued concern over the recent escalation in hostilities

in eastern Ghouta and Damascus. He said that on 3 December, aerial bombardment on eastern Ghouta reportedly resulted in civilian deaths and injuries, including of women and children. Shelling had also been reported over the previous days in several residential neighborhoods in Damascus resulting in several civilian deaths and injuries.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58199>

www.un.org/press/en/2017/db171204.doc.htm

<https://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58187>

UN Supported talks in Geneva extended until mid-December

On 30 November 2017, the Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, said that there should be no preconditions heading into the current round of discussions aimed at resolving the over six-year-long Syrian conflict that has resulted in immense human suffering. "We have [...] been talking about the rules of the game, and therefore reemphasizing: no preconditions, Staffan de Mistura told reporters in Geneva, after meeting with the Government and opposition delegations. The UN mediator also announced that the talks have been extended until mid-December.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58199>

UNHCR study uncovers shocking sexual violence against Syrian refugee boys, men

A study commissioned by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, into sexual violence against men and boys in the Syria crisis indicates that this violence may be far more widespread than previously understood. The study, the findings of which were released on 6 December, involved several dozen informants and focus group discussions with some 196 refugees in Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan and mainly conducted in late 2016. Its main findings were:

- Sexual violence and torture of men and boys in Syria by multiple parties to the conflict appears to be far more common than previously thought based on discussions with survivors, refugees and informants. UNHCR researchers heard accounts of violence against boys as young as 10, and against men including those in their 80s.
- Gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and this vulnerability does not end when people leave Syria. Inside Syria armed groups were reported as the main perpetrators. Outside Syria, the danger is often from opportunistic abuse.
- Refugee boys in countries of asylum suffer sexual violence at the hands of other male refugees and from males in the local community. The high rates of child labour among Syrian refugee boys (up to 94% males in Jordan) are of particular concern in this regard.
- Sexual exploitation and blackmail of refugee males in countries of asylum was reported, especially among those working in the informal economy.

<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2017/12/5a27a6594/unhcr-study-uncovers-shocking-sexual-violence-against-syrian-refugee-boys.html>

Security Council hear calls for 'all of UN' approach to stop destruction, smuggling of cultural heritage

The United Nations Security Council on 29 November discussed global efforts to stop the traffic in and destruction of cultural property, with the head of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) laying out steps to protect cultural heritage and ensure that it can serve "as a source of belonging and peace for all people in times of conflict." In her briefing, newly-appointed UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay, spotlighted the Secretary-General's first report on the adoption by the Council of resolution 2347 (2017), which, among others, condemned destruction of cultural heritage and the looting of cultural property. Vladimir Voronkov, the new head of the UN Office on Counter-Terrorism, told the Council that the looting and illicit trafficking of cultural objects leads to the financing of terrorism and criminal networks. Yuri Fedotov, the head of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), added that we must build up

international cooperation in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating cases related to trafficking in cultural property.

www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58196

Donors pledge US\$857 million to protect and assist refugees in 2018

Donor governments on 5 December pledged an initial US\$857 million to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, to fund operations destined to help some 67 million displaced or stateless people worldwide in 2018.

The pledges, made at an annual meeting in Geneva, amount to around 11 per cent of UNHCR's total 2018 funding needs of over US\$7.5 billion. This year's pledges are considerably higher than those made at end 2016, when US\$701 million was pledged. While today's pledges do not cover all of next year's funding needs, they can be seen as a useful indication of the anticipated funding levels and of overall support, allowing the organization to plan and continue operations that provide life-saving assistance and protection, without interruption. These include operations in some of the biggest emergencies around the world such as those in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2017/12/5a26ccba4/donors-pledge-us857-million-protect-assist-refugees-2018.html>

UN Radio in Arabic

Syrian talks continue under the auspices of the United Nations in Geneva.

[المحادثات السورية تتواصل برعاية الأمم المتحدة في جنيف](#)

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269445/index_search.html
05/11/2017

"The rhythms of the Khalili" opens a door of hope for Syrian refugees in Al-Azraq camp in Jordan

[إيقاعات الخليلي " تفتح بابا من الأمل للاجئين السوريين في مخيم الأزرق بالأردن"](#)

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269390/index_search.html
05/12/2017

Separate and simultaneous discussions held with participants in the Syria talks in Geneva

[مناقشات منفصلة ومتزامنة مع المشاركين في المحادثات السورية في جنيف](#)

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269214>
30/11/2017

UNESCO: 17 world heritage sites in Arab region are in danger because of conflicts

[اليونسكو: 17 موقعا عربيا على قائمة التراث العالمي المعرض للخطر بسبب الصراع](#)

