



Syrian Crisis United Nations Response



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

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Following the conclusion of the second round of Geneva talks between the Syrian Government and the opposition, the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General told reporters that Joint Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi had apologised to the people of Syria for the lack of progress at the talks. While stressing that the Geneva negotiations would be a long process, he said that Mr. Brahimi intends to push ahead with his diplomatic efforts for the talks to continue.

<http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp>

The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) announced on 17 February that the agency had been unable to deliver aid assistance to thousands of Palestinian refugees trapped in the Yarmouk refugee camp near Damascus for ten consecutive days. UNRWA has not had access to the camp since fighting broke out late at night on 7 February, forcing the agency to suspend its activities. UNRWA reiterated its strong appeal to the parties to allow desperately needed food, medicines and other life-saving humanitarian aid inside the camp.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47161&Cr=Syria&Cr1=#.UwPDKIXyL-S>

In a statement issued on 19 February, UNRWA's Commissioner-General expressed shock and outrage at the killing of at least 18 people, including five Palestine refugee children and an UNRWA staff member in an explosive attack near a school in southern Syria. "I must express my revulsion at this wanton disregard for civilian life and international law. All parties to the conflict are obliged to ensure that civilians and UN installations are protected. Yesterday's tragedy demonstrates beyond doubt that the conflict in Syria can only be stopped through dialogue and political negotiations", he stated.

<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/unrwa%E2%80%99s-commissioner-general-deplores-killing-18-including-five>

On 19 February, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published a paper entitled "Living Under Siege" on the devastating impact on civilians of ongoing sieges across Syria. The paper focuses on sieges imposed by Government forces and pro-Government militias, as well as by armed opposition groups in the Governorates of Homs, Rural Damascus and Damascus as well as Northern Aleppo. The document notes that these sieges have resulted in severe hardship, suffering and deaths of civilians, in clear breach of the obligations imposed by international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SY/SyrianCommentsPaperOnSiege.pdf>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14262&LangID=E>

On 14 February 2014, the OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, announced that following a rigorous tendering process, the OPCW had awarded contracts to two companies with respect to the Call for Proposals for Transport, Treatment and Disposal of Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Organic and Inorganic Chemicals, Effluents and Related Materials. The conclusion of this process represents an important step towards the full destruction of Syrian chemical weapons within the agreed timelines.
<http://opcw.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=6576&ctl=Details&mid=10358&ItemID=21794&language=en-US>

**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=>

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

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

OCHA: <http://www.unocha.org/crisis/syria>

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

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

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

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

UN on social media:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UN>

Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/unitednations>

Tumblr: <http://united-nations.tumblr.com/>

Photo galleries:

UNHCR: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c25d.html>

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

OCHA: <http://www.unocha.org/media-resources/photo-gallery>

UNICEF: http://www.unicef.org/photography/photo_2013.php#UNI82253

IRIN: <http://www.irinnews.org/photo/>