



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



"German Foreign Office: Syria Unsafe Zone for Refugees"

- Follow-Up Committee Calls On UNRWA to Take Urgent Action Regarding Tragic Situation in Gaza
- Displaced Families South of Damascus Receive Return Pledges
- UNRWA's Syria Chief Tours Palestinian Refugee Camp
- Food Aid Distributed in Deraa Camp for Palestinian Refugees

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Latest Developments

The German Federal Foreign Office said Syria remains an unsafe place for refugees due to the crackdowns perpetrated by the incumbent regime and its affiliated militias.

In a Thursday statement, the German Foreign Office said the security turmoil in Syria poses serious threats to the life of the refugees, citing violations committed by pro-government militias at checkpoints pitched across the country and the uncontrolled circulation of weapons “mercilessly” used by these militias and intelligence officers against people in Syria.

The German Foreign Office is assessing the situation in allegedly “safe zones”, saying deadly shootouts have been unabated in Idlib and other northern regions of the country.

After nine years of conflict, Palestine refugees continue to be one of the most vulnerable groups in Syria with immense humanitarian needs.

Palestinian refugees in Syria (PRS) continue to launch cries for help over their deteriorating humanitarian condition due to the sharp decrease in the exchange rate of the Syrian pound compared to the USD and their lack of access to the local labor market. The price leap has also overburdened the cash-stripped refugees. House rents have also seen a striking hike from previous years.

The refugees continue to urge UNRWA and all other concerned parties to increase financial aid, help the displaced families return



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to their refugee camps, and provide much-needed relief services for Palestine refugees.

Over 90 per cent of Palestine refugee households in Syria live in poverty and 40 per cent remain in protracted displacement as a result of conflict and the damage and destruction of their homes.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said in its 2020 Syria regional crisis emergency appeal that 126,000 PRS are identified as extremely vulnerable; 89% live in poverty; 91% live in extreme poverty; and 80% rely on UNRWA cash assistance as their main source of income.

UNRWA also said that 55% of PRS do not possess valid legal residency documents; 100% of PRS are in need of winterization assistance; and 86% of PRS households are reported to be in debt.

The majority of Palestinians sheltered in displacement camps set up across the Syrian territories have remained at bay from political calculations and frequently refused attempts by all warring parties to drag them into the raging warfare, saying their priority is to secure safe shelters for their children and families pending a just and lasting solution to their refugee plight and return to their motherland—Palestine.

In another development, the Follow-Up Committee of Palestinian refugees who returned to Gaza from war-torn Syria has urged the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to the returnees who have been facing abject poverty in the Israeli-blockaded enclave.



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In a letter to UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Philippe Lazzarini, the committee said Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in Gaza continue to face a dire humanitarian condition due to the high rates of unemployment and poverty rocking the besieged enclave.

The committee said the situation has gone downhill due to UNRWA's suspension of shelter allowances for PRS since June 2018.

The committee slammed UNRWA for failing to take up its allotted mission, saying the refugees will have no other option than to accept UNHCR's resettlement programs.

It called on the Agency to provide PRS with decent shelters and create labor opportunities in order to help them provide for their impoverished families.

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.

Civilians continue to launch cries for help over the high rates of unemployment, lack of financial resources, and movement crackdowns, which they said have made life quite unbearable in Gaza.

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.



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

A 2012 UN report predicted the Palestinian enclave would be “unlivable” by 2020 if nothing was done to ease the blockade, but in June 2017 a UN report on living conditions in Gaza stated that all the indicators were going in the wrong direction and that deadline was actually approaching even faster than earlier predicted.

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, local authorities have been removing rubble from AlHajar AlAswad city, south of Damascus, a few days after a committee has been established to smooth civilians’ return to their habitable homes in AlThawrah and Tishreen neighborhoods.

At the same time, local civil committees in AlTadhaun neighborhood, south of Damascus, have started noting down the names of families wishing to return to the area. Some 300 houses



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will be retrieved by the first batch of returnees, pending the return of other families.

In the meantime, Director of UNRWA operations in Syria Amany Michael-Ebye paid a visit to Khan Dannun refugee camp in order to inspect UNRWA facilities.

Amany met with UNRWA staff and Palestinian refugees at a UNRWA-run clinic, distribution center, the community development center, and schools, along with sanitation workers and students.

In another development, the Syrian Red Crescent Organization distributed on June 11 relief items to residents of Deraa camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Syria.

Some 650 Palestinian refugee families taking shelter in the area benefited from the move.

All the way through Syria's nine-year conflict, residents of Daraa Camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Syria, have been grappling with dire humanitarian conditions owing to the high rates of unemployment and absence of vital facilities.

Civilians continue to sound distress signals over the absence of health services and life-saving medical kit. Most of the clinics and medical centers in the area have gone out of operation in the warfare. Dozens of sick and elderly civilians face mountainous journeys trying to reach AlKashef area for treatment.



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UN data indicates that Deraa refugee camp is located inside Deraa City, in southern Syria. Palestinian refugees came to the Deraa area in two waves in 1948 and in 1967.

However, as the recent conflict unraveled, the camp became engulfed by violence and 90 per cent of the camp population had to leave the camp and seek safety in other areas such as Deraa city, Damascus or Jordan. Most UNRWA services were moved to alternative premises in Deraa city.

Deraa camp and its surroundings returned to government control in the summer of 2018. The camp is now largely destroyed. UNRWA was able to return to Deraa camp in November 2018 to conduct a needs assessment. Inside Deraa camp, all premises including three school buildings and a clinic need substantial repairs or complete rebuilding.

Deraa camp was home to 10,500 Palestine refugees before 2011. As of November 2018, 400 Palestine refugee families have returned since the camp returned to government hands.

As of February 2020, some 800 families had returned to Deraa camp and 750 students to the UNRWA schools, according to UNRWA.

The camp was initially set up on an area of 0.04 square kilometers, and it now covers an area of 1.3 square kilometers. In addition to the 10,500 Palestine refugees in the camp, there were more than 17,500 Palestine refugees living in neighboring Syrian villages before the conflict. Most of them worked as farmers on Syrian-



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owned lands, others were employed as wage laborers, government workers and a few as UNRWA staff.

The older part of the camp was established in 1950-51 for refugees from the northern and eastern parts of Palestine following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. Next to the old camp is the newer part, which was set up in 1967 for some 4,200 Palestine refugees who were forced to leave the Quneitra Governorate in the Golan following the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict.