



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيين 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 Refugees in Syria Suffer Harsh Working Conditions"

- Association of Displaced Palestinians Launched in Northern Syria
- Dutch Gov't Strips Nationality from 6 Who Returned to Syria
- Palestinian Refugee Mahmoud Kasem Abdul Halim Forcibly Disappeared in Syria for 10th Year
- Relief Items Distributed to Displaced Palestinian Families in Syria

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Latest Developments

More than ten years of bloody shootouts have severely affected the Syrian workforce and migrant workers in the war-torn country.

Palestinian refugees have been worst affected by the conflict; The majority have lost their livelihoods and in the best of cases those who have had the chance to access the labor market continue to face inhumane working conditions.

The situation has been made worse by the lockdown measures imposed as part of the anti-coronavirus battle along with the sanctions implemented by the US as part of the so-called “Caesar Act” targeting anyone doing business with the Assad regime, including in opposition-held zones. The implementation of the sanctions has led to a further deterioration of the exchange rate of the Syrian pound, resulting in a worse economic situation for vulnerable families whose sole sources of income have been already affected by the bloody warfare.

The majority of Palestinian refugees in Syria work in industrial plants or as day labourers. Women often work as housemaids in Damascus to supplement family income. However, during the conflict, such opportunities have dwindled and the unemployment rate is still very high with very limited financial resources to help Palestine refugees restore their livelihoods. Displacement, low wage, protection and security risks are among the main concerns shared by Palestinian laborers and Syrians alike.



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In another development, Palestinian activists have announced the launch of the Association of Displaced Palestinians in Northern Syria.

In a statement emailed to AGPS, the association said it is an independent body made up of activists and humanitarian actors operating in Syria.

The newly-formed group seeks to speak up for Palestinian refugees sheltered in displacement camps set up in northern Syria, where they have been struggling with squalid humanitarian conditions.

Meanwhile, the Dutch government stripped six Dutch-Moroccan dual citizens of their Netherlands nationality on allegations that they traveled to Syria to join Islamic extremist group ISIS or other terrorist groups.

The Council of State issued a ruling on Friday saying that the former state secretary for justice and security had sufficient reason to revoke their Dutch nationality several years ago.

The four men and two women lost their Dutch passports in 2017 and 2018. Three of them were convicted in absentia for joining a terrorist group. The other three were not convicted, but lost their nationality on the basis of official intelligence reports from civilian security service AIVD.

State Secretary Mark Harbers was able to demonstrate their participation in these groups after the law was amended on March 11, 2017, which gave permission to the Ministry of Justice and



Security to take the strict action. The law does not allow the government to revoke Dutch citizenship if it leaves a person stateless. Since the six people in question are also Moroccan nationals, deprivation of nationality was performed legally, the Council of State ruled.

Over the last four years, at least seven people who went to Syria and later lost their passports, eventually had their citizenship restored. This was because the organizations they had joined were not on the official list of terrorist organizations when their passports were revoked, broadcaster NOS reported.

An evaluation from December shows that authorities started 21 citizenship withdrawal procedures. Eleven people have lost their Dutch nationality in total.

The AIVD also estimates that about 300 Dutch people traveled to Syria to join terrorist groups like ISIS, a third of whom were women.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Mahmoud Kasem Abdul Halim has been secretly held in Syrian government prisons for the tenth consecutive year.

Mahmoud was arrested by Syrian security forces in Jaramana camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, in 2011. His condition and whereabouts have been shrouded in mystery.

Lists of hundreds of forcibly disappeared Palestinian refugees and victims in Syria are available on AGPS website, both in English and



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Arabic. AGPS supplies a database of their names and possible times and places of arrest.

AGPS has documented the secret detention of over 1,790 Palestinian refugees, including women and minors, in Syrian government lock-ups.

Humanitarian Action

The Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad in cooperation with Muhjat AlQuds Association distributed on May 2 relief items to 600 families who were displaced from Yarmouk Camp to the adjacent Yalda town.

Over 5,000 Palestinian refugees taking shelter south of Damascus have been grappling with dire conditions due to the price leap, steep rental fees, and forced military conscription with pro-government forces.