



Security Council

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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014)

I. Introduction

1. This eighth report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014) and paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The report covers the period from 18 September to 17 October 2014. The information contained in the reports and the attached annex is based on the data available to the United Nations actors on the ground and reports from open sources and sources of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

II. Major developments

A. Political/military

3. Conflict and high levels of violence continued throughout the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period, including in the governorates of Aleppo, Damascus, Dar'a, Deir ez-Zor, Hama, Hasakeh, Homs, Idlib, Quneitra and Raqqa. Explosive weapons continued to be used, including in populated areas. Indiscriminate aerial bombings by government forces and indiscriminate shelling and attacks by armed opposition, extremist and designated terrorist groups¹ continued to result in death, injury and displacement.

4. Syrian government forces continued military operations, including around Damascus and central areas of the country. In Rif Dimashq, government forces carried out air bombing campaigns. On 22 September, government forces conducted two air raids on the town of Hamouria, in eastern Ghouta, striking a row of street vendors, killing at least 10 civilians and injuring many others. On 24 September, also in Rif Dimashq, government forces carried out an air raid on a residential area in the district of Duma. According to information received by the Office of the

¹ On 30 May 2013, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Nusra Front were designated as terrorist groups by the Security Council under resolution 1267 (1999). The two groups operate in the Syrian Arab Republic.



United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), at least one woman and four children between two and six years of age were severely injured when a rocket struck their three-story building. Surface-to-surface missiles were also reportedly fired into Jobar district, causing significant destruction to buildings. In an incident on 26 September, six civilians, including a child, were reported killed by such attacks.

5. International non-governmental organizations reported an intensification of bombing and shelling in and around the town of Erbin, Rif Dimashq. One hospital in the area treated some 975 trauma patients between 4 and 14 October, of whom 180 were children. More than 60 patients were reported to have died, 10 of them children under five. On 9 October, a market in Erbin was struck, with the hospital reporting it received some 250 wounded.

6. In Idlib, Homs, Aleppo, Deir ez-Zor and Dar'á, Syrian government forces continued to shell opposition-held areas using artillery and airstrikes, including barrel bombs. On 22 September, Government airplanes bombarded the towns of Saraqib and Ehsim in Idlib with rockets, killing at least 43 people, including children. In early October, during Eid al-Adha, barrel bombs were reportedly dropped in the town of Saraqib, in Idlib, killing one man and causing significant destruction. Barrel bombs were also reportedly dropped during Eid prayers in Rastan, in Homs governorate, killing one civilian. Government aerial bombardments in Aleppo were reported to have stopped for three days following the start of the anti-ISIL coalition airstrikes on 23 September. From 26 September, however, government airstrikes resumed with a significant number of reported barrel bombs. Analysis by the Operational Satellite Applications Programme of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) indicates ongoing bombardment of the city of Deir ez-Zor, likely in some instances by barrel bombs. OHCHR reports that between 18 and 30 September, at least 12 civilians were allegedly killed as a result of aerial attacks and shelling launched by government forces on Dar'á City and surrounding areas. This includes the shelling of Al-Sabil neighbourhood of Dar'á City on 22 September, which allegedly resulted in the killing of five civilians, including two children. Barrel bombs were reportedly dropped on Hara on 10 October, resulting in the death of 19 civilians. The use of cluster bombs was also reported in the opposition-controlled area of Dar'á al-Balad.

7. During the reporting period, landmine use by government forces and anti-Government armed groups continued to pose a threat to civilians. On 19 September, seven civilians, including two children, were allegedly killed in the Lujah region in Dar'á Governorate when a landmine was set off. In Nawa, west of Dar'á, two men working on their farm were critically injured in a landmine explosion on 1 October. In Gadal village, approximately 40 kilometres north of Dar'á City, an unexploded ordnance detonated on 3 October, allegedly killing two children under five years of age of the same family.

8. Armed opposition and designated terrorist groups continued shelling government-controlled areas, including in populated areas, using mortars, small rockets and gas cannons, resulting in civilian casualties. On 21 September, armed opposition groups fired mortars that landed near two schools, a playground and the office of a non-governmental organization in the Al-Matar neighbourhood of Dar'á, killing three children and one adult and injuring more than 30 people. Mortar fire into Damascus also continued, resulting in numerous injuries.

9. On 1 October, twin bomb attacks occurred close to Al-Makhzomi School in Homs, killing over 50 people, including 29 children, and injuring dozens more, a large majority of them children. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic accused “armed terrorist groups” of this crime. No party claimed responsibility for the attacks, which were condemned by both the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

10. Violence and shifting front lines continued to lead to further displacement. Around 40,000 civilians fled intensifying clashes in the Tal Hamis, Gweiran and Yaroubiyeh areas of Hasakeh governorate, with most families displaced to Qamishli city and surrounding areas. Fighting in northern Hama during the weeks prior to the end of the reporting period resulted in some 30,000 people being displaced to rural areas of northern Hama and southern Idlib. Fighting in the periphery of Damascus around Dukkhanja displaced thousands of people to neighbouring locations, including Jaramana and Doyla’a. Further fighting in those locations led to a second wave of displacement, with many fleeing to Damascus and other parts of Rif Dimashq. Thousands fled heavy shelling in Haraa, Zemreen and Atma in Dar’a governorate and Quneitra governorate. OHCHR reported that aerial bombardment of Deir Al-‘Adas, north of Dar’a City, led thousands of civilians to flee at the end of September. In addition, power cuts coupled with shortages of water, commodities, food items and fuel supplies, as well as disruptions to communication services, forced the majority of the residents of Sanamain, Kafr Shamas and Jasim to flee their villages.

