



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



"Turkish Authorities Pledge to Work Out Situation of Migrants without Kimlik Visas"

- For 1st Time in Years, Buses Enter Yarmouk Camp to Transfer Students
- Khan Eshieh Residents Denounce Water Crisis
- Activists Deny Corruption Charges Filed against UNRWA in Jordan
- Palestinian Refugee Alaa Farhoud Secretly Held in Syrian Prison for 7th Year

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Latest Developments

The Turkish authorities have agreed to grant the temporary protection card (kimlik) to Palestinian refugees from Syria.

The Free Palestinian Syrian Assembly (Maseer) said a meeting between Syrian CSOs and the Turkish government culminated in the latter's agreement to enhance the legal and humanitarian situation of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) and provide them with kimlik visa cards.

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

Activists have leveled heavy criticism at the Palestinian Authority and the Palestine Embassy in Turkey over their apathy regarding the refugees' ongoing cries for help.

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



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roads to reach Turkey, fleeing war-tattered Syria, among other war-stricken zones.

In another development, buses have started entering Yarmouk Camp to give lifts to over 100 students enrolled at schools in AlMaydan and Alzahira, in Damascus.

Before the eruption of the conflict in 2011, Yarmouk was home to approximately 160,000 Palestine refugees, making it the largest Palestine refugee community in Syria. Located eight kilometers from Damascus, it is one of three unofficial camps in Syria.

In December 2012, fierce clashes erupted in Yarmouk, causing numerous civilian casualties, severe damage to property and the displacement of thousands of Palestine refugees and Syrians. The camp was under siege from July 2013, drastically restricting the entry of commercial and humanitarian goods.

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



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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.

Meanwhile, Palestinian families taking refuge in Khan Eshieh camp, in Rif Dimashq, said water has been repeatedly cut off across residential neighborhoods for over 20 hours daily.

The residents have warned of the repercussions of the water crisis on their children's health condition in light of the global propagation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An AGPS reporter said most of the families sheltered in the camp are cash-stripped and cannot afford to buy drinking water from privately-owned tanks.

Palestinian families continue to appeal to UNRWA and the concerned authorities to take urgent action regarding the alarming humanitarian condition in the camp.

Along similar lines, Palestinian activists said charges of corruption and lack of transparency allegedly made by Palestinian refugees from Syria regarding UNRWA's aid distribution mechanisms in Jordan are counterfeit and groundless.

The activists said UNRWA has recently conducted a probe into similar claims and found no corruption proofs into the Agency's financial policy in Jordan.



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The activists said such claims were not made by Palestinian refugees from Syria but by holders of Jordanian passports who had lived in Syria.

They added that the Agency's social researcher is not responsible for setting eligibility criteria for cash grants. The United Nations has given instructions that holders of Jordanian passports be given a sum of 52 Jordanian dinars and holders of Palestinian-Syrian travel documents a sum of 82.

A few days earlier, over 50 Palestinian refugee families from Syria in Jordan have called for an urgent financial probe by the United Nations into UNRWA's distribution of cash aid allotted to Palestinians from Syria in Jordan.

In letters emailed to AGPS, the families spoke out against the apathy maintained by UNRWA staff in Jordan regarding their appeals for urgent and increasing cash aid, slamming the Agency's staff member in charge of their file of discrimination and lack of transparency.

They further denounced the vulnerability assessment mechanisms implemented by the Agency's field researcher who determines eligibility criteria following field visits paid to the refugee families.

The refugees also said that a number of UNRWA staff members have been misappropriating refugees' cash grants and that some deceased persons' allowances continue to be mysteriously shelled out.



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The number of PRS in Jordan has remained relatively stable for a number of years, with 17,343 PRS recorded with UNRWA as of December 2019. Of these, 349 reside in King Abdullah Park (KAP), facing movement restrictions and a number of protection concerns.

Since the opening of Jabeer-Al Nassib border between Syria and Jordan, in October 2018, UNRWA has registered the return of 624 PRS individuals to Syria. As of November 2019, of those returnees, some 227 individuals were displaced again to Jordan for a range of reasons, including the unstable security situation in Syria, problems with civil documentation, lack of economic resources and livelihood opportunities, and high levels of destruction of homes and property.

A Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment conducted by WFP in 2018 indicated that the majority (67 per cent) of PRS were food-insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity. Twelve per cent of PRS female headed households were found to be food insecure compared to seven per cent of male-headed households. Food insecurity was even higher (78 per cent) in PRS households where the head of household was reported to be completely illiterate. Eighty-six per cent of surveyed PRS households were also reported to be in debt.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Alaa Samir Farhood, born in 1983 in Yarmouk Camp, has been locked up in a government-run jail in Syria since November 24, 2013.



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Alaa was arrested in Qudsaya, in Rif Dimashq. An ex-prisoner said he had last met him in Sednaya military prison in late 2015.

AGPS documented the detention of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syria's state-run dungeons, among them 110 women and dozens of minors.