



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

08-01-2020

No. 2632

التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Brother Drowns off Aegean Coast, Brother Missing"

- **Palestinian Activist Urges Palestinian Refugees to Wage Legal Battle to Return to Yarmouk Camp**
- **Rights Group Condemns Arbitrary Arrests Targeting Palestinian Refugees South of Damascus**
- **Cash-Stripped Palestinian Refugees Deprived of UNRWA Aid North of Syria**
- **Palestinian Refugee Mootaz Bakr Secretly Held in Syrian Prison for 7th Year**

+442084530978

/Actgroup.palsyria

reports@actionpal.org.uk

www.actionpal.org.uk



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Victims

Palestinian refugee Mohamed Khaled Dalati, raised in Syria's Yarmouk Camp, was pronounced dead after he drowned off the Aegean seashore. His brother Khaled has gone missing.

The refugees boarded a migrant vessel bound for Europe. AGPS could not identify the details of the trip and the nationalities of the missing migrants.

On Monday, January 6, eight migrants died after a migrant boat went down off the coast of Fethiye, in Turkey's southwest. Seven other migrants have been missing, according to Turkey's Ministry of Interior.



Turkey is a main crossing point for migrants, including Palestinian refugees, trying to make their way to Europe to escape violent conflicts or economic hardship.



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Rights groups have kept record of the death of dozens of Palestinian refugees onboard Europe-bound boats, as they fled war-torn Syria to Turkey, before heading for neighboring Greece and other coastal destinations.

A deal between Turkey and the European Union in 2016 helped stem migration flows, but many asylum-seekers still attempt the dangerous trip across the Aegean Sea to Greek islands.

Latest Developments

Palestinian lawyer Nour AlDeen AlSaman, a resident of Yarmouk Camp, called on Palestinian refugees who used to take shelter in the camp to file lawsuits in order to return to their homes and retrieve their properties.

AlSaman's calls came in response to the reluctance maintained by local authorities in Damascus regarding the residents' ongoing appeals to rehabilitate infrastructure and allow displaced civilians to safely return to the camp.

The lawyer said concerned authorities have been dragging their feet despite the presidential decision green-lighting the safe return of Yarmouk residents to their abandoned homes.

He said practical steps, including legal measures, should be opted for in order to protect the ownership rights of displaced civilians and ensure that their properties are safely repossessed.

The Palestinian lawyer slammed Damascus Governor for turning his back on Palestinians' calls for return, warning of underway attempts



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to alter demographic character of the camp and blur its identity as a living witness to the Palestinian refugee plight.

“Local authorities have not even removed one single pile of sand from the camp; nor have they reconstructed infrastructure”, he said. “We’ve only seen words rather than action. There’s no need for a new organizational plan. There’s already a certified plan which was approved in accordance with Law 23 of 2015.”

Last year, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) published the results of an assessment of the damage to Syrian cities caused by seven years of relentless bombardment by the incumbent regime and its allies since 2011.



The analysis found out that as many as 5,489 buildings were destroyed in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees. The damage atlas used satellite-detected damage analysis to identify buildings that are either destroyed, or severely or moderately damaged.

Most of Palestinian families taking shelter south of Damascus fled Yarmouk as a result of the tough blockade imposed by the



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government troops 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, 2018. The Syrian government regained control over the camp and southern Damascus towns following the military operation. Dozens of civilians were killed and dozens more injured in the offensive. Over 80% of buildings have gone either totally or partially destroyed.

A number of activists and residents attempting to reach their homes in Yarmouk have been denied access into the area by Syrian government troops deployed at the main entrances to the camp.

Meanwhile, the Violations Documentation Center in Syria (VDC) strongly condemned the recent abduction sweep launched by Syrian security forces against Palestinian students south of Damascus.

VDC expressed deep concern over projected torture scenarios to be perpetrated by the Syrian security forces against the arrestees, saying their detention is illegitimate and groundless.

In a statement issued on January 5, the rights center held the Syrian security devices responsible for the fate of the detained children and called for their immediate and unconditional release from custody.

VDC also urged the concerned international organizations, namely the Red Cross Organization, to take up their responsibilities in this regard, push for an urgent and independent probe into the mass arrest sweep, and pressurize the Syrian government to protect



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children in line with the Fourth Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the ensuing protocols of 1977 which state that children should be protected, particularly during armed conflicts.

Over the past few days, 56 Palestinian children were arrested by the Syrian security forces in Yalda town, south of Damascus, after schoolchildren from AlJarmak School tore a poster of the Syrian president.

An AGPS reporter said Syrian officers raided AlJarmak School and arrested 20 children. Another 36 schoolchildren were arrested from their homes. The arrestees are aged between 10 and 16.

Tension has been running high in the area. Civilians have appealed to all concerned parties to work on releasing their children at the soonest possible time over torture concerns.

Syrian authorities claimed the arrested children were affiliated with ISIS militias, which the families strongly denied. A boy who was released sometime later said the students were interrogated over alleged ties with ISIS.

Over 5,000 Palestinian refugees have been taking shelter in southern Damascus towns, where they continue to struggle for survival due to the price leap, steep rental fees, high unemployment rates, and security upheaval.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugees in northern Syria continue to rail against the apathy maintained by the UN Works and Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) regarding their appeals for urgent humanitarian assistance.



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Palestinian families who have been displaced from Yarmouk and Khan Eshieh refugee camps along with Rif Dimashq to the northern Syrian provinces of Idlib and Aleppo said they have been shorn of much-needed relief services by the UN Agency.

The displaced families leveled heavy criticism at UNRWA and held the Agency accountable for the squalid humanitarian condition endured by hundreds of women, children, and sick refugees.

Though UNRWA's mandate includes Palestinian refugees in Syria, UNRWA has rarely provided relief services to the displaced Palestinians in the northern corners of the country.



AGPS continues to urge UNRWA to hand over much-needed relief items, including medicines and foodstuff, to the displaced Palestinians in all of its fields of operations, including northern Syria, and to provide them with the physical and moral protection they quite urgently need at such a critical time.

In the meantime, the family of the Palestinian refugee Mootaz Mohamed Bakr, a resident of AlAyedeen Camp in Hums, continues to appeal to the human rights institutions to work on revealing their son's condition and whereabouts.



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Bakr was kidnapped by the Syrian government forces on January 7, 2013, on his way back to the camp. He is a taxi driver.

AGPS kept record of the incarceration of 1,780 Palestinians in Syrian government prisons, among them 108 women and girls.