



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



**A Weekly Update from the
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Secretary-General reiterates appeal for protection of civilians, condemns escalating violence

Following an upsurge in violence in Syria, the Secretary-General urged warring parties to ensure that civilians are protected, regardless of their religion, community or ethnic affiliation. In a statement on 7 April, the Secretary-General stressed that both the Syrian Government and armed groups have the legal obligation and moral responsibility to do so. "More violence will only bring more suffering and instability to Syria and sow chaos in the region" he said, calling on all Syrians and their outside supporters to put a stop to the conflict now. The Secretary-General also condemned the killing of an elderly priest in Homs on the same day as well as purported gross human rights violations in the Kassab area. "The United Nations is prepared to contribute to a new day in Syria by fostering a political settlement, providing humanitarian assistance, and supporting reconstruction", he added.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7579>

Navi Pillay briefs Security Council on human rights situation

High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay briefed the Security Council on 8 April on the latest report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry (A/HRC/25/65). Speaking to reporters on the issue of referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court, she said that she "stressed again that it is very important that while many Council members subscribe to the idea of a political solution, as those talks are ongoing, there has to be justice and accountability". Asked if, in her view, one side had committed more crimes than the other, Ms. Pillay said that "both the Commission of Inquiry and OHCHR monitors have consistently pointed to human rights violations by both sides, but you cannot compare the two...It is mostly the Government that is responsible for the violations".

<http://webtv.un.org/watch/navi-pillay-unhchr-on-syria-central-african-republic-south-sudan-libya-and-mali-security-council-media-stakeout-8-april-2013/3446011993001/>

Ceasefire allows first aid into Aleppo neighbourhood in nearly a year

For the first time in almost a year, a UNHCR/Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) convoy delivered desperately needed humanitarian aid into the besieged area of eastern Aleppo on 9 April. UNHCR said that the ceasefire, agreed for the duration of the operation, was fully respected as two truck loads of supplies were moved by hand to the last checkpoint on the outskirts of Aleppo. UNHCR staff reported a dire humanitarian situation inside the city with acute shortages of food, water and basic supplies. No humanitarian aid has reached the population since UNHCR last accessed the area in June 2013.

<http://www.unhcr.org/53454c516.html>

WFP: concerns rise about possible drought in Syria

In a report issued on 8 April, the World Food Programme (WFP) said that it has provided assistance to a record 4 million people in Syria in March. However, the agency voiced concerns about a possible drought if rainfall does not pick up. The Special Focus Syria report warns that dry conditions, also affecting the wider Middle East, will compound the impact of the civil war on the agricultural sector. Wheat production is expected to be at record low. Livestock and pastoral livelihoods will also suffer as a result of water shortages and poor pasture availability. According to current rainfall data, the worst-affected governorates account for close to 50 percent of Syrian wheat production. The northwest, in particular, the Aleppo, Idleb and Hama governorates are the most affected.
<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/wfp-dispatches-food-record-number-syrians-fears-rise-about-impact-drought>
<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp263930.pdf>

Select UN stories

UNRWA demands greater access to Yarmouk

UNRWA, 8 April- "UNRWA distributed 270 food parcels in Yarmouk on 8 April, the second consecutive day of distribution following seven days of suspended access. (...) UNRWA urges the authorities to facilitate an increased rate of distribution over the coming days", the agency said in a statement. "UNRWA remains deeply concerned about the desperate humanitarian situation in Yarmouk and the regular disruptions affecting its efforts to alleviate the plight of approximately 18,000 trapped civilians. UNRWA demands that all parties cease hostilities and seek to resolve their differences exclusively by peaceful means".

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

First mass vaccination campaigns start since polio found in Iraq

Amman, 6 April 2014 – Polio vaccination campaigns commenced in Syria, Iraq and Egypt on 6 April with the aim of reaching more than 20 million children over the next five days. The current vaccination rounds are part of a comprehensive response to the announcement, in October 2013, that wild poliovirus of Pakistani origin had found its way to Syria. In recognition of the risk of further international spread, the governments of seven countries across the Middle East, with the assistance of local non-governmental organizations, civil society groups and UN agencies, are endeavouring to reach 22 million children multiple times with polio vaccine. Since the outbreak was announced, UNICEF has delivered 14 million doses of polio vaccines to Syria. As of end of March 2014, 27 children have been paralyzed by polio in Syria. Prior to this outbreak, no polio cases have been recorded in Syria since 1999. The first case of polio was found near Bagdad in Iraq on 30 March.

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_73006.html

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/>