



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



"Palestinian Refugees Denounce Property-Theft in Syria Displacement Camp"

- Over 4,000 Entry Permits Granted to Yarmouk Residents in 2 Months
- Lighting Initiative Launched in Khan Eshieh Camp
- UNRWA: Funds Available only until next March

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Latest Developments

Property-theft attempts have increasingly been reported in Khan Dannun camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq.

Recently, a number of thieves burglarized commercial shops in the camp. The stolen property is estimated at 2 million Syrian pounds. A motorbike parked outside a shop was also taken away.

The residents have called on the Syrian authorities and popular committees to deploy security forces in the area in order to guard civilian property and help curtail property-theft assaults in the camp.

Living conditions in Khan Dannun have sharply deteriorated due to the lack of financial resources and high unemployment rates wrought by the unbridled warfare.

According to UN data, Khan Dannun camp was built several centuries ago to give overnight accommodation to trading caravans on the ancient route between Jerusalem and Constantinople (modern day Istanbul). In 1948, the ruins of the city provided shelter for refugees from villages in northern Palestine.

The camp, which lies 23 km south of Damascus, was officially established in 1950-1951 on an area of 0.03 square kilometers. The camp was home to 10,000 Palestine refugees by 2011, almost all of whom were living in irregular housing, constructed without any formal approval from the municipality.



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Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was already one of the poorest camps in Syria. The conflict exerted additional pressures. The camp was surrounded by armed opposition groups and many refugee families displaced from other areas of Damascus took refuge in the camp, tripling the number of residents to some 30,000 during the crisis. Currently, the camp is home to 12,650 Palestine refugees. The increase of the camp population has had a negative impact on the camp's infrastructure.

In another development, Syrian authorities have reportedly granted 4,200 permits to families wishing to return to Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, and retrieve their property over the past couple of months. An average of 67 entry permits have been issued daily.

At the same time, 1,800 permits have been issued for house reconstruction in the camp.

Lawyer Nour AlDeen Salman continues to call on the residents to keep on applying for entry and reconstruction permits.

Demands are submitted at a security checkpoint set up on Street 30. Three security officers along with engineer Rola Maw'ed from Yarmouk Municipality accompany the applicant to the house he/she wishes to return to assess its current condition.

Meanwhile, volunteers from Khan Eshieh Camp have embarked on a campaign to improve street lighting in the camp.



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The drive will see solar energy panels installed across residential thoroughfares.

Activists have called on expatriates and donors to help raise funds in favor of the project.

The power crisis has made the humanitarian situation inside the camp dire, as a cold winter season has overwhelmed the war-torn country and at a time when prices of fuel and wood have skyrocketed.

Civilians continue to raise concerns over the increasing abductions, home-burglary attempts, and sexual harassment reported in the area, particularly overnight due to chronic power blackouts.

Palestinian families taking refuge in Khan Eshieh camp have been struggling with squalid humanitarian conditions inflicted by the ten-year warfare.

According to UN data, Khan Eshieh camp lies beside the ancient ruins of Khan Eshieh, 27km south-west of Damascus. The Khan historically served as an overnight shelter for trade caravans on the road between Damascus and the southwest, and in 1948, it provided shelter for the first refugees from Palestine. The camp was established in 1949 on an area of 0.69 square kilometers with refugees originally from the northern part of Palestine.

Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was home to more than 20,000 Palestine refugees. In 2012, the farms and fields surrounding the camp became active battlegrounds in which heavy



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weapons were deployed, often indiscriminately. The population more than halved to 9,000.

Some of the camp's buildings and infrastructure were severely affected including some UNRWA installations; two UNRWA schools and the community centre were almost razed to the ground. In 2016, UNRWA was able to re-access Khan Esheih and the Agency was able to rehabilitate some of its installations. Residents have also slowly started to return, with the camp now accommodating 12,000 people.

In another development, according to the spokesman for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), Adnan Abu Hasna, Arab states have cut their support for the agency from \$200 million down to just \$20 million per year.

In response to this situation, UNRWA commissioner-general Philippe Lazzarini has appealed to donors in order to prevent the collapse of the agency and its services.

Abu Hasna mentioned that the UK has also cut its aid to UNRWA by 60 percent, pointing out that “the agency’s resources have not developed and the budget has not increased in proportion to the rise in the number of Palestinian refugees, negatively impacting the host countries, the refugees, and the quality of the agency’s services.”

According to Abu Hasna, UNRWA’s 2022 budget has not increased at all since the previous year, which will cause problems due to the



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rise of poverty rates and refugees. He went on to say that funds are available until next March, and the agency is hoping to obtain additional support from donor countries.

Commissioner-general Lazzarini held a meeting with Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi on 3 February, to discuss ways to support the agency and provide “sufficient and sustainable” assistance in order for it to continue its services to the 5.7 million refugees in its five areas of operation (Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Syria), a Jordanian Foreign Ministry statement said.

Lazzarini warned of the humanitarian, political and security risk to the stability of the region in the event that UNRWA would no longer be able to offer its services.

Jordan, for its part, has pledged its continued support for UNRWA and has promised to coordinate with regional and international partners to mobilize the needed support for the agency to continue its services.

UNRWA is in need of \$1.6 billion in funds from the international community, having already obtained the \$806 million minimum needed to cover basic services such as education, healthcare, and social services for refugees.