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Action Group For Palestinians of Syria



التقرير اليومي



الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية
The situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria

UN: Cholera outbreak in Syria is 'serious threat' to whole Middle East

- Mahmoud Abbas Foundation Provides Cash Aid to Yarmouk Camp Residents
- UN Refugees Commission Warns of Perilous Journey from Turkey to Greece
- New Zealand Renews Longstanding Multiyear Support to UNRWA



Latest Developments

The official declaration of a cholera outbreak in the Aleppo region of Syria at the weekend, represents “a serious threat to people in Syria”, and the whole Middle East region, said the UN humanitarian relief coordinator for the country on Tuesday.

Imran Riza, who is also Resident Coordinator, said in a statement that “swift and urgent action is needed to prevent further illness and death. UN agencies and non-governmental organizations partners are coordinating closely with health authorities to ensure a timely and effective response.”

The outbreak was declared on 10 September by the Syrian Ministry of Health, following 15 confirmed laboratory cases, including one patient death, said Riza. A total of 936 cases of severe acute watery diarrhoea were reported between 25 August and 10 September, which led to “at least eight deaths”, he reported.

Most cases were reported from Aleppo (72.2 per cent), and Deir- ez-Zor (21.5 per cent), with cases also reported in Ar-Raqqa, Al Hasakeh, Hama and Lattakia.

The number of confirmed cholera cases so far is 20 in Aleppo, four in Lattakia and two in Damascus – both of those infected in the capital had travelled from Aleppo.

“Based on a rapid assessment conducted by health authorities and partners, the source of infection is believed to be linked to people drinking unsafe water from the Euphrates River and using contaminated water to irrigate crops, resulting in food contamination”, said the UN Humanitarian Coordinator. “Cholera remains a global threat to public health and an indicator of inequity.”

He said the outbreak was an indicator of severe shortages of water throughout Syria, an issue the UN has “been sounding alarm bells on”, for some time.

Riza said that while the Euphrates levels were dropping with drought-like conditions and a national water infrastructure damaged by 11 years of war, “much of the already vulnerable population of Syria is reliant on unsafe water sources, which may



lead to the spread of dangerous water-borne diseases, particularly among children.”

“Water shortages are forcing households to resort to negative coping mechanisms, such as changing hygiene practices or increasing household debt to afford water costs.”

A closely coordinated water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and health response is underway, the senior humanitarian official said, led by the Syrian health ministry with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Children’s Fund UNICEF, working with a wide network of partners on the ground to respond.

“Since late August, health partners have been actively working to strengthen preparedness and response capacity for potential outbreaks in all affected governorates. Early warning surveillance has been intensified in areas where the outbreak has been reported and other high-risk areas, including in camps hosting internally displaced persons.”

AGPS data indicates that 15 residents of AlNeirab Camp for Palestinian refugees, in the northern Syrian province of Aleppo, caught cholera.

In another development, the Mahmoud Abbas Foundation paid a visit to Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees.

This came as part of four-day trip to Syria aiming to provide humanitarian and cash aid to vulnerable families.

A number of residents said, however, that cash aid was only handed over to families affiliated with Fatah Movement and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Meanwhile, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) denied it has been encouraging migrants to illegally enter Europe from Turkey.

The UNHCR warned of the life-threatening repercussions of illegal immigration from Turkey to Greece or Bulgaria.

The UN Agency said illegal migration leads to disastrous humanitarian consequences that can lead to death.



Calls for Syrians to gather on the Turkish border in so-called “peace caravans” began to be circulated on social media around two weeks ago.

In parallel, Syrian refugees in Turkey were urged to gather on the Turkish-Greek border seeking entry to Europe, convoys labelled the “al-Nour Caravan”, or Caravan of Light. The two caravans hoped to convene in Turkey.

Activists in Turkey who promoted the convoy on social media were summoned by authorities, and an opposition figure was arrested after he called on Syrian refugees to perform a week-long general strike.

WhatsApp and Telegram groups organising and promoting the Peace Caravan have hundreds of members and followers.

In the meantime, The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and New Zealand have signed a three-year agreement (2022-2024) totaling NZD 3 million (US\$ 1.8 million) to support core UNRWA programmes for Palestine refugees across the Middle East.

This agreement builds on a long-standing partnership between UNRWA and New Zealand and provides flexible funding that enables the Agency to continue service delivery to Palestine refugees, including education to 550,000 Palestine refugee students who are returning to 710 UNRWA schools across the Middle East over the next few weeks.

Special Representative Lewis reaffirmed New Zealand’s commitment to UNRWA, saying: “Despite recent challenges posed by COVID-19, UNRWA has shown that it has the ability to adapt and to continue making a positive, concrete difference in the lives of the people it serves. We are also encouraged to see UNRWA’s ongoing respect for UN values and commitment to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.”

Expressing her appreciation, UNRWA Director of External Relations and Communications, Alrifai said: “UNRWA is very grateful to the Government of New Zealand for its continued trust and confidence in the Agency to deliver quality services to Palestine refugees. We rely on our strongest partners to provide



predictable funding in the form of multiyear, flexible, support to our core programming, and New Zealand has consistently proven its willingness to respond to our needs. This genuine interest in the wellbeing of Palestine refugees is a proof that solidarity defies distance!”

New Zealand has been a dedicated donor to UNRWA since 1951, providing consistent levels of funding to the Programme Budget through multiyear agreements, as well as ad hoc support to the Emergency Appeals.

It is thanks to the enduring support of donors like New Zealand that UNRWA can provide vital services to Palestine refugees across the Middle East in the face of continuous challenges.