



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 Refugees in Egypt Facing Precarious Legal, Humanitarian Condition"

- Rights Commission Levels Heavy Criticism at UNRWA over Suspension of of Day Laborers' Wages
- Palestinian Refugees in Jaramana Camp Denounce Price Leap
- Palestinian Refugees Mark Land Day in Handarat Camp

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Latest Developments

Palestinian refugees who fled war-torn Syria (PRS) have been subjected to a fragile legal status in Egypt, where they are treated as foreigners rather than asylum-seekers fleeing war-stricken zones.

PRS in Egypt have been denied the right to legal visas, refugee documents, safe accommodation, basic services, and relief assistance.

Those who illegally entered Egypt via the Sudanese borders have been denied the right to free movement, education, and labor, among other basic necessities. Unlike Syrian nationals, who are granted safe asylum in Egypt and systematically assisted by the UNHCR, Palestinian refugees are left on their own.



AGPS data indicates that the number of Palestinian refugees from Syria in Egypt in 2018 was estimated at 3,500, down from over 6,000 in previous years. Some 500 refugees illegally entered Egypt through Sudan.

AGPS continues to stress the need to secure the rights of PRS in Egypt to legal and physical protection, as per the Refugee Convention of 1951, and to hand them over cash and in-kind aids,



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along with refugee cards, in order to enhance their legal status in the Egyptian territories.

In another development, the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees in Syria (GAPAR) has strongly condemned a decision by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to suspend the salaries of day workers.

GAPAR's Director Ali Mustafa said the decision affects hundreds of instructors and cleaning workers.

GAPAR urged Amany Michael-Ebye, Director of UNRWA Affairs for the Syrian Arab Republic, to push for immediately revoking the decision and paying the wages of day laborers who have been laid off due to the propagation of the coronavirus pandemic.

The group denounced discriminatory policies against UNRWA staff, saying day laborers in Jordan have received their wages while those in Syria have been laid off inconsiderately.

Sometime earlier, UNRWA's media adviser Adnan Abu Hasana said the Agency opted for such a measure owing to an "extremely alarming" financial situation.

Speaking with the London-based Palestinian Return Centre, Abu Hasana said UNRWA decided to lay off day laborers after its operations have been partly halted in its five fields of operations in line with precautionary measures taken by host countries to prevent further COVID-19 contaminations.



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In a statement issued in response to the decision, AGPS has called on UNRWA to protect the rights of day laborers particularly in light of the socio-economic discomfort inflicted by COVID-19 outbreaks.

AGPS said the diminution in UNRWA operations is the outcome of agreements made with host countries to prevent further COVID-19 contaminations, rather than a personal decision willingly taken by the workers themselves.

“In light of the coronaviurs crisis and the unprecedented employment rates rocking the region, the decision will result in a further deterioration of the calamitous humanitarian condition endured by Palestinian refugee workers”, said AGPS in its statement. “UNRWA represents a lifeline for nearly 95% of Palestinian refugees in Syria, many of whom work in favor of the agency on a daily or monthly basis”.

“UNRWA’s decision stands in sharp contrast to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights” the statement further read. “UNRWA should live up to its legal, moral, and humanitarian responsibilities regarding Palestinian refugees and work on securing the financial dues of workers and their families”.

AGPS also stressed the need for UNRWA to continue to provide Palestinian refugees with vital services, much-needed food and non-food items, and life-saving medical assistance.

Along similar lines, Palestinian refugees taking shelter in Jaramana camp, in Rif Dimashq province, continue to rail against the swift hike in the prices of vital food and non-food items.



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The residents said merchants and shopkeepers have been taking profit from the absence of control staff to manipulate prices and supplies.

Local activists have called for serious action by the concerned authorities, particularly the Syrian Ministry of Supply and Domestic Commerce, in order to impeach market abusers and dispatch control staff to regulate prices and control supply and demand.



Over recent years, residents of Jaramana Camp have launched cries for help over the dire socio-economic conditions, high unemployment rates, poor infrastructure, steep rental fees, and chronic water crisis rocking the area. The propagation of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 will further overburden the cash-stripped families who cannot afford to buy hygiene kit and life-saving medicines.

Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees sheltered in Handarat camp, in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo, marked the 44th anniversary of the Palestinian Land Day, a major commemorative event in the Palestinian political calendar and communal consciousness.

An AGPS reporter said the occasion comes as part of an international campaign to raise the Palestinian flag in Palestinian-



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inhabited areas across the world, in a gesture showing the refugees' devotion to their homeland, right of return to their native soil, and ancestral identity.

This year's celebration comes at a very critical time during which the Palestinians and the majority of the world's peoples have been struggling to fight the novel coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) which continues to claim the lives of thousands of people across the globe.

Forty-four years ago on March 30, Israeli police shot six Palestinian citizens of Israel dead as they were protesting against the Israeli government's expropriation of thousands of acres of Palestinian land in the Galilee. Since then, March 30 has been known as Land Day and is an important date in the Palestinian political calendar and collective consciousness.

This year, Palestinians will be marking Land Day at home amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has left much of the world's populations under lockdown and curfew. Being confined to their homes or their villages and towns is not a new experience for Palestinians which is perhaps why so many have taken it in their stride.

