



## **Syrian Crisis**

### **United Nations Response**



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

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#### **UN voices concerns over civilian casualties amid military operations at Syria-Turkish border**

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) voiced deep concern on 23 January over reports of fighting and military operations in Afrin District in northwest Syria near the Syria-Turkish border. Over the past few days, a number of civilians have reportedly lost their lives due to shelling and fighting. While the majority of bombardment has been reported to be concentrated on communities close to the Syrian-Turkish border, airstrikes on Afrin town and surrounding communities have also been reported. The agency added that it has also received reports of cross-border shelling from Syria into Turkey. More than 320,000 men, women and children, including 126,000 displaced people, live in the Afrin district.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/db180123.doc.htm>

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

#### **UN agency for Palestine refugees launches global funding push after US aid cuts**

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) launched on 22 January a global fundraising campaign to sustain resources for its education, health and other assistance programmes. The campaign follows the announcement by the United States to withhold more than half its funding commitment to the UN agency. "I wish to confirm to all Palestine refugees that UNRWA schools [...] will remain open [and] health care, and other services will be provided. It is a huge challenge, but it is absolutely imperative," Pierre Krähenbühl, UNRWA Commissioner-General, said in Gaza, launching the campaign, '#DignityIsPriceless'.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58456>

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-launches-dignity-priceless-global-fundraising-campaign-gaza>

#### **Syrian children succumb to freezing temperatures while crossing into Lebanon – UNICEF and UNHCR**

At least 13 Syrians, including two children, lost their lives to freezing temperatures in eastern Lebanon as they tried to enter the country from Syria, UN aid agencies said on 20 January. "More children could be among the dead as residents in the area and the Lebanese authorities continue to look for people who are reportedly trapped in the mountains in freezing temperatures and snow," said Geert Cappelaere, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58452>

[https://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_102483.html](https://www.unicef.org/media/media_102483.html)

<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2018/1/5a64875d4/statement-death-13-syrians-during-overnight-storm-attempting-enter-lebanese.html>

### **UN rights officials decry 'devastating' impact of surging violence on civilians**

Amid escalating violence in Syria, where dozens of people in eastern Ghouta have been killed in recent airstrikes, and schools and hospitals are being deliberately destroyed, senior United Nations officials have underscored the obligation on all parties to the conflict, and the international community, to protect civilians from atrocity crimes. "We cannot stand by silently in the face of indiscriminate violence and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law," said Adama Dieng, the Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide, and Ivan Simonovic, the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, in a statement issued on 18 January.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58448>

[http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/18-01-2018\\_SAs%20Statement%20on%20Syria\\_final.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/18-01-2018_SAs%20Statement%20on%20Syria_final.pdf)

### **UN humanitarian agencies alarmed at fighting in Idlib, resulting in more displaced people**

UN aid agencies have sounded the alarm over continued fighting in the Idlib Governorate, which has resulted in the displacement of over 200,000 people since 15 December and has impacted civilian infrastructure, particularly medical facilities, said the UN Spokesperson on 18 January. Between 5 and 8 January, attacks reportedly rendered three primary health care facilities inoperable. On 17 January, two ambulances were reportedly destroyed and a physician injured by explosive devices in the vicinity of Beir Jia'an. The UN reminds all parties of their obligation to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities and medical workers, as required by the international humanitarian law and human rights law.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2018/db180118.doc.htm>

### **UN is determined to pursue efforts to bring the positions of the Syrian government and the opposition closer**

Speaking to the media in Damascus on 18 January after meeting with the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Fayssal Mekdad, Deputy Special Envoy for Syria Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy said that the UN is determined to continue its endeavors to bring the positions of the Syrian government and the opposition closer, which would lead to consensus on the full implementation of all the provisions of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), without preconditions and ensuring that the solution would be Syrian-made with the help of the United Nations. Asked why the UN-facilitated talks were being held in Vienna, he explained that it was for logistical reasons.

[https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear\\_en\)/AC948DF4C30BAF48C125821D003A53B9?OpenDocument](https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/AC948DF4C30BAF48C125821D003A53B9?OpenDocument)

### **UN Radio in Arabic**

سوريا: اجتماع بين الحكومة والمعارضة في فيينا نهاية الشهر الجاري

Syria: The Government and the opposition set to meet in Vienna at the end of the month

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271585>

الأمم المتحدة تحث أطراف الصراع في سوريا على السماح بوصول الإغاثة للمحتاجين

United Nations urges parties to the Syrian conflict to allow aid to reach those in need