11. Public services, including water and electricity, have been impacted in several parts of the country. Yarmouk has been without a main water supply since early September, forcing some 18,000 people still besieged in the area to rely on contaminated groundwater and private wells. The Al-Sakhour electricity station in Aleppo was reportedly hit by a barrel bomb on 1 October, leading to a blackout in the area for several days. A reported aerial attack on the Arab gas pipeline on 29 September led to power outages across the southern Syrian Arab Republic.

12. Bread scarcities are threatening food security in many parts of the country, in particular the north, where commercial routes are disrupted by fighting and many bakeries have been damaged or destroyed. Production has consequently decreased and prices are prohibitive for many. Moreover, Government subsidies are not applied in opposition-controlled areas, which have seen price increases of over 75 per cent in parts of Dar’a, Deir ez-Zor and Rif Dimashq in the past three months. Fuel shortages have also been reported, driving up prices.

13. ISIL efforts were concentrated in the northern Syrian Arab Republic, particularly in Kurdish areas. On 16 September, ISIL launched an offensive against the Kurdish town of Ayn al-Arab/Kobane in Aleppo governorate, resulting in the massive displacement of civilians, including into Turkey, and numerous deaths and injuries. More than 190,000 refugees have crossed into Turkey since the offensive began. ISIL fighters indiscriminately shelled villages and communities in the area surrounding Ayn al-Arab/Kobane City, including with heavy weapons and tanks, taking control of the majority of those villages, and launched rockets, including into Ayn al-Arab/Kobane City. OHCHR received allegations of at least nine executions of civilians carried out by ISIL during their advance between 16 and 26 September, including in the Kurdish village of Sharabani, Aleppo Governorate.

14. The international coalition undertook airstrikes against ISIL and other targets in the Syrian Arab Republic beginning on 23 September. Airstrikes in defence of Ayn al-Arab/Kobane were first launched on 27 September. As of 17 October, fighting for control of the town continued. Most civilians reportedly fled the city, but reports suggest that a number of people remained, with fighting ongoing. There are concerns about the safety of those who remain in the area, in the light of the violence and persecution by ISIL of religious and ethnic communities elsewhere in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq.

15. In response to coalition airstrikes, ISIL has threatened retaliation against those perceived to be “collaborators”, including civilians. This has heightened the insecurity of aid workers. ISIL, Nusra Front and other Islamist groups have accused the international coalition of fighting a war against Islam and have called for retaliation against the coalition.

16. There are reports that ISIL is increasingly seeking refuge in civilian areas to avoid detection and minimize risks of attack. According to Syrian human rights groups, coalition strikes have hit civilian dwellings, and the targeting of Nusra Front on 23 September allegedly led to the killing of at least 11 civilians, including four children, particularly in the town of Kafr Daryan, Idlib governorate. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that on 28 and 29 September coalition airstrikes hit grain silos in the northeastern Syrian Arab Republic, killing and wounding several civilians as well as fighters. Oil fields and a salt mine were also reportedly hit. While numbers cannot be confirmed, reports suggest an estimated 80,000 people have been displaced from Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, Abu Kamal, Mayadin and Al Bab, largely to rural areas in Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates, following coalition airstrikes.

17. Recruitment of fighters, including foreign fighters, has reportedly increased following the commencement of the international coalition airstrikes. In early October, the Aleppo division of ISIL released a video claiming that dozens of elements from Ahrar al-Sham defected and pledged allegiance to ISIL.

18. Foreign fighters have reportedly been killed as the result of airstrikes by the international coalition. The Al-Qaida-affiliated Khorosan group, which the United States of America targeted in airstrikes on 23 September, is said to comprise foreign fighters from the region and Central Asia. Nusra Front reported that Abu Yousef al-Turki was killed on 23 September. On 28 September, a Nusra Front fighter posted a message that 11 fighters had been killed in a coalition airstrike, including three citizens of the Netherlands and four citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

19. On 3 October, ISIL released a graphic video of the execution of a volunteer British humanitarian aid worker. This was the fourth such execution believed to be carried out by the same individual. He may be a citizen of the United Kingdom. The act was strongly condemned by the Security Council.

20. Negotiations continue for local ceasefires. Direct negotiations between government officials and representatives of opposition groups had reportedly stopped in Wa'er, Homs governorate, with fighting and restrictions on access continuing. In Yarmouk camp, an opposition delegation reportedly met with a government security branch in early October to discuss terms, which were still under consideration. No agreement had been reached in Darayya, where intermittent

direct and indirect negotiations continued. A barrel bomb, visible from Damascus city, was dropped in Darayya on 10 October, causing significant damage. On 20 September, pro-government media reported that a new agreement was concluded in Qudsaya, west of Damascus.

21. In early October, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, resumed his consultations, visiting the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon. Visits to the Russian Federation, Iraq, Turkey and Germany were scheduled before the end of October. The visits followed a first round of consultations in the region since the Special Envoy and his Deputy assumed their duties at the beginning of September and would be complemented by a return visit to Damascus and further consultations in other capitals in early November.

B. Human rights

22. During the reporting period, concerns re-emerged regarding the safety and well-being of 27 political prisoners and/or detainees transferred from Aleppo Central Prison to Adra Central Prison after the Government recaptured the prison in May 2014. Information received by OHCHR suggested that some of the prisoners and/or detainees might have already qualified for release by virtue of completing their sentences or as provided by the general amnesty under Legislative Decree 22 of 9 June 2014. OHCHR learned that during the reporting period, however, the 27 prisoners and/or detainees had been transferred to detention centres run by military intelligence, including Branches 215 and 248 in Damascus, where allegations of torture and ill-treatment are regularly reported.

23. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reported that between 21 September and 12 October, 1,015 persons were pardoned after surrendering themselves and their weapons and pledging not to participate in the hostilities. The Government did not provide further details of the pardons. OHCHR is not in a position to verify this information.

24. On 30 September, ISIL reportedly released more than 70 Kurdish school children out of a group of 153 who had been kidnapped in Aleppo on 29 May. The fate of the remaining hostages is unknown. There are fears for their safety, given that their exact location is not known. Similar fears exist concerning hundreds of other detainees who are suspected to be held by ISIL in various locations in the governorates of Hasakeh, Deir ez-Zor and Raqqa. According to local reports, on 22 September, ISIL released 150 detainees who were held for what ISIL considered “minor offenses”.

25. On 5 October, a priest and several parishioners of Qunayeh in Idlib were abducted by fighters linked to the Nusra Front. Four days later, the priest was reportedly returned to the convent, where he was forcibly confined by the group. The whereabouts of the remaining abductees remain unknown.

26. At the twenty-seventh session of the Human Rights Council, the Chair of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, Paulo Pinheiro, presented its eighth report, in which the commission noted, inter alia, that government forces continued to perpetrate massacres and conduct widespread attacks on civilians. Indiscriminate and disproportionate aerial bombardment and shelling had led to mass civilian casualties and had spread terror. Government forces

also used chlorine gas, an illegal weapon. In addition, the commission reported that members of ISIL had committed massacres targeting civilians and captured soldiers, and that ISIL had deliberately exposed civilians, including women and children, to violence and indoctrination. Anti-government armed groups continued to commit crimes without regard to international law.

27. The commission reiterated that the only avenue for putting an end to the conflict was through dialogue and negotiation between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the mainstream opposition, with the support of influential States and the United Nations. In repeating its call to the Security Council to consider referring the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to the International Criminal Court, the commission noted that inaction allowed the warring parties to operate with impunity and exacerbated the violent conflict consuming the country. During the interactive dialogue with the commission, a number of Member States called for accountability and a referral to the International Criminal Court.

28. Members of the commission of inquiry, OHCHR and United Nations human rights monitors continue to be denied access to the country.

C. Humanitarian access

29. Some 10.8 million people in the Syrian Arab Republic remain in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including more than 6.4 million who are internally displaced. Around 4.7 million people reside in areas considered hard to reach, including at least 241,000 people in areas besieged by government and opposition forces.

30. While United Nations agencies and partners continued to deliver assistance to millions of people during the reporting period, the delivery of humanitarian assistance, especially in hard-to-reach areas, remained extremely difficult and insufficient to meet people's needs. Violence, rapidly shifting conflict lines, administrative hurdles and underfunding continued to hamper the relief effort as needs continued to grow. During the reporting period, assistance reached 75 (26 per cent) of the 287 locations identified as besieged or hard to reach. The World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) reached some 390,050 people in 23 hard-to-reach locations, more people than the previous month, but in fewer hard-to-reach areas. Non-food items were delivered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNRWA and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to 148,614 people in 47 hard-to-reach locations, as compared to 104,837 people in 39 hard-to-reach locations the previous reporting period. UNICEF provided water, sanitation and hygiene support for some 501,561 people, as well as nutritional and educational support to children. WHO delivered medicines and medical equipment for approximately 82,000 medical treatments in hard-to-reach locations, including in Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates.

31. Three inter-agency convoys took place during the reporting period to rural Homs and eastern Aleppo City with multisectoral assistance for 49,000 people and medicines for 43,000 patients. An inter-agency convoy targeting 15,000 people in eastern Ghouta did not go ahead as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not give an

answer to the United Nations request for approval. The inter-agency convoy to Harasta, agreed on 16 September, had not gone ahead as, despite repeated United Nations requests, the joint committee has yet to convene. Final approval of the convoy was conditional on further discussion through the committee.

32. The United Nations monitoring mechanism continued its activities in Turkey and Jordan. During the reporting period, an additional monitoring team was established in Gaziantep, bringing the total number of teams in Turkey to two. One team was also operational in Jordan. Efforts were under way to identify a team for Iraq; however its deployment remained pending owing to continued insecurity. The monitoring mechanism benefited from excellent cooperation and support from the Governments of Turkey and Jordan, including their facilitation of the establishment of operations in Gaziantep and Amman, respectively.

33. Under the terms of resolution 2165 (2014), the United Nations and its partners sent 23 shipments to the Syrian Arab Republic, many over several days, including 18 from Turkey and 5 from Jordan. Three border crossings were used: Bab al-Salam, Bab al-Hawa and Ramtha. The shipments included food assistance for more than 160,000 people, non-food items for 240,000 people, water and sanitation supplies for 79,000 people and medical supplies for more than 560,000 people, as well as other items for 48,000 people in Aleppo, Dar'a, Hama, Idlib, Ladhikiyah and Quneitra governorates.

34. While cross-border shipments continued, and the United Nations and its partners were seeking to scale up, they remained limited by insecurity, capacity and funding. Al-Ramtha requires improvements to its infrastructure to enable consistent and sustained use of the crossing. Funding shortfalls mean that some United Nations agencies and partners are being forced to cut back on operations.

