



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

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الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Refugee Arrested South of Syria"

- Palestinian Refugees Terrified as Mortar Shells Hit Southern Syria
- Displaced Palestinian Families: Return to Yarmouk Camp Hampered by "Paper Burden"
- UNRWA Chief Shows Up in Sabina Refugee Camp
- Popular Committees Push For Urgent Aid to Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon

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Latest Developments

Palestinian refugee Ahmad Mahmoud Abu AlRub was arrested by Syrian security forces in AlNakhla area, in Deraa AlBalad, south of Syria, as part of a manhunt launched in the area.

The Syrian security forces cordoned off the area with military checkpoints. The sweep culminated in the arrest of five civilians.

Sometime earlier, mortar shells were dropped in the area. Shootouts have also been reported between government forces and opposition groups.

Along similar lines, three mortar shells slammed into AlSadd neighborhood in Deraa, where dozens of Palestinian refugee families have been taking shelter.

No injuries were reported.

Palestinian families living in Daraa Camp continue to raise alarm bells over the security turmoil overwhelming the area as a result of internal rifts between the Syrian government forces and former opposition affiliates.

In another development, displaced Palestinian families wishing to return to their homes in Yarmouk Camp have denounced the complicated red tape slapped by the Syrian authorities.

The families said local authorities ordered them to present clearance certificates obtained from water, power, and telecommunications companies.



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Families displaced from Yarmouk to surrounding areas and those who remained in the camp have been enduring dire living conditions and the majority live below the poverty line.

Yarmouk camp, once home to 160,000 Palestine refugees, suffered devastating destruction because of intense fighting that decimated most of the camp's buildings.

Some 430 families who have returned to Yarmouk in the last few months say they had no option because they cannot afford to rent homes after several years of displacement. Their children go to the nearby al-Zahera schools in Damascus using buses provided by UNRWA. Seventy-five per cent of the Agency's 23 premises, including 16 schools, need to be completely rebuilt and all three of the Agency's health centres in Yarmouk are destroyed.

In the meantime, UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Philippe Lazzarini, visited UNRWA installations including a health centre and a school in AlSabina camp for Palestinian refugees, where he met members of the school parliament.

The refugees explained to the Commissioner-General the daily hardship of displacement and poverty, made worse by years of conflict that saw prices of basic goods soar to the point of making most of them unaffordable, as the value of the Syria pound collapsed.

The representatives of the school parliament briefed Lazzarini on the preventative measures taken in the school to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and the challenges of switching to online



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classes in the era of COVID-19. For most Palestine refugees in Syria, online education is a luxury that they cannot afford, with frequent power cuts, uneven internet coverage and absence of electronic devices in extremely vulnerable households.

“We are committed to ensure that you will be able to continue your education in a safe and healthy environment and make up for the knowledge and skills that may have been lost,” told the students.

Lazzarini made his first official visit to Syria on 26-29 October 2020. During his visit, he held meetings with a number of Syrian government officials and toured camps for Palestine refugees in Damascus to take a closer look at their situation and at the services that UNRWA provides within a context of the protracted crisis.

After nine years of war, which has caused extensive casualties, large-scale and protracted displacement and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, Syria is now facing an economic meltdown, fuelled by conflict-related hyperinflation and the plummeting of the Syrian pound. Prices of basic commodities, including bread, have skyrocketed and people are forced to queue for bread as this subsidized commodity is rationed.

Ninety per cent of Palestine refugees in Syria live in poverty and 40 per cent remain in protracted displacement. Their hardship has been exponentially exacerbated through the imposition of sanctions and the rapid spread of COVID-19 in refugee communities. Their resilience is at breaking point.



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Meanwhile, the Association of Popular Committees of Palestinians of Syria in Lebanon urged UNRWA to increase their winter assistance to displaced Palestinian refugees from Syria sheltered in Lebanon.

The Association called for emergency aid to assist the refugee families during winter.

UN data indicates that there are 27,700 Palestinian refugees from Syria who came to Lebanon during the crisis, adding to a pre-existing population of an estimated 180,000 Palestinian refugees, under UNRWA's mandate.

According to information collected by UNRWA, more than 80 per cent of PRS indicate that the Agency's cash assistance is their main source of income. 95 per cent of PRS are food insecure, while about 89 per cent of PRS live in poverty. 36 to 57 per cent of PRS youth face unemployment. In August and September 2019, UNRWA conducted a verification exercise of PRS in Lebanon and verified the physical presence of 27,803 PRS in the country.

UNRWA said PRS's vulnerability is further compounded by their precarious legal status. According to the Agency's monitoring data, around 55 percent of PRS do not possess valid legal residency documents.

The lack of a valid legal status, often coupled with outdated civil registration documents, results in severely restricted freedom of movement for some PRS in Lebanon due to fear of arrest, detention and being issued a departure order.



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