



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



**AGPS: Fatal Torture of Palestinian Refugees in Syrian Gov't Prisons**

**War Crimes**

- Palestinian Family Identifies Dead Son in Leaked Photos of Torture Victims in Syrian Jails
- Activists in Palestinian Refugee Camp in Syria Warn of Child Abductions
- Germany disburses EUR 20 Million to Support UNRWA COVID-19 Flash Appeal

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## Victims

A Palestinian family taking shelter in Syria's AlAyedeen camp in Hama has identified their missing relative—Mohamed Ibrahim Kasem— in a series of photos leaked by the so-called Caesar breakaway.

Kasem's family said in June 2018 the Syrian regime told the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees that 30 Palestinian residents of AlAyedeen camp in Hama died under torture in jail.

Horrific photos showing thousands of people who were tortured to death in Syrian government penitentiaries were leaked by a military police photographer, codenamed Caesar.

AGPS documented the secret incarceration of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government prisons, including 110 women and girls.

## Latest developments

A report released by AGPS on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture documented the death of over 620 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syrian government penitentiaries, among whom minors and elderly detainees.

AGPS believes the number is far higher due to the gag orders enforced by the Syrian regime on the detainees' fates and names, along with the reluctance of the casualty's families to reveal the names of their deceased or missing relatives for fear of retaliation.



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Most of the casualties' bodies have been withheld by the Syrian government forces, which is prohibited under international law except in cases where pillage and mistreatment are feared to occur.

The Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague Convention, and the Rome Statute consider the despoliation and mistreatment of dead bodies war crimes.

AGPS renews its calls to the Syrian regime to release and disclose the fate of 1,797 Palestinian detainees who have been forcibly disappeared in state-run penal complexes.

Many reports issued by AGPS, such as “Enforced Disappearance 1,” “Enforced Disappearance 2,” and the “Photos Massacre,” provided details about the Palestinian victims of torture and enforced disappearance during the bloody conflict.

According to the United Nations, torture seeks to annihilate the victim's personality and denies the inherent dignity of the human being. Despite the absolute prohibition of torture under international law, torture persists in all regions of the world. Its pervasive consequences often go beyond the isolated act on an individual; and can be transmitted through generations and lead to cycles of violence.

The United Nations has condemned torture from the outset as one of the vilest acts perpetrated by human beings on their fellow human beings.



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Torture is a crime under international law. According to all relevant instruments, it is absolutely prohibited and cannot be justified under any circumstances. This prohibition forms part of customary international law, which means that it is binding on every member of the international community, regardless of whether a State has ratified international treaties in which torture is expressly prohibited. The systematic or widespread practice of torture constitutes a crime against humanity.

On 12 December 1997, by resolution 52/149, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 26 June the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, with a view to the total eradication of torture and the effective functioning of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

26 June is an opportunity to call on all stakeholders including UN Member States, civil society and individuals everywhere to unite in support of the hundreds of thousands of people around the world who have been victims of torture and those who are still tortured today.

Meanwhile, activists in Khan Eshieh camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, have warned of increasing child abductions following reports about the abduction of a five-year-old girl in the area.

The activists further warned of human organs trafficking by child abduction gangs, calling on parents to keep an eye on their children.





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In another development, on 19 June, the Government of Germany disbursed a contribution of EUR 20 million to the updated COVID-19 Flash Appeal released by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

This contribution from Germany will help the Agency ensure that Palestine refugees are able to meet their basic needs, and mitigate a further deterioration in their humanitarian and socio-economic conditions, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable.

The disbursement of the contribution was announced at the extraordinary ministerial pledging conference “A Strong UNRWA in a Challenging World – Mobilizing Collective Action” on 23 June, a pivotal moment for UNRWA and its partners to mobilize support to meet the Agency’s resource requirements for 2020 and beyond.

To help UNRWA prevent the further spread of the virus, the Government of Germany has also provided a contribution of EUR 556 thousand through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), to support Palestine refugees in quarantine facilities and households under home quarantine across the West Bank.

As part of this project, vulnerable families will receive 2,500 food baskets and hygiene kits to ensure they have the means to isolate themselves at home. The packages include awareness raising material on personal mental health while staying in quarantine. The distribution started at the beginning of June.



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“The coronavirus knows no borders. It affects the people who are particularly vulnerable as they live in war zones, refugee camps or countries whose health systems are close to collapse because of the pandemic. We need to show solidarity here in order to relieve the suffering. Equally: only by working together will we permanently defeat the pandemic. Otherwise there will constantly be a danger of new waves of infection,” Federal Foreign Minister Heiko Maas underlined.

In light of the Agency’s current financial crisis, the Government of Germany has also increased its humanitarian assistance to UNRWA Emergency Appeals in the occupied Palestinian territory and Syria. Specifically, in 2020 Germany will contribute EUR 31 million towards emergency food assistance to the Gaza Strip as well as EUR 22 million for emergency cash assistance to Palestine refugees in Syria.

“UNRWA was able to largely contain an outspread of the virus because of the swiftness with which it adapted the way it works: from telemedicine to distance learning and other measures to prevent crowds but continue services,” said UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini. “This generous contribution will cover some of the most pressing needs of a population particularly harshly hit by the socio-economic impact of the pandemic. It is yet another sign of Germany’s strong commitment to the wellbeing and human rights of Palestine refugees.”



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The Government of Germany was the Agency's largest donor in 2019 contributing more than EUR 152 million towards UNRWA operations.

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA programme budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall.