



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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On 31 August, the UN Investigation Team departed Syria and arrived in The Hague after collecting samples from Ghouta, the Damascus suburb that was the scene of an alleged use of chemical weapons. On 3 September, before departing for the G-20 Summit, the Secretary-General told the media that the UN Mission led by Professor Åke Sellström was working “around the clock following its return from Syria to prepare the materials it gathered for analysis. I am pleased to announce that all biomedical and environmental samples will have arrived at the designated laboratories” by 4 September. The results of the analysis would be shared with Member States. The Secretary-General said that “if confirmed, any use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances would be a serious violation of international law and an outrageous war crime.” He again urged the Security Council to unite and develop an appropriate response, should the allegations of use of chemical weapons prove to be true. “The Security Council has a duty to move beyond the current stalemate and show leadership.” He reiterated his call for avoiding further militarization of the conflict and revitalizing the search for a political settlement, cautioning that the world must consider the “impact of any punitive measure on efforts to prevent further bloodshed and facilitate a political resolution of the conflict.”

During the week, as expected, the work of the UN Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Conflict dominated the news and the diplomatic activity at the UN and in many capitals around the world. The team, which had originally gone to investigate three sites where chemical weapons had been allegedly used, was asked by the Secretary-General to first investigate the Ghouta incident, which took place on 21 August. Before leaving Syria, the investigation team gave an undertaking to the Syrian authorities that it will return to conduct the investigation into all the pending allegations, including Khan al-Asal.
<http://www.un.org/sg/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=2967>

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, announced on 3 September that the number of Syrians forced to seek shelter abroad since the civil war began in March 2011 had crossed the 2 million mark that day with no sign of the outflow ending soon. This represented a jump of almost 1.8 million people in 12 months. One year ago today, UNHCR said the number of Syrians registered as refugees or awaiting registration stood at about 230,670 people. It noted that a further 4.25 million people are displaced inside Syria, according to data from the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).
<http://www.unhcr.org/522495669.html>

On 1 September the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) said that over half of the schools run by it in Syria for Palestinian refugees were closed, either because of damage to buildings or because of the overall insecurity. This had

affected some 45,000 children. Of the UN agency's 118 schools in Syria, only 49 will reopen for the 2013-2014 school year.

<http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=1862>

On 1 September UNICEF airlifted 100 tonnes of emergency supplies to assist Syrian refugee children and families to Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The supplies were urgently airlifted from UNICEF's global supply warehouse in Copenhagen, Denmark, to respond to the growing needs of Syrian refugees in Iraq. It said that some 50,000 refugees had arrived in the previous two and a half weeks, half of whom were children.

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_70289.html

Select UN stories

Syria: samples collected at site of alleged chemical weapons use to reach labs 'within hours'

2 September 2013 – Samples collected by the United Nations chemical weapons inspection team in Syria are now being transferred from The Hague to laboratories for analysis, according to a spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45754&Cr=Syria&Cr1=>

Syria: The journey to safety gets more dangerous by the day, but refugees keep coming

ZA'ATRI REFUGEE CAMP, Jordan, September 3 (UNHCR) – Before there was war, Hamid and his family lived just outside the city of Homs in western Syria. Their foremost concern was the sheep and goats they herded and the land they had lived on for generations. They had no time for politics and they avoided conflict.

<http://www.unhcr.org/5225b01a6.html>

UNICEF officer says Syrian children need us today

Video report included

NEW YORK, 30 August 2013 – As the stakes in the Syrian conflict continue to rise, UNICEF Emergency Specialist Abdulkadir Musse prepares to return to one of the most dangerous places on earth.

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/syria_70268.html

Palestinian refugee family's escape from Syria via tropical island to new life in Sweden

NEW DELHI, India, August 30 (UNHCR) – A Syrian refugee family, which first fled to Egypt, then to Libya, before arriving in Dubai, from where it was forced to go to Maldives, has started a new life in Sweden, where it found refuge after intervention by UNHCR.

<http://www.unhcr.org/5220863d9.html>

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/>