



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

15-03-2022

No. 3529

التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"AGPS Raises Alarm over Condition of Forcibly-Disappeared Palestinian Refugee Women in Syria"

- Palestinian Refugees Distressed as Syrian Gov't Hospitals Slap Financial Fees
- Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon's AlBekaa Deprived of Fuel
- Greek Border Guard Tightens Grip on Borders with Turkey

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Latest Developments

The Action Group for Palestinians of Syria (AGPS) and the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC) in London sounded the alarm over the ambivalent condition of dozens of Palestinian refugee women secretly held behind Syrian prison bars.

This came in an oral statement delivered by PRC's speaker Farrah Koutteineh as part of Agenda Item 3 of the interactive dialogue with UN Special Rapporteur on Torture.

PRC said 10 years have passed by since Palestinian refugee woman Salma Abdul Razak has been forcibly disappeared in Syria. Her condition and whereabouts have been shrouded in mystery.

Last year, Salma's sister, Kholoud, who fled war-torn Syria to France, told AGPS that the family paid large sums of money to brokers to identify Salma's condition, but to no avail.

"Born on March 30, 1990, Salma fled Yarmouk Camp after it was struck with Mig fighter jets. She was kidnapped as she attempted to re-enter the camp on December 30, 2012. She was transferred to an unknown location and charged with assisting refugees and tending to the wounded", said PRC's speaker.

"Salma, who was enrolled at the Architectural Engineering University in Damascus, has been deprived of her right to pursue an academic career that she has always dreamt of. She is among 110 Palestinian women and girls secretly held in Syrian prisons", added PRC.



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PRC and AGPS called on the UN Human Rights Council to take serious action in order to push the Syrian regime to urgently reveal Salma's condition and release her before it is too late.

In another development, Syrian sources said the government is considering imposing other financial charges on patients who show up at government hospitals across Syrian provinces.

The ministries of health and higher education reportedly finalized examining a decision to impose financial fees on all patients received at public hospitals. The two ministries claimed that financial grants provided by public health sector and medical organizations barely cover 25% of the expenses of the medical sector, and that the fees currently charged by hospitals for x-rays and medical examinations cover a very small percentage of the total charges.

As part of the new measure, only emergency cases, victims of road accidents, and the wounded will be admitted to government-run hospitals for free. Palestinian refugees are required to pay the same healthcare charges as Syrian nationals.

In another development, displaced Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon's AlBekaa region said they have been deprived of fuel supplies.

An AGPS correspondent said every family received no more than a fuel tank from UNRWA.



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Activist Ahmad Salamah slammed UNRWA for dragging its feet over the refugees' appeals for urgent humanitarian assistance.

Palestinian families taking refuge in AlBekaa have been struggling for survival in the face of the sub-zero temperatures rocking the mountainous region and the rain downpours swamping their poorly-equipped tents.

Families have been left with no option other than burning plastic bottles to keep their children warm, despite the damage wrought on their vulnerable bodies.

Price leap and steep rental fees, along with the absence of relief aid, have made life unbearable for the Palestinian refugees in AlBekaa.

The situation has been exacerbated by UNRWA's latest decision to cut aid for Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon.

The refugees continue to urge the Palestine Liberation Organization and human rights bodies to urge UNRWA to backtrack on the decision and transfer much-needed cash grants for PRS in Lebanon.

Over 28,000 Palestinians from Syria have sought refuge in Lebanon, where they have been enduring exacerbated living conditions and subjected to a precarious legal status.

In the meantime, Greek armed forces and police have cordoned off borders with Turkey over the last 24 hours to block the flow of asylum seekers and migrants.



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Over recent days, Greek forces backed by Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, have intensified their presence on borderlands without prior notice.

Human rights organizations said the presence of Frontex forces at the Turkish-Greek border contravenes international law, at a time when Greek border guards have been involved in serious human rights abuses against asylum seekers.

In recent years, hundreds of thousands have made short but perilous journeys across the Aegean to reach Northern and Western Europe in search of a better life.

Hundreds of people have died at sea as many boats carrying refugees often sink or capsize. The Turkish Coast Guard Command has rescued thousands of others.

Turkey and Greece are key transit points for migrants looking to cross into Europe, fleeing war and persecution to start new lives. Turkey has accused Greece of large-scale pushbacks, summary deportations and denying migrants access to asylum procedures, which is a violation of international law. Ankara also accuses the EU of turning a blind eye to this blatant abuse of human rights.

Pushbacks are considered contrary to international refugee protection agreements that say people should not be expelled or returned to a country where their life or safety might be in danger due to their race, religion, nationality or membership of a social or political group.