



# Palestinians of Syria and the Closed Doors

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Semi-Annual Field Report on the Situation of the  
Palestinians of Syria for the Period from July to  
the End of December 2016



# **Palestinians of Syria and the Closed Doors**

Semi-Annual Field Report on the Situation of the Palestinians of Syria  
for the Period from July to the End of December 2016

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## Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
 <b>1- General Overview</b>	
Economic Indicators .....	2
Health Indicators .....	2
Human Rights Indicators.....	3
 <b>2 - Palestinian refugee camps and communities in Syria</b>	
Yarmouk Camp:.....	4
Khan Eshieh Camp.....	11
Handarat Camp: .....	21
Neirab Camp: .....	22
Daraa Camp: .....	23
Husseneia Camp: .....	25
Sbeineh Camp: .....	26
Al-Sayeda Zeinab Camp.....	26
Khan Dannun Camp: .....	27
Jaramana Camp: .....	27
Al Aedin Camp in Homs: .....	28
Al Aedin Camp in Hama: .....	30
Raml Camp in Latakia: .....	30
al-Muzeireeb community: .....	31
Qudsaya Community:.....	31
 <b>3- Palestinian refugees outside Syria:.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon.....	33
Palestinians from Syria in Jordan: .....	38
Palestinian refugees from Syria in Egypt: .....	39
Palestinian refugees from Syria in Turkey: .....	39

Palestinians from Syria in Europe .....	41
Legal Status of Palestinians from Syria in Europe .....	43
Awareness-raising campaigns, solidarity events .....	44
Success stories .....	44
Risks Encountered on Migration Road.....	45
<b>The Turkish-European agreement.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>4- Victims and detainees.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Conclusion: .....</b>	<b>60</b>

## Introduction

It has become a fact of history that the Palestinian refugee community has been among the worst affected by the bloodshed and atrocities wrought by the conflict in Syria, which affected their socio-economic conditions as it did their health and psychological well being. Seeking to bring the news of the Palestinians of Syria to the forefront, AGPS has conducted intensive research to document the situation endured by the Palestinian refugee community in war-torn Syria, despite the difficulties and risks emerging on the scene as war has kicked into full gear since March 2011.

The report examines the situation of the Palestinians of Syria for the period from July 2016 to the end of December 2016.

The report sheds light on the exacerbated situation endured by the Palestinians of Syria as a result of the raging warfare and the tragic fallouts inflicted on the Palestinian refugee community, including the mass waves of enforced deportation, dislodgement, the tough blockade, and carnages.

The report provides thorough data on the daily onslaughts, death toll, number of detainees, and missing refugees in war-torn Syria. It also underscores the crises endured by the Palestinian community in refugee camps across the embattled Syrian territories. The report further cites cases of success stories achieved by Palestinians from Syria nationwide and overseas. At the same time, the study provides a detailed account of the violations perpetrated against the Palestinians from Syria on the asylum-seeking road and in such new destinations as Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, and Europe.

The report is based on data compiled by a team of field reporters, on-the-spot observers, journalists, and researchers.

AGPS is a London-based human rights watchdog that monitors the situation of Palestinian refugees in war-torn Syria. In seeking to fulfill this goal, AGPS team does its best to uphold the finest standards of historiographic ethics and maintain honesty in sourcing. To that very end, live snapshots, footages, and sworn affidavits are taken directly from the fighting scene across a myriad of flashpoints so as to authenticate AGPS role as a human rights overseer.

We are reshaping global media on human rights documentation and relentlessly working to boost our status as one of the world's most revered and most consulted human rights observatories.

## 1- General Overview

The simmering tide of hostilities in war-tattered Syria has given birth to movements of mass-exodus among the Palestinian refugee community.

U.N. figures kept record of the internal displacement of 7.6 million persons while 4.6 million refugees have sought shelter overseas.<sup>(1)</sup> At the same time, deals struck between the different warring actors brought hostilities to a standstill in such beleaguered areas as Darayya, al-Mu'dhamiya, Khan Esheih, and Qudsaya.

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(1) Amnesty, "Amnesty International Report Syria 2015/2016," <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/syria/report-syria/>



AGPS kept record of the death of at least 3,414 Palestinian refugees from Syria due to war-related incidents. The situation has gone far worse due to the socio-economic crises rocking Palestinian refugee camps inside and outside the Syrian territories.

## **Economic Indicators**

- Poverty rate has hit 86.7% as a result of the raging warfare.
- Syria stands as 2016's worst economic performers due to the swift hike in the individual cost of living, particularly among those who have lost their jobs as a result of the security mayhem and bankruptcy faced by several companies. Others have been unable to secure food, heating kit, and transportation fees after they have gone homeless and have, thus, been forced to rent a room or a small house to take provisional cover in.
- The continued plummeting of the Syrian pound's exchange rate, which dropped by 91,66%, compared to an exchange rate of 600 SYP/USD, has added insult to injury. The average household income needed per every single month is estimated at 240,000 SYP in order for a family to slightly rise above the poverty line, according to the findings of a report by Firil Center for Studies - Berlin (FCFS).
- Vegetable and fruit prices saw a leap of, consecutively, up to 1,690% and 1,310% in 2016 while dairy products rose by 1,180%. Meat prices have also increased by 1,100% compared to 2010.
- A ton of firewood has gone up as high as 40,000 SYP, up from 12,000 SYP prior to the war, forcing civilians to burn ragged clothes and plastic stuff, among other flammable materials, to keep warm.
- Relief aids donated by charities and international organizations fall usually in the hands of well-off families at the expense of the poor and needy people, resulting in a situation where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

## **Health Indicators**

- There are no exact figures on the number of doctors who have been displaced from Syria. Yet, preliminary data indicate that 28% to 34% of doctors registered with the Health Ministry fled the country. In a number of villages there exist no doctors or paramedical staff to evacuate or treat the wounded and diseased civilians.
- Over 61% of local hospitals and medical centers have either been totally or partially knocked down. 59 hospitals and 378 health centers suspended their services. 418 ambulances were either destroyed or stolen in the rampant warfare.
- Water supplies and sewage systems are deteriorating fast due to the unabated shelling and blasts. In several reported cases, water sewage networks have turned into passageways crossed by armed militias to reach their war preys.
- Mounds of garbage are being heaped up everywhere and civilians are forced to drink contaminated water mixed with sewage liquids.



## Human Rights Indicators

The human rights situation in Syria had seen a remarkable turn for the worse during the second half of 2016. As violence continued with fervor and unpredictability during the period under examination, daily cases of human rights violations are reported to and documented by AGPS.

- **Movement:**

Palestinians from Syria have been denied free and easy access into Syria's neighboring states, most of which have opted for a closed-door immigration policy.

- **Use of barrel bombs and direct onslaughts on civilians:**

Palestinian refugee camps in Syria have come under heavy shelling by the different warring parties. Upon more than one occasion, Daraa, Khan Eshieh, and Handarat camps have been targeted with gas cylinders, barrel bombs, and surface-to-surface missiles.

At the same time, hit-and-run offensives have reached a zenith in Yarmouk Camp between the opposition outfits (namely ISIS and al-Nusra Front) in an attempt to hold sway over the shelter, and also between the pro-regime squads and the armed militias in the camp.

- **Blockade**

Hundreds of refugees have been trapped in Yarmouk Camp due to the blockade enforced by the Syrian government troops since July 2013. As a result, civilians and humanitarian envoys have been denied access out of and into the camp, causing an acute dearth in much-needed food items and medicines. The situation has gone far worse due to the chronic power and water blackouts rocking the shelter.

AGPS kept account of the death of at least 192 Palestinians due to undernourishment and medical neglect in the besieged camp.

Meanwhile, ISIS militias have tightened the noose around territories run by Fatah al- Sham squads (formerly known as al-Nusra Front) in Yarmouk.

A partial blockade imposed by the government forces on Khan Eshieh Camp has developed into a complete closure during the second half of 2016. Daraa Camp has also been blockaded for over 1,000 days running.

- **Enforced deportation and displacement:**

Palestinian refugees have been denied access to their shelters via government-run checkpoints, despite the retreat of armed groups. Residents of Sbeineh Camp have been tragically affected by the ban. However, the government forces allowed a number of pro-regime residents of Husseneia Camp to return to their homes, under strict conditions.

The last quarter of 2016 witnessed the deportation of nearly 250 Palestinian families from Khan al- Sheih Camp to the northern Syrian province of Idlib following a reconciliation deal struck between the opposition outfits and the government battalions.

- **Abductions and enforced disappearance:**

AGPS kept record of the incarceration of 1,137 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government penitentiaries, among whom 80 female refugees. At the same time, 301 Palestinian refugees have gone missing while 457 others were tortured to death in those very lock-ups, amid increasing concerns over the mysterious fates endured by the detainees and victims of enforced disappearance.

## **2 - Palestinian refugee camps and communities in Syria:**

Palestinian refugee camps and communities in Syria have been the permanent targets of shelling, crackdown sweeps, and aggressions by all warring actors due to their strategic geographical location or affiliations with a particular warring actor.

### **A) Palestinian camps:**

- **Yarmouk Camp:**

Sporadic offensives and bloody clashes between ISIS and al-Nusra Front, on the one hand, and ISIS and the government forces, on the other, rocked Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees during the second half of 2016.

In early April 2016, the situation has seen a turn for the worse after ISIS announced its intent to seize Yarmouk and force al-Nusra Front out of the camp following disagreements over a deal struck between ISIS and the Syrian government. The deal ruled for the withdrawal of ISIS fighters from al-Hajar al-Aswad and Yarmouk.

Meanwhile, a tough cordon has been imposed by the government troops and their Palestinian partners on the camp since mid-July 2013, blocking the access of civilians and humanitarian convoys via the northern entrance to the shelter.

### **► ISIS and Fatah al-Sham: Hostilities and blockade:**

During the second half of 2016, ISIS strived to force Fatah al-Sham Front (formerly known as al-Nusra Front) to leave the camp by all means available. As a result, bloody hostilities had taken place between the two battalions and culminated in ISIS capture of Fatah al-Sham-led areas.

On August 2, 2016, ISIS intensified presence in the area and set off notifications to civilians in al-Rija Square, signaling the imminent takeover of Fatah al-Sham-run zones.

Civilians were left with two options: Either to remain in areas newly captured by ISIS or else to flee to the nearby towns of Yalda, Babila, and Beit Sahem, south of Damascus.

Since August 5, 2016, ISIS has slapped a tough cordon on and around al-Rija, Ein Ghazal, and Haifa Street, in Yarmouk, after it closed off the sole access road to areas led by Fatah al-Sham, blocking the access of civilians and foodstuff out of and into the camp in an attempt to force Fatah al-Sham fighters to turn themselves in or leave the besieged camp.

On September 5, 2016, ISIS ordered the stranded families in Fatah al-Sham-controlled zones to leave the area before it is completely closed off.

On August 15, 2016, ISIS evacuated the Uruba Street in Yarmouk, declaring the area a flashpoint with the opposition outfits deployed in the nearby Yalda town. Civilian families were ordered to seek shelter somewhere inside the camp.

On December 4, 2016, Mohamed Aboud, nicknamed Abu Ali Khamseen, was executed by Fatah al-Sham in al-Rija Square, controlled by the battalion, after he was kidnapped on allegations of collaborating with ISIS in Yarmouk.

### ► Deals and initiatives:

A round of talks and negotiations had taken place during the second half of 2016 in order to lift the siege on Yarmouk Camp. However the dream had never come true and talk rounds have been ongoing to that very end.

On July 8, 2016, talks brokered by delegates from the Syrian government and Fatah al-Sham culminated in a draft agreement to deport Fatah al-Sham fighters and their families from Yarmouk to the northwestern Syrian province of Idlib, the stronghold of Fatah al-Sham battalion.

Fatah al-Sham affiliates, estimated at 150 members, were expected to retreat through the Rama crossroads, controlled by the group, north of Yarmouk.

On August 1, 2016, head of the civil council in Yarmouk, Fawzi Hamid, announced a forthcoming deal between the Syrian government, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and ISIS to completely lift the blockade on Yarmouk.

Key to the deal was a complete ceasefire in the camp and a cessation of hostilities in nearby areas, including al-Tadhamun neighborhood. The deal also stipulated that a free passageway be opened between Yarmouk and Palestine Street before civilians and aids and that no person be arrested under any circumstances, whatsoever.

On December 15, 2016, reports emerged on an imminent deal between the Syrian government and ISIS ruling that the latter retreat from southern Damascus, including from Yarmouk and al-Hajar al-Aswad, to eastern al-Qalamoun.

Other reports also emerged on a looming accord between al-Buraq Brigade, affiliated with Yarmouk Residents Movement, headed by Essam Azzam, nicknamed Abu al-Abd Essam, and the Syrian regime army to form a new group administered by the movement following ISIS withdrawal from the camp.

### ► ISIS violations in Yarmouk:

ISIS had come down heavily on civilians in Yarmouk Camp, controlling all that is said and done. A strict dress code was imposed in areas it controls in the camp, forcing women, including minors below the age of 18, to have on black wears covering their bodies from head to toe under the religious pretext.

Yarmouk residents said life in the camp has become unbearable as “ISIS have been reining in personal freedoms, manipulating private life, and humiliating men and women nonstop.”

AGPS reporter said ISIS has closed off the main entry/exit points for the residents of Fatah al-Sham-led areas, blocking their access to food and water.

Dozens of Palestinians and Syrians sheltered in the camp have also been kidnapped by ISIS on charges of delivering foodstuff to Fatah al-Sham militants.

On July 25, 2016, a man accused of adultery and lifting a banner reading “100 whips over adultery charges” was publically flogged by an ISIS militant, as emerged in a photo report propagated on social media networks.

On July 28, 2016, a number of civilians in Yarmouk were detained by ISIS for smoking cigarettes in public places. Whoever is caught smoking by ISIS is systematically held for one day in the group’s lock-ups in southern Syria.

On August 3, 2016, ISIS ruled for closing all schools in Yarmouk and dismissing the teaching staff, except for those accredited by ISIS. The militia also imposed new curricula for the 2016-7 academic year and ordered civilians who would like to work independently from ISIS, at an estimated salary of 25,000 Syrian Pounds, to register their names in no more than a week’s time.

On August 19, 2016, ISIS prevented an elderly resident from leaving Fatah al-Sham-led zones, which were controlled by ISIS, for urgent treatment over cardiovascular disorders.

On September 9, 2016, two girls were flogged by ISIS at a checkpoint pitched in Uruba Street, south of Yarmouk, on charges of taking off the part of the veil which covers their faces after they left the camp. Another resident was whipped in al-Uruba over drug consumption.

On September 29, 2016, ISIS flogged three young men after they were accused of public and recurring smoking. Snapshots released by ISIS also showed a civilian as being beaten over adultery charges.

On October 9, 2016, ISIS razed refugee tombs to the ground in Yarmouk Cemetery under the religious pretext, in a move seen by activists as violating the sanctity of Palestinian dead bodies, including dozens of Palestinian leaders assassinated by the Israeli occupation and buried in Yarmouk graveyard.

Live photos released by ISIS on October 30, 2016 show ISIS affiliated al-Hasaba fighters as flogging a civilian for selling cigarettes. Piles of cigarettes were also burned down in the process. Another picture showed a man being checked for the length of his trousers, which ISIS fanatics said should be raised above the ankle. ISIS further distributed religious wears, which they said women should be compulsorily dressed in.

The imposed decrees further included banning poultry breeding. Those who violate the rule are likely to face confiscation, slaughter, and gun shooting. Clapping in weddings and smoking have also been declared illegal by ISIS. Penalties included prisons and fines of up to 42,000 Syrian Pounds.

ISIS further prohibited photographing and selling firewood in the camp. A curfew was also slapped on the camp during prayer times. Those who do not head to the mosque to perform their prayers are subjected to public flogging.

ISIS militias have also shut down all schools and prevented residents of al-Rija square from entering food to the area due to the alleged presence of al-Nusra Front affiliates. ISIS further outlawed soccer in streets and schools.

### ► Arrests and executions:

Palestinian activists in Yarmouk have been the permanent targets of sniper attacks, abduction sweeps, and executions. On July 15, 2016, Palestinian activist Bahaa al-Amin, head of Bisan Sports Club in Yarmouk and a Fatah leader, was fatally gunned down by an anonymous sniper near a checkpoint set up in the vicinities of Yarmouk’s automated bakery.

The casualty had been arrested by ISIS and al-Nusra Front on several occasions. Sometime earlier, he was prevented by ISIS from entering foodstuff to stranded civilians.

On July 23, 2016, Palestinian activist Abdullah al-Khatib was rushed to a field clinic in Yalda town after he was shot and injured by gunmen in his hand and stomach near his house in the town. The attack is the second assassination attempt survived by al-Khatib.

On September 24, 2016, Palestinian refugee Muhannad Farhoud Abdul Ilah was released from ISIS penitentiaries, where he had been held for a few days on charges of collaboration with opposition outfits.

ISIS-affiliated al-Farhoud was the head of Yarmouk's local council, run by the opposition, before he formed the so-called Relief Commission of Yarmouk Camp.

On November 9, 2016, Sham al-Rasoul brigade, affiliated with the opposition in Rif Dimashq, released the Palestinian refugee, Faysal al-Khaled, the director of the Palestine Hospital and Red Crescent chief in the southern area. Refugee al-Khaled was arrested by the opposition outfits deployed at the Yalda checkpoint a few days earlier.

Hundreds of other Palestinian refugees and activists from Yarmouk Camp were also arrested and kidnapped by the Syrian government forces. On August 1, 2016, the pro-government Palestine Branch arrested the commander of Buraq Brigades, Essam Beitari, called Abu al-Abd Essam on his way from opposition-led areas south of Damascus to government-run zones via the Babila-Sidi Miqdad roadblock so as to broker negotiations over the fate of stranded civilians in Yarmouk. Abu al-Abd Essam was released on September 5, 2016.

In a statement published on the Facebook page of al-Buraq Brigades, Abu al-Abd Essam announced that the group would sever all ties with al-Nusra Front and retreat from al-Rija Square to areas controlled by ISIS in Yarmouk. The move was opted for following a deal struck between the regime army and al-Nusra Front and which stipulated that the latter retreat to Idlib and that the area be entirely emptied and disarmed. The decision adopted by al-Buraq also came after al-Nusra fighters refused to hand over their sites in al-Rija and to supply the battalion with arms. Following such disagreements, Buraq Brigades voiced their intent to remain in Yarmouk and defend its residents against imminent threats.

### ► Health situation:

The health situation in Yarmouk Camp had gone sharply downhill in the period under examination as hundreds of civilians who caught life-threatening diseases did not receive adequate treatment.

The tough cordons and checkpoints set up by the different warring parties in and around Yarmouk led to an acute dearth in much-needed medicines and medical equipment. Several relief institutions ceased to operate in the area for fear of being kidnapped by ISIS or the government forces.

Wounded civilians have also encountered several hindrances while trying to reach health centers through government checkpoints. As a result, civilians have increasingly been diagnosed with typhoid and jaundice due to undernourishment, the water crisis, poor hygiene, and absence of relief assistance.

Director of the Medical Rescue Center (MRC) in al-Rija, Doctor Reyad Idris, dubbed the humanitarian and health situation in the blockaded area "tragic." He said such lethal



diseases and syndromes as typhoid fever, upper respiratory tract infections, and skin rash spread in the territory, particularly among children below eight-years-old.

ISIS crackdowns on relief activists and medical staff, along with the misappropriation of medical equipment from local clinics and the cordon imposed on Ein Ghazal Street, added insult to the injury. On September 27, 2016, ISIS stole one of the main power generators from Basil Medical Center, run by Palestine Charity near Safad Street, in Yarmouk. The generator was transferred to an ISIS stronghold in the nearby Hajar al-Aswad area.

Activists said ISIS had transferred all medical equipment from Basil Center to an unknown location in Hajar al-Aswad and that all hospitals and clinics in the camp had ceased to operate, except for the underequipped Palestine Clinic.

On August 21, 2016, al-Rija-based MRC raised alarm bells over the tragic situation in Yarmouk Camp due to the lack of foodstuff and uncontaminated water as a result of the blockade imposed by ISIS, on the one hand, and the pro-government forces, on the other.

In a video leaked from the area, MRC director, Dr. Idris, said civilians trapped in Fatah al-Sham-run al-Rija were forced to drink stagnant water from untreated wells. Several residents caught gastroenteritis, typhoid, upper respiratory tract infections, and skin rashes.

### ► Education:

During the second half of 2016, the education crisis in Yarmouk had sharply worsened due to the oppressive measures slapped by ISIS and which affected the academic output and careers of nearly 1,500 learners sheltered in the camp.

On August 3, 2016, ISIS ruled for closing all schools in Yarmouk and dismissing the teaching staff, except for those accredited by ISIS. The militia also imposed new curricula for the 2016-7 academic year and ordered civilians who would like to work independently from ISIS, at an estimated salary of 25,000 Syrian Pounds, to register their names in no more than a week's time.

On September 19, 2016, the first day of school in Syria, ISIS shut down all schools in the camp and only kept one school for boys near Ibrahim al-Khalil Mosque, in al-Uruba Street, and another for girls in al-Hajar al-Aswad open. New curricula were, meanwhile, imposed by ISIS.

A rally was held by stranded women in Yarmouk Camp in protest at ISIS measures and to push for reopening schools.

ISIS further closed all alternative schools in Yarmouk and ordered the residents to enroll at its newly-opened schools. Many refused to succumb to ISIS threats saying they prefer that their children stay indoors rather than be taught in ISIS-run institutions.

On July 27, 2016, secondary and high school learners gained access out of Yarmouk Camp to sit for final exams for 2016's catch-up round. UNRWA and the Arab Palestinian Refugees General Commission helped the concerned learners gain a safe access out of and into Yarmouk.

On October 14, 2016, a safe passageway was agreed to enable secondary school learners to leave the camp to sit for 2016-7 nationwide exam round at Sa'id al-As College and Palestine College in Damascus. Students came back to the camp on October 16, 2016.

### ► **Water crisis:**

The Syrian government has cut off water supplies to Yarmouk Camp and its environs since September 9, 2014, leaving relief charities with no other option than to reclaim artesian water wells.

The situation has gone far worse due to a tough blockade imposed on Yarmouk by ISIS militias and al-Nusra Front since April 2014. Following clashes with al-Nusra Front on April 7, 2016, ISIS tightened grip on the camp, blocking civilians' access out of the beleaguered shelter to fetch water.

AGPS has often sounded the alarm over the swift propagation of life-threatening diseases and infections among thousands of stranded civilians and refugees in the area due to contaminated water supplies from al-Fija line. Several children have been diagnosed with sharp diarrhea, inflammatory bowel diseases, and leishmaniasis, among other lethal infections.

### ► **Living conditions:**

Those taking shelter in the camp have been subjected to dire living conditions due to the shortage in food, medicines, and fuel inflicted by the blockade imposed by the government forces and their Palestinian partners for three consecutive years.

ISIS capture of large parts of the camp and crackdowns on civilians have added bad to worse. ISIS militias have tightened the noose around the residents of al-Rija Square, Haifa Street, and Safouriya, in western Yarmouk Camp, on account that they are controlled by Fatah al-Sham battalion. The blockade has resulted in tough restrictions on civilians' movement and on the entry of food items into the shelter in an attempt to force Fatah al-Sham fighters to throw in the towel.

Over 50 families, along with the families of Fatah al-Sham fighters, had been sheltered in the area. Instructors working at Yarmouk schools had, meanwhile, been allowed access out of and into the territory.

Civilians trapped in Ein Ghazal and Fatah al-Sham-controlled zones in Yarmouk had frequently sounded distress signals over the tragic upshots of ISIS cordon, which they said resulted in more victims of famine and medical neglect.

ISIS also called the residents to evacuate their homes in the area, threatening to gun down whoever dares move inside and out.

Sources inside Yarmouk said the local relief office brokered an agreement between ISIS and Fatah al-Sham to allow civilians stranded in ISIS-run Ein Ghazal a safe access out of the area.

On August 25, 2016, dozens of families trapped in ISIS-led zones were prevented from receiving legal contracts to obtain UNRWA cash allowances.

ISIS militias further looted a UNRWA office in Yarmouk and put down the names of their affiliates on aid lists at gunpoint.

The water and power crisis, along with the mounds of trash pile accumulated in streets, forced dozens to seek shelter elsewhere. Civilians had to walk for dozens of hours to get some liters of drinking water. At the same time, ISIS had been dragging their feet vis-à-vis civilians' appeals to secure water supplies and remove garbage piles from streets.



### ► Key events:

- On July 15, 2016, clashes burst out between ISIS and al-Nusra Front near the office of the Palestine Charity Commission, after ISIS militias targeted the area with homemade bombs. al-Nusra Front snipers also attacked ISIS strongholds near Abdul Qadir al-Husseini Mosque after the latter crept into al-Nusra-run zones. Two ISIS fighters were pronounced dead and three others wounded in the clashes.
- On July 18, 2016, violent clashes flared up near Yarmouk municipality, in Palestine Street, the Court Square, and al-Rija Square. Heavy and medium machineguns were reportedly used in the clashes. Confrontations between the opposition outfits and the pro-government forces also burst out in Nisreen Street, at the crossroads of al-Amin bakery, and in al-Tadhamun neighborhood, adjacent to Yarmouk Camp.
- On July 21, 2016, a woman was wounded on the main access road to Yarmouk Camp after she was hit with two sniper bullets. The injured lady was treated at the Medical Rescue Center in Yarmouk.
- On July 28, 2016, the Syrian government forces struck Yarmouk's western neighborhoods with anti-tank missiles, resulting in material damage.
- On August 7, 2016, sounds of heavy blasts were detected in Yarmouk after the Syrian regime army struck al-Tarboush area, to the east, with a ground-to-ground missile. Violent clashes between the government forces and the anti-government al-Kara'in Brigade were also spotted near Yarmouk municipality, where heavy machineguns and shells were used.
- On August 7, 2016, ISIS released the Palestinian activist Maher al-yan a few days after he was kidnapped from his home in Yarmouk Camp on allegations of photographing an event at a school in the camp without taking ISIS permission.
- On August 12, 2016, clashes burst out in Palestine Street, near the municipality, between the pro-regime troops and al-Kara'in battalion. Machineguns and shells were used in the clashes. No injuries were reported.
- On October 11, 2016, violent clashes flared up in Yarmouk between the pro-government forces and ISIS near Yarmouk's Secondary School, in Jalal Ka'oush Street. A round of shells was slammed into the camp. No casualties were reported in the clashes.
- On October 15, 2016, the Imam of Abdul Qadir al-Husseini Mosque, called Abu Omar, was hit with a sniper bullet in his shoulder near the main entrance to the mosque. The site is a flashpoint between Fatah al-Sham and ISIS in the besieged Yarmouk Camp.
- On October 15, 2016, violent clashes burst out in Yarmouk between the government forces and armed militias in the camp near the municipality, the secondary school, al-Sabarin School, and al-Karmal, in Jalal Ka'oush road, in Palestine Street.
- On October 16, 2016, the Syrian army struck ISIS-led zones in al-Shuhadaa sector, in Yarmouk, with mortar shells.
- On October 24, 2016, sporadic clashes flared up between al-Kara'in squad and the pro-regime outfits near the municipality and the Sports Market, adjacent to al-Tadhamun neighborhood, using light and medium weapons.
- On October 26, 2016, clashes between the government forces and al-Kara'in broke out near the municipality and the secondary school in Jala Ka'oush road, in Palestine Street. Shells hit the camp in the process.

- On November 15, 2016, the Syrian government forces attacked Yarmouk Camp with mortar shells, resulting in material damage. ISIS also claimed responsibility for onslaughts on sites controlled by the government forces and their Loyal forces near the main entrance to Yarmouk.
- On November 16, 2016, clashes between ISIS and Fatah al-Sham broke out at the crossroads to Haifa Street, in Yarmouk, using medium and light weapons. Fires broke out at civilian homes in the area.
- On November 18, 2016, artillery shells rocked Yarmouk Camp. Violent clashes also burst out at al-Karmel School crossroads and Sarfend between the pro-government battalions and the opposition outfits.
- On November 29, 2016, the Syria government army and their Palestinian partners hit al-Rija Square, in Yarmouk, with a round of missiles. At the same time, violent clashes burst out between the government forces and the armed groups. No injuries were reported on both sides.
- On December 1, 2016, violent confrontations between the pro-government forces and al-Kara'in Brigade rocked the crossroads to al-Sporat Street, in al-Tadhamun, and al-Malek, in Yarmouk.
- On December 5, 2016, Yarmouk Camp was struck with missiles, resulting in material damage. Pro-government Facebook pages said the offensive targeted ISIS-led sites in Yarmouk.
- On December 9, 2016, the Syrian regime army and their affiliated militias targeted residential neighborhoods in al-Thalathin Street with rockets. A heavy material damage was inflicted on civilian homes in the onslaught.
- On December 17, 2016, mortar shells hit Yarmouk Camp, resulting in material damage.

### • **Khan Eshieh Camp**

Residents of Khan Eshieh Camp, home to 12,000 Palestinian refugees, had been subjected to preplanned deportation, deadly attacks, and a tough blockade during the second half of 2016.

The Russian fighter jets had struck Khan Eshieh Camp and its adjacent areas, including Deirkhabiya, al-Muqeileeba, and the surrounding ranches, with internationally prohibited weapons. Civilian buildings, cultivates lands, sacred places of worship, and UN-run structures were all targeted in such onslaughts.

AGPS documented daily cases of executions and abduction, among other human rights violations against Khan Eshieh residents. Such violations can be summarized as follows:

- Attacks on the camp during the second half of 2016 left dozens of civilians dead and others wounded. Civilian homes and facilities were also reduced to rubble.
- The camp had come under heavy shelling using cluster grenades, napalm bombs, missiles, and barrel bombs.
- Several attacks were launched on ambulances, schools, civilian vehicles, and UNRWA offices.
- The Syrian regime army closed off all thoroughfares between the camp and Damascus since early October 2016, following a partial blockade enforced since 2013.

- Civilians had run out of much-needed foodstuff, bread, water, children's milk, and medicines. The situation had gone downhill following UNRWA cuts of its health services and recurrent attacks on health centers on Khan Eshieh's outskirts.
- Hundreds of civilians, relief activists, and journalists were deported to the northern Syrian province of Idlib following an agreement between the opposition outfits and the government forces. The agreement stipulated that the opposition fighters hand over their medium and heavy weapons and retreat to Idlib with their families.

### ► Appeals:

As warfare kicked into high gear in Syria, Khan Eshieh Camp came under heavy shelling using internationally-prohibited weapons. Infrastructure, health centers, and schools sustained heavy material damage. Dozens of civilians were pronounced dead and others wounded in a round of bloody hostilities rocking the shelter.

The residents had frequently appealed to the concerned bodies, Palestinian factions, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and UNRWA to step in and urge the Syrian and Russian abettors to cease deadly attacks on civilians after the camp had gone disarmed. The residents further called on UNRWA to assume its duties as regards the calamitous situation they had been made to endure in the beleaguered camp.

In another cry for help launched from the camp, civilians appealed for allowing a safe access of food aids, medicines, bread, and fuel into the camp. They further called for the need to make use of water wells and grant civilians' a secure passageway from which they can safely enter and exit the camp. Khan Eshieh residents had also frequently called for neutralizing the camp and keeping civilians away from armed conflicts.

### ► Official visit:

A delegation headed by al-Kiswa mayor, tasked by the government forces, popped in Khan Eshieh Camp on August 22, 2016. Palestinian and Syrian delegates from Khan Eshieh committee and the Palestine Charity Commission accompanied the delegation. The visit aimed to keep tabs on the situation in besieged Khan Eshieh Camp and the fallouts of air strikes on civilian facilities.

The delegation popped in schools, colleges, and the offices of Jafra and Palestine charities, along with UNRWA offices and other institutions operating in Khan Eshieh.

The envoy officially testified to the disarmed nature of the camp and pushed for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for securing a safe access out of and into the camp before civilians. However none of such pledges materialized on the ground and the government troops tightened even further the noose around civilians' neck.

### ► Khan Eshieh residents rebut Majdalani's statements:

On October 22, 2016, the residents of the Khan Eshieh Camp slammed Ahmed Majdalani, member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), for his statements, in which he alleged the presence of gunmen in the camp.

According to a statement issued by Khan Eshieh refugees, Majdalani's allegations "manifest to his intent to legitimize bombardment and military onslaughts on the camp."

“We would like to express our shock and disappointment over the thoughtless allegations released by such a senior Palestinian official,” said refugees in Khan Eshieh camp. “We believe that such a misconduct amounts to an act of barefaced incitement against us, civilians, and a call for more Syrian/Russian onslaughts on the camp.”

The statement dubbed Majdalani’s declarations an act of disloyalty and a stab in Palestinians’ back. Khan Eshieh residents reiterated the inherently arm-free nature of the camp, which has been corroborated by a Syrian supervisory delegation and by daily snapshots.

In the words of the Khan Eshieh residents, Majdalani’s statements represent a hollow lid aiming to decriminalize the crimes perpetrated against the Palestinian refugee community.

They added that Majdalani’s allegations fall in line with underway schemes of ethnic cleansing against the Palestinians which serve the interests of the Israeli occupation.

The refugees called on Majdalani to extend an apology over his claims and to show consideration for their struggle and history. They further urged the PLO to launch a probe into the above allegations, overthrow Majdalni, and to dispatch a delegation to the camp to attest to the counterfeit nature of his claims.

Majdalani’s statements sparked a tide of rage among the Palestinian refugee community, according to whom the claims only aim to legalize the genocides, destruction, and arbitrary abductions perpetrated by the Syrian regime and its abettors against thousands of civilians.

#### ► Key events:

- On July 4, 2016, Russian airstrikes targeting Khan Eshieh Camp and the vicinities of al-Kaziya area took away the lives of three Palestinians - Mahmoud Omar Sa’id, Mahmoud Sa’id Mohamed, and Hasan Subhi Saleh. Five civilians were left wounded, including two in critical conditions and a child protection center run by Jafra charity was razed to the ground in the attack.
- On July 5, 2016, the Russian fighter jets struck Khan Eshieh’s eastern neighborhood with two missiles, one of which did not explode. A number of civilians, including children and women, sustained wounds, and a car of the Honda brand was burned down. Material damage was also wrought on several homes and facilities.
- On July 10, 2016, the Syrian and Russian warplanes targeted Khan Eshieh Camp and its outer edges with over six missiles, three among which slammed into civilian homes in al-Sa’id Street, resulting in material damage. The Russian jets further targeted Khan Eshieh-Zakia access road, which serves as the only passageway for entering foodstuff and emergency items, with three air strikes.
- On July 11, 2016, four air raids hit central Khan Eshieh Camp, near the old market and al-Shamiyat restaurant, and the outer edges of the camp, leaving eight civilians injured, four among whom were identified as members of the same family.
- On July 18, 2016, Muslim scholar Hussein Falah survived an assassination attempt after fighter jets targeted his home in the camp. The Syrian and Russian abettors further struck the eastern and western outer reaches of the camp, leaving a resident wounded. A civilian car was crushed in the strikes.
- On July 19, 2016, two-year-old girl Israa succumbed to wounds she sustained in an onslaught on the eastern neighborhood of Khan Eshieh Camp. Other civilians sustained injuries.

- On July 29, 2016, 16-year-old Mohamed Emad Rahil was killed and a number of women were injured in a Russian airstrike on the camp.
- On July 30, 2016 a Russian air strike on the camp left a woman, a young girl, and a two-year old boy wounded. Civilian homes were destroyed in the attack.
- On July 31, 2016, a number of Khan Eshieh residents sustained serious wounds after Russian warplanes targeted the outskirts of the Zakia-Khan Eshieh thoroughfare with two missiles. A mortar shell also hit a home in the western neighborhood. At the same time, internet access was cut off, in the first such incident in the area.
- On August 1, 2016, the Russian and Syrian warplanes carried out air raids on Khan Eshieh's eastern and western quarters, killing four family members: Hamad As'ad and his wife, along with two kids, one aged two-years-old and the other two months. Other residents, including women and children, were left wounded. Palestinian refugee Hesham Yahya Shehabi was also killed in an attack on his car on Zakia-Khan Eshieh road.
- On August 3, 2016, the Russian warplanes struck Khan Eshieh's old market, near al-Huda Mosque, leaving youngster Layth al-Khalidi dead and two others injured. Civilian homes and shops sustained material damage.
- On August 5, 2016, the Syrian regime army showered Khan Eshieh's eastern and western neighborhoods with mortar shells, estimated at an average of seven shells per every single hour. Two such air raids also targeted the edges of the camp, resulting in material damage.
- In a statement issued on August 6, 2016, the Syrian opposition outfits in Khan Eshieh denied claims that they had established strongholds in the camp, stressing their commitment to keep civilians at bay from raging hostilities with the government forces.
- On August 8, 2016, the Russian warplanes struck civilian homes in the camp with cluster bombs. Palestinian refugee Mahmoud Muhssin Falah al-Khalidi, called Abu Ashraf al-Khalidi, was pronounced dead and over ten civilians were injured in the raid.
- On August 9, 2016, the Russian warplanes launched overnight raids on the western neighborhoods of Khan Eshieh Camp, leaving a number of civilians injured.
- On August 18, 2016, over 12 residents were injured after two ground-to-ground missiles hit civilian homes near the UNRWA-run schools and clinic overnight. One of the missiles fell near the office of the Popular front for the Liberation of Palestine, wounding two residents, including a child.
- On August 20, 2016, Khan Eshieh Camp was targeted with barrel bombs and two artillery shells. A house owned by the Krayem family was damaged in the attack.
- On August 24, 2016, overnight air raids targeted civilian homes in the camp. No injuries were reported.
- On September 3, 2016, Khan Eshieh's eastern neighborhood was struck by Syrian and Russian warplanes. Three children were left wounded, including one critically. Their bodies were later removed from the mounds of debris.
- On September 8, 2016, air strikes rocked the environs of the secondary school and the surrounding ranches of Khan Eshieh Camp.
- On September 20, 2016, the regime army attacked civilian homes in Khan Eshieh's eastern and western neighborhoods with a round of shells.



- On September 23, 2016, Khan Eshieh's eastern quarters were struck with artillery shells. al-Ridha Street was hit with three shells, resulting in a power blackout.
- On September 25, 2016, five displaced residents died in an attack launched on Khan Eshieh-Zakia access road using barrel bombs and artilleries. Civilians could not recover the casualties' bodies from the rubble of collapsed buildings due to the incessant onslaughts launched by the government troops deployed on the surface of Salh al-Teir Mountain.
- On September 26, 2016, the Russian and Syrian warplanes targeted civilian homes in the public street and near al-Huda Mosque with three vacuum bombs.
- On September 28, 2016, the Syrian fighter jets dropped bomb on the UNRWA-run Beersheba School in the camp, resulting in injuries among students and the teaching staff. Syrian and Russian warplanes also targeted civilian homes near al-Huda Mosque with a missile, leaving a number of civilians, including a woman and a child, wounded. Material damage was wrought on civilian homes in the offensives.
- On September 29, 2016, a number of civilians sustained injuries after the Syrian and Russian fighter jets dropped four barrel bombs on Khan Eshieh Camp. The pro-government Division 137 also struck the eastern and western neighborhoods of the camp, along with al-Sa'id Street and the environs of al-Huda Mosque. A woman and a young man were moderately wounded in the offensive.
- On October 1, 2016, the Syrian regime army deployed in Tel al-Kabosiya attacked the camp with heavy machinegun fire unleashed from the self-propelled Shilka tank. No injuries were reported.
- On October 3, 2016, an ambulance evacuating a number of injured residents in Khan Eshieh's western zones came under shelling. Palestinian paramedic Mohamed Ali, called Abu Ali, was pronounced dead.
- On October 6, 2016, Russian and Syrian raids launched on the camp using cluster bombs took away the life of the Palestinian child Israa, aged one year and a half, and left others wounded. The attack further claimed the life of the Palestinian refugee Mohamed Hussein, called Abu Nidhal, and another youth displaced from Dariya town. A number of civilians sustained moderate wounds.
- On October 8, 2016, four cluster bombs dropped by the Syrian and Russian warplanes on Khan Eshieh Camp and its adjacent ranches resulted in remarkable material damage.
- On October 9, 2016, Khan Eshieh's main thoroughfare was struck with cluster grenades unleashed by the Russian and Syrian warplanes. Three more cluster grenades also targeted Khan Eshieh's environs.
- On October 10, 2016, wildfires broke out at civilian homes after al-Salam Hospital in Khan Eshieh was hit with internationally prohibited napalm bombs.
- On October 14, 2016, overnight raids rocked civilian homes in the eastern neighborhood. At least one child sustained injuries in the shelling.
- On October 16, 2016, the Russian and Syrian warplanes launched two air strikes on Khan Eshieh, resulting in material damage.
- On October 19, 2016, a massacre perpetrated by the Syrian regime forces took away the lives of six Palestinian refugees taking shelter in the camp. The Syrian regime outfits struck a van evacuating refugees outside the camp with a heat-seeking missile. The list

of casualties included a displaced woman and her two-year-old toddler. AGPS field correspondents identified three other casualties as Kamal Hussein, a member of the Jafra Foundation for Relief, along with Umm Mahmoud al-Nader and her daughter Ibaa Said al-Nader.

