



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

No. 24/ 31 December 2013

Delay in meeting deadline, OPCW-UN Joint Mission statement

On 28 December, the OPCW-UN Joint Mission issued a statement saying that the 31 December deadline set for the removal of the most critical chemical weapons material from Syria for destruction will not be met owing to technical difficulties.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46843&Cr=syria&Cr1=chemical>

http://opcw.unmissions.org/Portals/opcw-un-syria/OPCW-UN%20Joint%20Mission%20Template_statement28Dec13.pdf

UN Secretary-General said work continues despite delay

UN secretary-General said that despite this delay the Joint Mission had continued to work closely and intensively with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the assisting States Parties to begin safe and secure removal and transportation operations as soon as possible.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7380>

OPCW Director-General urges Syria to take risk mitigation measures

Noting the statement issued today on behalf of the Joint Mission that the transportation of the most critical chemical material before 31 December is unlikely, the Director-General recalls that his latest monthly report issued on 23 December 2013 encourages the Syrian authorities to look at all possible options for risk mitigation in order to transport the chemicals from their locations to the port of loading.

<http://opcw.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=6576&ctl=Details&mid=10358&ItemID=12526&language=en-US>

UN Secretary-General looks forward to sending out invitations for Syria conference

The Spokesperson of the Secretary-General told the media on 31 December that the Secretary-General is looking forward to issuing the letters of invitation to the International Conference on Syria as soon as possible.

<http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp>

UN Secretary-General expresses concern at the use of "barrel bombs"

The Secretary-General expressed grave concern at the escalating violence in Syria, and especially the use of "barrel bombs" by Syrian government forces in Aleppo in recent days, where reports had indicated that civilians were among hundreds of people killed and injured. He condemned the continued and indiscriminate use of heavy weapons and mortar shelling against areas with civilian population.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7376>

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=46834&Cr=syria&Cr1=>

Some 4.1 million Syrian refugees will need assistance by end of 2014

The Spokesperson of the Secretary-General quoted the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, on 31 December and said that the number of registered Syrian refugees grew to more than 2.3 million people over the course of this year, with refugees continuing to pour out of Syria at a rate of 127,000 people a month. The Agency estimates that some 4.1 million Syrian refugees will need assistance by the end of 2014, including 2 million children.

<http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp>

UNRWA urges urgent humanitarian assistance for Palestinian refugees

The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) said it has received reports that at least five Palestinian refugees in the besieged refugee camp of Yarmouk in Damascus have died because of malnutrition, bringing the total number of reported deaths to fifteen.

<http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp>

EU contributes another EUR 16 million to UNRWA

In a statement issued on 27 December, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) thanked the European Union (EU) for a new contribution of EUR 16 million (US\$ 21.9 million). It noted that this contribution comes in response to the worsening situation in Syria and the increasing numbers of civilian deaths and casualties, including among Palestinians and humanitarian workers. 20 staff members are currently detained or missing. This donation brings total EU support to UNRWA in 2013 to EUR 153.5 million (US\$ 209.8 million). Including separate contributions from EU Member States, 41 per cent of the Agency's funding in 2013 came from Europe.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-thanks-eu-support>

Selected UN stories

UNHCR distributes winter aid airlifted to north-east Syria

On 30 December, the UN Refugee Agency said that it had airlifted to north-east Syria in the past two weeks emergency winter aid and distributed it to more than 50,000 vulnerable people in isolated areas. The UNHCR airlift from Erbil, Iraq, of some 300 tonnes of aid began on December 17 and was completed on 29 December, when the 12th and final flight landed at Qamishly International Airport. The chartered flights were carrying items such as thermal blankets, plastic tarpaulins, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, jerry cans and hygiene supplies. The World Food Programme and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) also flew in vital aid from Erbil.

<http://www.unhcr.org/52c17e389.html>

Syrians, risking everything to flee war, find chilly reception in Europe

ATHENS, Greece, December 27 (UNHCR) – It's been a heartbreaking, life-threatening journey for Syrian refugee Rajaa and her three children to reach this Athens basement lit by only a small lantern and a candle. It's no wonder that even though the family is sheltered from the rain outside, they still don't feel secure.

<http://www.unhcr.org/52bd53bb9.html>

UK toys bring smiles to Syrian refugee children

Created, donated or collected by children in Oxford and Berkshire through the Pitt Rivers Museum and the UK Scouts and Guides Fellowship during the Autumn, the

toys travelled more than 2,300 miles to their final destination in Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan – a journey made possible by the UK branch of Aviation Without Borders and UNHCR. The initiative, entitled 'Toys for Smiles' proved this week to be worthy of its name.

<http://www.unhcr.org/52b96c849.html>

Relevant links

DPI Focus Page on Syria:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=146&Body=Syria&Body1=>

OPCW-UN Joint Mission in Syria: <http://opcw.unmissions.org>

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/media/index.html>

WFP: <http://www.wfp.org/countries/syria>

OCHA: <http://www.unocha.org/crisis/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/>

UN on social media:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UN>

Flickr: 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

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