



Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7252nd meeting

Thursday, 28 August 2014, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Sir Mark Lyall Grant	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Bliss
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Ms. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Republic of Korea	Ms. Paik Ji-ah
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United States of America	Mr. Dunn

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014) (S/2014/611)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014) (S/2014/611)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/611, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014).

I give the floor to Ms. Kyung-wha Kang.

Ms. Kyung-wha Kang: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the Security Council for this opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

It has been six months since resolution 2139 (2014) was adopted with the aim of pressing the parties to the conflict in Syria to abide by basic international legal obligations and reduce the suffering of ordinary people caught up in the conflict. Over those six months, the plight of people in Syria has worsened rather than diminished. The violence and conflict continues unabated, with more deaths of women, children and men. The social and economic fabric of the country has been ripped to shreds. According to data collected by human rights organizations from various sources, July 2014 was a particularly harrowing month for civilians since the start of the conflict in Syria, with more than 1,000 civilian deaths and injuries. On 22 August, the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued updated casualty figures on the conflict. By April 2014, more than 191,000 people had been killed since it began. As appalling as it is, that number is a minimum. The real death toll is likely to be much higher.

In Aleppo governorate, a marked increase in the indiscriminate use of barrel bombs by the Government was registered in residential neighbourhoods, where civilians, including women and children, with no means to leave, still struggle to survive. The governorates of Dar'a, Hama and Idlib continued to be particularly affected by barrel bombs. In Dar'a, for example, more than 30 barrel bombs were reportedly dropped on Da'el city between 22 and 31 July, killing 10 civilians, including 5 children. Opposition and extremist groups continued to attack residential areas with mortars, shelling and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, killing and injuring scores of people, including children. In Damascus, approximately 225 mortars and missiles targeted the capital between 3 and 7 August, killing more than 17 people and injuring at least 100, including children.

The collective punishment of civilians continues, in flagrant violation of the most basic principles of international humanitarian law. Almost 1 million people in Aleppo are deprived of water because of attacks on vital infrastructure. The Islamic Front has several times cut the water supply to an area for displaced people in Aleppo. Medical facilities and personnel also continue to be targeted, and the number of people fleeing Syria in search of safety continues to increase. Almost one Syrian in two is either internally displaced or a refugee.

The advance of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) into central Syria is taking the violence meted out to unprotected civilians to a new level. The group continues to commit horrific atrocities against those opposing its rule. In Deir ez-Zor, for example, community sources report that as many as 700 members of the Arab Al-Sheitaat tribe, whom ISIL accused of apostasy, have been killed or kidnapped over the past two weeks, with some beheaded or crucified. Reports also indicate that women from the tribe are being sold in markets in Iraq.

In the face of total impunity, grave human rights violations have become the norm in Syria. The parties to the conflict are oblivious of their obligations to protect civilians and abide by international humanitarian law, as they continue to commit terrible crimes against civilians, young and old, women and men. The perpetrators must be held accountable. The impunity must end.

For the first time in six months, there was some improvement in the past month on humanitarian

access. We are reaching more people in need in hard-to-reach areas as a result of the Council's adoption of resolution 2165 (2014). The monitoring mechanism is now operational at the three border crossings of Bab al-Hawa, Bab al-Salam and Ramtha. The deployment of monitoring teams to Iraq is still pending, due to insecurity in the north-western part of the country, but the situation is constantly being assessed.

Access across borders has resulted in broader coverage in hard-to-reach areas in Aleppo, Dar'a, Rif Dimashq, Idlib, Quneitra and Ladhikiyah governorates. The United Nations has now sent nine shipments to Syria from neighbouring countries pursuant to resolution 2165 (2014). Those included seven shipments from Turkey — four through the Bab al-Salam crossing and three through the Bab al-Hawa crossing — and two from Jordan, through the Ramtha crossing. The shipments included food assistance for some 69,500 people, non-food items for approximately 120,000 people, water and sanitation supplies for around 82,500 people and medical supplies for some 190,000 people, including surgical supplies for 700 people. All the shipments crossed without incident, and the distribution of relief supplies is ongoing.

Those shipments were made possible due to the full cooperation of the Governments of Turkey and Jordan. The Government of Syria was notified 48 hours in advance of the crossing of the shipments and of their humanitarian nature. More shipments are planned over the next month in close coordination with the humanitarian team in Damascus, in line with the United Nations whole-of-Syria approach, through which cross-line access and cross-border access complement each other to maximize our reach to those in need.

There have also been new openings in access across conflict lines, notably in the eastern rural area of Aleppo, Dar'a and the Rif Dimashq governorates, including to besieged areas. Food was dispatched to approximately 97,500 people throughout the Aleppo governorate and to 10,000 civilians trapped in rural opposition-held areas of Dar'a that had not been assisted since the beginning of the crisis, notably in Yadudeh, Tal Shihab and Zayzun.

Of particular note, medical supplies, including surgical items, reached a number of opposition-held areas this month, mostly through cross-line access. Approximately 10 metric tons of surgical supplies and chronic-disease medicines for 22,300 people were

delivered to hospitals in eastern Aleppo city. In the Yarmouk camp, the Syrian authorities authorized the distribution of medical supplies, including antibiotics and medicines for non-communicable diseases. On 28 July, the World Health Organization and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered five metric tons of medical assistance to the besieged area of Madamiyet Elsham in Rif Dimashq to support a population of 24,000 people in need. Other deliveries were made to hard-to-reach areas of Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor and the Hasakeh governorates.

Despite those developments, much more needs to be done by the parties to ensure that access is rapid, regular, safe, and unhindered. There are still 241,000 people under siege. Administrative hurdles imposed by the Government of Syria continue to hamper the delivery of aid. Governors are still not allowed to approve the delivery of humanitarian assistance in their governorates without first consulting Damascus. The operational constraints placed on non-governmental organizations have not been removed. Designated terrorist groups, as well as armed opposition groups, continue to block access to the hard-to-reach eastern governorates of Syria. ISIL and the Nusra Front are advancing towards the border crossings of Bab al-Salam and Bab al-Hawa along the main access routes in Syria. That could threaten the additional cross-border operations authorized under resolution 2165 (2014).

I must highlight that the funding situation for humanitarian operations in Syria is dire. The Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan is severely underfunded, with only 30 per cent of the requirements met. The Syria Regional Refugee Response Plan is 45 per cent funded. That adds to the challenges we face with regard to our ability to help those in need.

Insecurity poses a serious risk to our operations and our staff. Last week we commemorated World Humanitarian Day. It was an occasion to remember the humanitarian workers in Syria who put their lives on the line every day to deliver assistance to those in desperate need in Syria. On 6 August, an 18-truck convoy of World Food Programme food en route from Deir ez-Zor to Raqqa came under attack from an unknown group. Two truck drivers were killed and two were injured, and the content of four trucks was damaged or destroyed. Sixty-two humanitarian workers have been killed since March 2011, including 38 Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteers, 15 United Nations staff members — 13 from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for

Palestine Refugees in the Near East alone — and 2 staff members from non-governmental organizations.

Humanitarian workers should not have to risk their lives to save others. I remind the Council that all parties have a responsibility to ensure the safety and security of those engaged in humanitarian operations.

The progress in access during the past month has shown that where there is political will, there is a way to improve the situation for millions of civilians in Syria. We must all redouble our efforts until we reach everyone in need with humanitarian assistance.

Each day results in more lives lost and more families and communities destroyed. The rise of extremist groups with complete disregard for even the

most basic norms of humanity threatens what remains of secularism and tolerance in Syria. Now more than ever before, the Council must do all it can to end the conflict and ensure that humanitarian access increases so that we can reach all those who are desperately in need in Syria. United Nations humanitarian agencies and our partners are doing everything we can to meet those needs, but — as we have repeatedly said — the solution to the crisis does not rest with us.

The President: I thank Ms. Kang for her briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.