



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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Secretary-General strongly condemns car bombing in central Homs

In a statement issued on 30 April, the Secretary-General condemned in the strongest terms the car bombing and mortar shelling in the Zahra neighbourhood in central Homs that killed and wounded dozens of civilians. The Secretary-General said he deeply regrets that the attack in Homs comes in the midst of ongoing cease-fire negotiations over the Old City of Homs and urged the government and opposition groups to resist provocative attempts at undermining any peace efforts. He reiterated his position that no side can achieve a military victory in the Syrian conflict. The Secretary-General appealed to all parties to this terrible conflict to at last live up to their responsibility under humanitarian law and stop targeting civilian areas, including through aerial bombardments and barrel bombs.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=7636>

USG Amos briefs the Security Council on humanitarian access

Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos briefed the Security Council on 30 April on humanitarian access in Syria. Speaking to the media after the consultations, she stressed that far from getting better, the situation is getting worse, and violence has intensified over the past month, taking a horrific toll on Syrians. She also expressed strong concern that less than 10 per cent of the 242,000 people living in besieged areas had received assistance in the past four weeks. While noting that in Syria the UN founding values and the responsibility of a state to look after its own people are being violated every day, she urged the Security Council to not only recognize that reality, but to act on it.

<https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/30%20April%202014%20USG%20Amos%20Media%20Statement.pdf>

OPCW sets up new mission to investigate chlorine gas attack

Following recent allegations of chlorine gas attacks in Syria, the OPCW Director-General announced on 28 April the setting up of an OPCW mission to investigate facts surrounding these allegations. In a press statement, OPCW said that the Syrian government has agreed to accept the team. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has also expressed his support and assured the assistance of the United Nations in providing security and logistical support for the mission.

<http://www.opcw.org/news/article/opcw-to-undertake-fact-finding-mission-in-syria-on-alleged-chlorine-gas-attacks/>

More than 92 percent of Syria's declared chemical weapons removed or destroyed

During a press briefing in Damascus, OPCW-UN Joint Mission Special Coordinator Sigrid Kaag confirmed that 92 per cent of Syria's declared stockpile of chemical weapons material has been removed or destroyed in-country to date. "Over the last months, Syria has destroyed all declared production, mixing and filling equipment and munitions, as well as some buildings associated with its chemical weapons programme" she said, noting that a majority of chemical weapons storage facilities have been closed.

Regarding the 8 per cent of declared chemical weapons material remaining in Syria, Ms. Kaag encouraged the Syrian authorities to complete the removal in the shortest possible timeframe. "The Joint Mission hopes that having come this close to meeting the target date for the removal of chemicals weapons material, the Syrian Arab Republic will take the final step very soon. Every effort must be made towards achieving the 30 June 2014 deadline set by OPCW Executive Council Decisions and the UN Security Council", she said.

<http://opcw.unmissions.org/AboutOPCWUNJointMission/tabid/54/ctl/Details/mid/651/ItemID/308/Default.aspx>

Gender-based violence on the rise amongst Syrian refugees in Iraq

According to a study conducted by UN Women, gender-based violence is rising amongst Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. The survey found increased levels of intimate partner violence; high levels of sexual harassment by employers and by taxi drivers; and significant numbers of reports of sexual commercial transactions inside and outside the refugee camps. Almost all men reported feeling afraid for the safety of their wives and daughters. Speaking at a launching event in Erbil on 27 April, a UN Women representative said that "'we just keep silent' is what Syrian women say they do after they have been violently attacked or harassed or pushed to do some sexually related act against their will". The report is based on a survey of men and women living inside and outside the camps, carried out between August and December 2013.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/we-just-keep-silent-gender-based-violence-amongst-syrian-refugees-kurdistan-region-iraq>

Select UN stories

Over 2.9 million children vaccinated across Syria - WHO

27 April 2014, Damascus – The World Health Organization (WHO) and its health partners launched the fourth World Vaccination Week in Syria, which is taking place from 26 April to 1 May 2014. The campaign aims to immunize over 300,000 children who missed their routine vaccination rounds, in addition to women of reproductive age. Since the onset of the polio outbreak in October 2013, WHO, UNICEF, local health authorities and NGO partners have implemented five national polio immunization rounds as part of a strategy to eradicate the disease in Syria. During the most recent campaign, over 2.91 million children were vaccinated in government and opposition-controlled areas.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/who-launches-fourth-national-vaccination-week-syria>

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