



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



"UNRWA's Commissioner-General: Palestine Refugees in Syria Witnessing Large-Scale Devastation"

- Palestinian Engineer Wahdan AlRawashdha Secretly Held in Syrian State Jail for 6th Year
- Greek Gov't Sends 900 Evacuation Notices to Refugees
- Child Event Held in AlSayeda Zeinab Camp for Palestinian Refugees

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Latest Developments

Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) warned of the scale of destruction he has witnessed in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Damascus.

“When last visiting the Yarmouk refugee camp, in Damascus, I was confronted with a scale of devastation unlike anything I had witnessed before in almost three decades of work in war zones around the world”, said Krähenbühl. “Standing in these fields of ruin, I saw signs everywhere of the appalling human cost of an unforgiving conflict, which has torn apart the lives of millions of Syrians. I was also reminded of what makes the tragedy of Palestine refugees in Syria so particularly unique.”



“Young Palestinians growing up in Yarmouk before the war would have spent the first years of their life trying to come to grips with their family’s history and the stories of exodus from cities whose names they know but whose features they have never seen. They



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would listen to the memories of their parents and grand-parents and long for a just solution to their plight”, he added.

“They would also be acutely aware that, in pre-war Syria, their parents had the dignity of being employed or running their own businesses, in other words of being largely self-sufficient and covering their needs independently. They would send their children to UNRWA schools and use our health centers, but otherwise not require any relief or emergency services”, UNRWA’s Commissioner-General further stated.

“When the conflict began and fighting engulfed several of the neighborhoods in which Palestine refugees had lived for decades, they became yet another generation of Palestinians to endure the trauma of displacement and dispossession. To the stories of their families in 1948 and 1967, the younger Palestine refugees would now add their own dramatic accounts of loss of relatives, friends, neighbors, homes and livelihoods.”

According to Krähenbühl, the Syrian conflict has impacted Palestine refugees elsewhere in Syria as well. There used to be 560’000 countrywide, mainly in Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Latakia, Damascus and Dera’a. Today, some 440,000 Palestine refugees remain, more than half of them are internally displaced, and nearly all require sustained humanitarian assistance. Roughly 120,000 Palestine refugees have fled Syria since 2011 to Lebanon and Jordan, but also Turkey and beyond. In Syria, 18 UNRWA staff members were killed and some 28 missing since the conflict began.



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Meanwhile, Palestinian engineer Wahdan Abdullah AlRawashdeh has been enduring a mysterious fate in Syrian government prisons, where he has been locked up for six years running.

Wahdan was kidnapped from his home in Jdeidat Artouz, in Rif Dimashq, on January 3, 2013. He is a retired colonel from the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) in Syria.



AGPS kept record of the names of 1,734 Palestinians, including 108 women and girls, secretly incarcerated in Syrian regime penitentiaries, where 570 refugees also died under torture.

In another development, the government of Greece sent notifications to 900 asylum-seekers who were granted “refugee status” to evacuate their European-funded shelters by the end of March.

Greek sources said the government will provide financial support for the refugees for three months only. The allotted aid cash will be suspended just one month after they receive their three-month allowances in case they do not leave their apartments as ordered by authorities.



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Sometime earlier, Greece's Ministry of Migration Policy announced its decision to suspend aids allotted for refugees who were granted subsidiary protection or asylum before August 2017.

Greek news outlets said at the time that the Greek authorities will gradually notify refugees with subsidiary protection/asylum status for over six months to leave their camps and UNHCR shelters, pending the suspension of financial aids.

The Greek government said the policy dovetails the country's attempt to rein in the influx of migrants and overcrowdings on its islands.

Human rights activists said the new decision comes in line with the EU commitment to fund the UNHCR's relief and housing program for asylum-seekers who have not yet received replies over their applications for asylum.



The activists further warned of the fallouts of the decision, which they said will result in increasing numbers of homeless refugees who will be left with neither food nor shelter and be denied their basic human rights.



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Palestinian refugees who have fled war-stricken zones to Greece have been denied their rights to visas and prevented from accessing vital facilities.

In the meantime, over 50 Palestinian children joined a cultural event held afternoon on Friday in AlSayeda Zeinab Camp in Rif Dimashq.

Shows, chants, and traditional choreographies were performed as part of the event.

AlSayeda Zeinab Camp has been gripped with dire socio-economic conditions as a result of the high rates of unemployment. Scores of civilians have fled the camp while others have been forced to join pro-government battalions.