



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

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## التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



### "Palestinians of Yarmouk Camp Appeal for Urgent Action by PLO"

- PLO Delegation Shows Up in Damascus
- Clashes Flare Up at Greek Migrant Camp
- Head of U.N. Palestine Refugee Agency: Difficult Year Ahead, amid Israeli Pressure

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## Latest Developments

Palestinian refugees have called on the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to live up to its political and moral obligations regarding their unending cries for help.

In appeals emailed to AGPS, activists quoted Palestinian refugees displaced from Yarmouk Camp as stating that their humanitarian condition is going from bad to worse due to the absence of relief assistance, price leap, steep rental fees, and high unemployment rates.



The activists urged member of the PLO's Executive Committee Azzam ALAhmad and other Fatah leaders in Damascus to seriously work on securing the refugees' safe return to the camp and to pressurize local authorities to issue a final organizational plan for Yarmouk.

The refugees further appealed to the PLO and Palestine ambassador in Damascus to urge UNRWA to resume its relief services and increase food aids for Palestinian families.

The Syrian government forces regained control over Yarmouk Camp and southern Damascus towns following a 33-day military



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operation launched on April 19, 2018. At least 33 civilians were killed and dozens more injured in the offensive. Over 60% of buildings in Yarmouk Camp have been either totally or partially destroyed in the warfare. 90% of homes have been subjected to burglary and looting.

Along similar lines, a PLO delegation led by member of the Executive Committee Azzam AlAhmad, has been spotted in Damascus. Member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Wassel Abu Yousef, also appeared during the visit.



Member of Fatah's Central Committee, Samir AlRefai, said the visit comes to mark the anniversary of the launch of the Palestinian Revolution and also to hold meetings with PFLP and DFLP leaders, along with other Palestinian leaders and Syrian officials, including deputy Foreign Minister Faysal Miqdad.

In another development, violent clashes erupted in Moria refugee camp, set up on the Greek island of Lesbos.

Fighting reportedly erupted by Afghan and Arab migrants using sticks and sharp weapons. Greek police said a Yemeni migrant was



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fatally stabbed by anonymous persons. Several migrants were arrested shortly afterwards.

Palestinian refugees and other migrants have been subjected to a dire humanitarian situation in Moria camp among other substandard facilities set up in Greece, most of them vastly overcrowded, unhygienic and violence-prone.

Over recent months, Moria, one of the biggest refugee camps in Europe, has been running at three times its capacity with over 9,000 refugees.



A few months earlier, UNICEF warned that the number of unaccompanied migrant minors staying in overcrowded reception centers on the Greek islands exceeds 1,100, the highest level since the peak of the refugee crisis in early 2016, calling on European countries to do more to protect vulnerable children.

Built to house 3,000 people, the Moria facility is hosting more than 8,700, including some 3,000 children, according to UNICEF. There are 520 unaccompanied children at a special section of the camp which was made to hold 160. Overall, Greece is hosting more than 32,000 child migrants of whom 4,100 are unaccompanied.



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Palestinian refugees from Syria continue to risk their lives onboard the “death boats” to Greece, rummaging around for a momentary respite from the daily scenes of bloodshed and destruction.

Activists estimate that around 4,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria are taking shelter on Greece islands.

Meanwhile, the interim head of the U.N. agency that aids Palestinian refugees on Thursday accused pro-Israel groups of lobbying foreign parliaments to stop donations, even as it struggled to recover from losing United States funding in 2018.

Christian Saunders, in an interview with Reuters in his Gaza office, also said Israel was seeking to replace United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) services for Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem with those of its own.

UNRWA has faced budgetary difficulties since 2018, when the United States, its biggest donor, halted its annual aid of \$360 million. The United States and Israel have both accused UNRWA of mismanagement and anti-Israeli incitement.



Last November, UNRWA commissioner-general Pierre Krahenbuhl resigned amid an investigation into misconduct allegations.



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In the interview, Saunders, now acting commissioner-general, said the inquiry by the U.N. Office of Internal Oversight Services was complete and Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had confirmed there had been no corruption or misuse of funds.

Saunders said the investigation had uncovered mismanagement related to human resources and abuse of authority, and that major donors, who had withheld funding while the inquiry was under way, have resumed contributions.

Saunders said he felt confident UNRWA had enough money for at least the first quarter of 2020, but he expected it to be an “even more difficult” year than last. He added that they had not given up on persuading the United States to change its mind about funding.

“We are engaged with the U.S., we will continue to engage with them in the hopes that they will see UNRWA as a reliable partner and worth supporting,” Saunders said in the interview.

Saunders initially said that Israel and the United States were “advocating against funding UNRWA in the European parliaments and elsewhere,” but later clarified in a statement that he was referring to pro-Israel groups. He said UNRWA “had no reason to believe that the U.S. was engaged in lobbying to stop funding the agency.”

He said UNRWA was feeling “the pressure in East Jerusalem in particular”, saying that Israel was in the process of building schools and institutions “to compete” with the agency and stop it from operating there.



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“The important thing to remember here is that UNRWA has a mandate from the (U.N.) General Assembly, from the rest of the world, the member states, to provide services to Palestinian refugees in East Jerusalem,” Saunders said.

Last month, the U.N. General Assembly renewed UNRWA’s mandate for another three years. The agency aids more than 5 million registered refugees in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, as well as in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.