



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



**A Weekly Update from the
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High Commissioner Pillay denounces rampant use of torture in detention facilities

In a report released on 14 April, High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay condemned the rampant use of torture in detention facilities across Syria by Government forces and some armed opposition groups. The document describes a broad pattern of torture and ill-treatment against individuals in Government facilities. It also documents reports of torture by some armed groups, based on interviews conducted by the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner of individuals who spent time in detention facilities in Syria during the conflict. Ms. Pillay urged both sides to immediately halt the use of torture and ill-treatment and to release all those who have been arbitrarily detained in conditions that clearly breach international human rights standards. She also reiterated her request to the Syrian Government to allow regular and unannounced access to all detention facilities to impartial international observers.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14507&LangID=E>

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SY/PaperOnTorture.pdf>

Answering a question from reporters on accountability in Syria, the UN Spokesperson said that the Secretary-General had made clear that those who commit crimes against humanity and violate international humanitarian law should be brought to account. He also noted that the Secretary-General had repeatedly spoken out against abuse and torture in Syria.

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

OPCW-UN Joint Mission: over 72 percent of chemical weapons removed from Syria

The OPCW-UN Joint Mission confirmed that a 15th shipment of chemical material left the Syrian port of Latakia on 16 April. This further consignment brings to more than 72 percent the overall portion of chemical materials removed from the Syrian Arab Republic or destroyed in the country.

<http://opcw.unmissions.org/AboutOPCWUNJointMission/tabid/54/ctl/Details/mid/651/ItemID/292/Default.aspx>

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Efforts to deliver food aid in Yarmouk refugee camp further disrupted

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) said on 15 April that it had been prevented from delivering food assistance inside the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp for the seventh consecutive day due to ongoing violence. A UNRWA Spokesperson noted that the resort to armed force has repeatedly disrupted efforts to alleviate the plight of

over 20,000 trapped civilians. The agency reiterated its demand that all parties cease hostilities and seek to resolve their differences exclusively through peaceful means.

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

Select UN stories

WHO and OPCW-UN Joint Mission reinforce public health capacities to respond to chemical incidents

13 April 2014 - The OPCW-UN Joint Mission and the World Health Organization (WHO) have been working to strengthen public health capacities within Syria to respond to risks of chemical exposure. This collaboration is part of WHO's existing programme to strengthen Syria's health system's ability to manage and respond to chemical accidents and mass casualty incidents involving toxic chemicals. In cooperation with the Syrian Ministry of Health, and with financial support from the OPCW-UN Joint Mission, WHO procured chemical personal protective equipment for hospitals in Syria and conducted an advanced training course for emergency physicians in February 2014.

<http://opcw.unmissions.org/AboutOPCWUNJointMission/tabid/54/ctl/Details/mid/651/ItemID/280/Default.aspx>

In Bulgaria, living conditions for asylum-seekers improves, but gaps remain - UNHCR

15 April 2014 - The UN Office of the High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) applauded today the "significant efforts" made recently by the Bulgarian authorities and their partners to improve living conditions for asylum seekers in the country. While planning to lift its January call to temporarily suspend the transfer of refugees from European countries back to Bulgaria (under the Dublin Regulation), UNHCR stresses that "serious gaps" in the system remain, and warns against transferring individuals or groups considered most vulnerable. In the past three months, UNHCR noted improved conditions particularly in the Harmanli centre, a former military base near the Turkish border where refugees were living in tents just four months ago.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47587&Cr=asylum&Cr1=#.U06RuFfyL-t>

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/>