



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



"UN Levels Heavy Criticism at Denmark over Repatriation of Syria Refugees"

- 30 Palestinian Residents of Syria's AlKabon Neighborhood Pronounced Dead since Conflict Outbreak
- Residents of AlNeirab Refugee Camp Denounce Bread Crisis
- Syrians, Persons with Equivalent Status Exempted from Civil Status Fines
- Dutch Journalist Documents Tragedy of Palestinians of Syria

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Latest Developments

Denmark is facing growing criticism for a decision last year to revoke residence permits for Syrian refugees, citing a “safe” situation around Damascus, but the country is sticking to its position.

The tough Danish stance is a new sign of the country now having one of Europe’s most restrictive migration policies.

Last week, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said it was concerned about Denmark’s decision, even with deportations currently suspended because of a lack of collaboration between Denmark and the Syrian government after years of civil war.

UNHCR said it “does not consider that the recent improvements in security in parts of Syria to be sufficiently fundamental, stable or durable to justify ending international protection for any group of refugees”.

Rights group Amnesty International has also denounced the “worrisome development”.

“Denmark keeps sending signals that they don’t want any asylum seekers in the country and scaring the ones who are here into returning to their home countries even when they are not safe,” Lisa Blinkenberg, a senior adviser for Amnesty in Denmark, told AFP.



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“Not only is Denmark the worst place in Europe but the country also shows a lack of solidarity with other European countries refusing to take a share in the burden,” Hansen said.

But, despite criticism even from within parliament, the government is sticking to its guns.

“The government’s policy is working, and I won’t back down, it won’t happen,” Social Democratic immigration minister Mattias Tesfaye said.

“Denmark has been open and honest from day one. We have made it clear to the Syrian refugees that their residence permit is temporary and that the permit can be revoked if the need for protection ceases to exist,” Tesfaye told AFP on Friday.

The Nordic country has a stated goal of “zero asylum seekers”, and also offers special grants for voluntary returnees’ grants, which were accepted by 137 Syrians in 2020.

In another development, AGPS has documented the death of 30 Palestinian refugees sheltered in AlKabon neighborhood, in Damascus, since the outburst of bloody hostilities in Syria.

AGPS data indicates that 4,048 Palestinian refugees in/from Syria have died of war-related incidents since the outbreak of the conflict in March 2011.

Nearly 6,000 Palestinian refugees have sought shelter in AlKabon neighborhood after they were forced out of their homes in the Israeli occupied territories.



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Meanwhile, residents of AlNeirab Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Aleppo, have sounded distress signals over the poor quality of bread packs sold in the area.

Hundreds of civilians continue to line up on a quasi-daily basis in long queues outside local bakeries in the hunt for a bundle of bread loafs to feed their starved families.

A number of residents told AGPS that plastic strips have been spotted inside bread loafs and urged the Syrian government to control bread sales and production in the area.

Speaking with AGPS, a number of bakery owners said bread is being baked using flour bags sent by government-run suppliers.

AlNeirab camp is the largest official camp in Syria and is 13km east of the city of Aleppo near the Aleppo airport.

Before the start of the conflict in Syria, Neirab camp was home to more than 20,000 Palestine refugees. Like other Palestine refugee camps in Syria, a large number of families, young people, have travelled abroad. The camp has also seen a large influx of more than 900 families from the nearby Ein el Tal camp, which has been mostly destroyed.

With nearly 18,000 registered refugees, Neirab camp is among the most densely populated camps. The camp suffers from overcrowding and a lack of privacy. Like other areas in Syria, displacement, unemployment, inflation, protection and security



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risks are among the main concerns shared by Palestine refugees and Syrians alike.

The location of the camp near the military airport means the area was exposed to hazards including mortars and shelling between the start of 2013 and the end of 2018.

Poor shelters and poor construction of the barracks result in scorching temperatures in summer and freezing conditions in winter. Water leakage and rodent infestation also remain a problem for the refugees.

Along similar lines, a presidential decree recently issued in Syria has ruled for exempting Syrian nationals and persons with similar status inside and outside Syria from civil status penalties.

Decree No. 7 of 2021 exempts Syrians from fines slapped on belated civil status registration in the war-torn country. The decree also seeks to ease Syrians' return to the country.

In the meantime, Dutch journalist Fernande Van Tets issued a new book entitled "Four Seasons in Damascus", which provides a rare glimpse into the work of humanitarian workers in Syria and explains the dilemmas that face humanitarian workers there.

Through her book, Van Tets says she wanted to send a message to the Dutch government that Syria is not safe and return is impossible.



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The journalist referred to the dramatic destruction wrought on buildings and infrastructure in Yarmouk Camp along with the property-theft by pro-regime militias.

In an interview, Van Tets warned that personally, she does not feel that any part of Syria is safe to return to at the moment. “The protection thresholds for return that the UN set out in 2018 have not been met. The voluntary returns that have taken place show that it is not safe to do so. The process of settling one’s security status, such as returnees from Lebanon are required to do, is not enough to guarantee a safe return. Many have been arrested, or sent to serve in the army despite receiving guarantees that they would be exempted. The people I spoke to that chose to return rarely did so on a truly voluntary basis; they were worried, for example, that their property would be confiscated if they did not return to stake their claim.”