



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



"Civilians Left Under Threat of War Remnants in Syria's Handarat Camp for Palestinian Refugees"

- Palestinian Journalist Muhannad Omar Forcibly Disappeared by Syrian Gov't
- As Coronavirus Takes Hold, Palestinian Refugees Launch Distress Signals from Greece Migrant Camps
- Denmark Contributes US\$ 15.5 Million for Palestine Refugees

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Latest Developments

Residents of Handarat Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Aleppo, continue to voice deep concern over their children's safety due to the spread of unexploded war remnants across and around the camp.

Last year, a Palestinian child was pronounced dead after a cluster munition went off in Syria's Handarat Camp. The casualty—Shaifq Yakoob—succumbed to the wounds he sustained in the blast while he was playing outdoors. He was rushed to a hospital, but breathed his last shortly after.

Hundreds of the internationally-prohibited cluster grenades have been detected in Handarat Camp due to the heavy onslaughts launched by the Syrian and Russian fighter jets on the area.



Scores of Palestinian refugees were killed in offensives launched on refugee camps across war-torn Syria using such internationally-prohibited weapons such as phosphorous-filled bombs and cluster grenades.



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Available data from the International Committee of the Red Cross indicates that each year, large numbers of civilians are killed and injured by explosive remnants of war, such as artillery shells, mortars, grenades, bombs and rockets, left behind after an armed conflict.

For the civilians and communities in war-affected Syria, the presence of these weapons represents an ongoing threat. Many innocent civilians, including Palestinian refugees, have lost their lives and limbs by disturbing or inadvertently coming into contact with explosive remnants of war. These weapons have also hindered reconstruction and threatened economic livelihood. Houses, hospitals and schools cannot be rebuilt until such weapons are cleared.

Local communities often have no means of dealing with the problem themselves. Most do not have the technical capacity or the resources to clear explosive remnants of war safely and few have the resources needed to deal with the psychological, medical and rehabilitative needs of victims.

In another development, Palestinian journalist Muhannad Mohamed Omar has been enduring a mysterious fate in Syrian government lock-ups for the eighth year running.

Omar was kidnapped by the government troops from the office of AlAlem Channel on February 29, 2012 on account of his affiliations with opposition outfits.

The journalist was born in Yarmouk in 1985. He is the father of two kids. He taught Arabic literature at AlBaath University in Homs and



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worked as a journalist at AlQuds International Foundation, before he moved to AlAlem news channel in Damascus.

On May 15, 2011, he joined protests calling for return to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, which he had entered sometime later with a group of Palestinian youth.



He wrote several blogs on the situation of the Palestinians of Syria and the human rights violations perpetrated by the Syrian government since the outbreak of the conflict. His condition and whereabouts have been shrouded in mystery.

AGPS documented the secret incarceration of 1,788 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government lock-ups, among them dozens of women and minors.

Meanwhile, scores of Palestinian refugees seeking shelter on Greek islands have been panic-stricken over recent weeks after reports of new cases of coronavirus have been confirmed in the country.

The helpless refugees have no proper medical or hygienic kit to battle a looming pandemic of the coronavirus, as the number of new



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infections increased outside China, including in Greece, whose government has taken a tough stance on migration.

A few days earlier, Greece said it will tighten border controls to prevent the spread of coronavirus, focusing on island routes used by migrants to enter the country.

Last week, Greece reported two new cases of coronavirus, bringing its total of confirmed cases to three - two in the northern city of Thessaloniki and one in Athens.

Greece is a gateway for refugees and asylum seekers fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East and beyond, with more than one million having passed through the country in 2015 and 2016.



Thousands of Palestinian refugees and other migrants are stuck in overcrowded refugee camps in conditions aid organizations say are appalling and which the government itself has described as a “ticking health bomb”.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis told a cabinet meeting on Thursday that “islands are already overburdened with public health issues and they must be doubly protected”.



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The United Nations refugee agency UNHCR says there are more than 40,000 refugees and asylum seekers on Greek islands. Many have waited for months for their applications to be processed.

In the meantime, Danish Minister of Development Cooperation, Rasmus Prehn, announced a contribution of approximately US\$ 15.5 million (DKK 105 million DKK) to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for 2020.

According to a statement by UNRWA, the amount represents a 50 per cent increase in Denmark's funding to the Agency from US \$ 10 million in 2019. This contribution to the Agency's core budget will help deliver essential education, health care and social services across the five fields of operation.

“I am very pleased to announce a substantial increase in Denmark's core support to UNRWA to approximately US\$ 15.5 million in 2020. UNRWA delivers quality core services to around 5.6 million Palestine refugees. It is clear that UNRWA plays a key role both in securing a better life for the many refugees and for creating stability in the region,” Minister Prehn said.

Minister Prehn visited the UNRWA Basic Girls' School in Jalazone refugee camp near Ramallah, where he saw key services provided by the Agency, such as education and health, and was briefed on some of the protection challenges that the Palestine refugee community regularly faces in the camp.

Students shared their hopes and dreams for the future and explained the importance of their work as members of the UNRWA



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school parliament, particularly in providing mediation during school disputes, and promoting the concepts of tolerance and human rights amongst their peers and within their community.

Gwyn Lewis and Matthias Schmale, Directors of UNRWA Operations in the West Bank and Gaza, respectively, accompanied the Minister.

“The Government of Denmark has been a valued long-term contributor and partner,” said Acting Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Christian Saunders. “This generous increase in Denmark’s contribution is an important expression of solidarity with Palestine refugees comes at a time of serious financial and political challenges for UNRWA. I thank the Government of Denmark for its support and solidarity with UNRWA”.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.6 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA across its five fields of operation. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight.