



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

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التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestine Refugee Agency Facing Alarming Financial Crisis"

- Classroom Shut at UNRWA School over Coronavirus Concerns
- Residents of Khan Eshieh Camp Denounce Fuel Shortage
- Palestinian Brothers Forcibly Disappeared in Syrian Prisons
- Aid Items from Israeli-Occupied Palestinian Territories Distributed in Northern Syria

+442084530978

/Actgroup.palsyria

reports@actionpal.org.uk

www.actionpal.org.uk



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Latest Developments

A webinar was held by Commission 302 to Defend Refugees' Rights on December 15 under the title “UNRWA after 71... Funding Challenge and Service Cut”.

The seminar was attended by directors of UNRWA offices in its five fields of operations and chaired by Dr. Intissar Danan.

In his opening speech, Director-General of Commission 302, Ali Huwaidi, underscored the need for UNRWA to keep up its vital services for Palestine refugees pending a just and lasting solution to their plight.

Huwaidi said donor states should send their pledged funds at the earliest possible time so as to enable the Agency to continue providing life-saving services for over 6 million registered Palestine refugees.

He called on the UN General Assembly to extend UNRWA's mandate.

Director of UNRWA's Syria Operations Michael Amany said Palestinian refugees continue to face squalid conditions in the conflict-stricken country, adding that Palestine refugees from Syria have been severely affected by the ongoing armed conflict. Of the total 438,000 Palestine refugees from Syria, the vast majority require assistance.

He said over 90 per cent of Palestine refugee households in Syria live in poverty and 40 per cent remain in protracted displacement



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as a result of conflict and the damage and destruction of their homes, warned the UN Agency for Palestine Refugees. 80% rely on UNRWA cash assistance as their main source of income.

He stated that 51,000 Palestine refugee girls and boys have gone back to 103 schools run by the Agency.

Amanya also said that 70% of UNRWA's budget remains in deficit and funds are urgently needed to carry out vital services for Palestine refugees.

Sometime earlier, UNRWA said that most of the refugees the Agency serves, including children, persons with disabilities and older persons, are not able to absorb the economic, social and medical shocks created by this global pandemic within a pre-existing humanitarian and conflict environment. Devastating consequences to their physical, social and economic wellbeing, with most already living below the poverty line, will continue to materialize if the international community does not act now.

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA programme budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall.



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Along similar lines, the Akka School administration in AlNeirab Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Aleppo, suspended courses at a classroom after a student tested positive for coronavirus.

The student was home-quarantined for 14 days and classes suspended for five-days pending laboratory tests.

In another development, residents of Khan Eshieh camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, said they have not received fuel supplies urgently-needed with the advent of winter.

A liter of fuel is sold by the government at 200 Syrian pounds. However, the price has hit 1,100 in the black market.

Palestinian refugee families taking shelter in the area continue to sound distress signals over the poor infrastructure, water and power outages, along with the absence of health care and transportation services. The swift price leap along with the high rates of unemployment and poverty have made the situation far worse.

Meanwhile, Palestinian brothers Emad Fares AlSamour, 33 and Iyad Fares AlSamour, 30, have been secretly held in Syrian government prisons since December 13, 2012.

The two brothers, residents of AlHajar AlAswad, were arrested by Syrian government forces in Sehnaya town, in Rif Dimashq. Their condition and whereabouts have not been identified.



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AGPS documented the secret detention of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in state-run penal complexes across war-torn Syria, among them 110 women and girls.

AGPS also documented the death of over 550 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syrian government lock-ups, including women, children, and elderly civilians.

Affidavits by ex-detainees provided evidence on the involvement of Syrian government officers in harsh torture tactics, including electric shocks, heavy beating using whips and iron sticks, and sexual abuse against Palestinian detainees, in a flagrant violation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, commonly known as the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT).

AGPS estimates the real number to be far higher due to the gag orders slapped by the Syrian government on the detainees' names and fates, along with the families' reluctance to report such cases over retaliation concerns.

AGPS continues to urge the Syrian government to disclose the fate of scores of Palestinians held in its lock-ups, release the bodies of those tortured to death, to seriously work on halting harsh torture tactics, launch fact-finding probes into crimes of torture, and to bring those involved in such crimes before courts.



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In the meantime, relief items donated by Palestinians living in territories occupied by Israel since 1948 have been distributed in displacement camps set up in northern Syria.

The Nazareth-based Merciful Souls Association said the distributed items include heaters, winter blankets, firewood, and pyrene, among other in-kind items.

Hundreds of Palestinian and Syrian families who have been forcibly deported to northern Syria have been grappling with an abject humanitarian situation as most of them have been taking cover in underequipped tents and denied access to vital facilities and services.