



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



### "Syrian Regime Toughens Military Grip on Deraa Camp for Palestinian Refugees"

- Palestinian Refugee Identifies Brother in Leaked Photos of Torture Victims in Syria
- Palestinian Refugee Karam Afani Secretly Held in Syrian Jail for 9<sup>th</sup> Year
- Activists Warn Yarmouk Residents against Attempts to Turn Their Property into Bargaining Chips
- Palestinian Refugees in Syria Displacement Camp Denounce Manipulation of Aid Distribution

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## Latest Developments

Residents of Deraa Camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Syria, have launched distress signals over the tough cordon imposed by the Syrian regime around the camp.

The Syrian security forces continue to block civilians' access out of and into the area. As a result, families have run out of vital food items and medicines.

Earlier, this week, an attack by the Syrian government forces targeted civilian houses in Deraa Camp.

Reporting from the area, an AGPS correspondent said Syrian forces deployed at checkpoints pitched around Deraa opened machinegun fire on houses overnight, sparking panic among children.

Recently, a tough cordon has been imposed by the Syrian security forces and their Russian allies around Deraa city, after a number of residents refused Russian demands to return their private weapons.

Local sources told AGPS that all access roads to the city centre have been blocked except for the Sajneh road, where three military checkpoints have been pitched.

Palestinian refugees have expressed concerns over a new wave of forced military conscription and arbitrary manhunts in the area.



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Meanwhile, Palestinian refugee Firas Salim has identified his forcibly-disappeared brother Osama in a series of photos leaked by the so-called Caesar breakaway.

Osama was arrested in February 2013.

“We received no updates about Osama’s condition and whereabouts”, the brother told AGPS. “We received the answer after we stumbled upon the leaked album”.

Horrific photos showing thousands of people who were tortured to death in Syrian government penitentiaries were leaked by a military police photographer, codenamed Caesar.

AGPS has recorded the secret incarceration of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government prisons, including 110 women and girls.

A report released by AGPS on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture documented the death of over 620 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syrian government penitentiaries, among whom minors and elderly detainees.

AGPS believes the number is far higher due to the gag orders enforced by the Syrian regime on the detainees’ fates and names, along with the reluctance of the casualty’s families to reveal the names of their deceased or missing relatives for fear of retaliation.

Torture is a crime under international law. According to all relevant instruments, it is absolutely prohibited and cannot be justified under any circumstances. This prohibition forms part of



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customary international law, which means that it is binding on every member of the international community, regardless of whether a State has ratified international treaties in which torture is expressly prohibited. The systematic or widespread practice of torture constitutes a crime against humanity.

Along similar lines, Palestinian refugee Karam Ahmad Afani, aged 29, has been mysteriously locked up in Syrian state prisons since September 15, 2013.

Karam, a resident of Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Damascus, was arrested in Qudsaya, in Rif Dimashq.

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

In the meantime, activists have called on the residents of Yarmouk Camp, in Damascus, to stand on guard to all attempts to force them to forfeit their houses and property at low prices.

The activists have warned against attempts by crooked real estate brokers to pressurize civilians to sell their homes and properties following the widely-condemned reconstruction plan proposed by Damascus Governorate.

Real estate dealers have reportedly established limited-liability contracting companies to buy real estate from the residents at extremely cheap prices. Civilians who have lost their property





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ownership documents have particularly come under simmering pressure.

UN data indicates that before the eruption of the conflict in 2011, Yarmouk was home to approximately 160,000 Palestine refugees, making it the largest Palestine refugee community in Syria. Located eight kilometers from Damascus, it is one of three unofficial camps in Syria.

In December 2012, fierce clashes erupted in Yarmouk, causing numerous civilian casualties, severe damage to property and the displacement of thousands of Palestine refugees and Syrians. The camp was under siege from July 2013, drastically restricting the entry of commercial and humanitarian goods.

In April 2015, armed opposition groups captured over 60 per cent of the camp, containing over 90 per cent of the remaining civilian population. This not only made relief institutions unable to carry out any distributions inside Yarmouk but also displaced most of the remaining 18,000 Palestine refugees and other civilians to the neighboring areas of Yalda, Babila and Beit Saham (YBB).

Almost all the remaining Palestine refugees left during the final government offensive for Yarmouk in April-May 2018, after which the government retook control of the camp.

In another development, residents of Jaramana Camp, in Rif Dimashq, denounced the manipulation of UNRWA aid distribution, saying staff have been secretly handing over aid items to their relatives and friends.



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Recently, UNRWA transferred food aid distribution to AlRama School, in Jaramana Camp.

The residents denounced the move, saying the new distribution centre is located several kilometers away from residential neighborhoods.