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269175>
30/11/2017

High hopes for medical evacuations from Eastern Ghouta in Syria

[الأمال كبيرة لإتمام عمليات إجلاء طبي من الغوطة الشرقية بسوريا](#)

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269176>
30/11/2017

The aroma of Middle Eastern spices at the Refugee Food Festival in France

[رائحة التوابل الشرق أوسطية في "مهرجان اللاجئين للأطعمة" في فرنسا](#)

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269171>
30/11/2017

Malnutrition rates among children in the eastern region are five times higher

[معدلات سوء التغذية بين الأطفال بالغوطة الشرقية تزداد بمقدار 5 أضعاف](#)

http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269142/index_search.html
29/11/2017

Twitter

@Refugees, 6 December

New UNHCR study uncovers shocking accounts of sexual violence against Syrian refugee boys and men #SGBV #16days

@Refugees, 6 December

Syrian refugees are doing better at school now that a Lebanese university student helps them with their studies: <http://trib.al/1ACLqXK>

@UNGeneva, 6 December

In rural Aleppo, @UNFPASyria is working to ensure that that women's voices are heard and their reproductive health needs are met. <http://syria.unfpa.org>

@OCHA_Syria, 5 December

Volunteers serve generously with goodwill. Message from Ali Al-Za'tari, Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in #Syria on the #InternationalVolunteerDay #VolunteersActFirst

@OCHA_Syria, 3 December

Gender-based violence continues to pervade the lives of too many women and girls in #Syria, with adolescent girls particularly at risk of early marriage and other forms of violence. #ENDviolence against women and girls

@UNHCRinSYRIA, 2 December

@Refugees in #Syria recently opened a new community center in newly-accessible AlWaer Neighborhood in #Homs. The center provides services to 18,500 persons most of them are returnees. Many women heading households and children receive #Protection services at this center.

@UNRWA, 2 December

During the #16Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (#GBV) Campaign, UNRWA #Syria Field Office puts emphasis on the importance of continuing #education for both boys and girls and the role it plays in preventing and responding to GBV in emergencies. @16DaysCampaign
twitter.com/UNRWA/status/936912977965416448

@UNGeneva, 1 December

#Genève : les pourparlers sur la #Syrie prolongés jusqu'au 15 décembre - 🇧🇪
<http://ow.ly/5wwn30gVEbs>

@OCHA_Syria, 1 December

During her visit, @UschiMuller thanks the Government of #Turkey for facilitating aid to millions of Syrians and commends NGOs for their support, as their efforts are the backbone of the humanitarian operation. <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/un-assistant-secretary-general-asg-humanitarian-affairs-and-deputy-emergency-relief>

@UNGeneva, 30 November

"It is heart breaking, it is intolerable, it will be a stain on our conscience for a very very long time." 🇧🇪 Watch @NRC_Egeland Special Advisor to the @UN Special Envoy for Syria, brief media today @UNGeneva on the humanitarian situation in Syria>>
<https://goo.gl/ausygF>

@UNGeneva, 30 November

Les pourparlers sur la #Syrie se poursuivent à #Genève et l'@ONU_fr appelle à de "réels progrès" - <http://ow.ly/MjHK30gUXca>

@OCHA_Syria, 30 November

The @UNReliefChief calls for preservation of all means of access and renewal of cross-border resolution to reach most vulnerable in #Syria. Read his full remarks to #UNSC: <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-74>

Facebook

"Education gives me strength and knowledge to distinguish right from wrong", said Nana, one of the #Palref students in Syria participating in the #MyVoiceMySchool virtual trip to meet her peers in #Norway.

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.10517119286279/0/1610209525692275/?type=3&theater>

#MyVoiceMySchool students in Bergen, Norway and Damascus, Syria discover common likes for school subjects, sports and music and bond via first video link. They will meet again in the coming months to share their researched ideas on how to improve #education in their school communities.

#UNRWA#EducationinEmergencies @NorwayMFA

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.10517119286279/0/1609989322380962/?type=3&theater>

Social media campaigns

UNRWA Transforms the Lives of Palestine Refugees with Disabilities

On 3 December, UNRWA joins the rest of the world in celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This year's global theme, 'Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies for all', celebrates the important contribution persons with disabilities can make in their communities, when given equal opportunities. Removing barriers and facilitating inclusion can empower persons with disabilities to become agents of change in their own lives and communities, striving towards ending exclusion and promoting equality. UNRWA provides physiotherapy treatment and equipment for Palestine refugee children in Khan Dunoun refugee camp in Syria, Ahmad and Ali are among these beneficiaries.

www.unrwa.org/newsroom/photos/unrwa-transforms-lives-palestine-refugees-disabilities

#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, more than 15 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/>