- On October 22, 2016, the government forces deployed in Tel al-Kabousiya targeted the eastern neighborhood with two mortar shells, resulting in material damage.
- On October 24, 2016, the regime army stationed in Tel al-Kabousiya attacked civilian homes in the western neighborhood with self-propelled Shilka tanks.
- On October 25, 2016, the Russian fighter jets launched four air strikes on the environs of al-Salam Mosque, al-Sa'id Street, and the environs of the old market in Khan Eshieh. Two children sustained light injuries and material damage was wrought on civilian homes.
- On October 26, 2016, over four air strikes rocked civilian homes and a UNRWA women's program center. No injuries were reported.
- On October 28, 2016, the Syrian and Russian fighter jets hit civilian homes in al-Sa'id Street, the nearby Villat Street, and the eastern and western outskirts of the camp with ground-to-ground missiles, resulting in material damage.
- On October 29, 2016, the regime army tightened grip on Khan Eshieh Camp following violent clashes with the opposition outfits deployed in nearby towns.
- On November 4, 2016, the Syrian warplanes attacked Khan Eshieh's eastern ranches with four barrel bombs.
- On November 5, 2016, civilian homes in the western neighborhood were struck with two artillery shells. Three civilians were injured and material damage was inflicted in the attack. At the same time, water tanks in the camp were hit with machinegun by the self-propelled Shilka tanks deployed in the nearby Deirkhabiya ranches. The environs of the camp were also targeted with barrel bombs and surface-to-surface grenades.
- On November 6, 2016, the Russian warplanes targeted Nestle Street with napalm bombs, setting civilian homes on fire.
- On November 7, 2016, five residents, including a child, were injured after the government forces struck Khan Eshieh and its environs with explosive barrels, missiles, and artillery shells.
- On November 10, 2016, 14-year-old Shahd Youssef Ismail was killed and four civilians wounded after artillery shells hit the environs of al-Kaziya area.
- On November 12, 2016, Russian warplanes attacked the eastern neighborhoods with four napalm bombs, resulting in material damage.
- On November 13, 2016, Russian warplanes attacked al-Huda Mosque with vacuum bombs, claiming the lives of Hussein al-Hindi al-Khalidi and Mohamed Muhsin Falah, called Abu Mahmoud. A number of worshipers were left wounded on their way to the mosque to perform dawn prayers. The mosque was heavily ravaged in the attack.
- On November 14, 2016, three civil defense staff members were left wounded in a Russian onslaught on a civil defense center. The center had gun out of operation due to the damage inflicted by the attack.
- On November 16, 2016, the Syrian and Russian warplanes struck the eastern quarters with vacuum bombs, resulting in material damage.



- On November 17, 2016, the Syrian government forces targeted UNRWA-run al-Biriya School, in Khan Eshieh Camp, with a surface-to-surface missile. The school was evacuated one day earlier.
- On November 22, 2016, reports emerged on underway negotiations between the government forces and the opposition outfits so as to force the latter to retreat to Idlib and Daraa.
- On November 23, 2016, two children were injured after a cluster grenade, unleashed sometime earlier, exploded in the camp.
- On November 29, 2016, the first batch of Khan Eshieh gunmen and their families reached opposition-led areas in the northern Syrian province of Idlib following a deal struck with the government forces.
- On November 30, 2016, hundreds of civilians, activists, and journalists were deported to Idlib.
- On December 2, 2016, 2,000 residents of Khan Eshieh Camp headed to Idlib, in an exhausting 48-hour trip.
- On December 3, 2016, Palestinian young man Hamza al-Muslih was kidnapped by pro-government committees in the camp and turned in to the military intelligence in Sa'sa' town. The government forces also stepped up search campaigns against Khan Eshieh residents below the age of 50. 250 Palestinian youngsters were forcibly enlisted for military conscription at the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA).

### ► Reprimands and solidarity campaigns:

A plethora of international and human rights institutions denounced the violations perpetrated against Khan Eshieh residents.

Addressing the host governments and donor states' representatives assembled for the second bi-annual UNRWA Advisory Commission meeting for 2016 held in Amman, UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl said Palestinian camps in Syria have sustained severe damage.

"Palestine refugees struggle to survive in the ruins of Aleppo and Dera'a, and I am now concerned that Khan Eshieh may become the next Yarmouk," said Mr. Krähenbühl.

In a statement issued by Khan Eshieh's local council on August 24, 2016, the opposition outfits denounced the incessant violations against civilians sheltered in the camp despite the retreat of armed groups.

According to the statements, military offensives were stepped up against civilians as of June 19, 2016, when the Russian warplanes launched 28 air strikes using vacuum bombs and cluster grenades. The government forces also hit the camp with six barrel bombs, two ground-to-ground missiles, and 24 artillery shells. 18 civilians were left dead and 72 wounded. 38 homes were reduced to rubble.

The local council further spoke out against the tough cordon imposed on the main access road into Kahn al-Sheih, where a number of civilians were pronounced dead on their way to fetch much-needed items.

The statement pushed for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for a safe passageway so as to allow the entry of humanitarian aids and UN envoys into the camp.

On September 30, 2016, UNRWA slammed the “warring parties” for bombarding one of its schools in the camp. On 28 September, at approximately 1 p.m.

“Just as the second shift was beginning, the Salameh Girls Preparatory School in Khan Eshieh took a direct hit that resulted in one eighth grade student being injured, as well as two teachers, one of whom was seriously wounded. The explosion hit an entrance door adjacent to the teachers’ room inside the school compound. This school provides primary education to 258 girls from grades 5 to 9,” said UNRWA.

UNRWA condemned in the strongest terms the attack on one of the few remaining educational facilities providing education to refugees in Khan Eshieh camp. “This is another grievous illustration of the continued exposure of Palestine refugee boys and girls to unacceptable levels of indiscriminate violence, in the very places where they should feel safe.”

On October 21, 2016, UNRWA condemned the killing of four Palestinian refugees from Khan Eshieh refugee camp. Four Palestinian refugees were killed on the night of 18 October as they attempted to leave the camp, to which access has been highly restricted. Nofeh Mohammed Jarad, who was in her 60’s, her daughter Ibaa Sa’id al-Nader, 22, their driver and a one-year old baby were all killed when their vehicle was shelled around 10 p.m. The mother of the baby, a Syrian citizen, also died in the incident.

UNRWA condemned the attack and the killing and wounding of all civilians including Palestinian refugees. It called on those responsible to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law and demanded that the parties to the conflict do their utmost to protect civilian life in accordance with international law.

On November 14, 2016, UNRWA strongly condemned the killing of one of its staff members, Mr. Husein Ali Muhsen, 52, and his uncle, Ahmed Mahmud Muhsen, 77, in Syria on Sunday, 13 November 2016 by an airstrike that hit a mosque during morning prayers in Khan Eshieh Camp, in the south west of rural Damascus. At least 12 people were injured in the incident.

“Mr. Muhsen served UNRWA with distinction for 24 years. He worked both as a Distribution Team Leader with the Procurement and Logistics department and most recently as a Clerk at the UNRWA health center in the camp. He is the twentieth UNRWA staff member killed since the beginning of the conflict in Syria and is survived by his wife and six children,” UNRWA stated.

A statement issued by activists from Khan Eshieh Camp under the hashtag “UNRWA is a partner in crimes against us” slammed the agency for its silence vis-à-vis the killing and forcible deportation of civilians. According to the statement the apathy maintained by UNRWA serves as a political cover for those involved in war crimes against the Palestinian refugees.

The statement condemned the lack of health and relief services by UNRWA in the camp and its reluctance as regards civilians’ frequent cries for help.

The statement called on UNRWA to urgently step in and pressurize the Syrian and Russian war abettors to cease onslaughts on the camp. It further pushed the agency to pop in Khan Eshieh, attest to the arm-free nature of the camp, and work on entering medicines and relief items to the stranded residents.

On October 5, 2016 Palestinian activists embarked on a so-called “Do Not Let Khan Eshieh Down” solidarity campaign in response to the silence maintained by UNRWA, PLO, and the Palestinian political factions as regards the crimes perpetrated by the Syrian and Russian partners in Khan Eshieh.

AGPS declared Khan Eshieh Camp a blockaded area after the Syrian regime forces tightened military noose around civilians' neck, snatched its environs in Western al-Ghouta, and closed off all access roads out of and into the camp. Khan Eshieh Camp has run out of basic food items, medicines, and children's milk as a result of the tough blockade. AGPS called on the international community to speak up for the residents of Khan Eshieh Camp, home to 15,000 displaced Palestinians and Syrians. AGPS further pushed for providing the refugees with physical and legal protection and for seriously working on ceasing the violations committed by the Syrian regime militias and their abettors against hundreds of women, children, and elderly refugees in the camp. AGPS launched distress signals over the tragic repercussions of the 30-day blockade, urging the concerned authorities to step up pressure on the Syrian regime so as to lift the siege and allow a safe passage for the entry of life-saving foodstuff and medicines, along with humanitarian and relief envoys.

On October 8, 2016, the European Network for Palestinians of Syria condemned the military escalation against Khan Eshieh and urged all warring actors to neutralize the camp and keep civilians safe from raging hostilities.

On October 14, 2016, the European Network, condemned, in letters sent to the Russian Embassy in the Netherlands, the UN office in the Netherlands, and the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Dutch Parliament, the "crime blockade" against Khan Eshieh and the mass killings of civilians using the internationally-prohibited cluster bombs.

Dozens of Palestinian refugees also rallied outside the UN headquarters in Vienna in solidarity with Khan Eshieh Camp. The rally-goers urged the Palestinian and international institutions to assume their duties as regards the calamitous state of affairs in Khan Eshieh.

A sit-in was staged by Palestinian refugees stranded in Athens in solidarity with Khan Eshieh residents and in protest at the deadly military offensives launched on the camp. The sit-inners pushed for safe passageways before civilians and much-needed items.

On October 15, 2016, Commission 302 to Defend Refugees' Rights sounded the alarm over the slaughters perpetrated against civilians in Khan Eshieh, along with the destruction of civilian homes, clinics, health centers, infrastructure, and relief institutions.

On October 16, 2016, a statement by PalMed Europe warned of the tragic humanitarian situation in Khan Eshieh Camp due to the unrelenting aerial bombing and arbitrary attacks on civilians using internationally-prohibited lethal weapons, namely cluster bombs and napalm grenades, among other incendiary devices documented by on-the-spot reports from the camp. As a result, dozens of civilians, including men, women, and elderly refugees, were killed. Frequent attacks on the camp led to the destruction of its infrastructure, obstruction of public amenities, and suspension of health services in clinics and at the camp's sole hospital. Over 12,000 Palestinian refugees, including 3,000 children, feeble elderly refugees, and persons with special needs, risk losing their lives at the camp.

On October 25, 2016, residents of Daraa Camp expressed their solidarity with Khan Eshieh residents and their deep concern over the calamitous state of affairs in the camp due to the arbitrary bombardment and tough siege. Daraa residents further lashed out at the PLO and UNRWA for their silence regarding the situation and called for the need to protect civilians in the disarmed camp, lift the siege, and hand over humanitarian aids to trapped civilians.

On October 18, 2016, al-Wafa European Campaign launched calls to raise relief funds for Khan Eshieh refugees. A so-called "Children of Khan Eshieh Camp Cry for Help" campaign kicked off in an attempt to speak up for Palestinians taking refuge in an area that

has been grappling with a tough blockade for over a couple of weeks, along with nonstop bombardment and acute dearth in medical kit and basic foodstuff. The campaigners called for rallying round Khan Eshieh refugees so as to assuage their plight before it is too late.

A so-called “We Are the Voice of the Camp” campaign was launched on October 20, 2016, by Palestinian activists and journalists in 1948 Occupied Palestine and the West Bank in solidarity with the Palestinian refugees in war-battered Syria. The campaigners called for ceasing bloodshed against and coerced displacement of the Palestinians of Syria. The activists launched calls to mobilize support for Khan Eshieh camp, where Palestinian refugees had been the permanent targets of unabated onslaughts. The activists further pushed for urgent actions to stop the reckless attacks against civilians and the infrastructure, lift the blockade, and dispatch humanitarian aid to the camp, most notably medicine and milk for newborns. They further spoke out against underway attempts to drag Palestinian refugee camps, namely Khan Eshieh, into the ongoing warfare. Such attempts have serious repercussions on Palestinians’ right of return to their homeland-Palestine. The activists denounced the unwarranted use of armed force and the massive bombardment on such a space-limited and arm-free area, which they believe stems from a preplanned attempt to dislocate the refugee residents, wipe out Palestinians’ presence in Syria at one fell swoop, and cede the floor to new residents allied with the incumbent Syrian regime.

In a renewed and flagrant violation of humanitarian ethics, Syrian regime snipers cold-bloodedly gunned down the relief campaigner Khaled Assaad al-Khalidi on Khan Eshieh-Zakia road as he attempted to fetch bread loafs for the blockaded children, women, elderly refugees, and disabled civilians in the camp.

In a statement issued on October 27, 2016, AGPS denounced the repeated crimes perpetrated against the Palestinian refugees in Syria and the inhumane attacks on relief activists, press agents, and unarmed civilians. AGPS called on the international community and all humanitarian and legal institutions to step up pressure on all warring parties in Syria so as to neutralize Khan Eshieh camp and protect the disarmed Palestinian refugees from the lavas of explosive barrels and missile strikes rocking the camp for weeks. AGPS pushed for lifting the blockade slapped on the camp and allowing a safe passage for basic food items and medicines via the thoroughfares leading to the camp. AGPS called for ceasing offensives on civilians and unpaid assistants and for securing a free passage out of and into the camp for relief and humanitarian crews so as to meet the refugees’ urgent needs.

The Palestine Charity Commission grieved, in a statement posted on its Facebook page, for the death of its staff member Khaled al-Khalidi, whom it said had been an icon of altruism, self-abnegation, courage, and dedication all the way through his benevolent involvement with the commission.

“Khaled had spared no single effort to assuage the tragic upshots of the war and the blockade inflicted on the refugees and displaced people in the camp,” the statement read.

A statement by the European Network for the Palestinians of Syria also slammed the murder of activist al-Khalidi in blockaded Khan Eshieh camp. The European Network strongly condemned the crime perpetrated by the Syrian regime sharpshooters, dubbing it a “war crime” that requires “international prosecution.” The group urged the Syrian and Russian co-conspirators to cease air strikes and artillery bombardment on the camp and to lift the illegitimate siege slapped on thousands of civilians, children, women, and sick refugees.

On November 5, 2016, dozens of Palestinian asylum-seekers in Germany took to Berlin streets in solidarity with the beleaguered residents of Khan Eshieh. The rally-goers lifted the Palestinian flag and banners bearing solidarity slogans. They further called for ceasing attacks on Khan Eshieh and securing a safe passage for relief items into the blockaded camp, home to 12,000 civilian refugees.

On November 13, 2016, a silent vigil was staged by the Palestinian Cultural Center in the Dutch city of Helsingborg in solidarity with Khan Eshieh. A statement issued by the center urged the UN organs to protect civilians, dubbing the situation “a scar” on humanity’s face.

- **Handarat Camp:**

The Syrian regime army regained control of Handarat Camp, formerly led by the opposition, on October 17, 2016, following a round of military operations to hold sway over Aleppo. Nearly 90% of civilian buildings and structures in Handarat Camp, in Aleppo, have been reduced to rubble due to the unabated offensives launched by the regime army. Snapshots and video footages leaked from the camp bear witness to the heavy damage inflicted by the raging warfare. The regime battalions and their Liwa al-Quds partners seized the camp, forcing the opposition groups to give ground. Residents of Handarat have gone homeless after the opposition outfits forced them out of their homes.

► **Key events:**

- On July 5, 2016, violent clashes flared up in the environs of Handarat Camp between the Syrian government troops and al-Quds Brigade, on the one hand, and the opposition outfits, on the other, using heavy and light weapons.
- On July 9, 2016, the expectant Palestinian refugee Abir Abedi died after she was hit with shrapnel of mortar shells and missiles targeting a youth hostel in Aleppo. Her husband Abdou Sweid and another Palestinian youngster - Ahmed al-Saadi - were left wounded in the attack.
- Palestinian instructor Ahmed Ali Jumu’a, a resident of Handarat, and his wife Sanaa Ali, from Neirab Camp, along with their daughter Nour were injured in a shelling targeting al-Furqan area, in Aleppo. Jumu’a and his daughter sustained foot fractures.
- On August 1, 2016, air strikes rocked Handarat Camp at the same time as violent clashes flared up in its environs.
- On September 20, 2016, the camp came under heavy shelling. Clashes also burst out in its environs between the opposition outfits and the pro-government battalions, including al-Quds Brigade.
- On September 24, 2016, the Syrian government forces and their Quds Brigade ally moved into Handarat Camp following heavy shelling targeting the opposition outfits in the camp. Casualties and material damage was reported on both sides. Later, on the same day, the opposition outfits regained control of the camp following a counter-offensive targeting the government army.
- On September 25, 2016, the opposition outfits announced their complete recuperation of the camp.



- On September 28, 2016, Palestinian refugee Mohamed Ibrahim Dgheim, from the pro-government al-Quds Brigade, was shot and injured by the opposition fighters in clashes with the regime troops in Aleppo.
- On October 17, 2016, the Syrian government forces regained control of Handarat.

- **Neirab Camp:**

Neirab Camp has been the permanent target of military onslaughts by the different warring actors due to its strategic proximity to Neirab Military Airport. During the second half of 2016, a number of civilians were killed, mostly as they fought alongside the government forces.

Upon more than one occasion, Palestinian and Syrian activists appealed to al-Quds Brigade to neutralize the camp and keep civilians at a distance from the rampant hostilities between the government forces and the opposition battalions in Aleppo.

The activists accused al-Quds Brigade chief commander Mohamed Sa'id of forcibly recruiting dozens of young men sheltered at the camp to fight alongside the government squads.

Residents of Neirab Camp had also been made to endure tough military restrictions, home break-ins, and abduction sweeps by the regime army and al-Quds Brigade.

On September 7, 2016, the Syrian government forces kidnapped five Palestinians sheltered in the camp after they broke into their homes.

52-year-old Nidhal Issa al-Naji was also detained by the government forces for three days after he was arrested on the Aleppo-al-Nirab access road on October 10, 2016 while on his way back from a hospital in Aleppo, where he underwent an urgent surgery.

On August 11, 2016, Palestinian youngster Ibrahim Haninou, a resident of Neirab, was released from a Syrian lock-up, where he had been detained for three years. Haninou was arrested by the government troops in Hama, on his way back to the camp.

► **Living conditions:**

Neirab residents have often launched a cry for help over their dire living conditions after the opposition groups in northern Syria cut the government's only supply line along the Ithriyah-Khanasser road on November 4, 2016, following violent clashes with the pro-regime battalions. The residents voiced their deep concern over a looming socio-economic crisis and a swift upsurge in food prices due to the acute dearth in fuel reserves and basic food items. Civilians were forced to purchase fuel at nearly 280 Syrian Pounds a liter. Dozens of residents also fled Aleppo on way to Turkey and Europe, seeking a safer shelter.

► **Key events:**

- On July 3, 2016, two Palestinian children - Ahmed Haythem Issa and Ali Mahmoud Khalayli were injured by the shrapnel of a mortar shell and gunshots fired on the camp.
- On July 4, 2016, Palestinian refugee Mahmoud Ayoub died as he fought alongside al-Quds Brigade in the vicinities of the camp.
- On July 6, 2016, Palestinian refugee Farid al-Rifi was injured by the shrapnel of a mortar

shell dropped on the camp. He received treatment at Aleppo's Military Hospital.

