



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



**A Weekly Update from the
UN Department of Public Information**

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Evidence of mustard gas used during attacks on civilians, UN Disarmament Chief tells the Security Council

Initial findings from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) fact finding mission in Syria found evidence of sulfur mustard in samples taken from an alleged attack on 16 September 2016, while analysis of samples collected in relation to an alleged April incident in Khan Sheikhoun had revealed exposure to sarin or a sarin-like substance, High representative for Disarmament Affairs Isumi Nakamitsu told the Security Council on 23 May. "This is an issue about which the United Nations cannot be neutral," she noted, outlining the findings of several recent OPCW reports. On a reported incident in Khan Sheikhoun on 4 April — the focus of another OPCW report (document S/2017/440) — she said that work remained to be done and a fact-finding team was planning a possible visit to the area, but as it was not under Government control, OPCW had requested UN's operational support.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12832.doc.htm>

Amid worsening medical situation, WHO mobilizes health response for Raqqa

As the health situation in Raqqa governorate in north-east Syria continues to deteriorate, with more than 400,000 people having increasingly limited access to medical services, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on 23 May that it is scaling up its response. Despite access challenges, the agency has airlifted four shipments of supplies sufficient for more than 360,000 medical treatments, including lifesaving medicines, treatments for chronic diseases and medical equipment, to Al-Qamishli in Al-Hassakeh governorate for distribution to camps hosting displaced populations, and Raqqa, once access is gained.

<http://www.emro.who.int/syr/syria-news/who-mobilizes-health-response-for-ar-raqqa-syria.html>

Tens of thousands of people displaced by fighting in Raqqa governorate

According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), nearly 39,000 civilians have been displaced as a result of military operations in Raqqa during the first two weeks of May. This brings to over 107,000 the number of displaced people since early April. The agency added that airstrikes and shelling has intensified across the Raqqa governorate, affecting civilians and

vital infrastructure. In response, UN agencies and partners continue to provide much needed humanitarian assistance to the IDPs in these and other areas.

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Raqqa%20Sit%20Rep%20No.%205.pdf>

Aid convoy delivers aid in hard to reach areas of Rural Damascus

A UN inter-agency convoy delivered on 22 May much needed humanitarian aid to more than 44,000 people in the hard-to-reach areas of Jirud, Nasriyeh and Atna in Rural Damascus. This was the first joint mission to deliver humanitarian assistance to Nasriyeh and Atna. The UN continues to call for safe, unimpeded and sustained access to all people in need across Syria, particularly the 4.5 million civilians trapped in hard-to-reach and besieged areas.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/db170523.doc.htm>

De-escalation zones are a promising step despite continued fighting - Special Envoy de Mistura

The sixth round of UN-mediated talks wrapped up in Geneva on 20 May. Briefing the Security Council by video-teleconference on 22 May about the political process, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura said that the memorandum on de-escalation zones — signed by Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey, in Astana, Kazakhstan — was “a promising step”, presaging a significant drop in reported violence, including aerial bombing. Tangible change was being reported on the ground, including the welcome resumption of market activity, he said. However, despite the memorandum and the nationwide ceasefire announced in December, hostilities between Government forces and armed opposition groups were still being reported, sometimes outside the current de-escalation zones. On the latest round of UN mediated political talks, Mr. de Mistura said that it had been kept short “so as to proceed in a focused manner”. While major gaps remained between the parties, the Envoy noted that there had been a greater understanding to negotiate a transitional political agreement based on Syria’s sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and independence, on the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012, and on Security Council resolution 2254 (2015).

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12829.doc.htm>

<http://webtv.un.org/watch/staffan-de-mistura-special-envoy-on-the-situation-in-the-middle-east-syria-security-council-7944th-meeting/5443567939001>

WFP kicks off fundraising campaigns ahead of Ramadan

To mark the Holy Month of Ramadan this year, the World Food Programme launched two simultaneous fundraising campaigns through its smartphone application “ShareTheMeal”. One of the campaigns aims to support Syrian refugee children and Lebanese children in Lebanon. With the app, users can share vital food and nutrition with hungry communities around the world by simply tapping on their smartphone and donating US\$0.50 or more. This year for the first time, ShareTheMeal for Ramadan has a function giving users the power

to choose where to send their donation. The first two countries to be included are Yemen and Lebanon.

<http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/help-prevent-famine-wfps-sharethemeal-app-during-ramadan>

UN Refugee agency and Google partner to dispel fallacies about Syrian refugees

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), in partnership with Google, launched on 22 May a website aiming to dispel misconceptions about the Syrian refugee crisis.

“Searching for Syria” combines UNHCR data and Google Search trends, to provide answers to the five most common questions that people around the world are asking about the crisis. The answers are delivered through multimedia content, such as refugee profiles, short editorials and videos.

<https://searchingforsyria.org/>

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/db170522.doc.htm>

UN alarmed by deadly attack near Hama

The UN expressed strong alarm about reports of an attack on the Aqareb al-Safyieh village, east of Hama on 18 May, reportedly resulting in the death of dozens of civilians, the majority of whom are women and children. A large number of people were also reportedly injured due to shelling. In addition to the people killed and injured, several people are reportedly missing and believed to have been kidnapped.

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/db170518.doc.htm>

Clean energy refugee camp set up in Jordan

A solar plant was set up the Asraq refugee camp in Jordan, which will allow more than 20,000 Syrian refugees to have solar energy. The UN Refugee agency (UNHCR) switched on the new two-megawatt solar photovoltaic plant on 17 May. The Azraq camp is the first refugee camp in the world to be powered by renewable energy. The grid is due to be expanded to all 36,000 refugees currently residing in the camp by early next year. The plant was built at a cost of US\$9.6 million, funded entirely by the IKEA Foundation’s “Brighter Lives for Refugees” campaign. Electrification will transform the lives of Syrian refugees living in the harsh environment of the camp, located in Jordan’s barren northern desert. “The construction of the solar plant is a remarkable example of cooperation between a host government, a private organization, and UNHCR,” said UNHCR’s Representative for Jordan, Stefano Severo.