35. In line with resolution 2165 (2014), the United Nations notified the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in advance of each shipment, including details of content, destination district and number of beneficiaries. Monitoring mechanism teams monitored the loading of the shipments and accompanied the loaded vehicles to the respective border crossings. In addition, for each shipment, the monitoring mechanism sent a notification to the Government confirming the humanitarian nature of the shipment, in accordance with resolution 2165 (2014).

36. Following the consent of the respective Governments, the Nusaybin/Qamishli border crossing point between Turkey and the Syrian Arab Republic was once again made available for United Nations agencies to deliver urgently needed supplies to the Hassakeh governorate. The first set of deliveries began on 30 September and continued throughout the reporting period. Using the Nusaybin/Qamishli border crossing was a more efficient and effective method of delivery compared to costly airlifts, and would allow WFP to meet its target for food distribution to over 227,000 people in the governorate for the first time in over a year and for UNICEF to reach more than 100,000 people with non-food assistance and pre-position supplies to respond to disease outbreaks for more than 28,000 people.

37. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations have developed a combined two-month joint operational plan that encompasses both cross-line and cross-border deliveries in four governorates of the Syrian Arab Republic, covering food, health and non-food items as well as water, sanitation and hygiene. The

intention is to reach more people in need in those areas and ensure a more harmonized and coordinated approach to aid delivery.

Besieged areas

38. Some 241,000 people remained besieged, 196,000 in areas besieged by government forces in Madamiyet Elsham, eastern Ghouta, Darayya and Yarmouk, and 45,000 in areas besieged by opposition forces in Nubul and Zahral.

39. During the reporting period, the United Nations reached Yarmouk with assistance. Food was distributed to 8,516 people (3.5 per cent of people in besieged areas) and non-food items to 2,140 people (0.9 per cent); medicines were delivered for up to 1,115 (0.5 per cent).

40. In eastern Ghouta, 150,000 people remained besieged. No assistance reached the area during the reporting period. One part of the area, Duma, was last assisted with medicines and water and sanitation supplies on 9 September 2014, while food and other crucial supplies were last provided on 28 May 2014.

41. In Madamiyet Elsham, around 24,000 people, including some 9,000 children, continued to face a shortage of supplies to meet their basic needs as well as movement constraints. It was last reached by the United Nations on 28 July 2014, when WHO and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered five tons of medical assistance.

42. In Darayya (Rif Dimashq), about 4,000 people remain besieged. No assistance reached Darayya during the reporting period. It was last reached in October 2012.

43. In Yarmouk, approximately 18,000 people remained besieged. UNRWA was able to access the camp on 11 days during the reporting period, reaching 8,516 people with food, 2,140 with non-food items and 1,115 with medical assistance, including antibiotics and a range of medicines for chronic and non-communicable diseases, which were permitted for the third consecutive month. Some 1,500 children received textbooks. Water mains, which had been out of service since early September, had not been repaired.

44. In Nubul and Zahra about 45,000 people remained besieged by opposition forces. It was last reached on 8 May 2014.

Free passage of medical supplies, personnel and equipment

45. Access to medical supplies and equipment continued to be hampered by insecurity, displacement and constraints imposed on humanitarian operations by parties to the conflict. During the United Nations inter-agency convoy to the villages of Tir Malla and Ghanto in rural Homs on 14 October, security forces removed all injectable medicines, antibiotics and surgical supplies, including eight inter-agency emergency health kits from the shipment, despite WHO having received official approval from the Governor of Homs. As a result, people were deprived of 9,891 much-needed medical treatments.

46. Owing to the breakdown in routine immunization services, 4,344 measles cases were reported in the northern Syrian Arab Republic. In response, the Measles Control Task Force planned a two-phase measles vaccination campaign. In the first phase, completed in August, 42,576 children in internally displaced person camps were vaccinated. In the second phase, which began on 15 September, 27,000

children in 60 health-care facilities were vaccinated. On 16 September, the campaign was suspended when, following immunization, 15 children died, with 50 others affected. WHO immediately sent an expert assessment team to Gaziantep to investigate the cause of the deaths. The investigation concluded that the most likely cause of death was the incorrect use of a drug called atracurium, which was added to vaccination packs in place of the standard diluent. The assessment team also concluded that there was no evidence that the WHO-prequalified vaccine and its correct diluent were the cause of the tragic event. As the risk of measles in the Syrian Arab Republic remains extremely high, WHO recommends that measles vaccinations be resumed, under improved conditions, as soon as possible.

47. Medical facilities and personnel continued to be attacked during the reporting period. In September, Physicians for Human Rights documented seven attacks on medical facilities, six by government forces and one by a non-State armed group (the specific group is unknown). Two attacks were in Hama governorate, one in Aleppo, one in Damascus, one in Rif Dimashq, one in Deir ez-Zor and one in Idlib. Three were missile attacks, one was with barrel bombs, two were aerial bombardments with unknown weapons and one attack was by shelling. One attack was on a facility that had been attacked before. Physicians for Human Rights documented the deaths of nine medical personnel in September, all of whom were killed by government forces. Six were killed from shelling and bombing, one from torture, one by execution and one was shot. Health-care facilities and personnel enjoy special protection under international humanitarian law. Deliberate attacks against health-care facilities and personnel constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Administrative procedures

48. No changes in administrative procedures were reported during the period. The implementation of the truck-sealing procedures intended to facilitate and speed up passage at checkpoints continued to slow the delivery of humanitarian assistance. During the previous reporting period, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the United Nations that agencies could send biweekly or monthly loading plans, as weekly notification was causing constraints. The movement of supplies to hard-to-reach areas, however, continued to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis centrally through meetings of the joint committee established following the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014). The committee includes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs and security personnel. Despite a verbal communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 7 September that governors in Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Idlib could authorize inter-agency cross-line convoys, central approval continued to be sought. This led to significant delays in the approval of some convoys.

