



## **Syrian Crisis**

### **United Nations Response**



**A Weekly Update from the  
UN Department of Public Information**

**No. 223/29 November 2017**

#### **More than 13 million people remain in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria**

Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock told the Security Council on 29 November that some 13.1 million Syrians need aid and protection with 5.6 million in acute need. On displacement, he said that more than 6,500 people have been displaced on average every day of the first nine months of 2017. Mr. Lowcock also voiced concern about reports of severe malnutrition among children in eastern Ghouta where only one fourth of the people in need have received food assistance this year. The UN Relief Chief stressed the need to preserve all means of humanitarian access, including cross-border and cross-line operations.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-74>

#### **Intra-Syrian talks resume in Geneva under UN mediation**

The eighth round of intra-Syrian talks began at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 28 November. On the first day, the Syrian opposition delegation met with Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura. At the initiative of France, the Envoy also held a meeting with the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council. On the second day of the talks, Mr. de Mistura held a series of meetings including with the delegation of the Government of Syria.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/noon-briefing-highlight>

#### **No preconditions will be accepted, says Special Envoy de Mistura**

Briefing the Security Council on the eve of the resumption of the Geneva talks, the UN Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. de Mistura stressed that in line with resolution 2254 (2015), discussions would focus on governance, a schedule and process to draft a new constitution and the holding of elections as the basis for a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned process to end the conflict. "International players are clearly looking for some common ground based on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2254 and are urging Syrians to begin to find some common ground too". He added that "we will be looking to move them into beginning serious discussions and hopefully negotiations. Let me make one thing clear: we will not accept any preconditions from either party," he pointed out.

[https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear\\_en\)/57B3AD191B8C434CC12581E500666BC1?OpenDocument](https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/57B3AD191B8C434CC12581E500666BC1?OpenDocument)

#### **Child malnutrition worsens in eastern Ghouta, warns UNICEF**

Violence, lack of humanitarian access and sky-rocketing food prices have worsened malnutrition among young children in besieged eastern Ghouta, UNICEF warned on 29

November. Nearly 400,000 people remain trapped in the area, half of them are estimated to be children. "Children in eastern Ghouta are living in extremely harsh conditions. The siege must be lifted to provide them with the life-saving assistance they need now," said Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa. "This drastic increase in malnutrition confirms – if any additional proof were needed – that escalating violence and the use of siege has devastated the health of children." A survey of 27 locations in eastern Ghouta conducted in early November has found that the proportion of children under five-years suffering from acute malnutrition to be 11.9 per cent – the highest rate ever recorded in Syria since the beginning of the conflict.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/child-malnutrition-levels-increase-sharply-besieged-east-ghouta-enar>

### **Returning foreign terrorist fighters is a global challenge, demands urgent multilateral response, UN official**

Addressing the Security Council on 28 November, the Head of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, stressed that with violent extremists having suffered defeats in Syria and Iraq, the international community must step up cooperation to address the complex problem of foreign terrorist fighters returning home or travelling to other regions. While travel measures implemented by countries and military victories against the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (or Daesh) have "significantly decreased" flows to the region, combatants have since tried to relocate to Libya, Yemen and Afghanistan – fueling existing conflicts in these countries. Mr. Voronkov added that at one stage more than 40,000 combatants from over 110 countries joined terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. "This is truly a global challenge that demands urgent and concerted multilateral response", he said. According to reports, at least 5,600 fighters from 33 countries have returned home.

[https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism.ctitf/files/20171128USGVoronkov\\_statement\\_SCCTFbriefing\\_Asdelivered.pdf](https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism.ctitf/files/20171128USGVoronkov_statement_SCCTFbriefing_Asdelivered.pdf)

### **Syrian refugees arrive in Zagreb from Turkey in first refugee resettlement to Croatia**

A group of 36 Syrian refugees landed in Zagreb after leaving Turkey on 28 November through a resettlement programme initiated by Croatia with the support of IOM, the UN Migration Agency. The group is the first of 150 Syrian refugees that Croatia has committed to resettling from Turkey, bringing the newest EU member into a group of emerging resettlement states. The 36 refugees included 15 adults, 20 children and 1 infant. IOM provided pre-departure health assessments for the resettled refugees and facilitated two selection missions undertaken by the Croatian government thus far in Turkey.

