



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: Academic Year to Kick-Start on Time for Palestine Refugees"

- 150 Displaced Palestinian Families from Syria in Lebanon Seek to Return to Syria
- Theft-Gang Caught in Yarmouk Camp
- Palestinian Refugee from Syria in Germany Appeals for Non-Refoulement

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Latest Developments

At an extraordinary session of the UNRWA Advisory Commission, held on August 16 in Amman, the Commissioner-General Mr. Pierre Krähenbühl announced that the school-year for 526,000 Palestine refugee girls and boys will open on time in the West Bank, Occupied Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

Mr. Krähenbühl emphasized that students and teachers will be returning to the 711 schools on time “because it is crucial to protect the fundamental right to education for Palestine refugee girls and boys and the community’s unwavering attachment to learning and the development of skills”. He added that schools will open taking into account the fact that host countries have repeatedly drawn attention to the serious risks to regional stability if this were not the case.



The Commissioner-General also underlined the ongoing severe risks facing the Agency: “While announcing today the opening of the school year, I wish to be clear that UNRWA is by no stretch of the imagination out of the woods.”



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“We currently only have funding to run the Agency’s services until the end of September. We need a further \$217 M to ensure that our schools not only open but can be run until the end of the year. This requires the resolute continuation of the collective mobilization that has been underway since January,” he added.

The Commissioner-General called on all member states of the United Nations who have pledged but not yet transferred their contribution to do so as soon as possible, and other countries who are still considering providing additional money to join initiatives to preserve UNRWA’s vital services to a very anxious Palestine Refugee community.

Sometime earlier, UNRWA had expressed concern that it may not be able to start the school year on time due to its unprecedented financial crisis, which was exacerbated this year and reached a critical level after the United States, the largest donor to UNRWA decided to slash most of its aid to the refugee agency, a step the Palestinians fear is intended to dismantle the Agency as a prelude to ending the Palestinian refugee issue at pressure from Israel.

Meanwhile, secretary of the Palestinian Popular Committees in Lebanon Abu Iyad AlShaalan said 150 families (comprising 370 members), out of 400 families who fled war-torn Syria to Lebanon, have applied to return to Syria.

AlShaalan said that efforts have been underway to facilitate the families’ return to Syria before Eid AlAdhha (the Feast of Sacrifice) and that the Palestine Ambassador in Lebanon has been in touch with Palestine’s Ambassador in Syria to that end.



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AlShaalan said the concerned families have been mostly displaced from such Syria-based refugee camps as AlSabina, AlHusainiya, and AlLatakia, where the security situation is relatively calm.

He added that families displaced from Yarmouk cannot return to the camp due to the massive destruction wrought on civilian homes and delays in the reconstruction process.



Nearly 31,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria seeking shelter in Lebanon have been subjected to a precarious legal status as the Lebanese authorities continue to rebuff their appeals for visa renewal under the pretext that no official instructions have been given to that end.

In the meantime, AGPS has learned that pro-government forces arrested a six-member gang that burglarized civilian homes in Yarmouk Camp.

The six gangsters, residents of Damascus, burned down civilian homes in the camp and smashed property.

Preliminary investigations attributed the assaults to underway attempts to prevent the residents from returning to their homes and force them to put their homes up for sale at the lowest prices.



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Over recent weeks, reports of theft have emerged in Yarmouk after Syrian government forces grabbed hold of the camp and reportedly burglarized civilian homes. Pro-government troops stole electric kit, furniture, and brass wares, among other equipment.

In another development, the German authorities announced their intent to deport a Palestinian refugee to Syria after he had received a prison sentence of one year and a half over violations of law.

The refugee said he had entered Germany some three years ago, fleeing the deadly warfare in Syria. He had served a prison term of one year and a half before he joined a job center, where he received promises to grant him access to the local labor market in one month.

“However, just a few days later, I received a letter ordering me to leave Germany in 30 days and return to Syria within the allotted time span,” he added.



The refugee said the migration office turned down his appeals to backtrack on the refoulement decision.

In appeals emailed to AGPS, the refugee called on the concerned authorities to urge the German government to rescind the



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deportation order or work on facilitating his access to another destination.

Non-refoulement is a fundamental principle of international law that forbids a country receiving asylum seekers from returning them to a country in which they would be in likely danger of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.