<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2017/5/591bfdbb4/jordans-azraq-becomes-worlds-first-clean-energy-refugee-camp.html>

UN Radio in Arabic

الأمم المتحدة تبدي القلق بشأن ما أفيد عن الهجوم على قرية بريف حماة

United Nations expresses concern about the reported attack on a village in rural Hama

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/242470/#.WSXGP-srKUK>

2017/05/18

المحادثات السورية تنتهي في موعدها المقرر في جنيف على أن تستأنف في حزيران / يونيو المقبل

Syrian talks end on schedule in Geneva and will resume in June

2017/05/19

دي مستورا أمام مجلس الأمن: لا نسعى لصياغة دستور سوري جديد في جنيف أو أستانة أو أي مكان آخر

Staffan de Mistura to the Security Council: We are not seeking to draft a new Syrian constitution in Geneva, Astana or anywhere else

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/242719/#.WSXGQusrKUK>

2017/05/22

مسؤولية دولية تؤكد ضرورة عدم تسييس استخدام الأسلحة الكيميائية

UN official stresses the importance of not politicizing the issue of the use of chemical weapons

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/242862/#.WSXGQ-srKUK>

2017/05/23

Facebook

United Nations shared UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency's video- May 22 at 10:18am ·

What was Syria like before the war?

What is happening in Syria?

Who is a refugee?

Where are Syrian refugees going?

How can I help Syrian refugees?... See More

UNHCR May 22 at 3:00am ·

The world is looking for answers.

Today we launch #SearchingforSyria with Google.

Explore and share: www.searchingforsyria.org

UN Geneva May 20 at 4:34am ·

"Less rhetoric, a more business-like atmosphere and incremental progress": the latest round of the intra-Syrian talks concluded yesterday as planned at UN Geneva.

Watch United Nations Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura brief the press in Geneva at the conclusion of the round.

#SyriaTalks

Twitter

OCHA Syria @OCHA_Syria- 24 May

Beyond bombs, bullets and explosions, children are dying in silence from diseases #Syria and the region said @UNICEF <http://ow.ly/pXju30c0nFL>

UN News Centre ✓@UN_News_Centre- 22 May

#Syria: Despite recent 'promising' steps on the diplomatic front, @UN envoy says hostilities continue on the ground <http://bit.ly/2qPxnBO>

OCHA Syria @OCHA_Syria – 22 May
Inter-agency @UN @ICRC @SYRedCrescent convoy delivered aid for 44,250 people in hard to reach Jirud/ Nasriyeh/ Atna in rural Damascus #Syria

OCHA Syria@OCHA_Syria – 21 May
#Syria 2017: @UN & partners' inter-agency operations delivered aid to 638k people in besieged & hard-to-reach areas <http://ow.ly/C68R30bUIYQ>

OCHA Syria@OCHA_Syria – 19 May
Majority of deaths & injuries in Aqareb al-Safyieh #Hama #Syria are women & children—several are reportedly missing <http://ow.ly/V8as30bRikO>

UN Geneva ✓@UNGeneva- 19 May
"We are not planning to draft a new constitution for #Syria. That is a task for Syrians themselves" - @UN Envoy de Mistura at a presser

Social media campaigns

#My Voice-My School is an UNRWA project launched in 2015 and implemented by Digital Explorer to connect schools in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon with schools in Europe and USA through Skype exchanges. Through live video conversations and customized teaching materials, students and teachers explore how education can help them meet their future aspirations. www.unrwa.org/myvoicemyschool

@ShareTheMeal: In April 2016, the World Food Programme launched its phone application to support fundraising efforts for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon. ShareTheMeal's fundraising aims to support 1,400 refugee children. Through the app, smartphone users can join thousands of other people in making donations and support a selected community and monitor progress. Since the launch of the campaign, nearly 7.5 million meals have been shared.
www.sharethemeal.org

#Unite4Heritage is a global movement run by UNESCO that aims to celebrate and safeguard cultural heritage and diversity around the world. Launched in response to the unprecedented attacks on world heritage sites, the campaign calls on everyone to stand up against extremism and radicalization by celebrating the places, objects and cultural traditions that make the world such a rich and vibrant place.
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1254/>

#NoLostGeneration: The initiative was launched by UNICEF and partners in 2013 to focus attention on the plight of children affected by the Syrian crisis. By articulating real concerns about the possible 'loss' of a generation of children to the effects of violence and displacement, the initiative put education and child protection at the centre of the response inside Syria and across the refugee hosting countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt).
<http://nolostgeneration.org/about>

Relevant links to UN Secretariat, Agencies, Funds and Programmes on Syria

DPI Focus Page on Syria:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=146&Body=Syria&Body1=>

UN System agencies :

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/media/index.html>

WFP: <http://www.wfp.org/countries/syria>

OCHA: <http://unocha.org/syria>, twitter.com/ocha_syria, facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria

WHO: <http://www.who.int/countries/syr/en/>

UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4f86c2426.html>

UNFPA: <https://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/crisis-syria>

OHCHR: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/NewsSearch.aspx?CID=SY>

UNRWA: <http://www.unrwa.org/>

UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/>

UNESCO Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage Project:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/areas-of-action/culture/syria/emergency-safeguarding-of-the-syrian-heritage/>

UNESCO Observatory of Syrian Cultural Heritage <https://en.unesco.org/syrian-observatory/>

UNESCO Bridging Learning Gaps for Youth: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/bridging-learning-gaps/>