



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية  
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

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## التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



**"Elderly Palestinian Woman Stranded at Istanbul International Airport for over 20 Days"**

- UNRWA Delivers Cash Aid to Palestinians from Syria in Jordan
- Palestinians in Hama Camp Denounce Poor-Quality Bread
- Yarmouk Camp Students to Return to Schools
- Palestinian Refugee Hafedh Haswa Forcibly Disappeared in Syrian Prison for 7<sup>th</sup> Year

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## Latest Developments

Elderly Palestinian woman Samia Tahan, who has been stranded at Istanbul International Airport for 22 days running, has appealed to the Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the international humanitarian institutions to lend her a hand.

In appeals sent to AGPS, the refugee said she traveled from Beirut to Belarus using her Palestinian-Syrian travel document. However, she was denied access into Belarus and deported to Istanbul Airport.

Samia is now trapped at the airport, sleeping for over 20 days in the waiting hall. She suffers from diabetes and hypertension. Airport authorities transferred her to the hospital, where she had been held for five days due to her deteriorating health condition.

Unofficial statistics indicate that 10,000 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.

Hundreds of PRS have been unable to provide for their children and families in Turkey. A large number of companies, factories,



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and shops shut their doors for fear of further COVID-19 contaminations. Several Palestinian families have lost their sole sources of income as a result.

In another development, UNRWA transferred cash aid to Palestinian refugees from Syria in Jordan.

Every registered family member received a sum of 84.960 Jordanian dinars as part of cash grants allocated for the fourth quarter of 2020.

In its Syria Regional Crisis Emergency Appeal 2020, UNRWA said nearly 100% of Palestine refugee families from Syria (PRS) in Jordan are in critical need of sustained humanitarian assistance.

UNRWA said PRS are highly vulnerable and 31% of recorded PRS are members of female-headed households, which increases their vulnerability.

Due to new arrivals and natural population growth, the number of PRS recorded with the UNRWA in Jordan has reached 17,343 at the end of November 2019, including 349 refugees sheltered in King Abdullah Garden.

PRS who have entered from Syria and remain in Jordan irregularly are living under continuous risk of arrest, detention and potential for forced return to Syria. Their lack of legal status and corresponding protection risks in Jordan are a source of major concern to UNRWA.



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After ten years of conflict, Palestinian refugees in and from Syria continue to face significant humanitarian and protection needs. In the absence of a durable political settlement, intense hostilities and violence resulting in deaths and injuries, internal displacement, loss of livelihoods, decreases in the provision of public services, and extensive damage to civilian infrastructure have disrupted the lives of civilians and severely undermined coping mechanisms.

According to the Agency's database, of the estimated 438,000 Palestine refugees remaining inside Syria, over 95 per cent (418,000) are in critical need of sustained humanitarian assistance. Some 254,000 Palestine refugees have been displaced at least once since the beginning of the conflict and an estimated 13,500 are trapped in hard-to reach or inaccessible locations.

Meanwhile, residents of AlAyedeen Camp, in Hama, continue to speak out against the insufficient quantities and poor-quality of bread sold in the area.

They further lashed out at the poor and unfair distribution mechanisms implemented by government-run distributors.

The residents added that their appeals to the supply authorities have gone unheeded.

UNRWA said that AlAyedeen camp in Hama city has attracted displaced Palestine refugees from Syria, boosting the population. The camp is currently home to between 300 and 400 displaced Palestine refugee families, and the camp population is estimated to be around 9,000 Palestine refugees.



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Hama camp lies within the town of Hama, 210 km north of Damascus. The camp was established in 1950 on an area of 0.06 square kilometers overlooking the Orontes River. Most of the refugees had fled from the villages surrounding Haifa and Acre in northern Palestine.

Before the conflict in Syria, there were 8,000 Palestine refugees living in Hama camp. It is estimated that 1,000 of the original population have left the country.

Most employed refugees are wage laborers or shopkeepers, but many rely on UNRWA assistance to survive.

In 2018, UNRWA rehabilitated one of its two schools, both built in the 1950s, due to aging.

Environmental health in the camp is a serious problem and the mechanization of solid waste disposal is one of the most pressing needs. The sewerage system is antiquated and does not meet the requirements of a growing camp population.

Like other areas in Syria, displacement, unemployment, inflation, protection and security risks are among the main concerns shared by Palestine refugees and Syrians alike.

Along similar lines, UNRWA and the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees (GAPAR) said classes will be resumed for students enrolled at schools located outside Yarmouk Camp.

Palestinian refugee schoolchildren and students continue to struggle with the devastating impact of the ten-year warfare.



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Available data by UNRWA indicates that 32 UNRWA facilities have been reduced to rubble in Yarmouk Camp alone, including 16 schools, in the Syrian conflict.

Several other UNRWA facilities were destroyed in the Syrian warfare and others have gone out of operation, including two clinics, a vocational training center, a youth development center, and 28 schools, out of 112 UNRWA schools in Syria.

Upon more than one occasion, the UN has raised alarm bells over the striking upsurge in the rate of school dropouts among the Palestinians of Syria, several among whom have left schools to help feeding their impoverished families in unemployment-stricken refugee camps.

Dozens of Palestinian students, schoolchildren, and teaching staff have been killed or forcibly disappeared in war-ravaged Syria.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Hafed Faisal Huswa has been secretly locked up in Syria's state-run prisons for the seventh consecutive year.

The refugee was arrested by Syrian security forces on July 11, 2013, at a checkpoint near the main entrance to Yarmouk Camp.

AGPS continues to urge the Syrian government to disclose the fate of scores of Palestinians held in its lock-ups, release the bodies of those tortured to death, to seriously work on halting harsh torture tactics, launch fact-finding probes into crimes of torture, and to bring those involved in such crimes before courts.



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As the novel coronavirus COVID-19 continues to grip the Middle East and the world, AGPS has called on the Syrian government to free all Palestinians and Syrians held behind prison bars.

AGPS fears the coronavirus could spread quickly in jails and in overcrowded displacement camps, where neither hygiene kit nor medical equipment are accessible.

AGPS calls on the Syrian government to immediately release Palestinian detainees and provide those who tested positive for COVID-19 with the necessary medical treatment.

The Syrian authorities and all concerned parties should also take precautionary measures and enhance captivity conditions to rein in a tragic propagation of the virus in jail.