- On July 10, 2016, Palestinian refugee Abed Ghanem died while fighting alongside al-Quds Brigade in clashes against the opposition battalions.
- On July 21, 2016, residents of Neirab Camp Ahmed Azzam, Bilal Azzam, Ahmad Sa'id Azzam, and Mahmoud Aazzam were injured with the shrapnel of explosive ammunition. On the same day, al-Ramousa thoroughfare was sealed off following clashes between the opposition outfits and the pro-government forces, including al-Quds Brigade and the popular committees. The opposition outfits captured al-Ramousa road.
- On August 2, 2016, al-Ramousa access road, linking Neirab to Aleppo, was completely closed off due to simmering hostilities between the government forces and the anti-government battalions.
- On August 4, 2016, three shells hit Neirab Camp, two among which hit the main access road while the other fell near the cultural center. No injuries were reported.
- On August 19, 2016, the Syrian warplanes struck the Roz wedding hall, leaving a child and his father dead.
- On October 7, 2016, material damage was inflicted on the camp after a missile hit a cultivated land. Overnight clashes flared up in the vicinities of the camp between the opposition forces and the regime army.
- On October 11, 2016, a missile was dropped on a civilian home. No injuries were reported.
- On October 28, 2016, violent clashes broke out in the vicinities of the camp between the opposition forces and the government army. Sounds of heavy blasts were detected in the area and near Neirab Airport.
- On November 15, 2016, a number of children sustained breathing disorders after shells exploded near the camp. The list of injured children included 12-year-old Ahmed Hawash.
- On November 28, 2016, the camp was struck with three mortar shells during the funeral procession of the pro-regime al-Quds Brigade military commander, Mohamed Rafaa, killed on November 27, 2016 in Aleppo clashes. One of the mortar shells targeted Rafaa's funeral procession while the second was dropped on a civilian home, resulting in critical injuries. The third shell hit al-Tawabeen Mosque.
- On December 6, 2016, the opposition outfits targeted the camp with a round of mortar shells. The onslaught hit Akka School.

- **Daraa Camp:**

The situation had taken a turn for the worse in Daraa Camp during the second half of 2016 due to the unbroken blitzing. 80% of Daraa Camp buildings have been razed to the ground. Civilians have also been subjected to severe crackdowns and arbitrary abductions on their way out of the camp. On October 1, 2016, 14-year-old Palestinian minor Majdi Zreiki was kidnapped by the government forces from the camp.



### ► Living Conditions:

The tough cordon imposed by the regime troops on the area led to an acute shortage in much-needed medicines and foodstuff. The situation has gone worse due to the spread of rodents at civilian homes, lack of relief assistance by UNRWA, and poor health services. Water supplies to the camp have also been cut off since April 1, 2014, forcing civilians to drink contaminated water from artesian wells. Others found no other way out than to walk for hundreds of meters to fetch water, risking to die in an area that has been thick with snipers.

Some 265 displaced families are taking refuge in Deraa Camp, which used to shelter over 40,000 residents prior to the Syrian warfare, 25,000 among whom identified as displaced Syrian nationals and 17,000 others as Palestinian refugees.

### ► Key events:

- On July 6, 2016, the regime army struck Daraa al-Balad and the nearby al-Sadd Road with mortar shells, resulting in material damage.
- On July 15, 2016, the regime army targeted the camp with five tank shells and a round of mortar shells.
- On July 25, 2016, the camp was targeted with anti-tank missiles.
- On July 28, 2016, the regime army struck Daraa Camp and the adjacent al-Sadd Road with mortar shells. A ground-to-ground missile also hit the camp, inflicting heavy material damage.
- On August 13, 2016, Daraa Camp was struck with mortar shells.
- On August 16, 2016, the government army hit the camp and al-Sadd Road with mortar shells.
- On August 21, 2016, artillery shells hit the camp. An attack on Daraa al-Balad, housing a number of Palestinian families, claimed the lives of three children, two among whom identified as Mohamed Kataysha and Limar Kataysha. Five residents also sustained wounds after the government forces targeted the camp with a gas cylinder.
- On August 29, 2016, the government forces struck Daraa Camp with tank shells, wreaking material damage.
- On September 1, 2016, violent clashes flared up in Daraa Camp following offensives launched by the government forces against the opposition outfits in an attempt to hold sway over the camp.
- On September 2, 2016, the government forces hit the camp with a ground-to-ground missile, leaving the wife of Hani al-Khayat and his daughter Malak, from the Golan Heights, dead. A number of civilians, including children, sustained wounds.
- On October 2, 2016, the Syrian government forces struck the camp with mortar shells, killing the Palestinian child Nasim Gweidar and leaving other residents seriously wounded.
- On October 6, 2016, the camp was hit with artillery shells. Onslaughts further rocked Daraa al-Balad and al-Sadd Road. Civilian homes were destroyed after they were hit with an explosive cylinder.
- On October 17, 2016, the camp sustained material damage after it was targeted with mortar shells.

- On October 18, 2016, the Syrian government forces targeted the camp with two ground-to-ground missiles, mortar shells, and an explosive cylinder, leaving seven civilians wounded, among whom women and children, and resulting in remarkable material damage.
- On October 24, 2016, the Syrian government forces hit the camp with mortar shells and tanks. Material damage was reported in the attack.
- On October 25, 2016, a gas cylinder and mortar shells slammed into Daraa Camp. No injuries were reported.
- On November 4, 2016, the regime troops attacked the camp with a gas cylinder and the adjacent al-Sadd Road with another cylinder, resulting in material damage.
- On November 10, 2016, the Syria army struck the camp and al-Sadd Road with gas cylinders and mortar shells, wreaking havoc on civilian homes.
- On November 21, 2016, the Syria forces attacked Daraa Camp with gas cylinders and mortar shells.
- On November 22, 2016, ground-to-ground missiles slammed into the camp at the same time as clashes flared up between the opposition groups and the government army on the outer edges of the camp and in adjacent towns.
- On November 24, 2016, the regime troops targeted Daraa and al-Sadd Road with gas cylinders, ruining civilian homes.
- On November 26, 2016, the regime warplanes struck the camp and al-Sadd Road with a gas cylinder. Heavy material damage was spotted in the onslaught.
- On November 29, 2016, the government forces launched an air strike on the camp and targeted al-Sadd Road with a gas cylinder.
- On December 2, 2016, government artilleries struck civilian homes in the camp and a ground-to-ground missile hit al-Sadd Road, causing material damage.
- On December 4, 2016, artillery shells stuck residential neighborhoods in the camp, in Daraa al-Balad, and in al-Sadd Road.

- **Husseneia Camp:**

During the second half of 2016, the regime army and its Shiite allies, tightened grip on Husseneia Camp, in Rif Dimashq, sealing off the main access roads out of and into the area. Access permits bearing the names of the refugee and his/her family members are inspected and updated at the security checkpoint, in a move that aims to trim down family visits to Husseneia residents.

Palestinian refugees in the Husseneia Camp had frequently launched distress signals over the arbitrary roadblocks and barriers pitched by the Syrian regime and its Shiite allies in al-Sayida Zeinab.

Nearly 40% of Husseneia refugee population could not reach their homes for several reasons, most notably for fear of being kidnapped at the regime-controlled checkpoints.

The residents have frequently appealed for urgent interventions as regards the sanitation crisis and the trash mounds overwhelming the camp and resulting in the spread of rodents and life-threatening diseases. The residents further denounced the reluctance of the municipal crews and the concerned authorities vis-à-vis the calls to repair electric wires.

Civilians' cries for help over the frequent power blackouts, which last up to 12 hours a day, had also gone unheeded. None of the promises made by Husseneia municipality and the pro-government popular committees to solve the crisis had seen the day.

- **Sbeineh Camp:**

Residents of Sbeineh Camp for Palestinian refugees in Rif Dimashq have been denied access to their homes via government-run checkpoints since November 17, 2013. Bloody hostilities between the government troops and the opposition battalions, who controlled the camp prior to the government takeover, in and around Sbeineh forced dozens of families to seek shelter elsewhere. The clashes culminated in a tighter cordon by the regime squads on all corners of the shelter. According to eye-witnesses, 80% of Sbeineh buildings have been subjected to quasi-total destruction.

During the second half of 2016, reports had emerged on a looming government decision to allow the residents a safe access to their homes. Pictures of cleaning campaigns carried out in Rif Dimashq and Qunaytirah further gave hope for an imminent respite. However the promises remained unfulfilled and the security authorities said the residents will be allowed to return to their homes only if the reconstruction process sees a progress.

The local reconciliation committee also spoke up for residents' wish to return to their homes before the advent of academic year, in September 2016. Steep rental fees and living costs have made the situation far worse.

Some 9,136 families, comprising 41,211 individuals, put down their names on waiting lists in anticipation of being allowed to return to their homes.

The residents and local activists slammed the apathy maintained by the Syrian government and the PLO, among other factions, regarding their calamitous situation.

- **Al-Sayeda Zeinab Camp**

During the second half of 2016, al-Sayeda Zeinab Camp had been characterized by a state of relative calm. Periods of turmoil occurred sporadically in the camp. On October 13, 2016, four mortar shells slammed near the camp, resulting in material damage. Abduction sweeps and crackdowns by the pro-government forces had also been detected on an intermittent basis in the camp. On October 29, 2016, at least 15 Palestinians were kidnapped in an alleged drug sweep launched by pro-government Shiite militias, escorted by regime officers. The detainees' families refused to reveal their relatives' names for fear of retaliation but said none of the captured civilians had used drugs. The list of arrestees included a youngster with mental disorders.

On 18 October 2016, UNRWA inaugurated the newly reconstructed Dallata/Beit Jibreen School for thousands of students in al-Sayeda Zeinab Camp. The school building, which was completely destroyed in the conflict, was rebuilt and upgraded with the support of the government of Japan.

- **Khan Dannun Camp:**

Syrian government forces and their war abettors deployed at a military checkpoint in Khan Dannun Camp, in Damascus Suburbs, have come down heavily on civilians. Several refugees have been subjected to exhaustive inspection as they tried to pass through the checkpoint. Residents of Khan Dannun Camp have often launched cries for help over the crackdowns they have been subjected to at government checkpoints on a quasi-daily basis. In letters emailed to AGPS, civilians spoke out against the arbitrary confiscation of their belongings, blackmails, and verbal assaults perpetrated against the female and male refugees at the checkpoint.

Khan Dannun residents have also been grappling with dire living conditions inflicted by overcrowding, price hike, and difficulties in securing water.

Residents of Khan Dannun Camp have been enduring abject living conditions due to the price leap, lack of humanitarian assistance, the transportation crisis, and the frequent water and power blackouts.

Reporting from Khan Dannun shelter, located some 23 kilometers away from southern Damascus, AGPS news correspondent said civilians' access out of and into the area has almost been blocked. Workers and students have also had difficulties getting to their workplaces and universities.

Khan Dannun residents further spoke out against the steep and unfixed transportation fees, often devouring up to a quarter of their salaries. Civilians are often forced to catch another means of transportation as bus drivers change the lines, stops, and fees according to their whims. Others have found no other way-out than to walk for thousands of meters in order to reach their workplaces.

Speaking in memorandums recorded by AGPS reporters, Palestinian refugees voiced their firm rebuff of any attempt to drag them into ongoing hostilities between the regime militias and opposition squads. The memorandums were issued after reports emerged on a meeting between delegates of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), Palestinian groups allied with the Syrian regime, so-called national defense committees, and representatives of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps. The meeting discussed possible ways to send military reinforcements to Dierkhabiya Front after several fighters from the 4th Armored Division, affiliated with the regime, died in ongoing fighting.

The Palestinian refugee community urged PLO, the PLA, the General Command, the Fatah al-Intifada, and the al-Nidhal Front, along with the Popular and Democratic Front, to cease bloodshed against the nonaligned Palestinian youths.

- **Jaramana Camp:**

During the second half of 2016, residents of Jaramana Camp, located some eight kilometers away from central Damascus, near Damascus International Airport, had frequently set off alarm bells over the lack of basic services and poor infrastructure despite the state of relative calm characterizing the area.

The situation had deteriorated due to high unemployment rates, lack of financial resources, and absence of humanitarian assistance and UNRWA aids.

Jaramana Camp is home to 5,000 residents, mostly displaced from such refugee camps as Yarmouk, Husseneia, al-Sayeda Zeinab, Al Sbeineh, and al-Dhiabiya.

- **Al Aedin Camp in Homs:**

Residents of the Homs-based Al Aedin Camp have launched a cry for help over the dire socio-economic conditions they have been made to endure due to the price leap, fuel and food shortage, and the bad weather conditions rocking the MENA region. Shopkeepers have also spoken out against the heavy losses inflicted by the frequent power outages. The situation has gone far worse due to civilians' inability to secure fuel and gas reserves with the advent of winter, along with the high unemployment rates and decline in the refugees' purchasing power. A health crisis has rocked the camp after UNRWA closed its sole clinic in the area.

Khan Dannun resident, Dr. Assem al-Shehabi, said in appeals to the concerned institutions that UNRWA hospital had officially shut its doors and that private clinics turned into charity centers. Dr al-Shehabi had also launched calls to reopen the UNRWA clinic and appoint five doctors to provide civilians with the needed medical therapy and check-ups. Sometime earlier, a memorandum was sent by the Homs Camp follow-up committee to the director of UNRWA affairs in Syria Michael Kingsley in an attempt to urge the agency to assume its duties as regards the crises wrought on the camp, most notably in the fields of education, health care, public hygiene, employment, and relief assistance.

► **Arrests and releases:**

Dozens had been kidnapped by the Syrian government forces during the second half of 2016. According to AGPS data, 186 residents of Al Aedin Camp have had mysterious fates in Syrian penitentiaries.

- On July 1, 2016, the Syrian government forces kidnapped three Palestinian refugees from the camp: Dirar Assaad Hadid, in his late 40s and called Abu Assaad. He is a native of the Palestinian city of Safad; Ibrahim Majd al-Asadi, in his late 20s and a native of Amaka village in Palestine; and Hesham Ata Hassoun, also in his 40s and a native of Ein al-Zaytoun village, in Palestine. Another Palestinian refugee - Emad Ahmed Shahin, called Abu Shahin—was released on the same day, after he had been detained for over 20 days. The three aforementioned arrestees, along with another refugee, identified as Mootaz Abbas, were released on July 6, 2016. Abbas, displaced from Yarmouk Camp, had spent 10 days in custody.
- On July 4, 2016, Palestinian young man Ibrahim Adel Kayed, in his 30s and a native of the Palestinian village of al-Safsaf, was released from a Syrian jail, where he had been held for over 50 days.
- On July 16, 2016, young man Ahmed Mohamed Ali Hamid, nicknamed Abu Uday and the father of a little kid, was kidnapped in an assault on al-Quds Street, in the camp. Hamid is a native of Ein al-Zaytoun village, in Palestine.
- On July 17, 2016, government patrols stormed Al Aedin Camp and kidnapped the Palestinian young man Nizar Mohamed al-Laham, called Abu Mohamed. Four Palestinian refugees were also kidnapped by the government troops. Another refugee



- Ayman Khatab, called Abu Mohamed - was released on the same day. Khatab, in his early 50s, worked as an officer at the Palestinian Authority Preventive Forces. He was kidnapped at a checkpoint pitched near the main entrance to the camp. He is a native of al-Zayoun village.
- On July 24, 2016, Palestinian refugee Mohamed Ziad Ayoub, nicknamed Abu Ziad, was arrested at the immigration and passports office in Homs. Abu Ziad, is in his early 30s and a native of al-Jash village, in Palestine. Palestinian refugee Ahmed Mahmoud Abu Arabi, in his early 20s, was also arrested at a checkpoint pitched near the campus. He is from the Palestinian village of Sabareen.
- On August 2, 2016, Palestinian refugee Mahdi Mahmoud Taha, in his early 20s, was kidnapped by the government forces from a cybercafé in the camp. He is a native of the Palestinian al-Zaytoun village and a member of the power emergency office in the camp.
- On August 6, 2016, Palestinian youth Ahmed Mohamed Samour, in his 20s, was arrested. He is from Safad city, in Palestine.
- On August 7, 2016, Fayez Khaled Samour, in his 20s, was arrested. He is from Safad city, in Palestine.
- On August 10, 2016, Palestinian young man Mahmoud Mohamed Awad, in his 20s, was kidnapped on his way back home from his workplace in a glass factor in the industrial city of Hisya. He is from the Palestinian village of al-Jash.
- On August 11, 2016, the Syrian government forces kidnapped Mohamed Salayma, called Abu al-Majd, from his home, shortly after he came back from Sweden on claims that he illegally moved Turkey and later to Sweden. Salayma, in his early 70s, served as the chief of a division at the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party and an instructor at a UNRWA school. He is a native of al-Shajara village, in Palestine. He was released nine days later.
- On August 12, 2016, the Syrian government forces arrested the Palestinian refugee Madyan Subhi Sarhan, called Abu Mohamed, at Tartous-Homs checkpoint as he gave a lift to civilians from Al Aedin Camp to Tartous coast. He is from the Palestinian village of al-Shajara and in his late 20s. Palestinian native of al-Shajara village Muayad Reyad Awad, in his late 20s, along with another refugee, were also arrested on the same day.
- On August 21, 2016, Palestinian refugee Mohamed Abdul Latif, called Abu Ahmed, was released from a government jail, where he had been held for 55 days. It turned out later that he was not the wanted suspect and that he was kidnapped due to name resemblance.
- On August 31, 2016, the government forces acquitted the Palestinian refugee Khaled Mohamed Mahmoud Idris, aged below 20 years-old, after he had been locked up for 60 days in Adra prison.
- On August 31, 2016, Mohamed Ziad Mohamed Ayoub was released following a 40-day detention period. He is from al-Jash village, in Palestine.
- On August 31, 2016, Palestinian refugee Ayman Khatab, from the Palestinian al-Zaytoun village, was released after he had been detained for 40 days in Palestine Branch, in Damascus.
- On September 28, 2016, Madyan Subhi Sarhan was released from government lock-ups, where he had spent nearly one month and a half.

- On October 1, 2016, Palestinian refugee Ahmed Moufeq Kousad, a resident of al-Shamas neighborhood, was released from government prisons, where he had been locked up for a couple of years.
- On November 3, 2016, Palestinian female refugee Ramiya Khalil Subhiya was released after she had spent over one year in government lock-ups.
- On December 12, 2016, Palestinian refugee Ahmed Mohamed Samour was released from Syrian government jails, where he had been held for over four months. Ahmad, a resident of the Homs-based Al Aedin Camp, was kidnapped on August 6, 2016 and dragged to an unidentified destination. He is in his 20s of age and a native of the occupied Palestinian city of Safad.
- On December 12, 2016, the Palestinian refugee Hamza al-Laham was released from Syrian prisons, where he had been locked up for over a couple of weeks.

- **Al Aedin Camp in Hama:**

Hama-based Al Aedin camp has been characterized by a state of relative calm. Yet, the shelter has not been safe from the abduction sweeps and break-ins launched by the Syrian government forces now and then. The situation has worsened due to high rates of unemployment and price leaps

Occasionally, residents of Al Aedin Camp had sounded distress signals over the acute dearth in gas supplies. Civilians said they have been purchasing gas cylinders at 5,000 Syrian Liras (\$10) from shadow traders due to the crisis rocking government-led areas.

Subzero temperatures and snowfall had made the situation far worse. “We wake up at the crack of dawn and line up for long hours while our limbs are frozen by snowstorms and torrential downpours, desperately hoping to get a gas cylinder to keep our children warm. However our wishes often go up in the air,” said one refugee.

AGPS kept record of the names of 51 Palestinian detainees from Al Aedin Camp who have had mysterious fates in Syrian prisons.

Hundreds of families displaced from Damascus, Aleppo, Idlib, Hama suburbs, Deir al-Zor, al-Riqa, Daraa, and Latakia had been grappling with a tough cordon imposed by the regime army around the main access roads to the camp.

- **Raml Camp in Latakia:**

Residents of al-Raml Camp in Latakia have sounded the alarm over the arbitrary abduction sweeps and home break-ins carried out by the Syrian regime forces on a sporadic basis.

Residents of al-Raml camp further spoke out against the swift price hike and steep rental fees in the area.

Several youngsters fled the camp for fear of being kidnapped and forcibly enlisted at pro-regime battalions.



## - Palestinian refugee communities:

- **al-Muzeireeb community:**

al- Muzeireeb town, home to nearly 8,500 Palestinian refugees, came under heavy shelling during the second half of 2016. According to AGPS reporter, tension flared up in al-Muzeireeb after the Syrian regime army struck the town with randomly-unleashed spates of mortar shells, inflicting heavy material damage on civilian homes. Meanwhile, civilians voiced concerns over the incessant attempts by the Syrian government troops to intensify their presence in southern Syria and tighten grip on the Palestinian refugee community.

