
UNRWA'S COMMISSIONER GENERAL FIRMLY REITERATES THE NEED FOR UNHINDERED HUMANITARIAN ACCESS AFTER VISITING YARMOUK CAMP

[بعد زيارته مخيم اليرموك هذا اليوم: المفوض العام للأمم المتحدة يؤكد بحزم على ضرورة وصول المساعدات الإنسانية بلا عوائق](#)

Damascus

UNRWA's Commissioner General, Filippo Grandi entered Yarmouk camp during the resumption of UNRWA's humanitarian aid distribution this morning. He was shocked by the condition of the Palestine refugees he spoke to and the extent of war damage done to homes.

"I am deeply disturbed and shaken by what I observed today. The Palestine refugees with whom I spoke were traumatized by what they have lived through, and many were in evident need of immediate support, particularly food and medical treatment. What I have seen and heard today underlines the timeliness of the UN Security Council resolution 2139 on Humanitarian Access and the need for all sides to implement the resolution without fail. " Yarmouk Camp has been sealed since July 2013, resulting in acute and widespread deprivation, including severe malnutrition, while civilian residents are constantly exposed to the threat of death, injuries and trauma of the armed conflict.

UNRWA welcomes the support of Syrian authorities to resume distribution today. During his three day visit to Syria, Grandi was encouraged by assurances given by the authorities that access will be maintained and expanded, and ultimately lead to the safe return of Palestine refugees to their homes.

"We hope that the positive developments in Yarmouk can give momentum to peaceful dialogue between all parties so that there can be humanitarian access for all civilians in Syria who have suffered enough", said Grandi.

UNRWA reiterates the demands of the international community for the full and unhindered humanitarian access to all conflict-affected communities in Syria.

Background:

Following clashes in northern Yarmouk on the night of 7/8 February, UNRWA distribution of food parcels and medical supplies had been suspended. Until this point, UNRWA had successfully distributed 7,000 food parcels, 10,000 polio vaccines and a range of other medical supplements to civilians inside the camp, after partial humanitarian access was granted on 18 January and 20 February.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty. As a result, the Agency's General Fund (GF), supporting UNRWA's core activities and 97 per cent reliant on voluntary contributions, has begun each year with a large projected deficit. Currently the deficit stands at US\$ 65 million.

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