



General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 May 2017

English only

Human Rights Council

Thirty-fifth session

6-23 June 2017

Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by The Palestinian Return Centre Ltd, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 May 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.17-08574(E)



* 1 7 0 8 5 7 4 *

Please recycle 



Statistics on Palestinians from the Syrian Arab Republic (PRS) during the period from July 1st 2016 until December 31st 2016

It is an undeniable reality that the Palestinian refugee community has been among the worst groups affected by the bloodshed and atrocities wrought by the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, an over 6-year war which has negatively affected not only their socio-economic conditions but also their health and psychological well-being.

Seeking to bring awareness to the plight of the Palestinians of Syria to the forefront, the Action Group for Palestinians of Syria (AGPS) has conducted extensive research on the ground to document the situation endured by the Palestinian refugee community in war-torn Syria, despite the difficulties and risks present on the ground since the start of violence in March 2011.

This report examines the case of the Palestinians of Syria during the period from July 2016 to the end of December 2016.

Victims

As of December 2016, AGPS documented the total death of 3,414 Palestinians in Syria due to war-related incidents.

- 138 Palestinians from Syria were confirmed dead during the second half of 2016, down from 173 deaths in the first half of the year.
- 311 Palestinians from Syria were killed in 2016, compared to 480 in 2015

Civilian and Non-civilian Casualties

41% of the PRS victims who were killed in the second half of 2016 (56 refugees) are identified by AGPS as non-combatants, down from 66% (115 refugees) civilian victims during the first half of 2016.

59% of those killed during the second half of 2016 (some 82 refugees) are believed to be combatants affiliated with the government and anti-government battalions, an increase of 34% (58 refugees) from the first half.

Casualties by Gender and Age

Females made up nearly 4% while also minors amounted to 4% of the total death toll during the second half of 2016. The warfare claimed the lives of six females, 132 males, 6 minors, and 132 adults from July to December 2016. Male deaths amounted to 95.65% of the total casualties.

Temporal Distribution of Casualties

The highest number of casualties during the second half of 2016 was recorded in September, with 43 victims. The second highest month in the second half of the year was July, with 27 deaths.

See below the number of casualties AGPS recorded during each month between July and December 2016:

- July: 27
- August: 12
- September: 43
- October: 24
- November: 17
- December 15

Geographical Distribution

135 Palestinian refugees were killed in the Syrian territories in addition to 3 Palestinian refugees from Syria who died in Lebanon.

40 Palestinian refugees died inside refugee camps in Syria, mostly in Khan AlSheih with 25 casualties, followed by Yarmouk Camp with 7 refugees. 95 Palestinians died in other locations across the beleaguered Syrian territories.

As to provinces; Rif Dimashq Province hit a record high of 63 victims followed by Aleppo province with 15 casualties. 12 refugees died in Damascus, 9 in Deir AlZor, 8 in Daraa, 4 in Homs. Meanwhile 24 others in unidentified locations

Casualties by Refugee Camps during second half of 2016:

- Khan AlSheih Camp – Rif Dimashq: 25 (62.50%)
- Yarmouk – Damascus: 7 (17.50%)
- Daraa Camp – Daraa: 4 (10.00%)
- Handarat Camp – Aleppo: 4 (10.00%)

Victims by major provinces:

- Rif Dimashq: 63
- Unknown: 20
- Aleppo: 15
- Damascus: 12
- Deir AlZor: 9
- Daraa: 8
- Homs: 4
- Idlib: 2
- Latakia: 1
- AlQunteira: 1

Victims by Cause of Death

Clashes and armed confrontations took the lives of 73 Palestinians during the second half of 2016. 39 refugees died under shelling of missiles, barrel bombs, and artillery shells. 10 others were tortured to death in Syrian prisons. Three Palestinians died as a result of undernourishment and medical neglect in besieged Yarmouk Camp. AGPS kept record of the death of 190 Palestinians in war-torn Syria as a result of blockades and starvation.

Casualties by leading cause of death:

- Gunfire: 73 (52.90%)
- Shelling: 39 (28.26%)
- Torture: 10 (7.25%)
- Sniper attack: 4 (2.90%)
- Medical neglect: 3 (2.17%)
- Abduction followed by murder: 3 (2.17%)
- Blockade: 3 (2.17%)
- Unknown: 1 (0.72%)
- Assassination: 1 (0.72%)
- Blast: 1 (0.72%)

Detainees

The second half of 2016 witnessed an increase in the rate of Palestinian detainees compared to the first half. AGPS recorded the detention and abduction of 48 refugees across Syria: 13 Palestinian residents of Khan AlSheih Camp in Rif Dimashq, and 11 others sheltered in Homs-based AlAydeen Camp were arrested during this period.

Detainees by Camp/Province

- Khan AlSheih Camp – Rif Dimashq: 13 (1.17%)
- AlAydeen Camp – Homs: 11 (0.99%)
- Unknown: 7 (0.63%)
- AlNeirab Camp – Aleppo: 5 (0.45%)
- AlMuzeireeb – Daraa: 4 (0.36%)
- Yarmouk Camp – Damascus: 4 (0.36%)
- AlMu'dhamiya – Rif Dimashq: 1 (0.09%)
- Daraa Camp – Daraa: 1 (0.09%)

- AlHusseiniya Camp – Rif Dimashq: 1 (0.09%)
- AlSbeina Camp – Rif Dimashq: 1 (0.09%)

Forced disappearances across Syrian territories targeted all age categories. 75-year-old woman Umm Omar Amsheh, a resident of Yarmouk, was arrested on September 27, 2016, as she passed through the government-run AlKadam checkpoint, in Rif Dimashq. 20-year-old Palestinian university student Rawand Abu AlSou'oud, from AlMuzeireeb, was detained for 10 days on her way to the campus.

Several Palestinian refugees were also arrested by the opposition forces in Syria. Refugee Faysal AlKhaled was arrested by Sham AlRasoul brigade on September 9, 2016, at the Yalda checkpoint in Rif Dimashq. The detainee is the director of the Palestine Hospital and the Red Crescent chief in the southern area.

Palestinian refugees Omar Suleiman, Khaled Suleiman, Ammar Aziz, and Khaled Hussein were kidnapped by ISIS militias from Rajm AlBaqar area, in AlSweida's northeastern outskirts (south of Syria) on their way to Turkey.

Victims of Torture

10 Palestinians were tortured to death in Syrian government penitentiaries during the second half of 2016, bringing the number of torture victims in 2016 to 26. The overall number of victims of torture and enforced deportation among the Palestinian community in war-torn Syria totals 457.

Conclusion

The report highlights the harsh reality of the Palestinians living in Syria. It underscores the flagrant human rights violations perpetrated against the Palestinians both inside and outside the Syrian territories.

The Palestinian refugee community from Syria has been grappling with their vulnerable legal status and their lack of the right to physical protection.

The situation has also been tragic in the new asylum destinations, where Palestinians of Syria are treated as foreigners and stateless individuals, and are thus denied the right to permanent stays, family reunifications, job opportunities, and freedom of movement inside and out.

AGPS appeals to all stakeholders and UN bodies, among all concerned institutions, to take serious and urgent action vis-à-vis the crises wrought on the Palestinians of Syria, and to push all warring actors to neutralize Palestinian refugee camps and keep refugees protected from armed conflicts.