► **Arrests and releases:**

During the second half of 2016, four Palestinian residents of al-Muzireeb, including a female student, were arrested, three among whom were released sometime later.

On July 3, 2016, the Syrian government forces arrested 35-year-old Amjad Kamel Fahd Hussein at a Damascus checkpoint and 42-year-old Bassam Khaled Abu Shala at a Daraa checkpoint. Both refugees were released on August 6, 2016.

20-year-old Palestinian university student Rawand Abu al-Sou'oud, from al-Muzeireeb, was detained for 10 days on her way to the campus. She was released on October 2, 2016.

On September 25, 2016, Palestinian refugee Ghassan Ezzet al-Breiqi, a resident of al-Muzeireeb, was arrested at a government-run checkpoint in Daraa.

AGPS documented the incarceration of 21 Palestinian residents of al-Muzeireeb in Syria government jails, among whom a female refugee. Their fate has been shrouded in mystery. 346 Palestinians sheltered in Daraa, including 31 residents of al-Muzeireeb, were pronounced dead in war-torn Syria.

► **Key events:**

- On August 26, 2016, the government army struck al-Muzeireeb town with heavy spates of mortar shells, causing material damage.
- On August 29, 2016, an explosive device was detonated in a Hilux car belonging to the opposition outfits. No injuries were reported.

- **Qudsaya Community:**

In October 2016, an agreement to cease hostilities was signed between the government forces and the opposition fighters in Qudsaya. The deal stipulated that the latter retreat to Idlib and hand over its light and medium weapons. The deal further ruled for granting a safe passage for those who wished to leave the camp.

During the third quarter of 2016, the socio-economic situation had seen a turn for the worse in Qudsaya. A security turmoil had also rocked the area, home to some 6,000 displaced Palestinian families.

- On July 14, 2016, violent clashes burst out between the opposition battalions and the regime army and its abettors.
- On August 17, 2016, confrontations between the government forces and opposition groups broke out at the main checkpoint in Qudsaya.
- On September 21, 2016, artillery and mortar shells hit al-Muzeireeb, leaving a resident dead and several others wounded. At the same time, a number of government fighters were pronounced dead in raging clashes on the edges of the town.
- On September 29, 2016, residents of Qudsaya along with several families displaced from Yarmouk fled the town due to the simmering hostilities and clashes between the government troops and opposition forces.
- On September 30, 2016, the government army targeted Qudsaya with artillery shells and tanks. Wildfires broke out at civilian homes in al-Khayateen.

### ► **Living Conditions:**

Prior to the reconciliation agreement, a tough cordon had been enforced by the government troops on Qudsaya. At the same town, the area had come under heavy shelling. Sniper attacks, abduction sweeps, and the closure of the main access roads out of and into the town forced dozens of families to seek sheltered elsewhere in Damascus and its suburbs.

Palestinian families who remained in Qudsaya town, in Rural Damascus, have been enduring abject living conditions. Life in the area has been marred by price leaps, high unemployment rates, steep rental fees, and the decline in civilians' purchasing power.

Hundreds of Palestinian families displaced from Yarmouk to Qudsaya have often appealed to the Palestinian Embassy in Damascus to urgently step in and work on lifting the blockade on Yarmouk so as to allow civilians a safe access to their homes.

The residents further appealed to the warring actors to grant them a safe passageway out of the area and urged UNRWA, PLO, and the other Palestinian factions to take action as regards the situation in Qudsaya.

### 3- Palestinian refugees outside Syria:

The situation endured by the Palestinians from Syria has been no less tragic in the new asylum destinations.

Palestinian refugees have been grappling with the lack of security and protection along with a precarious legal status. They have also been deprived of the right to access social services and facilities. Besides, survival for most of those seeking refuge overseas has largely hinged on UNRWA aids in order to cover such basic needs as food, shelter, education, and health care.

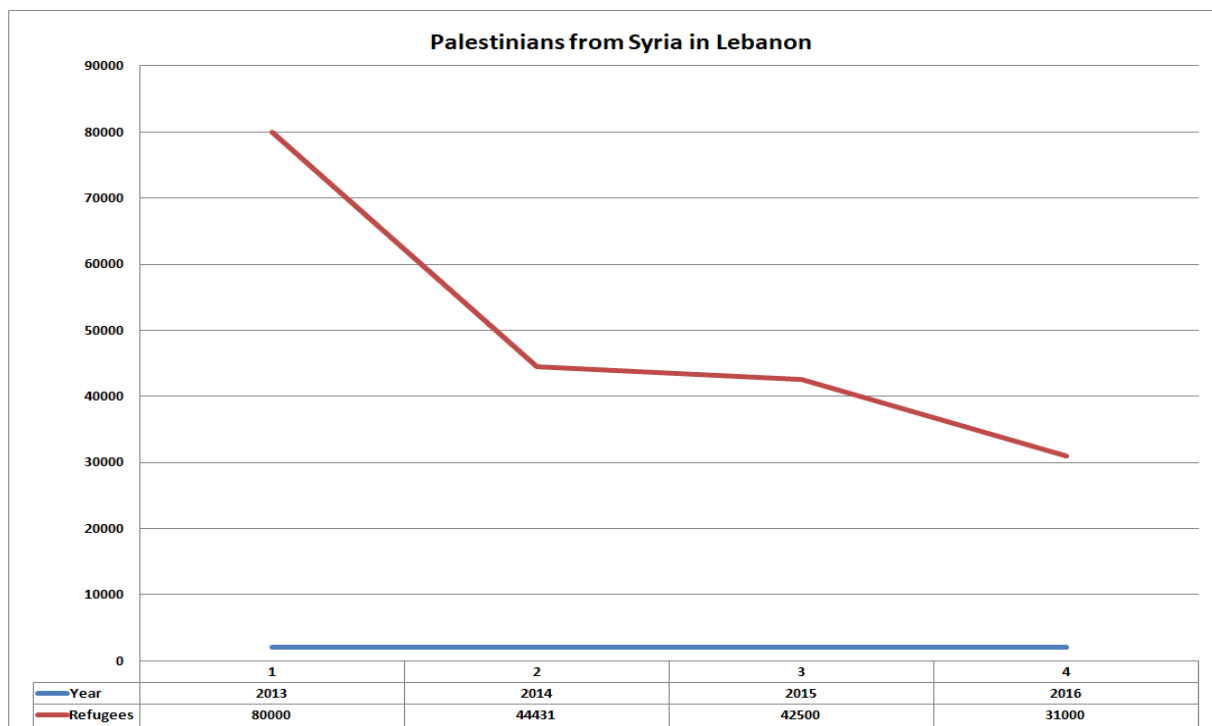
- **Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon**

According to statistics conducted by PLO popular committees in October 2015, some 33,198 Palestinians from Syria, estimated at 11,066 families, have sought shelter in Lebanon. UNRWA statistics estimated that 31,000 Palestinian from Syria have been sheltered in Lebanon.

The decrease in the number of Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon stems from delays in family reunification opportunities along with the return of several families to Syria due to the deteriorating situation in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

According to UNRWA statistics, 55% of Palestinian families from Syria in Lebanon are housed in 12 major refugee camps and 45% others are taking cover outside Palestinian camps.

A chart demonstrating the decline in the number of Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon from 2013 to 2016:



### **Health situation:**

Health care services are not freely accessible by the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The situation has gone far worse after UNRWA cut off its health services. Refugees in need of complex surgery or treatment are compelled to foot a large sum of the bill. They often find themselves unable to cover the rest of the bill and have to run up debts that they cannot repay. Cardiac catheterization, Kidney stone disease, also known as Urolithiasis, treatment of dental disorders and burns, among other illness, are not covered by UNRWA.

As for cases of natural childbirth, the expenses were covered by the UAE Red Crescent Movement after mediation by UNRWA. The latter transferred the expectant mothers to the Palestinian Red Crescent hospitals. However, since early 2016, UAE Red Crescent and UNRWA suspended childbirth services. Only a number of expectant mothers in need of a caesarean intervention were granted basic health care services.

### **Education:**

Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon have faced difficulties with respect to their access to education. Palestinians from Syria have fewer chances to enroll at Lebanon schools compared to other refugee communities due to restrictions and steep education fees which far outpace the refugees' budgets.

Classes are often suspended due to abrupt road closures, strikes, and security turmoil. Besides, refugees' academic output has been affected by the striking divergences between the Syrian and Lebanese curricula, resulting in a dramatic increase in school drop-outs.

### **Legal situation:**

Palestinian refugees from Syria are reported to lack legal status in Lebanon. The absence of specific legislation addressing the unique situation of the Palestinians of Syria has made them vulnerable to marginalization within the Lebanese polity, both as individuals and as a community.

On September 19, 2016, the Lebanese authorities stipulated that every single refugee aged 15 or above and who overstays his/her visa in Lebanon has to shell out \$200 to get a renewed six-month permit. Only those who have been in the Lebanese territories for over one year are granted a free six-month extension, making the situation far complicated particularly for joint families.

### **Human rights violations:**

Several human rights violations had been recorded by AGPS against the Palestinians of Syria in Lebanon, mostly regarding family reunification procedures, during the second half of 2016.

On July 3, 2016, the Lebanese security forces in Sidon arrested a Palestinian female refugee from Syria along with her two children on account of her illegal entry into the Lebanese territories. The detainee's husband told AGPS that his wife was tricked by a driver, who marked her travel documents with fraudulent stamps from the General Security Directorate.

The woman was arrested on charges of forgery and illegal entrance as soon as she got to a police station to renew her residency.

On September 7, 2016, the Lebanese security forces banned the Palestinian female student from Syria Aya Tayseer Shahada from re-entering Lebanon after she headed to Syria through legal routes to sit for preparatory school exams. Shahada underwent an urgent foot surgery and had to stay for three months in bed before she decided to join her mother and two sisters, displaced in Lebanon since 2013. She was arrested right as she reached the Lebanese borders and ordered to wait for another day pending an intervention by the Palestinian embassy.

On September 23, 2016, the Lebanese security forces banned the entry of a Palestinian woman from Syria and her son, who were heading to Beirut for a family reunification appointment at the German embassy.

The mother said she reached the Lebanese border crossing at 07:00 a.m. but the officer refused to let her in under the pretext that the entrance telegram is missing.

The mother added that her husband, sheltered in Germany, headed to the German Auslander office for migration and refugees and had been told that the reunification telegram was sent to the Lebanese authorities. However the Lebanese officer claimed he had contacted the German embassy several times but received no reply.

On December 17, 2016, the Lebanese forces arrested the Palestinian refugee from Syria Mohamed al-Haj Ahmed in Beirut on allegations that he overstayed his visa.

### **Relief situation:**

Relief aids by UNRWA and the Palestinian factions have been under threat of indefinite suspension in Lebanon.

Sigrid Kaag, special Coordinator for the United Nations in Lebanon, expressed concern about the difficult living conditions of the Palestinian Syrian refugees in Lebanon as a result of the ongoing civil war in Syria.

Kaag also stressed, during a press conference held on Friday, July 8, 2016 in New York that 17% of those refugees are now living below the poverty line.

The situation had gone downhill due to the wintry weather and the low atmospheric pressure rocking the region. Over recent years, air depression, low altitudes, and torrential downpours destroyed refugees' makeshift tents. The situation has exacerbated due to the acute shortage in financial resources and relief assistance in a territory where temperatures often reach 12 degrees below zero and ice covers civilian homes from the ground up.

On December 8, 2016, UNRWA announced the launch of its winter assistance program for Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon so as to enable them to make it through the winter season. According to UNRWA, the program aims to secure the refugees' food and shelter expenses.

UNRWA said the winter aids will be distributed as of December 13 and that it will shell out \$588 to those living in areas higher than 500 meters above sea level on four installments worth \$147 each. Those sheltered in areas lower than 500 meters above sea received \$400 on four installments.



During the second half of 2016, food parcels and meat boxes were distributed by relief institutions operating in Lebanon, namely al-Quds, al-Furqan, and al-Islah, among other charity groups.

The Palestine Charity Commission, in cooperation with the Guidance and Reform Association, distributed 400 food rations to displaced Palestinian refugees from Syria in Wadi al-Zina, in the Lebanese area of al-Kharoub, as part of relief projects carried out in worst-affected communities.

On August 10, 2016, al-Furqan Charity handed over in-kind foodstuff to a number of Palestinian families from Syria seeking shelter in Ein al-Hilweh Camp, in the southern Lebanese city of Sidon.

During holy Eid al-Adha (Sacrifice Feast), Palestinian families in Lebanon, including those displaced from Syria, also received meat boxes.

On September 19, 2016, the Assembly of Palestinian Workers from Syria launched a so-called “meat project for 2016”, which was sponsored by the European Workers Assembly-Germany and Merciful Hands Charity-Germany.

### **UNRWA:**

UNRWA relief services in Lebanon have been proceeding at a shaky pace. In October 2014, UNRWA cut the access of 1,100 families to food and shelter allowances on claims that they do not meet the eligibility criteria set by the agency.

In May 2015, a series of rallies and protest moves were staged outside UNRWA offices in Lebanon after the agency announced a series of restrictions limiting the refugees’ access to basic education, relief, and health services. UNRWA resumed its relief assistance following a round of talks with refugee delegates.

### **PRS Program:**

During the second half of 2016, PRS program outlined by UNRWA to work out the situation of Palestinian workers from Syria in Lebanon, in terms of salaries and power and rental allowances, turned out to be problematic. Treating the Palestinian refugees as residents of Syrian territories, the program failed to take into account the discrepancies in living costs between Syria and Lebanon.

### **Socio-economic survey of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon:**

UNRWA called on Palestinian families from Syria in Lebanon to update their personal data from July 25 to July 29, 2016 at UNRWA centers, under very strict conditions.

The move sparked rage among the Palestinian refugee community from Syria. al-l refugees from Syria had to show up at UNRWA centers carrying documents testifying to their stay in Syria prior to March 2011, including electricity and telecommunication bills, rental lease, school certificates for children, among other crippling documents.

### **Delays in aid distribution:**

Following UNRWA’s survey launched in July 2016, the agency announced the delay of its September allowances to the Palestinians of Syria and pledged to reimburse the sum by mid-

October pending the renewal of ATM cards. On September 21, 2016, Palestinian refugees rallied outside the UNRWA office in Bekaa in protest at the unexpected delay.

### **The International Red Cross:**

The International Red Cross Committee handed over a sum of \$1,000 to a number of needy Palestinian families from Syria for a four-month period.

Though the move was considered a step in the right direction, the refugees strongly condemned the discriminating and strict selection criteria. In September 29, 2016, protest vigils were staged by Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon and popular committees outside the Red Cross headquarters in Ein al-Hilweh Camp. The sit-inners slammed the Red Cross Committee for its unfair and partial eligibility mechanisms. A memorandum pushing for an inclusive eligibility scale was handed over by the refugees to the Red Cross director.

### **Civil Action:**

Palestinian refugees from Syria took part in several activities and campaigns staged during the second half of 2016 as part of ongoing initiatives to assuage the crises endured by the Palestinian refugee community Lebanon.

On July 14, 2016, the Committee of the Palestinians of Syria joined a workshop hosted by al-Naba' Association in Ein al-Hilweh Camp on child protection policies. The speakers discussed some of the alarming issues faced by the Palestinian children from Syria and those sheltered in Ein al-Hilweh Camp.

On July 31, 2016, the First Qiblah Charity to Teach Holy Koran honored the Palestinian child from Syria Mona Muhssin Abdul Rahman, aged nine and sheltered in al-Baddawi Camp, for memorizing three parts of the holy Koran. Mona, who lost her sight at birth, received a laptop developed for sightless persons during a ceremony held in Sidon.

On August 7, 2016, the Assembly of Palestinian Workers from Syria held its second annual conference under the title "Workers between Reality and Future Prospects" in Sidon under the sponsorship of the International Association of Palestinian Professional Institutions. The speakers expressed their ongoing support for the Palestinian refugee community from Syria in Lebanon.

On August 12, 2016, al-Qastal Scout Group, displaced from Syria, held, in cooperation with the Follow-Up Committee of the Palestinians of Syria, a four-day scout camp in al-Kharoub, in Siblin.

Afaq Educational Center in Wadi al-Zina, in partnership with the Islamic Relief Organization, launched a so-called "Protect a Child . . . Build a Nation" project to rehabilitate traumatized children from Syria.

On August 16, 2016, over 60 Palestinian learners from Syria joined the first English language camp in Lebanon, held under the title "We Learn for Palestine." A number of Palestinian instructors who were born in Europe and others sheltered in Lebanon took part in the language camp.

On August 18, 2016, Thabit Organization for the right of return, in cooperation with AKCT, held a training session for the Palestinian refugees from Syria and Lebanon at Shtaura Park Hotel, in al-Bekaa Valley.

On November 3, 2016, a team of benevolent activists from the UNRWA-run Women's Program Center in Ein al-Hilweh Camp initiated, in coordination with the committee of Palestinian-Syrian refugees in Lebanon, a free hairdressing and barbering project for students of al-Samou' School. The four-day project involved students from the first to the fourth grade.

### **Accidents:**

\*On July 26, 2016, Labib Medical Center in Sidon withheld the body of the Palestinian refugee Khaled Nasser Abu Jaideh, who succumbed to wounds he sustained in a shooting attack in al-Miyah wa Miyah Camp. The hospital administration stipulated that his body be released on condition that his family pay as much as \$14,000 as the fees of a night he spent in the intensive care unit, shortly before he was pronounced dead.

\*Palestinian girl from Syria Meriam Arjawi, a resident of Khan Eshieh Camp, died in an accident near al-Jalil Camp in Baalbek on October 15, 2016.

\*On December 7, 2016, the mother of the injured Palestinian refugee Ahmad Moussa, 31, launched cries for help after her son's health condition has taken a serious turn for the worse. Moussa, a former resident of Yarmouk who is currently taking refuge in the southern Lebanese province of al-Kharroub, sustained critical injuries in a motorcycle accident in al-Marj town some 30 days ago. His mother said right after the accident he was evacuated to the Central Hospital in Mazboud area, where he received treatment for four days. She later transferred him to the Sidon-based al-Hamshari Hospital due to the steep treatment fees. Ahmad underwent a scanner but medics refused to provide him with any further treatment after the family failed to shell out the medical charges. The patient will only regain admission into the hospital if the family pays \$2,000 for a device instilled in his face to repair the fractures inflicted by the motor vehicle crash. His mother appealed to the PLO, the Palestinian factions and charities in Lebanon, and all other concerned parties, to urgently step in and help the family secure the remaining \$1,500, after UNRWA donated only \$500. On December 10, 2016, the European al-Wafa Campaign embarked on a project to raise \$3,500 dollars to cover the treatment fees.

### **• Palestinians from Syria in Jordan:**

UNRWA estimated that 18,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria have fled to Jordan, 41% among whom identified as children below 18 years of age. The number is very likely to be much higher as several refugees entered Jordan using Syrian identity documents and posing themselves as Syrian nationals due to the bans slapped by the Jordanian authorities.

UNRWA provides aids to 80% of Palestinian refugees. A refugee receives an allowance of \$40 per month. 1,800 learners are enrolled at 141 UNRWA schools across Jordan.

For 25% of Palestinian families in Jordan, women have reportedly been the sole breadwinners. The Palestinians of Syria have been shorn of the right to public health services in Lebanon. Most refugees receive treatment in UNRWA clinics and health centers. UNRWA also covers transfer fees to public hospitals.

Palestinians from Syria in Jordan have been subjected to a vulnerable legal status and are under constant threat of refoulement. Difficulties in accessing public facilities, including civil registration, have made the situation worse.

On 11 December, 2016, the Jordanian authorities closed **Cyber City**, a facility in northern Jordan housing some 175 **Palestinian refugee families** from Syria, and transferred the refugees to King Abdullah Park, in Ramtha.

The move was carried out in partnership with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Jordan on account of repair works.

- **Palestinian refugees from Syria in Egypt:**

Some 4,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria have reportedly been taking shelter in Egypt, according to UNRWA estimates. Palestinians from Syria fall under the mandate of UNHCR, in partnership with the UNRWA coordination office in Egypt.

Palestinian refugees from Syria in Egypt have frequently spoken out against the apathy maintained by the Palestinian Embassy in Cairo and PLO, among other national and international institutions, regarding their extremely vulnerable socio-economic and legal situations.

#### **Legal Status:**

Palestinian refugees in Egypt have been denied the right to permanent visas. The Egyptian authorities treat them as visitors, foreigners, or, in the best of cases, second-class residents.