49. As of 17 October, 35 United Nations visas or visa renewal requests remained pending, 29 within the 15-working-day limit, 6 exceeding the 15-working-day limit and 12 for international non-governmental organizations. While the number of visas pending was reduced, international non-governmental organizations had started cancelling visa requests (four cancelled in the reporting period) owing to delays in receiving decisions on applications.

50. Six additional national non-governmental organizations were authorized to partner with agencies of the United Nations system during the reporting period.

There are 99 national non-governmental organizations working with United Nations organizations through 156 branches throughout the Syrian Arab Republic.

51. International non-governmental organizations are unable to conduct independent needs assessments; most cannot open sub-offices; and they are not authorized to partner with national non-governmental organizations or participate in inter-agency cross-line convoys or United Nations field missions.

Safety and security of staff and premises

52. Mortar and rocket fire into Damascus City continued to affect the safety and security of humanitarian actors. On 4 October, two mortars landed near the Dama Rose hotel, close to the area where United Nations staff reside.

53. On 3 October, ISIL released a video showing the execution of a British aid worker and threats to an American aid worker.

54. On 24 September, unknown assailants shot at a United Nations convoy of two armoured vehicles on the road between Aleppo and Homs near Sheik Hilal village. One of the vehicles was badly damaged. The six United Nations staff members escaped unharmed.

55. Gunfire and mortars struck in the vicinity of the UNRWA distribution point in Yarmouk camp in Damascus, halting the distribution of food and health services, most recently on 11 October.

56. Twenty-seven United Nations national staff members, 24 of them UNRWA staff members, continued to be detained or missing. The total number of humanitarian workers killed in the conflict since March 2011 is 66. This includes 17 United Nations staff members, 38 Syrian Arab Red Crescent staff members and volunteers, seven Palestinian Red Crescent Society volunteers and staff members and four international non-governmental organization staff members.

III. Observations

57. Tragically, in the month since the previous report, heinous attacks and atrocities against civilians have continued, committed by all sides in the Syrian conflict. The senseless killing of dozens of children and other civilians in Homs on 1 October is a grotesque reminder that this conflict and those fuelling it are robbing the Syrian Arab Republic of its future. It is one more shocking event in a reporting period that has witnessed continued indiscriminate use of weapons by all parties, including barrel bombing by Syrian government forces on a near-daily basis.

58. Given the very real implications for peace and security, the international community has rightly mobilized to counter the threat posed by terrorism, but a military campaign alone cannot resolve the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic or stem the spread of terrorism from the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. It is a complex, protracted regional conflict that requires the international community to use all the tools at its disposal. A solely military response could also have the unintended consequence of further isolating groups that have been politically, culturally and economically marginalized in the Syrian Arab Republic.

59. The threat posed by ISIL raises serious additional protection concerns, as evidenced by the offensive on Ayn al-Arab/Kobane, which resulted in the massive

displacement of civilians, including into Turkey, and large numbers of deaths and injuries. In the light of the gross and extensive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law the terrorist group has committed in areas that have fallen under its control in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, I reiterate my urgent call on the international community to take immediate action to protect the people left in Ayn al-Arab/Kobane.

60. While the world's attention has been focused on the barbarity of ISIL and its advance in the Syrian Arab Republic, people throughout the country continue to be killed and injured. They face grave abuses at the hands of the Government and other parties to the conflict, who continue to violate international human rights and humanitarian law. The continued use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas is having a devastating effect. Thousands of civilians have been killed or maimed. Millions have been forcibly displaced by fear and through the deliberate destruction of essential civilian infrastructure, including health facilities and schools.

61. Continued attacks against health-care facilities and personnel and the denial of care to the wounded and sick — basic obligations under international humanitarian law — continue to be of grave concern. The international community must do more to ensure that the Government and other parties to the conflict abide by their international legal obligations and are held accountable for their actions.

62. Access to hard-to-reach areas, where some 4.7 million people are in need, remains extremely limited. Violence, insecurity, shifting conflict lines and other obstacles, including administrative hurdles, constrain the ability of humanitarian organizations to deliver aid. Some 241,000 people remain besieged, the majority by government forces, despite the Government's repeated statements that it is responsible for looking after its people. It is unacceptable that ordinary people are denied the basics required for their survival: food, health care and clean water. It is unacceptable that people should suffer when assistance is available a short drive away. Humanitarian workers have been horrified by the dire conditions they have seen in Yarmouk, one of the besieged areas where there has been wholly insufficient access.

63. Humanitarian actors on the ground continue to serve people in need throughout the Syrian Arab Republic at great personal risk, and I commend their commitment and bravery. At a time when the Organization should be scaling up operations to respond to growing needs, United Nations agencies and their partners are being forced to cut back operations owing to a lack of funds. I strongly appeal to donors to urgently provide additional funding so that we can continue our response efforts, particularly as winter approaches.

64. Additional support must also be provided to neighbouring countries that continue to bear the weight of hosting over 3 million refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic. The international community must better share this burden so that all those fleeing the country are protected. Refugees and those hosting them need our help and support to live in safety and with dignity.

