



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



"Palestinian Refugee from Syria Detained at Istanbul Airport"

- Refugees Protest Crackdowns on Greek Island
- Palestinian Families in Syria's Handarat Camp Call for Urgent Action by UNRWA
- Delegation of Arab Students Union Shows Up in Handarat Refugee Camp
- UNRWA Says 2019 Financial Deficit Ongoing

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Latest Developments

Palestinian refugee from Syria Mohamed Mahmoud Kablawi, born in 2000, was arrested by the Turkish authorities on his way out of Istanbul New Airport.

Reporting from Turkey, an AGPS correspondent said Kablawi was taken to a pre-removal detention centre, pending his deportation to northern Syria.

The refugees' family have appealed to the international and Palestinian human rights and humanitarian institution to take urgent action in order to pressurize the Turkish authorities to backtrack on the refoulement threat, saying once he is pushed back to Syria he risks to have his academic career halted.

Recently, Turkish police stepped up crackdowns targeting irregular migrants, including hundreds of Palestinians from Syria who fled to the country owing to the bloody shootouts rocking the Syrian territories.





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Unofficial statistics indicate that 8,000 Palestinians from Syria have sought shelter in Turkey, where they have been facing dire socio-economic conditions and denied access to the local labor market.

Turkish embassies continue to prevent Palestinian refugees from Syria from obtaining visas. As a result, hundreds of Palestinians have embarked on life-threatening journeys via illegal immigration roads to reach Turkey, fleeing war-tattered Syria, among other war-stricken zones.

In the meantime, Palestinian and Syrian migrants who have sought shelter in Moria refugee camp, pitched on the Greek island of Mytilene, took to the streets on Sunday, speaking up against the squalid humanitarian condition they have been facing.

Greek police unleashed heavy spates of teargas grenades to disband the protesters, several among whom choked on teargas. At the same time, wildfires broke out at a number of mobile caravans set up in the camp, resulting in heavy material damage.





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Over recent months, Moria, one of the biggest refugee camps in Europe, has been running at three times its capacity, reportedly with over 9,000 refugees.

Thousands of women and girls are trapped on Greek islands, often in horrendous conditions, due to a “containment” policy for asylum seekers, to facilitate speedy processing and return to Turkey under the EU-Turkey deal.

Last month, UNICEF warned that the number of unaccompanied migrant minors staying in overcrowded reception centers on the Greek islands exceeds 1,100, the highest level since the peak of the refugee crisis in early 2016, calling on European countries to do more to protect vulnerable children.

“We continue to appeal to Greek authorities to transfer children to adequate accommodation on the mainland, but Greece cannot support refugee and migrant children alone,” UNICEF’s regional director for Europe and Central Asia Afshan Khan said from the agency’s headquarters in Geneva.

“It is vital that European governments increase pledges to relocate unaccompanied and separated refugee and migrant children, and fast-track family reunifications for those who already have relatives in Europe,” she added.

The refugees’ cries for help are a stark reminder that the situation in reception centers in Greece is at a breaking-point.

Built to house 3,000 people, the Moria facility is hosting more than 8,700, including some 3,000 children, according to UNICEF. There are 520 unaccompanied children at a special section of the



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camp which was made to hold 160. Overall, Greece is hosting more than 32,000 child migrants of whom 4,100 are unaccompanied.

Palestinian refugees from Syria continue to risk their lives onboard the “death boats” to Greece, rummaging around for a momentary respite from the daily scenes of bloodshed and destruction.

AGPS has kept record of the death of dozens of refugees onboard Greece-bound ships. Several others have been arrested by Turkish coast guards.

Activists estimate that around 4,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria are taking shelter on Greece islands.

In another development, UNRWA’s Media Consultant in Gaza Adnan Abu Hasana said the Agency still faces a financial deficit of US\$ 89 million in its annual budget for 2019, down from 120 million in previous months.

According to Abu Hasana, UNRWA amassed generous donations at the UNRWA donor-pledging conference held in New York on Thursday, September 26, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. But the deficit is still there, he said.





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However, on Saturday, head of the Refugee Affairs Department at the Palestine Liberation Organization, Ahmad Abu Holi, said the donor-pledging conference held in New York to rally support for UNRWA will help the UN Agency overcome its funding crunch and continue to provide services for Palestinian refugees in its five fields of operations.

Last year, UNRWA said it was facing the greatest financial predicament in its history following the abrupt end to funding by the United States, resulting in a shortfall that threatened general education for 525,000 students, essential primary health care for 3 million patients and food assistance for 1.7 million refugees. In response, UNRWA launched a global campaign, #DignityIsPriceless, to raise donations for the agency.

Meanwhile, residents of Handarat Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Aleppo, called on UNRWA to include their names on lists of most-vulnerable families owing to their abject living conditions.

Palestinian refugees in Handarat Camp have been grappling with dire conditions due to the lack of humanitarian assistance and life-saving services. Most of the families have been taking shelter in buildings rented at extremely steep costs in the poverty-stricken area.

The families continue to lash out at UNRWA and the local authorities in the camp for turning their back on their ongoing demands for reconstruction of destroyed homes and facilities. Severe water and power crises also continue to rock the area.



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Along the same line, representatives of the Arab Students Union from Morocco, Chad, Yemen and Sudan paid a field visit to Handarat refugee camp on September 30, 2019, in an attempt to scrutinize the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the area.

Heavy shelling on Handarat and bloody shootouts between the government forces and the opposition outfits led to the destruction of over 90% of its buildings. The confrontations culminated in the government's takeover of the camp along with other areas in Aleppo and the displacement of the vast majority of its civilian population.