



## Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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### **JSR Brahimi visits Iran in effort to re-start Geneva talks**

Joint Special Representative for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi began a three-day visit to Iran on 16 March to meet with Iran's top officials and discuss a possible resumption of the Geneva peace talks.

<http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2014/db140317.doc.htm>

### **Civilians in besieged areas of Syria reduced to scavenging - UN official**

During a briefing to the Human Rights Council on 18 March, the Chair of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, said the harrowing violence in Syria has entered its fourth year with no sign of subsiding. In besieged areas people have been reduced to scavenging and children have starved to death. In its latest update, the Commission noted that the Syrian Government continues to rely on its superior firepower, including its control of the skies, and has benefitted from the intervention of foreign fighters. According to the Commission, the conflict has taken on an increased complexity with hundreds of non-State armed groups. Foreign fighters have streamed into Syria, often joining the more extremist battalions. Some are imposing their radical ideologies on the civilian population, the report also notes.

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/OralUpdate18March2014.pdf>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14395&LangID=E>

### **Syrian refugee crisis has dramatic regional impact**

On 18 March, the Acting UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Lebanon called on the international community to help bear the brunt of the pressure on Lebanon. Speaking at a press conference in Geneva, Mr. Ross Mountain said that massive international support is crucial as the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon continues to rise and is on track to reaching 1.5 million by the end of this year.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47379&Cr=lebanon&Cr1=#.UynM7oXyL-s>

Meanwhile, a study on the situation of Syrian refugees in Jordan published on 18 March has found that among the 584,600 Syrians currently living in Jordan, almost four in five of them live outside formal camps and as their resources dry up, many are turning to negative coping mechanisms' to make ends meet, sometimes placing themselves at risk of exploitation. The survey, co-led by UNHCR and International Relief and Development (IRD), showed the day-to-day difficulties of some 450,000 registered Syrian refugees faced outside camps, despite the support that Jordan offered to them, including free access to the public health care and education systems.

<http://www.unhcr.org/5328207f6.html>

## **UNRWA food convoy reaches Yarmouk**

After being prevented for over two weeks from reaching the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp due to heavy fighting, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was able to resume its distribution on 18 March. An UNRWA spokesperson told the media that on that day the agency had distributed 465 food parcels to the civilian population inside the camp. Working through the Palestinian Red Crescent, UNRWA also delivered 2,000 doses of polio vaccines.

In a press statement, UNRWA said it remains deeply concerned about the desperate humanitarian situation in Yarmouk and the fact that increasing tensions and resort to armed force have disrupted the agency's efforts to alleviate the desperate plight of civilians.

UNRWA also announced the launch on 20 March of the final part of its "Thunderclap" social media campaign for humanitarian access to Yarmouk and all civilian areas of Syria. The campaign has reached 26 million people and will display the iconic picture of crowds of Palestinians lining up for UNRWA food parcel on large electronic billboards in New York's Times Square and in Tokyo.

<http://www.unrwa.org/crisis-in-yarmouk>

### **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=>

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/>