

Testimony by Jan Egeland on the Humanitarian Situation related to the Crisis in Syria

Testimony by Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, "Syria After Geneva: Evaluating U.S. Options for Ending the Conflict" on March 26, 2014.

Introduction

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Corker and Members of the Committee: I thank you for this opportunity to input into your deliberations on the next steps for US Policy. Let me also applaud the efforts you have made to bring attention to the plight of millions of Syrians, who continue to suffer as a result of this appalling conflict, now entering its fourth year.

I am the Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an independent, humanitarian non-government organization that assists and protects millions of displaced people worldwide, including more than 700,000 Syrians across the Middle East.

I have been active in humanitarian and human rights work for more than 30 years and have visited many of the worst war- and disaster-zones of this past generation. I have never before seen the scale of suffering now present in Syria. Syrian families, and in particular the Syrian youth, are losing hope fast. We must restore hope, rebuild schools and provide a future for Syria's children.

I have previously had the opportunity to come to Congress to discuss the humanitarian challenges we have faced elsewhere in the world. I have seen how bipartisan support in and from this Senate has helped mobilize relief and hope for societies plagued by war and repression - from Darfur to northern Uganda and eastern Congo. Your support can help us again as we face even greater challenges in Syria.

Last month I was back in Syria and Lebanon – my sixth visit to this region since the war broke out. I saw once more the extreme challenges faced by the UN, NGOs and the Red Cross/Crescent in accessing the millions of people denied food, water and medical supplies across the country. While I was there, extremely challenging negotiations to evacuate civilians from the besieged Old City of Homs were taking place. Painstaking efforts to agree a local ceasefire with a multitude of warring parties did not prevent UN and Red Crescent colleagues being shot at while entering Homs.

With the heroic efforts of Syrian and expatriate humanitarian workers operating across the country, assistance *is* reaching many parts of Syria and lives *are* being saved. However, it is nowhere near enough. Too many defenseless and suffering civilians are not being reached and the risks that humanitarians are forced to take in their daily work are totally unacceptable.

And the situation is not getting better. A year ago I travelled to the city of Aleppo and witnessed how desperate mothers, fathers and neighbors were searching with their hands through the rubble of their destroyed apartment, trying desperately to find their own children, relatives or friends. Missiles had hit heavily populated civilian areas the night before. After seeing the scale of suffering, I could not believe that the conflict could get any worse - but it has. Twice as many people in Syria are now dead or in urgent need of aid as when I was in Aleppo.

The stories I hear from Syrians who have fled the violence and from aid-workers are horrific: With active conflict, widespread disregard for basic moral and ethical standards, as well as the excessive restrictions imposed by the Syrian government and opposition forces on humanitarian operations, millions of Syrians continue to be denied access to lifesaving humanitarian aid. The bureaucratic hurdles of some neighboring countries are further complicating our ability to operate. We request your further support to compel the Government of Syria and warring parties to remove all barriers to our operations so that millions of people can access the aid they urgently need and are entitled to. With your assistance, NRC and other dedicated aid agencies stand ready to cross battle lines, cross borders, cross rivers and mountains – whatever is required so that we can end the human suffering in Syria.

The crisis has seriously impacted Syria's regional neighbors, now hosting more than 2.5 million men, women, and children who have fled their homes.ⁱ This equates to a population four times that of the District of Columbia. I have visited Lebanon and Jordan regularly over the last two years. Each time humanitarians, the people and authorities tell me that they have reached breaking point. Yet, the flow of refugees keeps coming. I have spent time in Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, which is one of the world's largest. No Syrian would choose to live there. But they have nowhere else to go. They have lost their homes, their jobs and their loved ones. They have often suffered atrocities and unspeakable violence. A generation of Syrian children is growing up about to lose hope – and we risk losing them to poverty and despair.

Refugees in Zaatari and the millions more spread across the region need your help. As do the governments and communities who continue to demonstrate extraordinary generosity by hosting them. Lebanon is particularly in need of more direct financial and infrastructure support, and the US can play an important part. By the end of next week, Lebanon will be hosting one million refugees, 230 refugees for every 1,000 Lebaneseⁱⁱ – the highest number of any country in recent history. Proportionally this equals 80 million refugees crossing the US border in 18 months.