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271559>

تحذير أممي من تصاعد الأعمال العدائية ضد المدنيين في الغوطة الشرقية وإدلب

UN warns of escalating hostilities against civilians in Eastern Ghouta and Idlib

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271706>

مسؤول أممي: الحكومة السورية ستشارك في اجتماع فيينا الأسبوع المقبل

UN official: the Syrian Government will participate in the Vienna meeting next week

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271666>

ممثل اليونيسف في سوريا: يجب ألا يدفع الأطفال ثمن حرب لم يتسببوا فيها

UNICEF: Children should not pay the price for a war they did not start

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271702>

وفاة 10 سوريين من البرد أثناء محاولتهم الدخول إلى لبنان

10 Syrians die of cold while trying to flee into Lebanon

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271804>

الأمم المتحدة: القتال قرب عفرين أدى إلى نزوح 6 آلاف شخص وتعليق قوافلنا الإنسانية

UN: Fighting near Afrin resulted in the displacement of 6,000 people and the suspension of humanitarian convoys

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/271962>

## **Twitter**

OCHA Syria@OCHA\_Syria- 23 January

Intense hostilities in Afrin District resulting in displacement and casualties raising concern for protection of civilians in densely populated #Afrin and

#Idleb in northwest #Syria

[https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/turkey-syria-recent-developments-northwestern-syria-idle-governorate ...](https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/turkey-syria-recent-developments-northwestern-syria-idle-governorate...)

UNRWA@UNRWA- 23 January

#UNRWA student makes unprecedented appeal to Pope Francis @Pontifex from the Church of Nativity in #Bethlehem, in response to UNRWA financial crisis. Part of the #DignityIsPriceless global fundraising campaign. "Support our quest to preserve education; our dignity is priceless".

OCHA Syria@OCHA\_Syria – 22 January

Explosive hazards contamination in #ArRaqqa #DeirEzZor hampering humanitarian access and poses a serious threat to people trying to return to their communities.

Download the northeast #Syria report:

UN in Syria Retweeted UN News @UN\_News\_Centre- 21 January

"We cannot stand by silently in the face of indiscriminate violence and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law," said UN rights officials voicing concern over impact of surging violence in Syria on civilians

UN in Syria Retweeted UNFPA-Syria @UnfpaSyria- 21 January

"If you want to conquer your fear, don't sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy"

@UNFPA is working in #Syria to fulfill the potentials of over 4 million young people

OCHA Syria@OCHA\_Syria- 21 January

Abdul Malek AlNajjar is among the 355,000 people displaced by violence in #Homs city.

See how the #SyriaHumanitarianFund is helping returnees rebuild their homes and community.[https://www.unocha.org/story/syria-conflict-homs-city-subsides-syria-humanitarian-fund-steps-efforts-rebuild-city%E2%80%99s-homes ...](https://www.unocha.org/story/syria-conflict-homs-city-subsides-syria-humanitarian-fund-steps-efforts-rebuild-city%E2%80%99s-homes...)

UNICEF@UNICEF- 20 January

Tragic.

Syrian children freezing to death while crossing from Syria to Lebanon.  
#ChildrenUnderAttack

United Nations Retweeted UN News @UN\_News\_Centre – 19 January  
Syria: UN rights officials decry 'devastating' impact of surging violence on civilians  
(@UN\_GP\_RtoP)

OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 18 January

Read @UNRWA appeal to keep schools open, health clinics running, and emergency food and cash distribution systems functioning for #Palestine refugees in the region including #Syria

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/statement-unrwa-commissioner-general-pierre-kr%C3%A4henb%C3%BChl-1%20...>

UN in Syria Retweeted OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 17 January

All affected civilians, wherever they are in #Syria, must be protected, provided with assistance and accorded safe freedom of movement. Read @UN statement on civilians impacted by increase in hostilities <https://reliefweb.int/node/2419714>

UN in Syria Retweeted UN News @UN\_News\_Centre -16 January

On top of the already-desperate conditions in war-torn #Syria's East Ghouta and north-west Idlib governorate, a violence upsurge is intensifying insecurity, said @WFP.

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58431#.Wl6Apq5KvAU ...](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58431#.Wl6Apq5KvAU...)

## **Social media campaigns**

### **UNRWA Global fund-raising campaign**

UNRWA launched on 20 January the #DignityIsPriceless global campaign in response to the unprecedented funding reductions by the U.S. Government to protect the dignity of Palestine refugees by providing emergency food assistance to the most vulnerable, and by not disrupting the education of their children and healthcare for families. Through a call to action, UNRWA aims to raise five hundred million USD (500\$M). #FundUNRWA #DignityIsPriceless

<https://www.unrwa.org/donate>

**#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, more than 15 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/>