



## Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

**No. 8 /11 September 2013**

In a renewed push for the search for a political settlement to the Syrian crisis, the Secretary-General, accompanied by Joint Special Representative (JSR) Lakhdar Brahimi, took part in the G-20 Summit in St Petersburg on 6 September. Addressing the meeting, the Secretary-General reiterated his call to the international community to intensify efforts towards a return to the negotiating table and the rapid convening of the Geneva II conference.

On the investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons, he told G-20 leaders that the UN Mission was working around the clock to prepare materials for analysis. The Secretary-General also pledged to promptly communicate the results of the investigation to the Security Council.

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/speeches/statments\\_full.asp?statID=1955](http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/speeches/statments_full.asp?statID=1955)

Following a meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov also on 6 September, JSR Brahimi told the media that he had been working extremely hard with the US and Russia to prepare for the Geneva II conference.

<http://www.un.org/sq/offthecuff/index.asp?nid=2976>

On 6 September, USG for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos wrapped up a two-day mission to Damascus aimed at discussing improving aid operations with Syrian authorities and humanitarian partners. In a UN Headquarters press briefing via video link, USG Amos noted that Syria and the region were suffering a humanitarian crisis on a scale rarely seen. She added that more than one-third of the Syrian people urgently needed humanitarian aid, but the crisis was affecting everyone.

[http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2013/130906\\_Guest.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2013/130906_Guest.doc.htm)

Echoing the Secretary-General's call for a political solution, High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay urged the international community to take serious joint action to halt the downward spiral that has gripped Syria. At the opening of the Human Rights Council 24<sup>th</sup> session on 9 September, she said that the use of chemical weapons has long been identified as one of the gravest crimes that can be committed, adding that their use in Syria "seems now to be in little doubt, even if all the circumstances and responsibilities remain to be clarified". She also cautioned that a military response or the continued supply of arms risks igniting a regional conflagration, possibly resulting in many more deaths and even more widespread misery.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13687&LangID=E>

In a press conference on 9 September, the Secretary-General said that should Dr Sellström's report confirm the use of chemical weapons, "this would surely be

something around which the Security Council could unite in response". He indicated that he was considering making proposals to the Security Council when presenting the investigation team's report. More specifically, he said that he may ask the Council to demand Syria to transfer its chemical weapons and chemical precursor stocks to places inside Syria where they can be safely stored and destroyed.

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/sgspeeches/statments\\_full.asp?statID=1951](http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/sgspeeches/statments_full.asp?statID=1951)

On 10 September, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria released its latest report covering investigations conducted from 15 May to 15 July 2013. The report says that Government and pro-government forces continued to conduct widespread attacks on the civilian population, committing murder, torture, rape and enforced disappearance as crimes against humanity. Investigations also found that anti-government armed groups have committed war crimes, including murder, execution without due process, torture, hostage-taking and attacking protected objects. They have besieged and indiscriminately shelled civilian neighbourhoods.

[http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session24/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_24\\_46\\_en.DOC](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session24/Documents/A_HRC_24_46_en.DOC)

### **Select UN stories**

#### **Return to learning vital for children amid Syria crisis**

#### **Funding desperately needed to increase learning opportunities for children**

Amman, 6 September 2013- Since the last school year, almost two million Syrian children have dropped out of school, which includes nearly 40 per cent of all pupils registered in grades 1 to 9. One million Syrian children are now refugees and helping them back to school is proving challenging.

[http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_70322.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_70322.html)

#### **UNFPA and partners are scaling up efforts to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health**

Nearly 6.8 million people have been affected by the crisis in Syria, of which 25 percent are women and girls of reproductive (child-bearing) age. UNFPA delivers reproductive health services to 9,000 women, family planning services to 5,600 women and reproductive health vouchers to 1,500 women in Damascus, rural Damascus and Aleppo.

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNFPA%20Regional%20SitRep%202015%20August%20-%202010%20Sep%20%2311%20.pdf>

#### **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/](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](http://www.unicef.org/photography/photo_2013.php#UNI82253)

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