
UNRWA Opens US-Funded Community Centre in Yarmouk

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Damascus

A new community development centre was opened today in Yarmouk by Mr Charles F. Hunter, Chargé d’Affaires of the United States Embassy in Syria. The centre was built thanks to a generous donation of USD 1,397,400 from the US government.

“The United States is committed to supporting refugees and displaced people worldwide,” said Hunter in his address. “With this community centre, the people of the United States show their continued commitment to UNRWA’s human development work for Palestinian refugees in Syria.”

Filippo Grandi, UNRWA Commissioner-General, thanked the United States for the generous contribution. “The United States is our largest donor and we are deeply grateful for your longstanding support.” He also expressed his gratitude to the Syrian government for its essential cooperation.

The United States contributed almost USD 268 million to UNRWA in 2009, its largest yearly donation to date. In addition to the community centre, recent US-funded projects in Syria include the reconstruction of Ras el-Ain school in Yarmouk, and a nine-month emergency cash assistance project for Palestinian Iraqi refugees.

“This contribution is a vital investment in the Palestinian refugee community in Yarmouk,” said Mr Ali Mustafa, Director-General of the General Authority for Palestine refugees.

The new centre was designed and built in consultation with community. It will run programmes that focus on economic empowerment and addressing the needs of women, the disabled and other vulnerable members of the community. The new building replaces an old community development and women’s programme centre originally constructed in the 1960s but which and could no longer meet the community’s growing needs.

UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, provides education, healthcare, relief and social services, and micro-credit services to over 470,000 Palestine refugees in Syria.

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