#### **Living conditions:**

The unemployment rate among the Palestinians from Syria in Egypt hit climactic levels during the second half of 2016. Palestinians have been deprived of the right to decent labor. The security mayhem rocking the Egyptian territories has made the situation far worse. Besides, Palestinians' lack of access to the Egyptian labor market is tightly linked to their ineligibility for permanent visas.

#### **The right to Hajj (Greater Pilgrimage):**

The Saudi Embassy in Cairo refused to grant Palestinian refugees from Syria in Egypt a visa to enter Saudi Arabia to perform Greater Pilgrimage for 2016.

According to the Saudi authorities, the Syrian opposition coalition is the only party in charge of the pilgrimage file for the Syrian nationals and Palestinian refugees from Syria. As figures in an agreement with the Saudi Pilgrimage Ministry, the Higher Pilgrimage Committee, appointed by the opposition coalition, takes charge of the procedures, arrangements, applications, and visas for the Palestinians from Syria and Syrian nationals.

- **Palestinian refugees from Syria in Turkey:**

The situation of the Palestinians of Syria in Turkey has had an ambivalent character. During the second half of 2016, the number of the Palestinians from Syria in Turkey had not seen a remarkable increase. An estimated 5,000 to 7,000 refugees have been taking cover in Turkey, mostly in Istanbul and central and southern Turkish provinces.

### Entry bans, visa restrictions:

The Turkish authorities tightened the noose around the neck of the Palestinian from Syria, denying them easy access to visas.

The Turkish forces have also tightened grip on the borderlands, intensifying military deployment and setting up alert systems that are systematically activated if any moving subject comes within 300 meters of the border line.

On July 24, 2016, 20 Palestinian families from Syria stranded on the Turkish borders, precisely in Izar, since January 2016 appealed to the international institutions, the Palestinian embassy, and UNHCR to urgently step in and broker their entry to the Turkish territories.

In order for Palestinian refugees to enter Turkey they have been made to shell out as much as \$700. As a result, dozens have remained trapped in in-between areas and in olive groves, unable to return Syria for fear of being kidnapped by the government forces and their war partners.

On December 3, 2016, Palestinian woman from Syria Khadija Ahmad Akleh was shot and injured by the Turkish border cops as she tried to reach out to Turkey, fleeing beset Syria. A resident of the blockaded Yarmouk Camp in southern Damascus, the refugee sustained spine fractures after she lost footing and fell off a cliff in Khirbet al-Jouz borderland. She was rushed to the Jisr al-Shughur hospital in Syria for urgent treatment.

### Crackdowns at airports:

During August 2016, AGPS kept record of several violations and crackdowns perpetrated against Palestinian refugee from Syria at Turkish airports.

The London-based AGPS documented cases of arbitrary delays of projected flights for Palestinian Syrian refugees heading to Europe via Turkish airports despite the fact that they had obtained leaves from the Turkish authorities.

At times, Palestinian families from Syria had to pay up to \$1,000 as a precondition to be allowed in. Other families have been banned from entering Turkey for five years.

**A number of refugees at Sabiha Gokcen and Ataturk international airports told AGPS that they had been mistreated by the officers and subjected to steep fines and arbitrary travel bans.**

On October 17, 2016, a Palestinian-Syrian family, previously taking refuge in Beirut, was arrested by the Turkish forces on its way to Denmark via Istanbul on claims that it did not carry a transit visa. The family was released afterwards following pressure from the Danish Embassy in Turkey. Another Palestinian-Syrian family was arrested in Turkey on way to Sudan

The Turkish government issued a decision stipulating a transit visa as a precondition to let Palestinian refugees in. The decision implies that Palestinian refugees will have to submit an application for a visa at the embassy of their country of residence, in a move that sets another stumbling block before Palestinian refugees' access out of and into Turkey after they fled war-torn Syria.



## **Palestinians in Turkey Conference**

On September 4, 2016, hundreds of pro-Palestine activist, NGOs, rights groups, and Turkish MPs joined the Palestinians in Turkey conference. The event shed light on the situation of the Palestinians from Syria in Turkey, most notably their legal status and their lack of access to relief assistance.

On October 26, 2016, a senior delegation of the Palestinians of Turkey Conference briefed representatives of the Turkish Parliament in Ankara on the tragic state of affairs endured by the Palestinians of Syria in Turkey regarding travel documents and their legal statuses.

The Palestinians of Turkey Conference delegates called on the Turkish MPs to try to work out the crisis and to lend a hand to the refugee students.

The delegation said the visit culminated in an agreement to hand over the file of the Palestinians of Syria and Iraq to the advisor of the Turkish Prime Minister Dr. Ahmet Davutoglu so as to keep tabs on the issue.

- **Palestinians from Syria in Europe:**

The massive flow of the Palestinians of Syria to Europe had seen a hiatus during the second half of 2016, except for a number of families who gained access into European countries for family reunification procedures.

A Turkish-European agreement to rein in the flow of migrants and asylum-seekers, has also contributed to the slowdown in the pace of refugee influx.

## **Number of Palestinians from Syria in Europe:**

The exact number of Palestinians from Syria in Europe remains vague due difficulties in the documentation process. Over the past few years, little efforts have been made by Palestinian and European official institutions and statistics departments to provide a well-studied database. Other official bodies, namely UNHRC, suspended their statistics-based reports. Difficulties in the documentation process also stem from the delays in data-release by the concerned European bodies and statistics centers. Other official organs, including UNHCR, halted their publication of quarterly reports. At the same time no official Palestinian authorities have kept record of thorough data on the Palestinians from Syria in Europe.

According to AGPS data, 97,206 Palestinians from Syria reached Europe until June 2016. In light of the absence of official data and statistics regarding the Palestinians from Syria, a category often referred to as “stateless, AGPS statistics are conducted using the weighting technique which helps establishing fairly accurate estimations as regards the intended study subject.

The stateless category also includes Kurds, Somali asylum-seekers, and refugees from Gulf countries, who reportedly make up 16% of the overall number of refugees.

## **Palestinians from Syria in Europe from 2011 to June 2016:**

Based on UNHRC semi-annual reports for the period from 2011 to 2016, AGPS reached the following findings:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of Refugees	2,465	3,513	9,620	13,902

According to data by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) for the second quarter of 2015, the number of refugees from Syria is three times higher. Based on such a finding, the number of Palestinian refugees from Syria in Europe is estimated at around 41,706. During the first half of 2016, official data as regards the refugees from Syria had been brought to a standstill by such concerned bodies as UNHCR and Frontex. Taking into account the continued influx of refugees prior to the Turkish-European deal struck in early March 2016, AGPS estimates that 8,000 Palestinians from Syria have reached Europe, amounting, more or less, to the same number recorded in 2015. As a result of Turkey's implementation of a closed-door immigration policy following the March 2016 deal and the tough restrictions enforced by Hungary, Bulgaria, and Macedonia on their borders, the number of Palestinians from Syria who entered Europe has shrunk back. Between 2011 and January 2016, 79,206 refugees reached Europe.

**Table: Estimated number of Palestinians from Syria in Europe**

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number	2,465	3,513	9,620	13,902	41,706	8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>79,206</b>					

The current number is expected to have exceeded 85,000 refugees according to estimates by refugees' families and siblings who reached Europe during the second half of 2016 for family reunification meetings.

- **Legal Status of Palestinians from Syria in Europe:**

The legal status of the Palestinian refugees in Europe has been as shaky and vulnerable as it has been in other parts of the world. In the best of cases, the Palestinians of Syria in Europe are granted a five-year visa.

**Sweden:**

Palestinian Syrian refugees seeking asylum in Sweden slammed the closed-doors policy pursued by the Swedish government to rein in the influx of refugees after the kingdom suspended granting long-term visas for refugees and has instead issued residence permits of no more than 13 months.

Hundreds of Palestinian refugees rallied outside the Swedish parliament headquarters to protest the new immigration law.

On December 1, 2016, the Swedish authorities refused to grant asylum to 12 Palestinian families from Syria who had been sheltered in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

**Denmark:**

The Palestinians of Syria in Denmark have been made to endure unfree labor, limited access to public facilities, and tough family reunification procedures. Students holding a Danish citizenship were kept apart from those with non-Danish nationalities and those who fell under the “stateless” blacklist.

On September 15, 2016, dozens of refugees joined a rally in the second largest Swedish city of Aarhus denouncing the government’s inflexible immigration politics.

**Germany:**

Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Germany expressed profound disappointment at a German court verdict ruling that Syrians fleeing the war in their home country do not have automatic right to refugee status, confirming an earlier decision by Germany’s Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).

According to the court, asylum seekers deported to Syria will not necessarily be persecuted as political foes solely on the grounds that they fled the country.

BAMF currently awards Syrian asylum seekers only temporary, so-called “subsidiary protection.” The subsidiary protection protects the refugees from deportation but prevents them from reuniting with family members.

Holders of subsidiary protection are granted only a one-year stay rather than three and are not entitled to their rights as holders of a refugee status.

According to German daily Hamburger Abendblatt, in Muenster alone, 1,900 lawsuits had been brought by Syrians contesting the decisions by the BAMF by the end of January. In the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, 12,300 such lawsuits had been filed.

The German national daily Die Welt also said on December 15, 2016 that the number of appeals was estimated at 36,000, mostly filed by Palestinians from Syria who had been granted subsidiary asylum status. 89% of the appeals were backed by the panel of German adjudicators.

Palestinians from Syria in Germany are categorized as stateless refugees, according to the German law. The Geneva Convention stipulates that Germany grant nationality to those categorized as stateless refugees, in accordance with the German Nationality Law of 2000.

- **Awareness-raising campaigns, solidarity events:**

During the second half of 2016, the Palestinian refugee community from Syria embarked on a series of awareness-raising campaigns and protest moves staged across the European continent to draw the world's attention to the Palestinian cause.

AGPS also took part in several human rights and cultural workshops hosted in Britain, Switzerland, and Sweden, most notably the 32<sup>nd</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> sessions of the UN Human Rights Council.

Speaking during the 32<sup>nd</sup> session of UNHRC in Geneva, Member of the Palestinian Return Center (PRC) and AGPS Executive Director, Mr. Ahmed Hussein, along with AGPS delegate Nawras Ali and PRC researcher Pietro Stefanini, shed light on the crises wrought on the Palestinians from Syria, most notably the blockade, arrests, forced displacement, death on migration road, and the effects of statelessness.

AGPS, in partnership with PRC, also provided a database and intensive reports on the Palestinian detainees and victims of torture and enforced disappearance in Syria on the sidelines of the 33<sup>rd</sup> UNHRC session.

On September 7, 2016, dozens of Palestinian refugees from Syrian in the Netherlands joined a rally held outside the Dutch parliament to protest a projected stopover by the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

On October 22, 2016, The Danish Crescent Charity announced the launch of a fundraising campaign to gather voluntary donations for Khan Eshieh refugee camp.

On November 13, 2016, a peaceful rally was staged by the Palestinian Cultural House in the Swedish town of Helsingborg in solidarity with Khan Eshieh Camp. The rally comes in response to the deadly offensives and the tough siege slapped by the Syrian government militias and their war abettors on the camp.

- **Success stories**

Several cases of success stories achieved by Palestinian refugees from Syria in Europe were documented by AGPS.

- Palestinian refugee from Syria Assem Hussam al-Din Taleb won the top prize at a Karate championship in Sweden and a gold medal, the fourth of its kind, at the competition.
- Palestinian-Syrian child Aws Montassar Tershehane, from Neirab Camp, won the first prize in a regional chess championship held in Sweden.
- 26-year-old Ruba Shamout, who arrived in Sweden some three years earlier, started a promising academic career as a pharmacy enrollee at Malmö University.
- Palestinian refugee Musab al-Mawad established a provisional school to teach languages, mathematics, and IT, among other subjects, to young learners and adults in the Greek refugee camp of Katsikas.
- A Palestinian student from Syria wins 13<sup>th</sup> place in mathematics competition in Germany and his brother gets appointed as a translator at a German school.

- **Risks Encountered on Migration Road**

The journey from war-tattered Syria to other destination has not been risk-free. Prosecutions, crackdowns, enforced deportation, and cases of drowning at sea, have been frequently documented by AGPS.

**Tunisia:**

On August 7, 2016, a Palestinian family from Syria detained at the Carthage Airport appealed to PLO and the Palestinian embassy in Tunisia, among other concerned bodies, to backtrack on a deportation order and grant them temporary residence in the Tunisian territories.

The three-member family, coming from Beirut Airport and stopping over Tunisia, was on its way to Mauritania

On August 10, 2016, the Tunisian authorities deported a Palestinian family from Syria detained at Carthage Airport to Lebanon after they subjected the family members to mistreatment.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the husband told AGPS: “The Tunisian airline office booked a flight to my wife, child, and myself on August 7, 2016. We left Beirut Airport on way to Carthage Airport, where we landed following a two-hour trip. However as soon as we got to the gatehouse hoping that we would board the flight easily, an officer kicked us out after he told me that my son and myself are banned from the right to travel to Mauritania, following instructions by the Tunisian airline companies.”

“Until your plane arrives, keep to this corner and ask no further questions. Your forcible transfer to Lebanon is unquestionable,” the family was further told when it appealed for a temporary stay in Tunisia.

**Greece:**

Palestinian refugees from Syria seeking shelter in Greece have often launched cries for help over their dire socio-economic situation and shaky legal status.

**Statistics:**

According to unofficial statistics, 400 Palestinian refugees, mostly from the Syrian camps of Daraa, Yarmouk, Al Aedin, and Husseneia, have been seeking shelter in makeshift tents and under-equipped halls on such Greek islands as Lesbos, Chios, Leros, and Kos.

- **The Turkish-European agreement:**

The situation has gone far worse after the EU heads of state forged the March 2016 deal with Turkey, sparking an atmosphere of palpable panic. At its core, the agreement aimed to address the overwhelming flow of migrants and asylum seekers traveling across the Aegean from Turkey to the Greek islands by allowing Greece to return to Turkey all new irregular migrants arriving after March 20. Leaflets released by the Greek authorities confirmed that the Palestinians of Syria are not implied by the accord for they are categorized as “stateless” persons, making their status even worse.



### **Humanitarian situation:**

Several reports and snapshots have been released by AGPS on the situation of the Palestinians of Syria who have been seeking asylum in Greece. Sometime earlier, Palestinian-Syrian journalist Amal Faour spoke out against the flagrant violations and psycho-physical mistreatment perpetrated against the Palestinians of Syria on the Greek island of Chios. Heavy beating of Palestinian women racial discrimination, and bribery were frequently reported.

### **Poor health conditions and hygiene:**

The government has denied the Palestinians of Syria the right to undergo medical treatment and check-ups in public hospitals, forcing the refugees to pay steep fees to private clinics. The refugees have also been subjected to mistreatment and discrimination by Greece medics. The Palestinians from Syria in Greece have been taking refuge in makeshift tents, which the refugees said have become uninhabitable due to the spread of insects and reptiles, along with the poor hygiene.

### **Concerns over hate crimes:**

By the end of November 2016, racist assailants hurled Molotov cocktails at Souda refugee camp in Chios, forcing 150 refugees, among whom Palestinians from Syria, to leave the area. The Greek police held refugees accountable for the incident.

On December 15, 2016, Seven Palestinian refugees sustained wounds, including two in critical conditions after Afghani refugees aggressively attacked Palestinians sheltered on the island. The refugees were attacked as they attempted to defend a 14-year-old Gazan who was violently beaten by refugees taking cover on the island. The assailants wielded cold weapons and wreaked havoc on Palestinian makeshift tents before they stole the refugees' belongings. The refugees have gone homeless and could not reach their shelters after they received death threats from the gangsters. The Palestinian refugees slammed the apathy maintained by the Greek police vis-à-vis such frequent assaults. "We have repeatedly appealed to the Greek police to transfer us to safer shelters but to no avail as none of our appeals have been taken into consideration," said one of the injured Palestinian refugees.

### **Appeals:**

Palestinian refugees in Greece have frequently launched cries for help to the international humanitarian institutions, PLO, and the Palestinian Embassies.

On August 19, 2016, the family of the stranded Palestinian-Syrian child Jawad Abweini appealed to the Palestinian and European NGOs and GOs to take urgent action vis-à-vis the deteriorating health situation of their son, who arrived in Greece with his mother, following a life-threatening journey from Syria to Lebanon then to Turkey.

### **Czech:**

On September 11, 2016, the Czech police arrested the Palestinian refugee Manal Mohamed Amin al-Dabagh onboard a train from Austria to Germany to visit her daughter. The Czech officers detained her on the borderland.

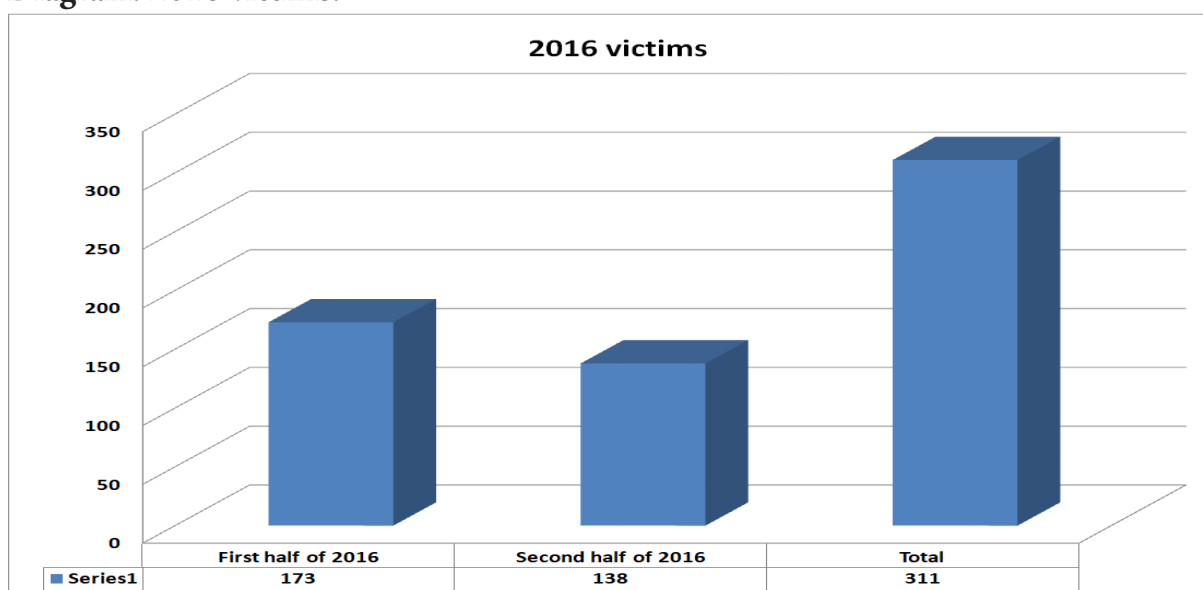
#### 4- Victims and detainees:

AGPS kept record of the death of 3,414 Palestinians from Syria due to war-related incidents until December 2016.

