



## Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

**No. 27/ 22 January 2014**

### **Secretary-General opens Geneva Conference**

The Secretary-General today opened in Montreux the High-Level Segment of the Geneva Conference on Syria aimed at ending the violence and achieving a comprehensive agreement for a political settlement, implementing fully the Geneva communiqué of June 2012. "After nearly three painful years of conflict and suffering in Syria, today is a day of fragile but real hope", he said in his opening remarks. The Secretary-General recalled that the Syrians themselves have the primary responsibility to end the conflict, determine their political system and future, and start rebuilding their country. "The violence must be ended. Attacks against civilians must cease. All parties must work to put an end to all terrorist acts", he added. The Secretary-General also urged the Government and the opposition to allow immediate and full humanitarian access to all communities in need, particularly in the besieged areas.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7418>

<http://webtv.un.org/watch/ban-ki-moon-unsg-geneva-conference-on-syria/3088679532001/>

Speaking at a press conference with Joint Special Representative (JSR) Brahimi after the conclusion of the meeting, the Secretary-General noted that the really hard work would begin on 24 January when the two Syrian parties meet in Geneva for negotiations facilitated by Mr. Brahimi. "Ending this war and making peace will be hard. We have a difficult road ahead. But it can be done. And it must be done. (...) It is still not too late to end the bloodshed, and find a peaceful and democratic future in a united Syria", the Secretary-General stated.

<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=3259>

<http://webtv.un.org/watch/ban-ki-moon-unsg-geneva-conference-on-syria/3088679532001/>

### **UN experts urge human rights-based deal in Geneva**

On 21 January, the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council -- a group of UN independent human rights experts -- published an open letter calling for the Geneva conference to agree on measures to swiftly end violence in Syria. "The human rights principle of participation of all is key to securing a lasting peace. All legitimate actors and population groups must have a voice in shaping the future and the protection of religious freedom and the ongoing security and human rights of all segments of society must be on the agenda of Geneva talks", UN experts stressed in the letter. They pledged to support and assist all positive initiatives to end the conflict, re-establish the rule of law, and ensure protection of human rights and humanitarian assistance for all. They also emphasized that relevant experts should be granted immediate access to the country to assess the human rights situation.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14188&LangID=E>

## **UN social media campaign appeals for aid access to Yarmouk refugee camp**

Ahead of the Geneva conference, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), along with other UN agencies and humanitarian partners, launched on 17 January a social media campaign to call for access to Palestinian civilians in desperate need of humanitarian assistance in the Yarmouk refugee camp. Entitled "Yarmouk: How much longer?", the campaign calls on the participants in the Geneva peace talks to lift the restrictions on the Yarmouk refugee camp and all areas of humanitarian need in Syria where numerous deaths from starvation have been reported in recent weeks.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/%E2%80%99Chow-much-longer%E2%80%9D>

## **OPCW receives tenders for destruction of Syria's commodity chemicals**

On 20 January 2014, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) said that a total of 14 private firms had submitted tenders to destroy 500 metric tonnes of Syria's commodity chemicals, as well as effluent from the neutralisation of its priority chemicals, at commercial facilities outside of Syria. The tenders were opened in a public event at the OPCW's Headquarters in The Hague. The Organisation stated it would conduct technical and commercial evaluation of the bids and announce the winner(s) in early February.

<http://opcw.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=6576&ctl=Details&mid=10358&ItemID=16941&language=en-US>

## **Select UN stories**

### **UNHCR joins call in Turkey for solidarity with countries hosting Syrian refugees**

Harran-Kokenli refugee camp, Turkey, January 17 (UNHCR) – UNHCR on 17 January joined top officials from Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt in calling on the international community to boost solidarity with countries hosting the bulk of the refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria. The appeal came in a joint statement released during a tour of the Harran-Kökenli refugee camp in south-eastern Turkey, which currently provides shelter to 14,000 Syrian refugees.

<http://www.unhcr.org/52d956909.html>

## **Relevant Syria links to UN Secretariat, Agencies, Funds and Programmes**

### **Playlist of the archived videos on the Geneva Conference:**

<http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/conferencessummits/geneva-conference-on-syria-22-january-2014-montreux-switzerland/>

### **DPI Focus Page on Syria:**

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

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/](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)

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