<http://www.iom.int/news/syrian-refugees-arrive-zagreb-turkey-first-ever-refugee-resettlement-croatia>

### **UN envoy welcomes the conclusion of Syrian opposition conference in Riyadh**

In a statement on 25 November, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura took note of the conclusion of the expanded opposition conference, hosted and facilitated by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. He noted the broad and inclusive participation in this conference, including all opposition components identified in Security Council resolution 2254 and a wide range of others from both inside and outside of Syria, including

independents - and female participants. Mr. de Mistura took particular note of the fact that a negotiating team had been announced that is tasked to negotiate in Geneva without any preconditions, and that the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions was regarded as the sole reference for the negotiation.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2017-11-25/statement-behalf-un-special-envoy-syria-staffan-de-mistura>

### **More needs to be done to prevent gender-based violence in Syria**

"Gender-based violence continues to undermine the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims in Syria," Panos Moumtzis, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis," said on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November. "It's imperative we do more."

Nearly seven years since the start of the conflict, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence continues to remain a major source of concern for women, men, girls and boys across Syria; with women and girls reporting being in fear of sexual violence, often associated with abduction. According to the 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview released on 21 November, gender-based violence, particularly verbal harassment, domestic violence, child marriages and the fear of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, continues to pervade the lives of Syrian women and girls inside and outside the home.

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Press%20Release%20on%20Gender%20Based%20Violence.pdf>

### **Republic of Korea contributes US\$ 500,000 to promote better life for Palestine refugees from Syria in Jordan**

The Government of the Republic of Korea has contributed US\$ 500,000 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to help ensure the continuity of the Agency's educational and health services to Palestine refugees from Syria in Jordan. On 27 November, UNRWA said that this latest contribution will support its efforts to ensure that Palestine refugees fleeing Syria and currently in Jordan have free access to safe, child-friendly and gender-sensitive schools and health centres, and vocational training centres for youth.

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/republic-korea-contributes-us-500000-promote-better-and-safer-life-0>

### **UN Radio in Arabic**

UN: 10 million Syrians "do not know where their next meal is coming from"

[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269067/index\\_search.html](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/269067/index_search.html)

“الأمم المتحدة: عشرة ملايين سوري لا يعرفون من أين تأتي وجباتهم القادمة”

2017-11-28

Special Envoy for Syria stresses that there is an opportunity to move the Syrian crisis towards a real political process

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/268993>

دي مستورا يؤكد وجود فرصة سانحة لتحريك الأزمة السورية نحو عملية سياسية حقيقية

2017-11-27

The Refugee Food Festival is a way to discover cultures and bring people together

[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/268286/index\\_search.html](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/268286/index_search.html)

مهرجان اللاجئين للأطعمة وسيلة لاكتشاف الثقافات والتقارب بين الناس

2017-11-25

Special Envoy de Mistura participates in Riyadh meeting, and the World Health Organization is concerned about the situation in the eastern Ghouta  
[http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/268868/index\\_search.html](http://www.unmultimedia.org/arabic/radio/archives/268868/index_search.html)

دي مستورا يشارك باجتماع الرياض، ومنظمة الصحة العالمية تبدي القلق بشأن الوضع في الغوطة الشرقية

2017-11-22

## **Twitter**

UNICEF@UNICEF – 29 November  
Violence.

Restricted humanitarian access.

Skyrocketing food prices.

Child malnutrition levels have increased sharply in besieged Syrian town of E. Ghouta:

<http://uni.cf/2k7vnfP>

#ChildrenUnderAttack

UN Geneva@UNGeneva- 29 November

"Children are so weak that they are fainting at school. They are eating animal fodder, they are skipping meals, they are begging in the streets."

📺 Watch @BettinaLuescher @WFP & @JensLaerke spox @OCHA update media @UNGeneva ystday on the humanitarian situation in Syria.

UN Refugee Agency- 28 November

This is what happened when three refugee chefs from Yemen, Syria and Iran cooked lunch for 1,500 students in four schools in France:

UN Refugee Agency Retweeted UNHCR Syria - 28 November

#Today a UN/SARC/ICRC IA convoy entered #Nashabiyeh in besieged #EasternGhouta in Rural #Damascus & delivered food, nutrition & health materials for 7,200 ppl in need @UNHCRinSYRIA #protection staff accompanied the convoy to assess people's needs in the besieged area.

UN Political Affairs@UN\_DPA – 27 November

Special Envoy for #Syria Staffan de Mistura to Council today: "Syria has been at war for the last 6 years. Half of its population fled their homes. This crisis now has the potential to move towards a genuine political process." Full statement:

[http://www.un.org/undpa/en/speeches-statements/27112017/syria ...](http://www.un.org/undpa/en/speeches-statements/27112017/syria...)

OCHA Syria@OCHA\_Syria - 27 November

8.2 million people in #Syria live in areas affected by hostilities and explosive hazards.

See the Humanitarian Needs Overview in #Syria 2018 summary

[https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/hno\\_2018\\_summary\\_171120\\_0.pdf...](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/hno_2018_summary_171120_0.pdf...)

