



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



"5,000 Palestinian Refugees Stranded South of Damascus"

- Dozens of Volunteers Take Part in Debris Clearance in Yarmouk Camp
- Bread Crisis Rocks Husainiya Refugee Camp
- Ministerial Meeting on UNRWA Funding Raises \$122 Million

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Latest Developments

More than 5,000 Palestinian refugees have been trapped in southern Damascus due to the tough cordon imposed by the Syrian government forces on Babila, Yalda, Beit Sahem, and Sidi Miqdad towns.

Speaking with AGPS, a Palestinian refugee said: “Several years have passed by since I last met my family sheltered in Qudsaya due to the blockade imposed on Yarmouk and movement restrictions.”

The Syrian authorities ruled that in order for Palestinian refugees sheltered in the area to gain free access and of and into Damascus a formal consent should be issued to that very end.



Activists in southern Damascus said entry permissions can only be granted to the refugees if their situation is worked out. Every concerned person should carry a local residence permit, a residential lease, and a list comprising the names of all family members. A written application should be submitted to the concerned authorities.



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Shortly after, a security check is conducted by the government forces to verify the provided data. The applicant receives a written reply by the head of the Palestine Branch so as to be allowed to enter Damascus through a checkpoint in Babila.

The activists added that such a prerequisite has been enforced prior to the government's recapture of southern Damascus and maintained even following the retreat of the opposition outfits.

At the same time, Palestinians taking refuge south of Damascus have been grappling with dire conditions due to the price leap, steep rental fees, crackdowns carried out by pro-government militias, and forced military conscription.

Meanwhile, over 60 Yarmouk Camp residents have taken part in projects to remove debris from the area.

Volunteers from the Palestinian Red Crescent have also joined debris clearance projects in the camp and carried out visits to families trapped in the area.





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Dozens of Palestinian activists and relief officers have been pronounced dead in Yarmouk Camp as a result of heavy shelling, extrajudicial execution, or fatal torture in jail.

Most of Palestinian families taking shelter south of Damascus fled Yarmouk Camp as a result of the tough blockade imposed by the government troops and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command and also after ISIS grabbed hold of the camp on April 1, 2015. Scores of other stranded families fled the camp following the 33-day military operation launched by the government forces on April 19.

In the meantime, residents of AlHusainiya Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, have sounded distress signals over the acute dearth in bread.

Hundreds of civilians continue to line up on a quasi-daily basis in long queues and under scorching heat outside of local ovens or to walk for long distances in the hunt for bread loafs to feed their starved children.





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The residents called for the need to increase bread quantities to local bakeries, saying crooked bakers have been carrying bread in mini-buses and selling it elsewhere at high prices.

A refugee railed against the poor selling mechanisms and mistreatment the residents have been subjected to by workers in the reserve bakery.

Offensives launched on the camp using MIG warplanes led to the death of dozens of civilians in AlHusainiya Camp and a massive material destruction. Bloody shootouts between the opposition outfits and the Syrian government forces culminated in the latter's takeover of the camp on October 9, 2013.

In another development, On 27 September, the Foreign Ministers of Jordan, Sweden, Turkey, Japan and Germany, as well as the High Representative and Vice-President of the European Union, hosted a Ministerial Meeting in New York, with the aim of mobilizing financial and political support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

The Ministerial Meeting raised a remarkable US\$122 million, with Kuwait, the European Union, Germany, Norway, France, Belgium and Ireland announcing additional funding commitments. This meeting represented a crucial step in the efforts to overcome the Agency's remaining shortfall of US\$ 186 million and sustain UNRWA operations.

The event was attended by Ministers and senior officials from a total of 34 Member States and organizations, including the League of Arab States, the Organization for Islamic Cooperation and the



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Islamic Development Bank. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President of the General Assembly, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and two Palestine Refugee students also participated in the event.

The Commissioner-General, Pierre Krähenbühl, thanked Member States for their extraordinary support: “Today, we witnessed a powerful moment of commitment and solidarity with Palestine refugees. I am very grateful to the co-Chairs for convening this important meeting and demonstrating the strength of collective action”.

During the meeting, UN Member States reaffirmed the fundamental rights of Palestine refugees under international law and obligations of the international community. Participants expressed strong political support for UNRWA, its mandate and staff, and its critical services to Palestine refugees.

UNRWA was confronted with a dramatic financial crisis when in January 2018 its largest donor the US announced a major reduction in contributions and the Agency’s shortfall reached an unprecedented US\$446 million. The mobilization since then, including at this Ministerial meeting in New York, has brought the deficit down to US\$64 million.