



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



**A Weekly Update from the
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Secretary-General highlights need to mobilize political will to address Syrian crisis

Speaking to reporters during a press conference in Brussels on 1 April, the Secretary-General emphasized the necessity for the international community to mobilize political will to address the Syrian conflict. While recognizing that the Geneva II Conference had not yielded much, he said that he will continue to push diplomatic efforts to convene a third round of peace talks in Geneva. The Secretary-General reiterated his call to both the Government and the opposition to engage in a constructive dialogue to find a political solution.

<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=3369>

Asked about the work of Joint Special Representative for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi, the Deputy Spokesperson said during a media briefing at the UN Headquarters that Mr. Brahimi had represented the Secretary-General last week at the summit of the League of Arab States in Kuwait. He noted that Mr. Brahimi is continuing his discussions with a range of interlocutors.

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

UNRWA renews call for unhindered access to Yarmouk

On 1 April, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) said it had been informed by Syrian authorities that access by the agency to the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp would be suspended for four consecutive days, until Friday 4 April. "It is essential that large numbers of food parcels are distributed in Yarmouk every day in order to meet the minimum food requirements of the civilian population", stressed UNRWA in a press statement. During March, the average daily distribution rate was only 97 food parcels a day, with frequent armed engagements impeding regular access. UNRWA has renewed its demand for safe, substantial and uninterrupted access to civilians in Yarmouk.

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

Mandate of Commission of Inquiry further extended

On 28 March, the Human Rights Council extended the mandate of the International Commission of Inquiry on Syria through to the 28th session. The Council strongly condemned the use by the Syrian authorities of starvation of civilians as a method of

combat, the besiegement of civilians and all acts of violence directed against humanitarian actors.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14455&LangID=E>

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Socio economic and damage assessment: UNRWA microfinance clients in Syria

According to an unprecedented survey conducted with the support of the European Union on UNRWA microfinance programme in Syria, the impact of the conflict has been “overwhelming and traumatic”, with the vast majority of its clients displaced and in need of humanitarian assistance. The survey found that displacement, physical destruction and looting have taken place on such a massive scale that only 13 per cent of businesses supported by UNRWA were able to survive. It also says that the Syrian economy will take 30 years to recover to 2010 levels.

<http://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/socioeconomic-and-damage-assessment-reportunrwa-microfinance-clients-syria>

Syrian Arab Republic: Concern over drought conditions

A report released by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on 28 March warns that prospects for the winter wheat and barley crops, for harvest from May 2014, are unfavourable. The persistent civil insecurity and conflict continue to hamper agricultural production, as access to farmlands becomes difficult. Shortages of fuel to operate irrigation pumps and other equipment have compounded the problem. FAO also voices growing concern at drought conditions detected in main cropping areas of Syria.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/giews-update-syrian-arab-republic-concern-over-drought-conditions>

<http://www.fao.org/giews/english/shortnews/Syria28032014.pdf>

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/

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/>

