



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

16-02-2021

No. 3138

التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"629 Palestinian Refugees Tortured to Death in Syrian Prisons"

- Displaced Palestinian Families Urge Syrian Authorities to Ease Access to Yarmouk Camp
- Palestinian Refugees Denounce Price Manipulation in Syria Displacement Camp
- NGO Pays Tribute to Palestinian Poet Abdullah Issa
- Bread Packs Distributed to Palestinian Refugee Families in Lebanon

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Latest Developments

AGPS has documented the death of 629 Palestinian refugees in Syria's state run penal complexes since the outbreak of the conflict in 2011.

AGPS estimates the real number to be far higher due to the gag orders slapped by the Syrian government on the detainees' names and fates, along with the families' reluctance to report such cases over retaliation concerns.

Affidavits by ex-detainees have 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 prisoners, 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).

Palestinian women and girls have also been subjected to harsh psycho-physical torture tactics in Syrian penitentiaries.

Such practices breach the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict of 1974, Article 5, which criminalizes all forms of torture and mistreatment against women and children.

AGPS continues to urge the Syrian government to disclose the fate of scores of Palestinians held in its lock-ups, release the bodies of



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those tortured to death, to seriously work on halting harsh torture tactics, launch fact-finding probes into crimes of torture, and to bring those involved in such crimes before courts.

In another development, Palestinian families displaced from Yarmouk Camp continue to denounce the complicated red tape slapped by the Syrian authorities regarding their demands to return to the camp.

The residents said local authorities continue to block their access to their houses and property in the camp.

Recently, the Syrian authorities claimed 500 families received permits to return to their homes, which has been denied by local sources.

Palestinian families continue to call on the concerned authorities to allow them a safe return to their homes in Yarmouk Camp, in Damascus, and to press ahead with reconstruction projects.

Such calls come in response to the reluctance maintained by local authorities in Damascus regarding the residents' ongoing appeals to rehabilitate infrastructure and allow displaced civilians to safely return to the camp.

A number of activists have also warned of ongoing attempts to alter the demographic character of the camp and blur its identity as a living witness to the Palestinian refugee plight.

In 2019, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) published the results of an assessment of the damage to



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Syrian cities caused by seven years of relentless bombardment by the incumbent regime and its allies since 2011.

The analysis found out that as many as 5,489 buildings were destroyed in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees. The damage atlas used satellite-detected damage analysis to identify buildings that are either destroyed, or severely or moderately damaged.

Most of Palestinian families taking shelter south of Damascus fled Yarmouk as a result of the tough blockade imposed by the government troops and also after ISIS grabbed hold of the camp on April 1, 2015.

Scores of other stranded families fled the camp following the 33-day military operation launched by the government forces on April 19, 2018. The Syrian government regained control over the camp and southern Damascus towns following the military operation. Dozens of civilians were killed and dozens more injured. Over 80% of buildings have gone either totally or partially destroyed.

Meanwhile, residents of Khan Dannun camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, said prices have skyrocketed at the local market, where expired and smuggled products have been sold at exorbitant prices.

The residents called on local authorities to take serious measures in response to price manipulation and violations of product safety rules.



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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 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, the Lady of the Earth Foundation honored the Palestinian poet Abdullah Isaa as part of ceremony held in the West Bank province of Ramallah to pay tribute to the “icons of the year”.



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Speaking from Russia, Abdullah Issa apologized for not being able to attend the event.

Abdulla Issa, born 15 January 1964, is a Palestinian poet, First Secretary of the Embassy of the State of Palestine, journalist, political analyst, film producer, winner of several literary awards, and recognized as a national Palestinian poet. He is known as one of the representatives of "the poetry of updates".

Abdulla was born in the Yarmouk Camp near Damascus in Syria. His family was banished to Syria after the capture of his father's village in Palestine during the 1948 Arab–Israeli War.

He began to study the Quran and classical Arabic poetry. In 1984 he became the laureate of the "New Arabian poetry", and at the age of 21 he published his first collection of poems in Arabic, the Last part. From 1985-1989 he was editor of the magazine New tomorrow, becoming a laureate of the prize of the Union of writers of the Arab countries in 1986.

In 1989 he moved to the Soviet Union where he began to study Russian at the preparatory courses at Moscow State University. In 1991, in Moscow, he led the Palestinian Democratic Union under the direction of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). From 1993 to 2003 he was the editor for cultural programs at TV and radio company "Voice of Russia", authoring programs about Russian and Arabian culture.

From 2007 to 2009 worked as the Chief Editor of the Russian office of the Arab News Agency "ANA". From 2012 to 2013 he was



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director of the film documentary project Muslims are proud of Russia. The project is aimed at real-world examples to show that there is no conflict between the terms "Muslim" and "Russian patriot". In 2013 he directed and co-produced "And we love life" about the life of the blockade of Gaza, Palestine, with the participation of the then Prime Minister of Gaza Ismail Haniyeh and executive producer Ramil Khayrulin.

Humanitarian Action

1,500 bread packs have been distributed by CSOs to Palestinian families from Syria in Lebanon's AlBekraa region.

The majority of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live in poverty and are food insecure.

According to information collected by UNRWA, more than 80 per cent of PRS indicate that the Agency's cash assistance is their main source of income. 95 per cent of PRS are food insecure, while about 89 per cent of PRS live in poverty. 36 to 57 per cent of PRS youth face unemployment.

In August and September 2019, UNRWA conducted a verification exercise of PRS in Lebanon and verified the physical presence of 27,803 PRS in the country.

The number of PRS in Lebanon has been gradually decreasing over the past two years, and UNRWA estimated that in 2020 the



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country continued to host approximately 27,700 PRS (8,450 families).

UNRWA said PRS's vulnerability is further compounded by their precarious legal status. According to the Agency's monitoring data, around 55 percent of PRS do not possess valid legal residency documents.

The lack of a valid legal status, often coupled with outdated civil registration documents, results in severely restricted freedom of movement for some PRS in Lebanon due to fear of arrest, detention and being issued a departure order.