



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda items 3 and 4

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

**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.

[28 May 2021]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



## **Palestinian Refugees from Syrian Arab Republic in Jordan**

As a new wave of coronavirus has hit hard the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) along with other parts of the world, Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in Jordan continue to grapple with increasing hardships. The perils of the highly contagious virus have worsened the torment already experienced throughout the conflict.

Shocking UN data indicates that over 90% of PRS in Jordan are in need of humanitarian assistance. In its factsheet entitled “Syria Regional Crisis Emergency Appeal 2021”, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) sounded the alarm over the dire humanitarian situation confronted by PRS in Jordan due to long-term displacement and difficult socio-economic conditions, coupled with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to UNRWA, 17,800 PRS are in need of UNRWA cash assistance. Of these, hundreds reside in King Abdullah Park (KAP), facing movement restrictions and a number of protection concerns.<sup>1</sup>

While most of PRS in Jordan are assessed as highly vulnerable, many of them additionally face a difficult protection situation, mainly due to their precarious legal status in the country.

Back in 2013, the Government of Jordan announced a policy of non-entry to Palestinians fleeing the Syria conflict. This stemmed the flow of Palestine refugees from Syria towards Jordan and compounded the extreme vulnerability of Palestinians seeking safety in Syria, as well as that of those who managed to enter Jordan.

The irregular status of PRS in Jordan means they endure a considerable degree of insecurity. They face difficulties in civil processes such as registration of births and in access to government services and are at constant risk of refoulement.<sup>2</sup>

Palestinian refugees who illegally entered Jordan holding Syrian travel documents also said the Jordanian authorities impose a sum of a dinar and a half (over 2 USD) on every day spent in Jordan starting their entry date.

Palestinian refugees who have entered from conflict zones, including Syria, to Jordan are irregularly living under continuous risk of arrest, detention and potential for forced deportation. Their lack of legal status and corresponding protection risks in Jordan are a source of major concern.

PRS’ vulnerability is further aggravated by a dire socio-economic condition and their lack of access to the labor market. Most of them live below the poverty line; Women and children are exposed to different forms of violence and persons with disabilities suffer social exclusion.

At the same time, hundreds of recorded PRS are members of female-headed households, which increases their vulnerability.

Delays in humanitarian aid delivery by UNRWA and other relief institutions have intensified. Every registered PRS receives a sum of 85 Jordanian dinars. Holders of the national Jordanian number receive 52 dinars. The sums lag far behind the refugees’ most basic needs in a country where prices have tripled and even quadrupled.

An assessment of UNRWA’s output by the Palestinian refugee communities from Syria, as figures in a poll published by AGPS on its official website, found out that 61.4% of the refugees in Jordan believe the cash grants provided by the agency do not meet their

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/syria\\_2021\\_ea\\_factsheet\\_eng.pdf](https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/syria_2021_ea_factsheet_eng.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unrwa.org/prs-jordan>.

demands. 24.3% said they are insufficient. 15.7% of respondents also dubbed aid reception as “life-threatening” while 34.3% said it is difficult.<sup>3</sup>

PRS in Jordan continue to launch distress calls over their lack of access to healthcare services and the complicated red tape slapped by government-run hospitals and health centres across the Jordanian territories.

Owing to such an alarming situation, the UN should work on increasing cash and in-kind aid to PRS to enable them to cover their basic needs, including food, medicines, clothing, and housing. Cash grants should be delivered to the refugees on a monthly rather than a trimestral basis.

The UN should also make serious endeavours to ensure PRS’ access to the local labor market and increase employability chances by creating new livelihoods and boosting individual enterprises.

The UNHRC should pressurize and encourage UNRWA to strengthen its capacity to monitor and respond to protection issues affecting PRS.

The UNHRC should pressurize the Government of Jordan to uphold the international legal principles of non-refoulement and secure the refugees’ rights to legal protection and access to vital services, particularly healthcare and education.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.actionpal.org.uk/en/post/8131/palestinians-from-syria-rally-outside-of-unrwa-office-in-jordan>.