65. In each of my reports to the Security Council I have made the point that what is most needed in the Syrian Arab Republic is an end to the violence. This can come only through a political process, which is more urgent than ever, but that goal seems even further away today. The situation throughout the country continues to

deteriorate rapidly. Many more people have been killed. Violations of international human rights and humanitarian law are rife. Nearly 3 million children are out of school. Three quarters of the population is impoverished. The currency has plummeted and food prices have soared since the start of the conflict. Terrorist organizations such as ISIL will thrive, and violence will persist throughout the Syrian Arab Republic unless the deep-seated roots of the conflict are addressed through a process that brings together all sectors of Syrian society. My Special Envoy for the Syrian Arab Republic, Staffan de Mistura, began his mission with vigour last month. He will engage intensively with regional and Syrian actors, from whom support is essential in the search for new openings to launch a credible, comprehensive and inclusive political process. A solution must be found. We cannot continue to watch people die. The heightened risk of sectarian violence compels us all to work even harder for peace.

Annex

Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014): available data

1. Protection of civilians^a

Examples of attacks on civilian facilities (schools, hospitals, camps, places of worship):

- On 9 October, a market in Erbin, eastern Ghouta, was reportedly struck. A local hospital reported it received some 250 wounded.
- On 1 October, twin bomb attacks close to Al-Makhzomi School in Homs killed over 50 people, including 29 children and injured dozens more, a large majority of them children.
- On 1 October, the Al-Sakhour electricity station in Aleppo was reportedly hit by a barrel bomb.
- In mid-September, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) destroyed the Armenian Church in Deir ez-Zor.

Large-scale impact of conflict on public services:

- The conflict continued to disrupt health-care services. Hospitals have been damaged in 12 of the country's 14 governorates. Out of 97 Ministry of Health hospitals:
 - 42 per cent are reported as fully functioning; 34 per cent are reported as partially functioning; and 24 per cent are reported as not functioning at all.

2. Safe and unhindered humanitarian access to people in need

Hard-to-reach areas:

- Food assistance was provided to 390,046 people during the reporting period in hard-to-reach areas (381,530 by the World Food Programme (WFP) and 8,516 by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)).
- Non-food items were provided to 148,614 people in hard-to-reach areas (111,340 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2,140 by UNRWA, 9,134 by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and 26,000 by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)).
- Water and sanitation assistance was provided to 501,561 by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
- Educational support was provided to 46,013 children (44,501 by UNICEF and 1,512 by UNRWA).

^a The United Nations has a distinct and regular mechanism of reporting on the six grave violations against children in armed conflict that has set verification standards and periodicity of reporting to identify trends.

- Nutritional support was provided for 12,900 children by UNICEF.
- Medical supplies were delivered for 82,889 treatments (81,774 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and 1,115 by UNRWA).

Inter-agency cross-line convoys

- Three inter-agency convoys took place during the reporting period:
 - On 15 October, an inter-agency convoy was dispatched to east Aleppo City with nutritional supplies for 7,500 children, non-food items for approximately 15,000 people and medicines for 43,000 patients.
 - Two inter-agency convoys took place to areas in rural Homs:
 - On 14 October, an inter-agency convoy reached Tir Malla, Ghanto and Jaborien with multisectoral assistance for 14,000 people.
 - On 22 September, an inter-agency convoy reached Al Houla with multisectoral assistance for up to 12,500 people.
- One inter-agency convoy to eastern Ghouta was requested but did not take place during the reporting period, as no feedback was received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- One inter-agency convoy to Harasta, Rif Dimashq, was approved on 16 September but has not been permitted to move owing to the absence of a meeting of the joint committee.

Besieged areas

- In total, 241,000 people remain besieged.
- In besieged areas, during the reporting period, food assistance was distributed to 8,516 people (UNRWA), or 3.5 per cent of those besieged; non-food items were distributed to 2,140 people (UNRWA), or 0.9 per cent; and medical assistance was distributed to 1,115 people, or 0.5 per cent. UNRWA also distributed textbooks for approximately 1,500 students in Yarmouk.

Cross-border assistance

- According to the Turkish Red Crescent Society, humanitarian actors have channelled about 23 million dollars in humanitarian assistance monthly on average from Turkey into the Syrian Arab Republic through the zero-point delivery system administered by the Society. The monthly average does not include assistance delivered by commercial or other channels.

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2165 (2014)

- The United Nations and its partners have sent 23 shipments, many over a number of days — 18 from Turkey and 5 from Jordan — to the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014), using three border crossings: Bab al-Salam, Bab al-Hawa and Ramtha. The shipments have included food assistance for more than 160,000 people, non-food items for 240,000 people, water and sanitation supplies for 79,000 people and medical supplies for more than 560,000 people, as well as other

items for 48,000 people in Aleppo, Dar'á, Hama, Idlib, Ladhíqiyah and Quneitra governorates.

Safety of humanitarian workers

- The number of humanitarian workers killed in the conflict since March 2011 stands at 66, including 17 United Nations staff, 38 Syrian Arab Red Crescent staff and volunteers, seven Palestine Red Crescent Society volunteers and staff, and four international non-governmental organization staff.
- A total of 27 United Nations national staff members continue to be detained or missing, of whom 24 are UNRWA staff.

Declaration of commitment

- A total of 30 armed opposition groups have signed the declaration of commitment, affirming their core responsibilities under international humanitarian law and their commitment to facilitate action to meet the needs of civilians on the basis of need alone. Of the 30 signatories, one signed during the reporting period and one signed in the previous reporting period but was not reported.
 - Twenty-first Division (11 September 2014)
 - Tajammu' Alwiya Fajr al-Hurriya (15 October)

3. Safe passage of medical personnel and supplies

Attacks on medical facilities during the reporting period

- Physicians for Human Rights documented seven attacks on medical facilities in September. Six were by government forces and one by a non-State armed group (specific group is unknown). Two attacks were in Hama governorate, one in Aleppo, one in Damascus, one in Rif Dimashq, one in Deir ez-Zor and one in Idlib. Three were by missiles, one by barrel bombs, two by aerial bombardment with unknown weapons and one by shelling. One attack was on a facility that has previously been attacked. In total, Physicians for Human Rights has documented 202 attacks on 161 separate medical facilities throughout the Syrian Arab Republic. Of those, 182 (90 per cent) were by government forces; 14 by non-State armed groups, including the Free Syrian Army, ISIL, the Nusra Front and the Islamic Front (7 per cent); and six by unknown forces (3 per cent). Aleppo governorate continues to have the highest number of attacks, with 56 in total.
- In September, Physicians for Human Rights documented the deaths of nine medical personnel, of whom three were targeted killings. All nine were killed by government forces. Six were killed by shelling and bombing, one by torture, and one by execution, and one was shot. In total, Physicians for Human Rights has documented the deaths of 565 medical personnel through 30 September 2014. A total of 557 deaths were by government forces and eight by non-State armed groups.

Removal of medicines and medical supplies from convoys

- Despite previous authorization, Syrian authorities on 14 October removed medical supplies, including all injectable medicines, antibiotics and surgical supplies, from an inter-agency convoy heading to the opposition-controlled villages of Tir Malla and Ghanto in Homs governorate. As a result, people in those areas were deprived of supplies for 9,891 medical treatments.

Polio vaccination campaign

- Polio vaccines were provided to over 1 million children under the age of five (out of 1.2 million targeted) during the latest subnational immunization campaign, which took place from 31 August to 4 September. According to post-campaign monitoring coverage, rates are around 97 per cent, including many hard-to-reach locations, although problems were encountered in reaching children in some districts in Aleppo, Homs, Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor and Rif Dimashq. Since the campaign began in late 2013, UNICEF has provided 34 million doses of oral vaccine. The next polio round is scheduled to take place from 19 to 23 October, targeting 2.9 million children.

4. Administrative hurdles

- On 9 June, the Ministry of Social Affairs communicated to governors that all convoys or missions to “hot spot areas”^b required the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the High Relief Committee and the National Security Office. Previously, the governors were delegated to coordinate and authorize delivery of assistance within their respective governorates, including across lines of conflict. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs communicated verbally to the United Nations on 7 September that this requirement has been removed and governors have been empowered to authorize inter-agency cross-line convoys. Delivery of assistance to cross-line locations continues, however, to be hampered as a result of the directive.
- On 7 July, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs communicated a time frame for submitting the weekly loading plans in accordance with the truck-sealing procedures rolled out for the movement of trucks for regular programmes: loading plans are to be submitted by United Nations agencies each Monday during working hours. The Government has committed to clear the weekly loading plans on Thursday for distributions to start on Saturdays. On 26 August, the Ministry stated that agencies could send the loading plans on a biweekly or monthly basis to simplify procedures, as weekly loading plans were creating constraints.
- An exemption was obtained with respect to the distribution of medicines and medical equipment and water, sanitation and hygiene items for regular programmes. The distribution of such items will be exempted from some of the new procedures rolled out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in April and May.

^b The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic refers to “hot spots”. Clarification was requested by the United Nations on 16 July for the definition and criteria of “hot spots” but has not been received. For the purpose of the present report, they are referred to as hard-to-reach areas until clarified because of the difficulty in reaching these locations.

The distribution of medical aid for cross-line deliveries will be coordinated by the Ministry of Health on a case-by-case basis.

- On 11 September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs notified the United Nations that regular importation of goods through the official border crossings, namely Jdaidet Yacoub, Tartus port, Ladhqiyyah port, Naseeb and Nusaybin, can proceed to United Nations or international non-governmental organization warehouses directly from the crossing upon authorization by the official in charge of the crossing rather than requiring an additional facilitation letter from the governor. Other administrative procedures continue to apply.

Clearance procedures for telecommunications equipment

- During the reporting period, UNHCR received approval for the installation of very small aperture terminal (VSAT) satellite stations in its Aleppo office. In addition, although UNHCR has obtained approval to import and operate Cisco Systems telephony, the supplier continues to remain reluctant to issue the licence. Government approval to import and operate information and communications technology equipment remains a lengthy process that can take months. Daily follow-up remains the only way to obtain the relevant permissions.

Empowered interlocutors

- Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. The joint United Nations and Government of the Syrian Arab Republic committee established following the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) includes a security focal point. Regular meetings take place between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator on an almost daily basis.
- The opposition is still unable to designate empowered interlocutors. The fragmented nature of the opposition makes it difficult to clearly identify an interlocutor for armed opposition groups. Ad hoc local engagement is ongoing to negotiate access. Interlocutors vary depending on the localities where access is being negotiated.

Visas

- The revised visa policy established by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on 4 March continued to be implemented. As at 16 October, a total of 35 United Nations visas or renewal requests remained pending, 29 within the 15-working-day limit and six exceeding the 15-working-day limit.
- As at 11 September, the number of pending visas for international non-governmental organizations is at 12. While the number of visas pending has decreased, international non-governmental organizations have begun cancelling requests (four cancelled during the reporting period) owing to delays receiving feedback.

International non-governmental organization partners

- The number of international non-governmental organizations approved to work in the Syrian Arab Republic remains at 16.
- International non-governmental organizations are still not authorized to work directly with national non-governmental organizations and are not allowed to accompany United Nations convoys.
- There was no progress in the revision of the standard memorandum of understanding for international non-governmental organizations with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and line ministries.

National non-governmental organization partners

- As of 16 October, the number of national non-governmental organizations authorized to partner with the United Nations increased to 99, operating through 156 branches, with six national non-governmental organizations approved during the reporting period (five in Homs governorate and one in Damascus governorate).

5. Funding

- A total of \$59.8 million in funding for the Syrian crisis was registered during the reporting period. Of that amount, \$52.1 million was for activities inside the Syrian Arab Republic and \$7.7 million was for support to Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries.
- Of the total amount reported for the Syrian Arab Republic during the period, 43.3 per cent (\$25.9 million) was for activities included in the Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan. For neighbouring countries, 56.7 per cent (\$33.9 million) of the amount reported was for activities included in the Syrian Arab Republic Regional Refugee Response Plan.
- As at 17 October, the total funding for the Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan and the Syrian Arab Republic Regional Refugee Response Plan stood at 47 per cent (\$6.02 billion requested, \$2.83 billion received). The Syrian Arab Republic Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan is 38 per cent funded and the Syrian Arab Republic Regional Refugee Response Plan is 52 per cent funded.

6. Overview of United Nations humanitarian response**Food assistance**

- In September, WFP and partners provided food assistance for 3.9 million people — 93 per cent of the overall monthly target. However, in addition to security-related constraints, a fuel shortage slowed transport capacity to Hama and Rif Dimashq.
- Of the total assistance dispatched, 90 per cent was delivered through regular programme operations, 8 per cent through cross-line missions and 2 per cent through cross-border operations under resolution 2165 (2014). The number of beneficiaries of cross-border food shipments tripled from 27,500 in August to 75,000 in September. In addition, following the opening of the

Nusaybin/Qamishli border crossing on 23 September, WFP began the transportation of food assistance aimed at supporting over 227,000 people per month (provided the crossing remains open). By 15 October, a total of 19,423 family food rations for over 97,000 people (42 per cent of the plan) had been off-loaded in Qamishli.

Core relief items and shelter

- UNHCR dispatched core relief items for more than 271,336 people in the reporting period. As of 15 October 2014, UNHCR has distributed 12,907,158 non-food items benefiting more than 3,635,603 individuals in 13 governorates.
- IOM reached 77,000 people in 59 locations in 10 governorates with non-food items during the reporting period.
- UNICEF provided non-food items (for example, winter clothing, plastic sheets and blankets) to 18,080 children and internally displaced persons.
- So far in 2014, UNHCR has completed the rehabilitation of collective shelters in seven out of 11 governorates planned, benefiting 14,315 people. Furthermore, private shelters were upgraded for 27,066 beneficiaries in Homs, Rif Dimashq, Dar'á and Aleppo.

Health

- Through its regular programme, WHO distributed medicines and supplies for approximately 1,618,384 medical treatments^c during the present reporting period in Aleppo, Damascus, Homs, Idlib and Quneitra governorates.
- UNICEF and partners supported 65,700 women and children with access to primary health-care services.
- UNFPA continued to support its implementing partners in the delivery of lifesaving reproductive health services through 28 mobile clinics, 27 static clinics and 13 medical points in 10 governorates. Reproductive health services were delivered to 17,000 women, including 4,100 with family planning services and 3,600 pregnant women referred for delivery services. Some 430 women used reproductive health vouchers supported by UNFPA for the delivery services. UNHCR continues to provide medical equipment, medicines and support to 13 primary health-care clinics in the Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Homs, Tartus, Aleppo and Hasakeh governorates, benefiting almost 367,000 people since the beginning of the year.

Nutrition

- UNICEF and partners screened almost 70,000 children for malnutrition; over 1,700 received multi-micronutrient supplements and 48 were treated for severe acute malnutrition.

^c One standard treatment course (for example, a course of antibiotics for eight days) is considered as treatment for one person. Treatment courses are determined for each medicine distribution on the basis of international WHO standards.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

- During the reporting period, UNICEF and partners reached over 481,500 people with access to clean water through water tankering, enhancement of water storage and/or household water treatment. In addition, over 80,000 people received hygiene items and hygiene promotion messages and almost 23,000 internally displaced persons and children in learning facilities obtained access to appropriately designed toilets and hand-washing facilities.
- In total, over 16.5 million people have been assisted with safe access to water and improved sanitation since the beginning of the year.

Education

- Almost 441,500 children received education supplies as part of the “Back to Learning” campaign for the 2014/15 school year, carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

Palestine refugees

- Through regular programming, UNRWA provided food assistance to 38,416 people; non-food items to 4,899 people; health consultations to 71,000 people; education to 39,975 students; 422 new microfinance loans; and water, sanitation and hygiene/shelter support to 13,865 people.

Agriculture

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with support from partners, provided agricultural support (cereal seeds and animal feed) to 21,161 people in Raqqa, Hama, Homs and Idlib.

Protection and community services

- UNHCR continued to extend protection support through seven offices, 17 community centres, partner organizations and outreach volunteers. Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR has provided 279,450 vulnerable individuals with protection assistance.
- UNFPA supported partners to provide medical examination and psychosocial support for around 2,900 women in five governorates. In addition, 75 survivors of gender-based violence — out of 500 women screened — received specialized services, including medical counselling. Furthermore, training and capacity-building was provided for health-care staff and volunteers.
- UNICEF supported 10,036 children with psychosocial support. This includes 786 children in the Wa'er neighbourhood of Homs City and 117 Iraqi refugee children in Newroz Camp.