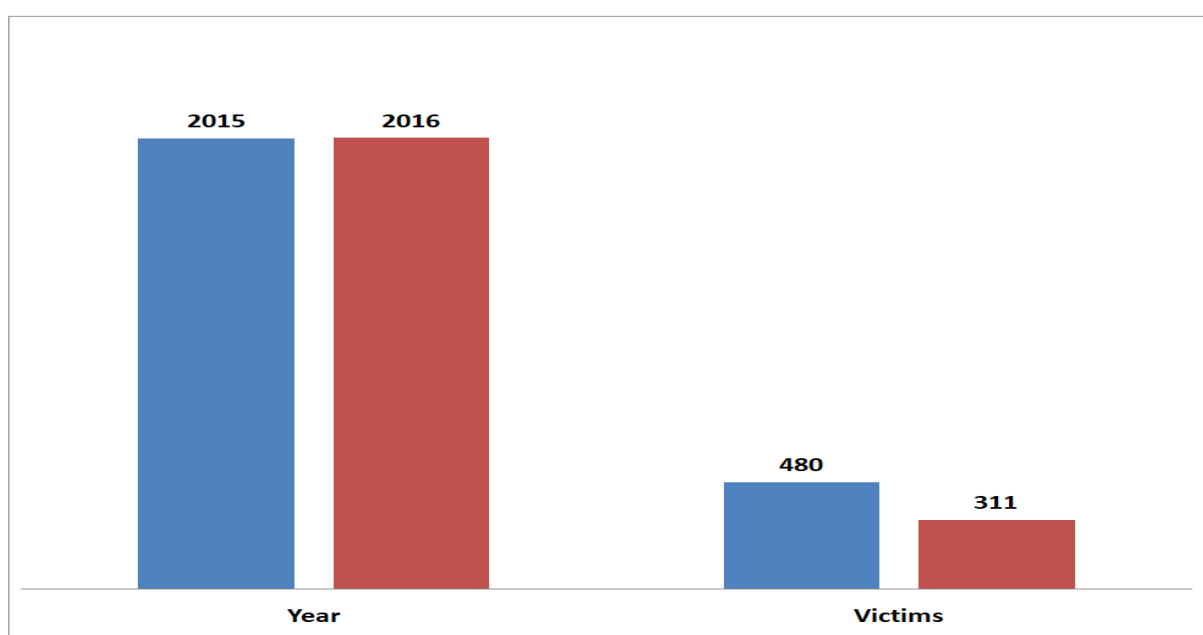
##### Victims:

138 Palestinians from Syria were pronounced dead during the second half of 2016, down from 173 in the first half.

Diagram: 2016 victims:



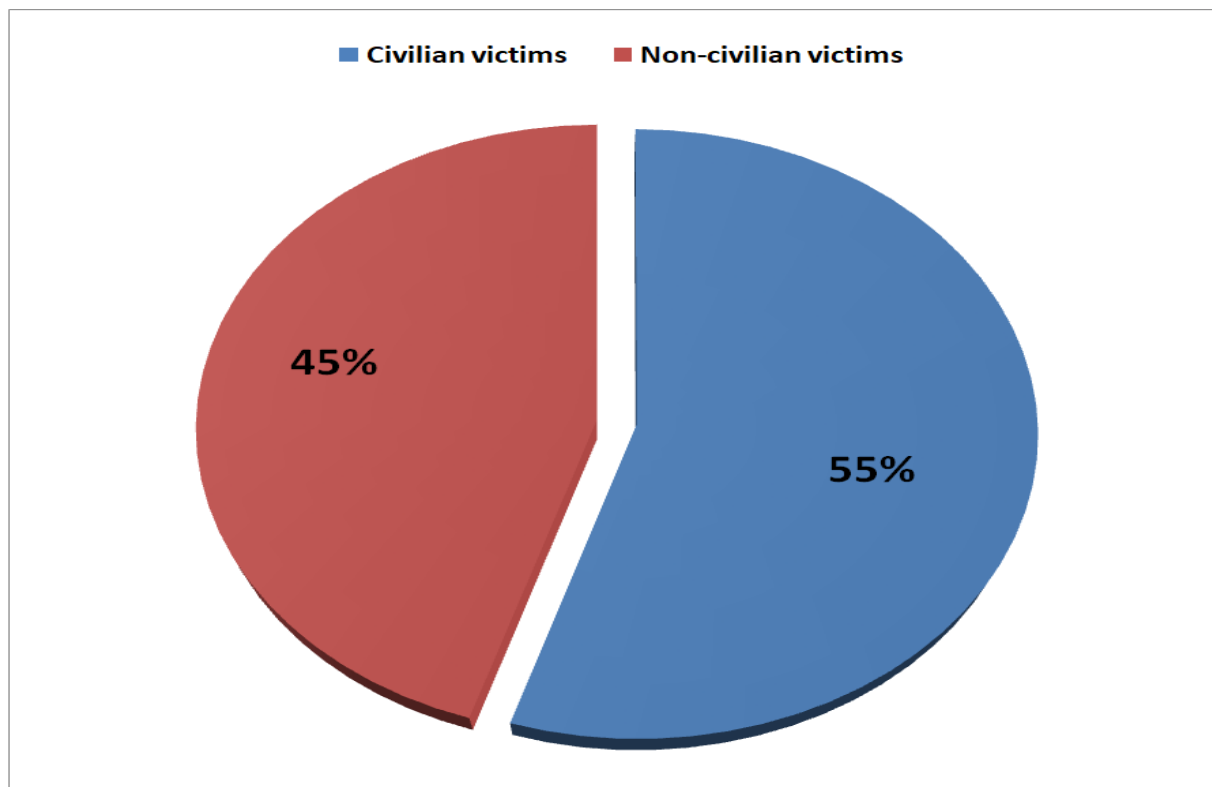
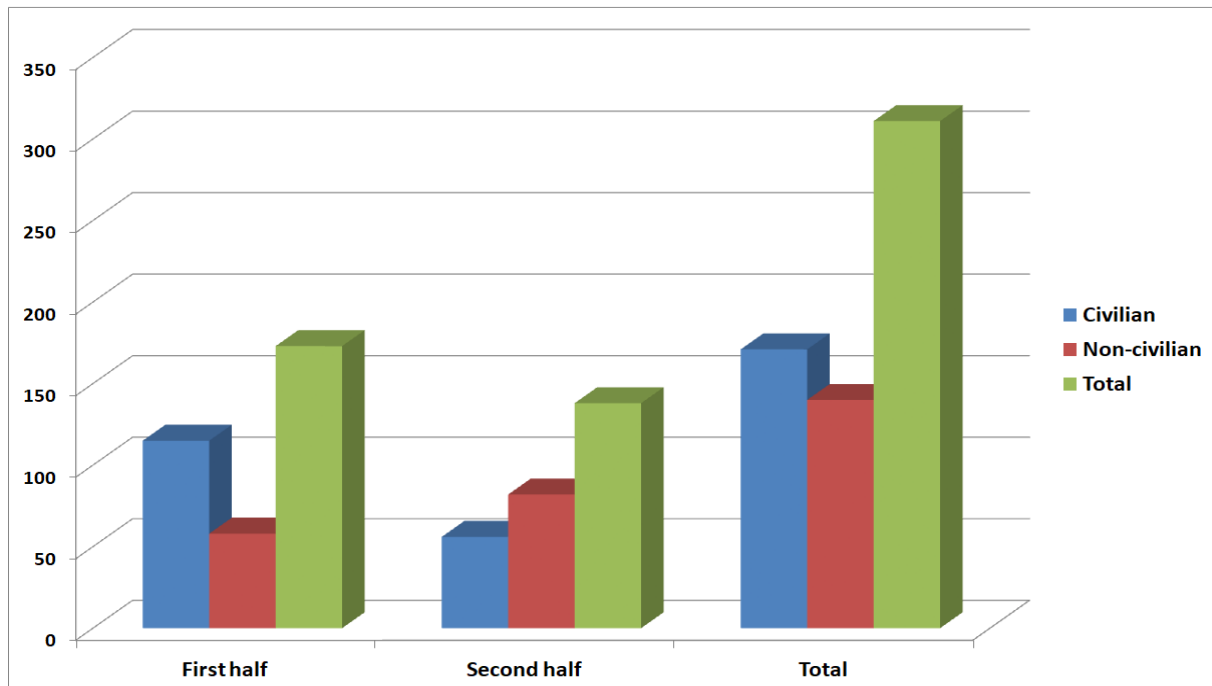
311 Palestinians from Syria were killed in 2016, compared to 480 in 2015.



### Civilian and non-civilian casualties:

41% of the Palestinians of Syria killed in the second half of 2016 (56 refugees), are identified by AGPS as non-combatants, up from 66% (115 refugees) until the end of June 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, up from 34% (58 refugees) during the first half.

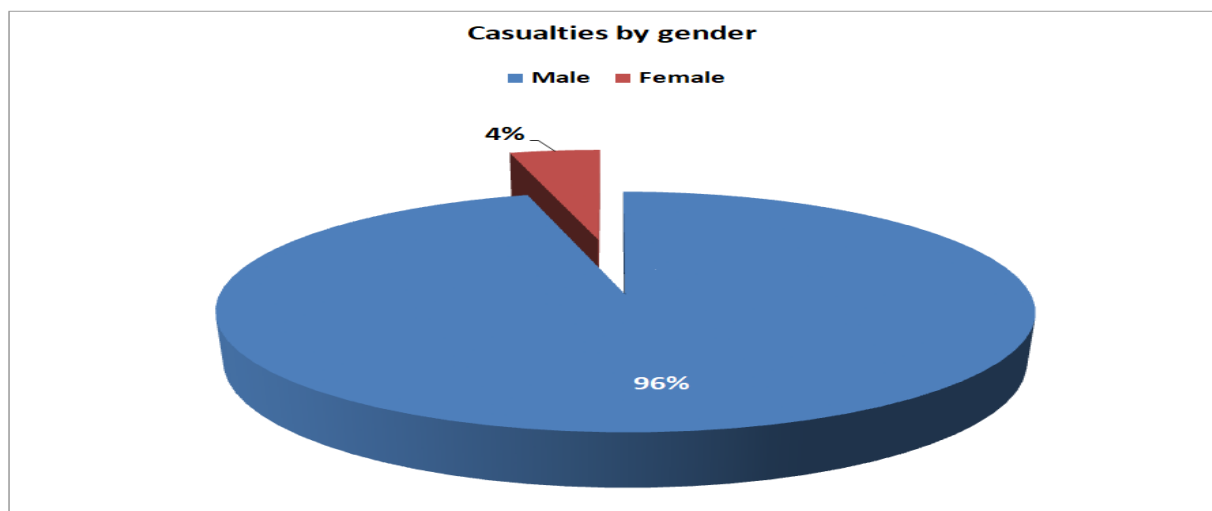


### Casualties by gender, age:

Women and children made up nearly 4% of the death toll of the second half of 2016. The warfare claimed the lives of six women, 132 men, six children, and 132 adults.

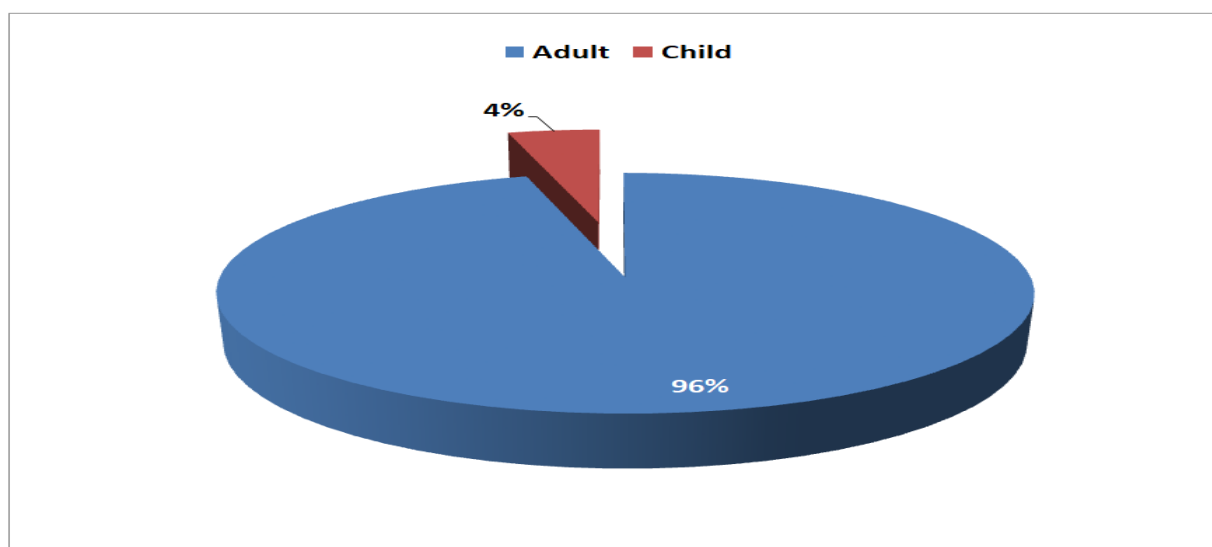
### Victims by gender:

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	132	95.65%
Female	6	4.35%
Death Toll	138	100.00%



### Victims by age:

Age	Number	Percentage
Adult	132	95.65%
Child	6	4.35%
Death Toll	138	100.00%

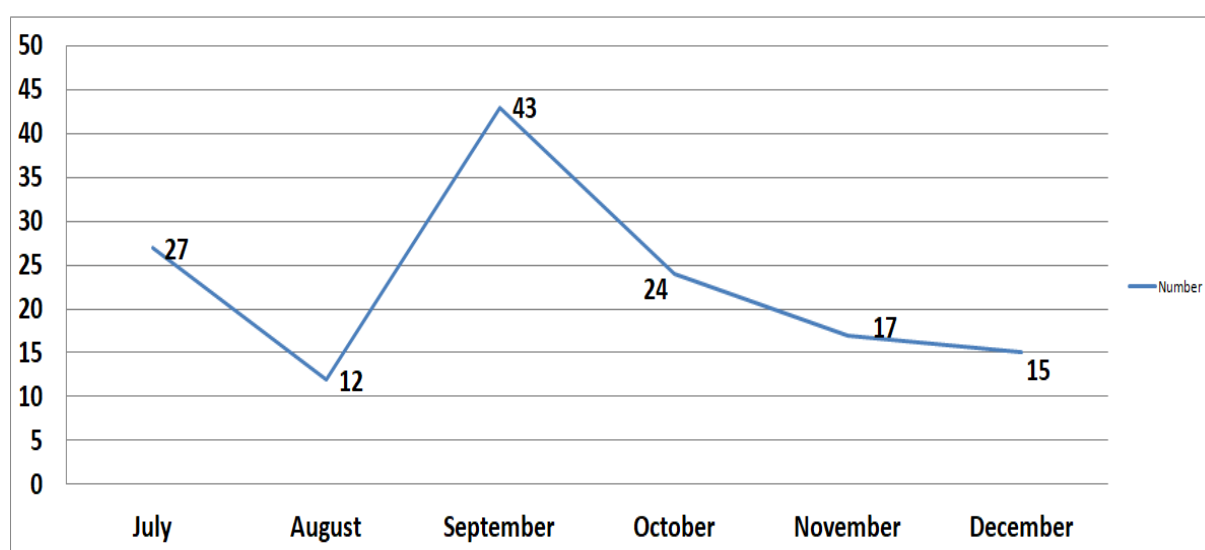
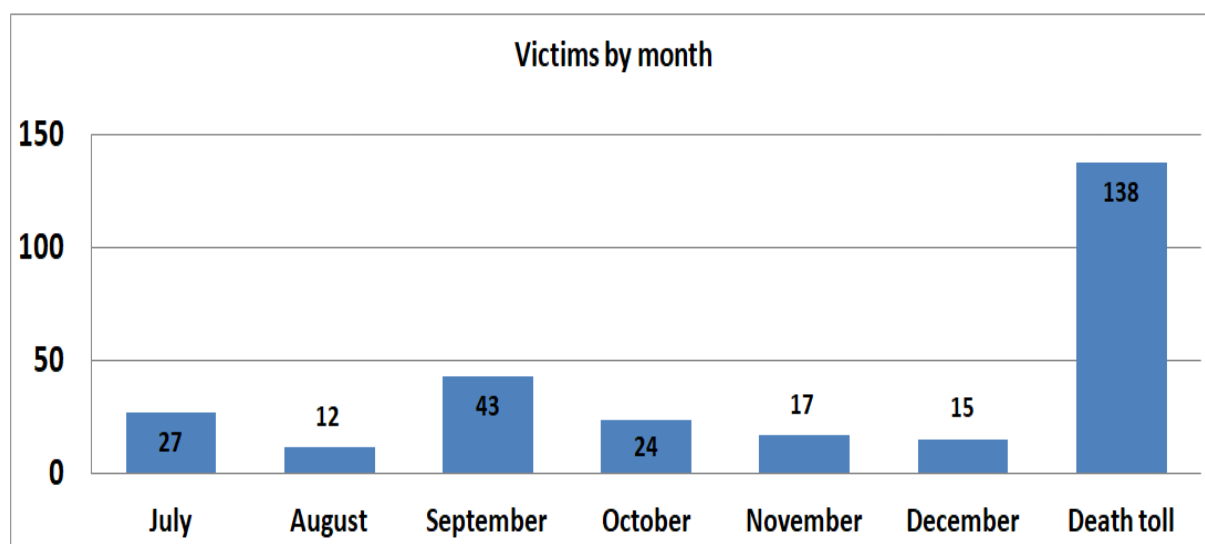


### Temporal distribution of casualties:

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

### Victims by month:

Death date	Number
July	27
August	12
September	43
October	24
November	17
December	15
Death toll	138





### Geographical distribution:

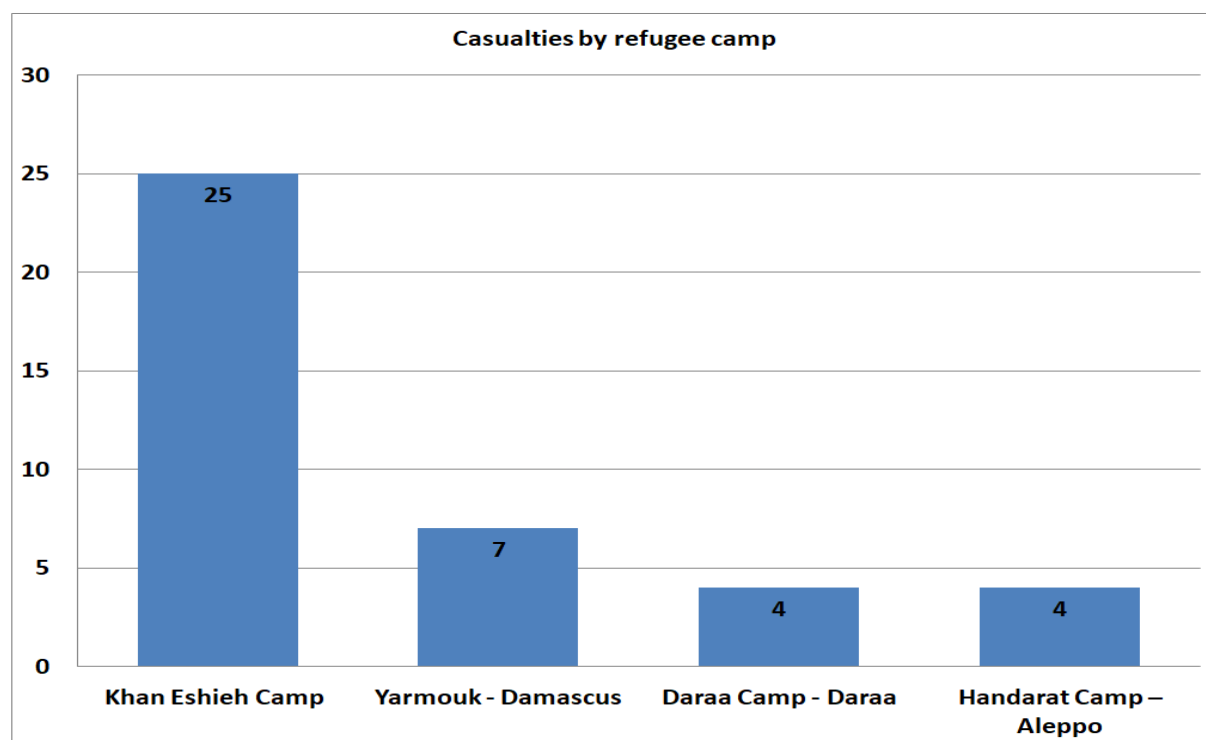
135 Palestinian refugees were killed in the Syrian territories while three Palestinians from Syria died in Lebanon. Palestinian child Mohamed Tanji was pronounced dead at Sidon public hospital shortly after he fell into a coma and was rushed to an intensive care unit. His family could not secure the treatment fees. 26-year-old Khaled Abu Jeida was fatally gunned down in al-Miyah wa Miyah Camp, near Sidon. Ahmed Walid Mahdhiya was also shot dead in Beirut.

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

Rif Dimashq hit a record high of 63 victims followed by Aleppo, with 15 casualties. 12 refugees died, meanwhile, in Damascus and 20 others in unidentified locations.

