



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



"Palestinian Refugee Children in Syria Denied Access to Food Items via Smart Card"

- Property-Theft Ongoing in Yarmouk Camp
- Transportation Crisis Remerges in Husaniya Camp
- UAE Pushes for End of UNRWA Mandate
- Palestinian Refugee Maher Mahmoud Forcibly Disappeared in Syria for 7th Year

+442084530978

/Actgroup.palsyria

reports@actionpal.org.uk

www.actionpal.org.uk



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Latest Developments

A number of Palestinian refugees said their children aged below 15 have been barred from smart cards used by the Syrian government to ration bread and a wider range of subsidized goods, namely fuel, rice, tea, and sugar.

Several refugee families said they have not received sufficient quantities of bread and food items.

After ten 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 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 Palestine refugees in Syria (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.



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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.

Meanwhile, reports of burglary continue to emerge in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, where hundreds of Palestinian refugees had been taking shelter.

Members of pro-government groups have reportedly stolen furniture from abandoned buildings in and around Yarmouk neighborhoods.

Palestinian families displaced from the area continue to call on the concerned authorities to allow them a safe return to their homes and to press ahead with reconstruction projects.

Over recent years, pro-government militias have been raking through evacuated homes in Damascus and holding sway over furniture, copper, iron, and kitchenware belonging to displaced families.

The Syrian government forces regained control over Yarmouk Camp and southern Damascus towns following a 33-day military operation launched in April 2018. Dozens of civilians were killed and dozens more injured in the offensive. Over 60% of buildings have gone either totally or partially destroyed in the warfare.

UN data indicates that before the eruption of the conflict in 2011, Yarmouk was home to approximately 160,000 Palestine refugees, making it the largest Palestine refugee community in Syria.



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Located eight kilometers from Damascus, it is one of three unofficial camps in Syria.

In December 2012, fierce clashes erupted in Yarmouk, causing numerous civilian casualties, severe damage to property and the displacement of thousands of Palestine refugees and Syrians. The camp was under siege from July 2013, drastically restricting the entry of commercial and humanitarian goods.

In April 2015, armed opposition groups captured over 60 per cent of the camp, containing over 90 per cent of the remaining civilian population. This not only made UNRWA unable to carry out any distributions inside Yarmouk but also displaced most of the remaining 18,000 Palestine refugees and other civilians to the neighboring areas of Yalda, Babila and Beit Saham (YBB).

Almost all the remaining Palestine refugees left during the final government offensive for Yarmouk in April-May 2018, after which the government retook control of the camp.

UNRWA was able to return to the camp to conduct a needs assessment in October 2018. Of the 23 UNRWA premises in the camp and nearby Hajjar al Aswad, including 16 school buildings, all have been affected by the conflict.

Along similar lines, residents of AlHusiniya Camp, in Rif Dimashq, said buses transferring civilians to and back from the camp have suddenly disappeared from the area.



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Recently, Syrian security forces have cracked down on civilians passing through a recently-pitched military checkpoint near the main entrance to AlHusainiya Camp.

Buses and passengers have been subjected to intensive search and questioning at the checkpoint.

Over recent years, residents of AlHusainiya camp have denounced the absence of vital services in the area. The transportation crisis, price leap, absence of relief assistance and healthcare, power and water crises, and high rates of unemployment have made survival quite difficult for dozens of displaced Palestinian families.

Meanwhile, Israel and the United Arab Emirates have been working together to eliminate the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) without solving the issue of Palestinian refugees, French newspaper Le Monde has reported.

According to Le Monde, this process has been underway since Israel and the UAE announced normalisation between the two countries in August.

According to the report, Emirati officials are weighing up a plan to gradually eliminate UNRWA, without making it conditional on a resolution of the refugee issue. This is despite the UAE having been a major funder of UNRWA in 2018 and 2019, along with Qatar and Saudi Arabia, to offset US President Donald Trump's halting of funds to the agency, which had brought it to the verge of bankruptcy.



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The US, historically UNRWA's largest single donor, had cut its contributions from \$360m to \$60m in 2018 and then down further to zero for 2019.

At stake is the dignity and human security of millions of Palestine refugees, in need of emergency food assistance and other support in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Addressing the alleged plans by Israel and the UAE to eliminate UNRWA, Le Monde journalist Benjamin Barthe tweeted out part of the report, which read: "In doing so, Abu Dhabi would be rallying to a long-standing demand from Israel, which insists that the agency is obstructing peace by nurturing refugees in the dream of returning to the lands from which their parents were driven in 1948."

UNRWA was established 70 years ago to supply aid to Palestinian refugees and its mandate is renewed every three years. UNRWA says that the services it provides would otherwise not be available to Palestinians.

The agency was set up in the years after more than 700,000 Palestinians had been expelled or fled their lands during the 1948 war surrounding the creation of Israel. It provides schooling and medical services to millions of impoverished refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, as well as the Palestinian territories.

In another development, Palestinian refugee Maher Khaled Mahmoud, born on 31/04/1994 and raised in AlHajar AlAswad in



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Syria, has been forcibly disappeared in Syrian government prisons for the seventh year running.

Maher was kidnapped by pro-government forces at Ali AlWahsh Street checkpoint, south of Damascus, in March 2014. His condition and whereabouts remain unknown.

AGPS has documented the secret incarceration of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government lock-ups, among them women and children.