



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

**31-01-2021**

**No. 3122**

## التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



### "Palestinian Refugee Woman Kidnapped, Killed in Turkey"

- Committee of Displaced Palestinians Hands Over Memorandum to UNRWA
- Palestinian Families Wishing to Return to Yarmouk Camp Blackmailed
- Palestinian Family Appeals for Information over Forcibly-Disappeared Relative in Syria
- Humanitarian Campaign Launched for Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

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## Latest Developments

Palestinian refugees in Istanbul woke up to the reports of the horrendous murder of Palestinian woman Israa Maatouk, who fled war-torn Syria to Turkey in the hope for a safer life.

Israa's relatives said she was kidnapped by a man called "Abdul Hadi AlBa'aj", a former resident of Damascus, in Syria, and dragged to his house in Taksim Square, in Istanbul.

Ten days later, Israa was found dead at the kidnapper's house. She was identified by her relatives and through her fingerprint.

Her uncle said WhatsApp messages found on the victim's and the murderer's mobile phones showed that the latter fled to Greece.

In another development, the Follow-Up Committee of Displaced Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon sent a memorandum to the Director of UNRWA operations in Lebanon, Claudio Cordone, calling for an emergency and sustainable relief plan.

The memorandum was sent to UNRWA through the Agency's director in Mar Elias camp, in Beirut, Ferial Kiwan.

The document sounded alarm bells over the squalid humanitarian condition endured by Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and called for urgent aid delivery.

It said the refugees' survival has been at risk due to the coronavirus pandemic and the heavy burden it has wrought on Palestinian refugee camps set up across the Middle Eastern Country.



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The committee further urged the Agency to transfer cash grants in US dollars, work on securing PCR tests to all suspected cases among the Palestinians of Syria, and to ensure the refugees' access to the local labor market.

Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees said they have been blackmailed by staffers tasked with assessing the habitability condition of houses in Yarmouk Camp.

In letters emailed to AGPS, a number of residents said return to abandoned houses is only greenlighted after a sum of up to 30,000 is shelled out to control staff. A number of habitable houses have been blacklisted after their owners failed to secure the required sum.

Over recent years, activists have called on the residents of Yarmouk Camp, in Damascus, to stand on guard to all attempts to force them to forfeit their houses and property at low prices.

The activists have warned against attempts by crooked real estate brokers to pressurize civilians to sell their homes and properties following the widely-condemned reconstruction plan proposed by Damascus Governorate.

Real estate dealers have reportedly established limited-liability contracting companies to buy real estate from the residents at extremely cheap prices. Civilians who have lost their property ownership documents have particularly come under simmering pressure.



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In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Yousef Mustafa AlKhatib, born in 1980, has been secretly held in Syrian government prisons for the seventh consecutive year.

Yousef, a resident of Yarmouk Camp, was arrested in September 2014 on his way to his workplace. His family continues to appeal for information about his condition and whereabouts.

AGPS has been deeply concerned about the upsurge in the number of Palestinian victims of torture and enforced disappearance in Syria.

Over 1,790 Palestinian refugees have been secretly held in Syrian government dungeons since the outburst of deadly hostilities.

AGPS also documented the death of over 600 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).

## **Humanitarian Action**





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The Palestinian Communication Association in The Netherlands embarked on a humanitarian campaign aiming to assist Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon.

In cooperation with the Popular Committee for Palestinians of Syria in Lebanon's AlBekaa region, the Association distributed food portions to a number of displaced families in Palestinian refugee camps.

According to information collected by UNRWA, more than 80 per cent of PRS indicate that the Agency's cash assistance is their main source of income. 95 per cent of PRS are food insecure, while about 89 per cent of PRS live in poverty. 36 to 57 per cent of PRS youth face unemployment. In August and September 2019, UNRWA conducted a verification exercise of PRS in Lebanon and verified the physical presence of 27,803 PRS in the country.

The number of PRS in Lebanon has been gradually decreasing over the past two years, and UNRWA estimates that in 2020 the country will continue to host approximately 27,700 PRS (8,450 families). UNRWA said PRS's vulnerability is further compounded by their precarious legal status. According to the Agency's monitoring data, around 55 percent of PRS do not possess valid legal residency documents.

The lack of a valid legal status, often coupled with outdated civil registration documents, results in severely restricted freedom of movement for some PRS in Lebanon due to fear of arrest, detention and being issued a departure order.



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