



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



"Palestinian Official: Political Decision Needed to Save Yarmouk Camp"

- Jaramana Camp for Palestinian Refugees Grappling with Abject Conditions
- School Drop-Out Rates Getting Higher in AlNeirab Camp for Palestinian Refugees
- Palestinian Refugee Mohamed AlMarkaten Held in Syrian Dungeons Since 2013
- Palestinians among Several "Quota Refugees" Received in Sweden

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Latest developments

Secretary-General of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF) Khaled Abdul Majid said the reconstruction plan proposed by Damascus Governorate has failed to taken into account the historical and political significance of the camp, which stands as a witness to the Palestinian refugee plight and to Palestinians' commitment to their right of return to their motherland—Palestine.

His said the Yarmouk file cannot be handled on exclusively technical grounds and that any proposed reconstruction plan should take into account the socio-historical identity of the camp.

He said the Palestinians have objected to the plan to deter any attempts to relocate Palestinian refugees in other destinations and further displace the people in known and unknown locations.

He said the objections come in light of the US-drafted “deal of the century” which negates Palestinians' right of return to their homeland.

The PPSF leader added that displaced Palestinian and Syrian families should be allowed to return to Yarmouk at the earliest possible time, adding that 40% of homes are habitable in the camp and another 40% can be reconstructed.

Abdul Majid also said contacts have been recently made between Palestinian political factions and Syrian leaders in an attempt to hand over a memorandum to the Syrian President outlining



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Yarmouk's historical and political value for the Palestinian refugee community and calling for the new reconstruction plan to be canceled.

He further stated that an urgent political solution is needed to work out the Yarmouk file and prevent further tension in the area.

In another development, residents of Jaramana Camp have launched cries for help over the dire socio-economic conditions and simmering security turmoil rocking the area.

High unemployment rates, poor infrastructure, steep rental fees, and chronic water crisis have made survival difficult for the majority of families.

The residents have gone traumatized by the chronic Israeli strikes targeting government military sites in and around the area. Abductions have also been increasingly reported by the camp residents.

The situation has been exacerbated by the sanctions implemented by the US as part of the so-called "Caesar Act" targeting anyone doing business with the Assad regime, including in opposition-held zones.

The implementation of the sanctions has led to a further deterioration of the exchange rate of the Syrian pound, resulting in a worse economic situation for vulnerable families whose sole sources of income have been already affected by the bloody warfare.



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Nine years into the deadly conflict, the majority of Palestinian refugees continue to live below the poverty line in Syria and are food insecure.

Jaramana camp is 8km from Damascus on the road to Damascus International Airport. The camp was established in 1948.

Before the start of the conflict in 2011, there were over 18,000 Palestine refugees living in Jaramana camp.

During the Syrian crisis, the number of Palestine refugees in the camp and the surrounding area increased to 49,000 due to an influx of displaced Palestine refugees from other areas, including the camp of Yarmouk. As a result, Jaramana has become one of the most densely populated areas of Damascus. Many Palestine refugees took refuge in Jaramana because of the low rent rates.

The camp occupies an area of 0.03 square kilometres. Historically, the camp has been inhabited by those displaced by the conflict in 1948, as well as Palestinians who had taken refuge in the Golan Heights and were displaced as a result of the 1967 hostilities.

Meanwhile, Palestinian families taking shelter in AlNeirab Camp continue to denounce the dramatic nosedive in their children's access to education.

An AGPS reporter said that high school dropouts have been reported among school boys, several of whom left their academic institutions to join armed militias.



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At the same time, dozens of Palestinian teaching staff members have been arrested and sent to jail.

AGPS continues to appeal to the Palestine Liberation Organization and UNRWA, among all concerned institutions, to urgently step in and work on reconstructing destroyed schools, providing civilians with the needed psycho-physical protection, and boosting children's access to education in Syria's displacement camps.

Upon more than one occasion, UNRWA has raised alarm bells over the striking upsurge in the rate of school dropouts among the Palestinians of Syria, several among whom have left schools to help feeding their impoverished families in unemployment-stricken refugee camps.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Mohamed Salem Ali AlMarkaten, in his 60s, has been incarcerated in Syrian government prisons for the sixth year running.

Mohamed was kidnapped by the government forces on his way out of Yarmouk Camp and was dragged to an unknown location. His fate and location has been shrouded in mystery.

AGPS has documented the secret detention of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government prisons, among them 110 women and girls.

Meanwhile, the Swedish Migration Agency has given greenlight for the entry of quota refugees coming from Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan



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and for holders of Syrian and Palestinian travel documents, among other nationalities.

Quota refugees or resettlement refugees are usually people who are registered as refugees by the UNHCR, but who cannot be offered a permanent solution in the country they are currently in and who are therefore offered resettlement in a third country.

For many refugees, it is impossible to return to their home country or to be integrated in the country where they are staying.

Media reports said that during 2020, Sweden will accept 5,000 quota refugees for resettlement. But so far, only 13,000 have been allowed in.

The Migration Agency said sometime earlier that the Swedish resettlement programme will help to resolve protracted refugee situations that are at risk of becoming permanent. It can also offer timely protection for people in vulnerable situations. Refugees who are selected for resettlement may be in refugee camps, but they may also be in cities or rural areas.

Resettling in a third country may be the only solution for people who can neither remain in their first country of asylum nor return home. The process is administered by the UN refugee agency, UNHCR. Most refugees are resettled from areas bordering on crises or conflict regions. Resettlement is therefore becoming an increasingly important action in the effort to prevent people from risking their lives in an attempt to cross the Mediterranean.