



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



### "Syria Embassy Slaps 3,500 Fine on Palestinian Refugee in Thailand"

- Palestinian Refugees Call for Vigil Outside of UNRWA Office in Gaza
- Humanitarian Initiative Launched in Khan Dannun Camp
- Palestinian Refugee Adel Diab Forcibly Disappeared in Syria for 7<sup>th</sup> Year
- UNHCR Calls for Equitable Access to COVID-19 Vaccine for Refugees

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## Latest Developments

The Syrian Embassy in Malaysia has imposed a fine of 3,500 USD on expatriates, including Palestinian refugees, who had lived in Syria and wish to have their legal situation worked out.

A refugee told AGPS that Palestinian refugees from Syria in Thailand who have overstayed their visas have failed to renew their travel documents due to the exorbitant costs imposed by the embassy.

AGPS continues to sound alarm bells over the deteriorating humanitarian condition endured by dozens of Palestinian refugees who fled war-torn Syria to the Kingdom of Thailand. The refugees risk to be forcibly sent back to Syria or tossed into Thai detention centers for indefinite periods of time.

Sometime earlier, the refugees urged Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to pressurize the Thai authorities so as to release refugees trapped at IDC detention center and grant them legal and physical protection.

The refugees said the Thai authorities continue to rebuff their appeals for visa-renewal after they overstayed their residence permits. The Thai government also prohibited renting homes to the refugees, who have been considered as lawbreakers rather than asylum-seekers.



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In another development, a vigil is slated to be held on Tuesday by the Follow-Up Committee of Palestinians of Syria in Gaza to push for urgent humanitarian assistance by UNRWA.

Sometime earlier, Director of UNRWA operations in Gaza, Mathias Schemale promised to increase efforts in order to tone down the calamitous humanitarian condition endured by Palestinian refugees who returned from Syria to the blockaded Gaza Strip.

Schemale promised to reach out to donor parties in order to help construct housing units for Palestinian refugees from Syria in the besieged enclave and to secure rental allowances to the displaced families.

Some 150 Palestinian refugee families from Syria who returned to the blockaded Gaza Strip have been facing an abject humanitarian situation in the Israeli-blockaded enclave.

The refugees say they have been deprived of humanitarian assistance by UNRWA and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip have been enduring dire living conditions due to the 13-year-long Israeli siege and the devastating upshots of the Israeli onslaughts on the coastal enclave.

The offensives launched by the Israeli military on Gaza have turned the enclave into a hell on earth as most families have lost their sources of incomes, homes, and property.

According to data by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Gaza is one of the world's most densely populated areas, with more than





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5,000 inhabitants per square kilometer. The Gaza Strip is smaller than the city of Oslo but is home to three times as many people.

Gaza is described by many Palestinians and humanitarian actors as the world's largest open-air prison, where nearly 2 million Palestinians live behind a blockade and are refused access to the other occupied Palestinian areas and the rest of the world.

NRC said 7 out of 10 Palestinians in Gaza are registered as refugees, and many of these come from families who were forced to leave their villages in 1948. Many have also been forced to leave their homes due to war, violence, and economic hardship.

Meanwhile, expatriates formerly sheltered in Khan Dannun camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, have collected a sum of 1 million Syrian pounds for cash-stripped and vulnerable families in the camp.

Living conditions in Khan Dannun have sharply deteriorated due to the lack of financial resources and high unemployment rates wrought by the unbridled warfare.

According to UN data, Khan Dannun camp was built several centuries ago to give overnight accommodation to trading caravans on the ancient route between Jerusalem and Constantinople (modern day Istanbul). In 1948, the ruins of the city provided shelter for refugees from villages in northern Palestine.

The camp, which lies 23 km south of Damascus, was officially established in 1950-1951 on an area of 0.03 square kilometers. The



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camp was home to 10,000 Palestine refugees by 2011, almost all of whom were living in irregular housing, constructed without any formal approval from the municipality.

Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was already one of the poorest camps in Syria. The conflict exerted additional pressures. The camp was surrounded by armed opposition groups and many refugee families displaced from other areas of Damascus took refuge in the camp, tripling the number of residents to some 30,000 during the crisis. Currently, the camp is home to 12,650 Palestine refugees. The increase of the camp population has had a negative impact on the camp's infrastructure.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Adel Adib Diab, aged 23, has been secretly held in Syria's state-run prisons for the seventh consecutive year.

Adel was arrested on March 24, 2014 on his way out of the old city of Hums as part of the reconciliation deal between the government forces and opposition outfits. He was dragged to the Andalus School in Hums before he was transferred to an unknown location.

AGPS has documented the secret detention of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in state-run penal complexes across war-torn Syria, among them 110 women and girls.

AGPS also documented the death of over 550 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syrian government lock-ups, including women, children, and elderly civilians.



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Affidavits by ex-detainees provided evidence on the involvement of Syrian government officers in harsh torture tactics, including electric shocks, heavy beating using whips and iron sticks, and sexual abuse against Palestinian detainees, in a flagrant violation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, commonly known as the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT).

In another development, the UNHCR called for concerted international action and solidarity to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations, including for refugees and other forcibly displaced and stateless people.

In a statement issued on World Health Day, UNHCR said it was encouraged by the fact that 153 States have adopted vaccination strategies that include refugees. Yet, in many parts of the world, actual immunization remains a challenge, largely due to the unequal availability of vaccines and the capacity of health systems.

“The blatant imbalances observed in vaccine-sharing among States are counter-productive and shortsighted. A ‘my country first’ approach just cannot work in a pandemic that knows no borders,” said the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi.

To date, some 20 countries are known to have begun inoculating refugees on an equal footing to citizens. Recent examples include Serbia and Nepal, which came on the heels of other States, such as Rwanda and Jordan.



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“We commend these countries for their exemplary dedication and leadership. By including refugees in their vaccine distribution, they mitigate the risks associated with exclusion and discrimination,” Grandi said. Such risks range from consequences for the overall public health situation to limited access to services or curtailed freedom of movement.

Some 85 per cent of the world’s refugees, including Palestinian refugees, are hosted in low- and middle-income countries, which face financial challenges and fragile health systems. These nations need more support to address the urgent health needs both of their nationals and refugees, including with COVID-19 vaccines.