



التقرير اليومي



الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

The situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



UNRWA Commissioner-General Calls For Support To Palestine Refugees In Syria

- UNRWA Staff Union Condemns Statement of Commissioner-General
- Cultural Centre, Clinic Opened Up in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian Refugees
- Two Palestinian Brothers Forcibly Disappeared by Syrian Regime for 10th Year



Latest Development

The Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Philippe Lazzarini called on the international and donor community to support Palestine refugees in Syria.

After a visit to Damascus on 19-21 April, and ahead of the international conference on “Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region” to be held next month, he reminded donors and policymakers that some 438,000 Palestine refugees remain in Syria, most at least once displaced and living under the poverty line.

The recent spike in the prices of food, fuel and commodities globally adds a layer of hardship to an already dire situation for the refugees in Syria, after 11 years of conflict. Many report living on one meal a day, preferring to lower their intake to be able to feed their children.

“It is very difficult to describe the destitution of most Palestine refugees in Syria,” said the UNRWA Commissioner-General. They often seem to fall off the grid, off the global attention. They need the support of the international community. After 11 years of a grueling conflict that displaced half the population, most Palestine refugees need UNRWA cash assistance to survive. Sadly though, insufficient funding to UNRWA makes it unable to cover their needs. Female headed families and families of disabled children are most vulnerable and most in need of support,” said Mr. Lazzarini



UNRWA said it expects Palestine refugee families that receive government clearance to continue returning to camps such as Yarmouk and Ein el Tal, despite the destruction and risks of unexploded ordinance. “UNRWA must be able to provide at least basic health and education services to Palestine refugees who have no choice but to return to camps that are still largely destroyed,” said Lazzarini.

“It is always very compelling to see the scope and scale of destruction in Yarmouk and other Palestine refugee camps. It is also very gripping to see the extraordinary resolve and determination of young Palestine refugee girls and boys and their avidity to learn,” he added after a meeting with UNRWA schools parliamentarians at the Beit Lahia Ariha School in Khan Dunoun camp.

During his visit, the Commissioner-General met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Dr. Faysal Miqdad and the Director-General of the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees (GAPAR), Mr. Qasem Husein to discuss the situation in Palestine refugee camps and ways to continue to support jointly Palestine refugees.

The Commissioner-General lauded the UNRWA front line staff, teachers, doctors, nurses, social workers for their dedication in providing essential services throughout the conflict to Palestine refugees, sometimes at the risk of their own life. UNRWA has lost 19 staff member in Syria since the beginning of the conflict.

Meanwhile, UNRWA staff workers have leveled heavy criticism at the Agency’s chief Philippe Lazzarini, who, talking about the



financial difficulties facing the UN agency that included annual shortfalls to the core program budget nearing \$100 million over the last years due to a shortage of funds from donor countries, proposed other options to continue providing the services.

In a message to Palestine refugees on April 23, UNRWA Commissioner-General Lazzarini, “[O]ne must realistically look at the financial forecast and acknowledge that to continue relying almost exclusively on voluntary funding from donors would not be reasonable, given the world and regional dynamics,” Lazzarini said in his message.

“Are there different ways to ensure that the services provided to you continue without the threat of disruption due to UNRWA’s lack of financial resources?” he asked.

“My priority is and remains your continued access to quality services and the protection of your rights and the UNRWA mandate. Within this framework, one option that is currently being explored is to maximize partnerships within the broader UN system. Central to this option is that services could be provided on behalf and under the guidance of UNRWA, and hence strictly in line with the mandate UNRWA received from the UN General Assembly. Such partnerships have the potential to protect essential services and your rights from chronic underfunding.”

Lazzarini, however, stressed, “Let me be clear: there is no handover or transfer of responsibilities and programs on the table, and no tampering with the UNRWA mandate. UNRWA is and remains irreplaceable.”



UNRWA staff workers Union called on the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), Philippe Lazzarini, not to do anything that would prejudice the rights of the refugees or transfer UNRWA services to other international organizations.

The Union warned that such a move, if implemented, would be in violation of UN Resolution 302, under which the Agency was established, and the mandate that defined its responsibilities

UNRWA's plan to transfer responsibilities to other organizations has drawn strong protests from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and refugees in general. Voting at the UN General Assembly on the renewal of the UNRWA mandate is going to take place at the end of this year.

Meanwhile, the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), affiliated with the Syrian regime, inaugurated the Helwa Zeidan Cultural Centre and Raja Abu Amasha Clinic in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees following reconstruction works that lasted for several months.

The two facilities were massively destroyed in the conflict.

In the meantime, Palestinian brothers Waseem and Anas Mahmoud Muhahi have been held in Syrian government dungeons for the tenth consecutive year.

Both were kidnapped in October 2012 from Street 30, in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees south of Damascus.



Wasseem, born in 1977 and the father of seven kids, had led Muslim prayers at a local Mosque. Mahmoud, born in 1986 and the father of three children, had served as a voluntary driver with PLA in Qatna.

AGPS has kept record of dozens of cases of secret internment and fatal torture of members of same family in Syria's state-run prisons, where nearly 1,800 Palestinian refugees have been held captive.