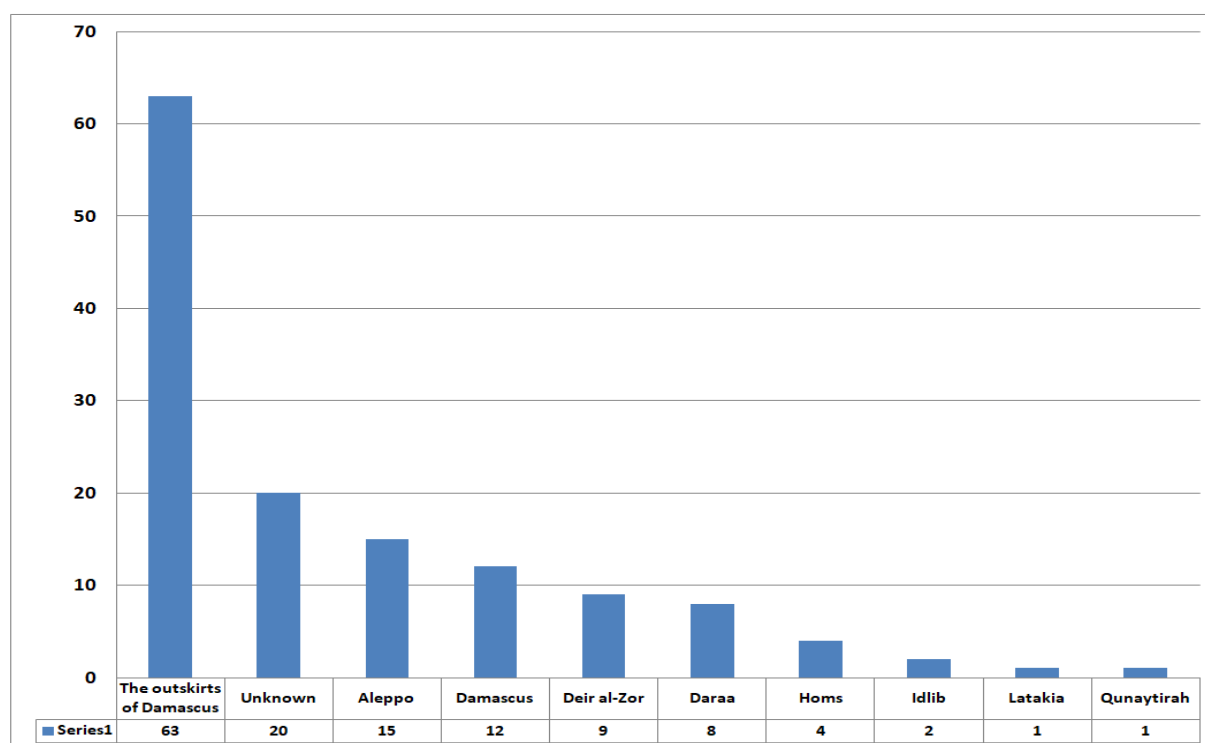
### Casualties by refugee camp during second half of 2016:

Death place	Number	Percentage
Khan Eshieh Camp	25	62.50%
Yarmouk - Damascus	7	17.50%
Daraa Camp - Daraa	4	10.00%
Handarat Camp – Aleppo	4	10.00%
Death toll	40	100.00%



### Victims by major province:

Province	Victims
The outskirts of Damascus	63
Unknown	20
Aleppo	15
Damascus	12
Deir al-Zor	9
Daraa	8
Homs	4
Idlib	2
Latakia	1
Qunaytirah	1
Death toll	135

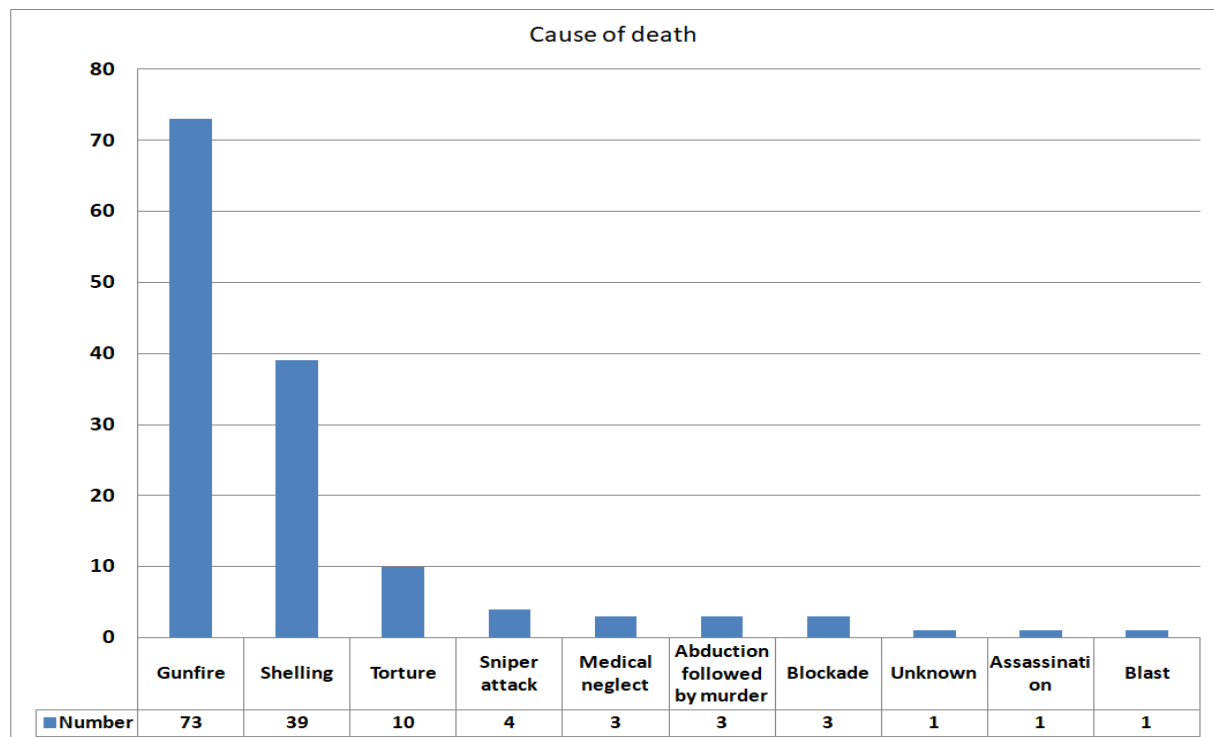


### Victims by cause of death:

Clashes and live ammunition took away the lives of 73 Palestinians during the second half of 2016. 39 refugees died under shelling, using missiles, barrel bombs, and artillery shells. 10 others were tortured to death in Syrian lock-ups. 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 the blockade and starvation.

### Casualties by leading cause of death:

Cause of death	Number	Percentage
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%
Death toll	138	100.00%



### Detainees:

The second half of 2016 witnessed an upsurge in the rate of Palestinian detainees compared to the second half. AGPS kept account of the detention and abduction of 48 refugees across Syria. 13 Palestinian residents of Khan Eshieh Camp, in Rif Dimashq, and 11 others sheltered in Homs-based Al Aedin Camp were arrested during the period under examination.

### Detainees by camp, province

Place of arrest	Number	Percentage
Khan Eshieh Camp – Rif Dimashq	13	1.17%
Al Aedin Camp – Homs	11	0.99%
Unknown	7	0.63%
Neirab Camp – Aleppo	5	0.45%
al-Muzeireeb – Daraa	4	0.36%
Yarmouk Camp – Damascus	4	0.36%
al-Mu'dhamiya – Rif Dimashq	1	0.09%
Daraa Camp – Daraa	1	0.09%
Husseneia Camp – Rif Dimashq	1	0.09%
Sbeineh Camp – Rif Dimashq	1	0.09%
Death toll	48	4.33%

Abduction sweeps across the ravaged 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 al-Kadam checkpoint, in Rif Dimashq. 20-year-old Palestinian university student Rawand Abu al-Sou'oud, from al-Muzeireeb, was detained for 10 days on her way to the campus.

Several Palestinian refugees were also arrested by the opposition outfits in Syria. Refugee Faysal al-Khaled was arrested by Sham al-Rasoul 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 al-Baqar area, in al-Sweida's northeastern outskirts, south of Syria, on their way to Turkey.

### List of arrestees during second half of 2016:

No.	Name	Date of arrest	Place of Arrest	City	Address
1	Amjad Kamel Fahd Hussein	7/2/2016	Unknown	Damascus	Daraa - al-Muzeireeb
2	Bassam Khaled Abu Shalah	7/2/2016	Unknown	Daraa	Daraa – al-Muzeireeb
3	Ahmed Mohamed Ali Ali Hamid	7/16/2016	Al Aedin Camp - Homs	Homs	Al Aedin Camp – Homs
4	Ayman Khatab	7/17/2016	Al Aedin Camp – Homs	Homs	Al Aedin Camp - Homs
5	Mohamed Ziad Ayoub	7/24/2016	Migration and passports office	Homs	Al Aedin Camp - Homs
6	Ahmed Mahmoud Abu Arabi	7/24/2016	Campus	Homs	Al Aedin Camp - Homs

7	Essam Beitari	8/2/2016	Babila	Rif Dimashq	Damascus – Yarmouk Camp
8	Mahdi Mahmoud Taha	8/2/2016	Al Aedin Camp	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
9	Ahmed Mohamed Samour	8/6/2016	Al Aedin Camp	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
10	Fayez Khaled Samour	8/7/2016	Al Aedin Camp	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
11	Mahmoud Mohamed Awad	8/10/2016	Hisya Industrial City	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
12	Mohamed Salayma	8/11/2016	Al Aedin Camp – Homs	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
13	Madyan Subhi Sarhan	8/12/2016	Homs-Tartous road	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
14	Muayed Reyad Awad	8/12/2016	Al Aedin Camp – Homs	Homs	Al Aedin Camp
15	Abed Harb	9/6/2016	Neirab Camp	Aleppo	Aleppo – Neirab Camp
16	Nadim Abu Hassan	9/6/2016	Neirab Camp	Aleppo	Aleppo – Neirab Camp
17	Ahmed Shatara	9/6/2016	Neirab Camp	Aleppo	Aleppo – Neirab Camp
18	Iyad Jawhar	9/6/2016	Neirab Camp	Aleppo	Aleppo – Neirab Camp
19	Mohamed Kasem	9/11/2016	Beit Sahem	Rif Dimashq	Damascus – Yarmouk Camp
20	Rawand Abu al-Saoud	9/21/2016	Unknown	Daraa	Daraa – al-Muzeireeb
21	Ghassan Ezzat al-Breiki	9/25/2016	Unknown	Daraa	Daraa – al-Muzeireeb
22	Umm Omar Amsha	9/27/2016	Unknown	Rif Dimashq	Damascus – Yarmouk Camp
23	Majdi Zreiqi	10/1/2016	Unknown	Daraa	Daraa – Daraa Camp
24	Mahmoud al-Zeibaq	10/1/2016	Unknown	Unknown	Rif Dimashq – al-Mu'dhamiya
25	Nidhal Issa al-Naji	10/10/2016	Unknown	Aleppo	Aleppo – Neirab Camp
26	Ahmed Haidar Ali	10/12/2016	Zakia	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
27	Abu Sadam al-Haji	10/12/2016	Zakia	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
28	Abdul Hakim Hussein	10/16/2016	Unknown	Unknown	Rif Dimashq – Khan Husseneia Camp
29	Ahmed Mohamed Ali	10/24/2016	Jdeidat Artouz	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
30	Marwan Mar'i Mahmoud	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown
31	Ibrahim Mahmoud Mahmoud	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown

32	Ihab Areisha	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown
33	Rami Atiyeh Jumua	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown
34	Moussa Jumua	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown
35	Mohamed Jumua	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown
36	Amer Amer	11/1/2016	Branch 227 Department	Damascus	Unknown
37	Abed Mohamed Awad Eid	11/15/2016	Jdeidat Artouz	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
38	Abed Kasem Dhaher	11/26/2016	Syrian-Lebanese borders	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
39	Abdul Halim Abdul Rahman	12/1/2016	Palestine Branch	Damascus	Damascus – Yarmouk Camp
40	Hamza al-Muslih	12/3/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
41	Faris Eissat	12/24/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
42	Mohamed Abdullah Arsan	12/24/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
43	Shadi al-Hindi	12/25/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
44	Khaled al-Hindi	12/25/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
45	Hamouda al-Hindi	12/25/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
46	Mahmoud Ahmed Haj Ahmed	12/28/2016	Unknown	Unknown	Rif Dimashq – Sbeineh Camp
47	Tareq Khalifa	12/30/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp
48	Mohamed Kheir Nawfel	12/30/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	Rif Dimashq	Rif Dimashq – Khan Eshieh Camp

### 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 has hit 457.



### List of refugees tortured to death during second half of 2016:

No.	Victim	Date	Status	Extra data
1	Emad Faris	7/16/2016	Civilian	He is a resident of Khan Dannun. He had spent one year and a half in Syrian government jails.
2	Shadi Hassan Helal	7/25/2016	Civilian	He is a resident of Khan Dannun. He had spent two years in Syrian government jails.
3	Mohamed Ziad Fourani	8/1/2016	Combatnat	He is a resident of Yarmouk Camp. He had been locked up for three years in government jails. He was kidnapped at a checkpoint in Jaramana on his way to visit his family after the end of his military mission with PLA.
4	Omar Jumu'a Rdeif	8/25/2016	Civilian	A resident of Daraa Camp. He died under torture in government jails.
5	Sleiman Mustafa al-Kousi	9/6/2016	Civilian	He is a resident of Yarmouk. He died under torture in regime prisons.
6	Mohamed Kasem Sa'id	9/11/2016	Civilian	He is called the pharmacist. He had spent over five years in regime prisons. He is a resident of Daraa Camp.
7	Fouad Ali Mansour	9/26/2016	Civilian	He is 35-year-old and a resident of Yarmouk. He had spent one year in government lock-ups. According to his family, he was arrested on August 2015 on his way to al-Hasaka province.
8	Salah Rabi'	10/24/2016	Civilian	He is 49-years-old and a resident of Neirab Camp. He was arrested on charges of facilitating civilians' access to Turkey. He had been jailed for one year by the government forces.
9	Karam al-Asadi	11/28/2016	Civilian	He was born in 1994 in al-Hama, in Rif Dimashq. He died under torture in regime prisons, where he had been held for three years. He was arrested on his way to Lebanon.
10	Maysara Abu Rahma	12/27/2016	Civilian	He is a resident of Neirab Camp. He was pronounced dead in regime jails one year after he was arrested.

### Releases:

40 Palestinians were released from Syrian prisons during the second half of 2016, some among whom were arrested during the same period, namely refugee Ayman Khatab, while others were captured sometime earlier, including Ibrahim Haninou, a resident of Neirab Camp. The latter had been held for three years in Syrian government lock-ups.

### List of refugees released during second half of 2016:

No.	Name	Release date	Place of residence	Extra info
1	Ibrahim Adel Kayed	7/4/2016	Homs Camp	He was released 50 days after his arrest.
2	Dirar Assaad Hadid	7/6/2016	Homs Camp	He is the delegate of Al Aedin Camp. He is called Abu Assaad.
3	Ibrahim Majd al-Asadi	7/6/2016	Homs Camp	He had run for the position of the camp's spokesman.
4	Hesham Ata Hassoun	7/6/2016	Homs Camp	He was arrested following disagreements over the camp's nominees.
5	Mootaz Abbas	7/6/2016	Homs Camp	He was displaced from Yarmouk to Al Aedin Camp and was released ten days after his arrest.
6	Amjad Kamel al-Kharoubi	8/6/2016	Daraa – Muzeireeb	He was detained for one month by the government forces.
7	Bassem Khaled Abu Shala	8/6/2016	Daraa – Muzeireeb	He was released one month and a half after his arrest.
8	Ahmed al-Khatib	8/9/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released eight months after his arrest.
9	Abdullah Sanad	8/9/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released 18 months after his arrest.
10	Ibrahim Haninou	8/11/2016	Aleppo-Neirab Camp	He had spent three years in government jails. He was arrested in Hama.
11	Ali al-Ter'ani	8/19/2016	Daraa Camp	He is called Abu Omar. He had been locked up for a couple of years in Syrian prisons.
12	Bassam Abdul Rahman	8/19/2016	Daraa Camp	Nicknamed Abu al-al-aa, the refugee had spent over a couple of years in Syrian jails.
13	Mohamed Salayma	8/20/2016	Homs Camp	He had been detained for nine days. He was arrested on August 11, 2016 from his home in Al Aedin Camp, in Homs, on claims of illegally migrating to Turkey and then to Sweden.
14	Mohamed Abdul Latif	8/21/2016	Homs Camp	He had been held for 55 days in Syrian government jails over name-resemblance. He is in his late 40s.
15	Mohamed Ziad Mohamed Ayoub	8/29/2016	Homs Camp	He had been detained for 40 days.
16	Khaled Mohamed Mahmoud Idris	8/30/2016	Homs Camp	He had been detained for 60 days in Adra prison.
17	Ayman Khatab	8/30/2016	Homs Camp	He was released after he had spent 40 days in Palestine Branch in Damascus.
18	Essam Beitari	9/5/2016	Yarmouk Camp	He is the leader of Buraq Brigades, affiliated with Yarmouk Residents Movement. He was released 35 days after his arrest.

19	Madayn Subhi Sarhan	9/28/2016	Homs Camp	He was released following a detention period of a one month and a half. He was arrested as he gave a lift to refugees fleeing al-Ayddan Camp in Homs to Tartous coast. He is affiliated with the PFLP-GC.
20	Ahmed Moufek Kousad	10/1/2016	Homs Camp	He was released following a two-year detention period.
21	Rawand Abu al-Saoud	10/2/2016	Daraa - Muzeireeb	She was released ten days after she was arrested on her way to the campus.
22	Mohamed Kasem	10/13/2016	Yarmouk Camp	He is a member of the Palestinian Popular Commission. He was arrested a couple of months earlier near Beit Sahem checkpoint, south of Damascus.
23	Nidhar Issa al-Naji	10/13/2016	Aleppo-Neirab Camp	52-year-old al-Naji was released 10 days after he was arrested by the government troops deployed at checkpoint near Neirab Camp, on his way back home from a hospital in Aleppo, where he underwent a surgery.
24	Abu Sadam al-Haji	10/15/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released a couple of days after he was arrested by government forces stationed at al-Zeito checkpoint in Zakia on October 13, 2016.
25	Ahmed Haidar Ali	10/26/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released a couple of days after he was arrested by government forces stationed at al-Zeito checkpoint in Zakia on October 13, 2016.
26	Ramiya Khalil Subhiya	11/3/2016	Homs Camp	She was released following a detention period of one year.
27	Hikmat Ismail	11/7/2016	Khan Dannun Camp	He was released months after his arrest.
28	Faysal al-Khaled	11/9/2016	Yarmouk Camp	He was released by Sham al-Rasoul battalion a few days after he was arrested at Yalda checkpoint. He is the director of Palestine Hospital and the Red Crescent delegate in the southern area.
29	Mohamed Hasan Odeh	11/13/2016	Daraa – Muzeireeb	He was released by the government forces one month later. He is 38-years-old.
30	Omar Suleiman	11/21/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released by ISIS one month after he was kidnapped from Rajm al-Bakar area in al-Suweida suburbs on his way to Turkey.
31	Khaled Suleiman	11/21/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released by ISIS one month after he was kidnapped from Rajm al-Bakar area in al-Suweida suburbs on his way to Turkey.
32	Amar Aziz	11/21/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released by ISIS one month after he was kidnapped from Rajm al-Bakar area in al-Suweida suburbs on his way to Turkey.

33	Khaled Hussein	11/21/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released by ISIS one month after he was kidnapped from Rajm al-Bakar area in al-Suweida suburbs on his way to Turkey.
34	Ahmed Mohamed Samour	12/12/2016	Homs Camp	He was arrested on August 6, 2016, and transferred to an unknown destination. He was released four months later
35	Hamza al-Laham	12/13/2016	Homs Camp	He was released following a detention period of over two weeks.
36	Abed Mohamed Awad Eid	12/21/2016	Jdeidat Artouz	He was released following a detention period of over 36 days. He was arrested on November 15, 2016 at the government-run Jdeidat Artouz checkpoint, in Rif Dimashq.
37	Ahmed Maari	12/25/2016	Aleppo-Neirab Camp	He was released 20 days after he was arrested in Damascus. He is a member of the pro-government Liwa al-Quds battalion.
38	Shadi al-Hindi	12/31/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released following a reconciliation deal between the government and the opposition.
39	Mohamed Abdullah Arsan	12/31/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released following a reconciliation deal between the government and the opposition.
40	Hamza al-Muslih	12/31/2016	Khan Eshieh Camp	He was released following a reconciliation deal between the opposition and the government.

## Conclusion:

The report highlighted the calamitous situation of the Palestinians of Syria. It underscored the flagrant violations perpetrated against the Palestinians both inside and outside the Syrian territories.

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

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

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







# Palestinians of Syria

## and the Closed Doors

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مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية  
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