OCHA Syria@OCHA\_Syria- 26 November

Some 69% of communities in #Syria perceived early marriages, exposing girls to loss of self-esteem, significant personal protection risks, health issues and depriving them of an education

#ENDviolence against women

OCHA Syria @OCHA\_Syria- 24 November

"I cannot do anything to save my baby boy," Read stories of children who sleep on empty stomachs in besieged #EastGhouta where families face dire humanitarian

conditions @WFP\_MENA <https://insight.wfp.org/kids-sleep-on-empty-stomachs-in-syria-5ac993aa74d3> ...

UNRWA@UNRWA- 23 November

High school students in Bergen and Damascus build friendships & share their passion for music & dance on 1st of 3 UNRWA's #MyVoiceMySchool video exchanges. @NorwayMFA <https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/933729421265133569>

UNRWA@UNRWA- 23 November

Amid challenging conditions, #Palref students in Syria inspire peers in Norway through their enthusiasm for discovery and their drive to learn. Thanks to @NorwayMFA support to #UNRWA's #education.

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/933789810564747267>

UNRWA@UNRWA – 22 November

#Palref students in Syria discuss empowerment through education with their peers in Norway during 1st #MyVoiceMySchool video exchange. Read more:

<http://www.unrwa.org/MyVoiceMySchool>

<https://twitter.com/UNRWA/status/933386969538842629>

## **Facebook**

"Education gives me strength and knowledge to distinguish right from wrong", said Nana, one of the #Palref students in Syria participating in the #MyVoiceMySchool virtual trip to meet her peers in #Norway.

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1610209525692275/?type=3&theater>

#MyVoiceMySchool students in Bergen, Norway and Damascus, Syria discover common likes for school subjects, sports and music and bond via first video link. They will meet again in the coming months to share their researched ideas on how to improve #education in their school communities.

#UNRWA#EducationinEmergencies @NorwayMFA

<https://www.facebook.com/unrwa/photos/a.118302834882959.10295.105171192862790/1609989322380962/?type=3&theater>

## **Social media campaigns**

**#My Voice-My School** is an UNRWA project launched in 2015 and implemented by Digital Explorer to connect schools in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon with schools in Europe and USA through Skype exchanges. Through live video conversations and customized teaching materials, students and teachers explore how education can help them meet their future aspirations. [www.unrwa.org/myvoicemyschool](http://www.unrwa.org/myvoicemyschool)

**@ShareTheMeal:** In April 2016, the World Food Programme launched its phone application to support fundraising efforts for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon. ShareTheMeal's fundraising aims to support 1,400 refugee children. Through the app, smartphone users can join thousands of other people in making donations and support a selected community and monitor progress. Since the launch of the campaign, more than 15 million meals have been shared.

[www.sharethemeal.org](http://www.sharethemeal.org)

**#Unite4Heritage** is a global movement run by UNESCO that aims to celebrate and safeguard cultural heritage and diversity around the world. Launched in response to the

unprecedented attacks on world heritage sites, the campaign calls on everyone to stand up against extremism and radicalization by celebrating the places, objects and cultural traditions that make the world such a rich and vibrant place.

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1254/>

**#NoLostGeneration:** The initiative was launched by UNICEF and partners in 2013 to focus attention on the plight of children affected by the Syrian crisis. By articulating real concerns about the possible 'loss' of a generation of children to the effects of violence and displacement, the initiative put education and child protection at the centre of the response inside Syria and across the refugee hosting countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt).

<http://nolostgeneration.org/about>

## **Relevant links to UN Secretariat, Agencies, Funds and Programmes on Syria**

### **DPI Focus Page on Syria:**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=146&Body=Syria&Body1=>

### **UN System agencies :**

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/media/index.html>

WFP: <http://www.wfp.org/countries/syria>

OCHA: <http://unocha.org/syria>, [twitter.com/ocha\\_syria](https://twitter.com/ocha_syria), [facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria](https://facebook.com/UNOCHA.Syria)

WHO: <http://www.who.int/countries/syr/en/>

UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4f86c2426.html>

UNFPA: <https://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/crisis-syria>

OHCHR: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/NewsSearch.aspx?CID=SY>

UNRWA: <http://www.unrwa.org/>

UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/>

UNESCO Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage Project:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/beirut/areas-of-action/culture/syria/emergency-safeguarding-of-the-syrian-heritage/>

UNESCO Observatory of Syrian Cultural Heritage <https://en.unesco.org/syrian-observatory/>

UNESCO Bridging Learning Gaps for Youth: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/syria-crisis-response/bridging-learning-gaps/>