I want to take this opportunity to thank members of this Committee, particularly the bipartisan leadership of Senators Kaine (D-VA) and Rubio (R-FL) for introducing Senate Resolution 384, which calls for the immediate and full implementation of UN Security Council 2139, including unimpeded humanitarian access, both across conflict lines and borders.ⁱⁱⁱ

In this testimony, I will make four points to inform future US policy:

- **The US should continue to pursue political dialogue** with all sides in order to ensure respect for the Laws of War and ultimately resolve this senseless conflict. With Russia, the US brought about an agreement to destroy Syria's chemical weapon stockpiles. We require this same leadership to uphold the humanitarian imperative and alleviate the suffering of the Syrian population, including the nine million displaced.^{iv} All countries with leverage over the parties to the conflict must put pressure where they can in order to seek a resolution to the crisis and respect for the Laws of War.
- **US policy needs to prioritize measures that ensure unimpeded aid delivery inside Syria.** Syrians urgently need to be able to access more and better assistance and protection in or close to their homes. Government, donors and countries neighboring Syria must urgently facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, across front-lines and across borders. As recognized by UNSC Resolution (S/RES/2139), International Humanitarian Law provides an unequivocal legal basis for undertaking cross-border operations, to all areas within Syria.

- **US policy should ensure that all humanitarian assistance to Syria is, and is *perceived* as impartial, neutral and independent from political agendas.** Among related concerns, counter-terrorism laws must not impact negatively on humanitarians' ability to maintain independence and ensure impartial provision of aid.
- **The US, along with the international community, has a responsibility to help address the enormous challenges faced by Syria's neighbors.** By generously accepting 2.5 million refugees, the region is facing the prospect of regional instability, and social and economic collapse. Increased humanitarian and development assistance is urgently needed. Furthermore, the US, Europe and other countries must share the responsibility and allow more refugees across their borders.

1. The US should continue to pursue political dialogue

Our relief workers see each day the impact of the political stalemate on Syria. Syria is the worst humanitarian crisis in the 21st century. We all know the figures - more than nine million people displaced, well over 100,000 killed, more than 5.5 million children at risk.^v During the two hours of this Senate hearing alone, 120 families will have been forced from their homes.^{vi} These numbers are unfathomable when we consider that each individual represents immense human tragedy. Yet, the collective response of the international community remains woefully inadequate. A solution that ends this crisis must be your unequivocal priority.

As your former colleague in this Committee, US Secretary of State Kerry and other world leaders have repeatedly made clear; "There is no military solution to Syria, there is only a political solution and that will require leadership to bring people to the negotiating table".^{vii}

Yet Geneva II generated no tangible results: No political solution, no lasting ceasefire, no end to the bloodshed and no alleviation of the unbearable suffering of the Syrian people. In spite of the enormous efforts of Special Envoy Brahimi, no concrete results were achieved. The millions of people who have been driven from their homes have had their hopes betrayed. We see shocking echoes of the horrors of Bosnia and Rwanda - and therefore a moral obligation to prevent a return to those dark days.

Only six month ago, the US, alongside Russia, led peaceful efforts to agree a process to destroy Syria's weapons of mass destruction. Political progress is therefore possible – if there is enough political will. I call on the US to resume this leadership role, for the Syrian people to realize their dream of a peaceful life. Syrians must be protected from all forms of violence, including the use of conventional weapons and barbaric "barrel bombs", which are responsible for the vast majority of the killings. To this end, I urge you to work with Russia and other members of the international community, and to use your influence with the warring parties *and their allies*, to ensure respect for international law and put an end the conflict once and for all.

As urgent as political progress is, the millions of Syrians denied humanitarian aid cannot wait for negotiations to bear fruit. The humanitarian imperative to meet the immense needs and alleviate the suffering of ordinary Syrians cannot be a pawn traded within negotiations, or held hostage to political posturing. I urge you to do your uttermost to support the humanitarian endeavor in Syria, irrespective of political progress. There will be no winners at the end of this war, and whatever

political end goals the international community has, the protection of civilians and respect for international humanitarian law cannot be compromised.

It is the persistent denial of humanitarian aid that I will now move on to address.

2. US policy needs to prioritize measures to ensure unimpeded aid delivery

I have seen for myself how the Syrian Government and opposition forces impede the delivery of life-saving assistance on a daily basis, and how countries neighboring Syria place unreasonable administrative constraints on reputable NGOs. These practices have to end immediately.

I appeal for your help to ensure all parties to the conflict, particularly the Government of Syria, actively facilitate the delivery of life-saving assistance and protection. To be effective, this has to include ensuring humanitarian access from across Syria's borders - which is so often the most efficient route.

2.1 Impediments and denial of humanitarian access

There are countless examples of the deliberate and shameful denial of humanitarian assistance and protection. A few examples to illustrate:^{viii}

- **Aleppo governorate** in northern Syria continues to experience air raids by the Syrian air force and clashes between military and armed opposition groups, as well as among the opposition groups, forcing more than 750,000 people to flee. The Government of Syria and some armed groups actively harass and sometimes even appear to target aid convoys. They stop humanitarian agencies at checkpoints, demand money and threaten aid workers with violence and illegal detention. They also attempt to divert humanitarian goods. The close proximity between southern Turkey and northern Aleppo means that assistance can and is being delivered from across the Syrian border, but delays and blockages at both sides of the crossings mean enough aid is not getting through.
- Many parts of **Damascus and the surrounding rural areas**^{ix} have been entirely cut-off from humanitarian assistance for up to a year due to the abhorrent use of siege tactics by government and some armed opposition forces and because of the ongoing active conflict. The barriers put in place by the Syrian Government, including restrictions on working with national NGOs, the refusal to let aid convoys travel and the ban on allowing agencies operating from Damascus to also deliver aid across borders, seriously inhibit the ability of aid agencies to realize the rights of those in need. Even areas located only a couple of miles from where aid agencies are based cannot be reached.
- **Dar'a and Quneitra governorates** in southern Syria have seen fierce fighting between Government and armed opposition groups. Shelling and aerial bombardments continue to intensify throughout both governorates, leaving more than 245,000 people without access to even basic humanitarian assistance. Aid operations into southern Syria are considered dangerous due to the ongoing fighting. However, they would be possible if the Syrian government gave permission for aid convoys to travel from Damascus or if cross-border aid routes could be utilized more effectively.

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2.2 Besieged communities

Beyond these examples, an estimated 240,000 people^x continue to be trapped in besieged communities, some for more than one year.

The use of medieval siege tactics and the deliberate starvation of hundreds of thousands of people have come to epitomize the brutality of the conflict. The recent evacuation of many civilians from the besieged areas of Homs has rightly received significant attention. More than 4,000 people faced deliberate starvation and had been trapped, without even basic supplies, for more than 600 days. While the media attention has died away, this crisis is not yet over. Fighting and shelling is ongoing and approximately 2,000 people remain in the Old City.^{xi}

But, of Syria's many besieged civilians, 99 per cent are not in Homs.

- In **Nabul and Zahraa villages outside of Aleppo**, an estimated 45,000 people continue to be effectively imprisoned, without food or drinking water. Despite multiple attempts at ceasefires, mediation has failed and these locations remain besieged by armed opposition groups and foreign fighters.
- In the **Yarmouk refugee camp** in Damascus, some 18,000 mainly Palestinian refugees remain under siege.
- In **rural areas outside Damascus**, an estimated 160,000 people are besieged. With the exception of some polio vaccines delivered by Syrian Arab Red Crescent, no aid has entered these areas since the siege began over one year ago.^{xii}

These are just some of the gross violations of the Laws of War that continue unabated across Syria.

I appeal to you today to use your influence with all parties to prevent the continuation of these practices. Besieged populations must be set free and attacks on civilians, schools and hospitals must stop. Ceasefires need to be supported and strengthened so that people can access assistance and humanitarian workers can operate. And governments' restrictions on humanitarian access, including from across borders, must end to enable those who need assistance to access it.

It is this last point that I would want to underline below, as an indispensable part of a future US policy on Syria:

2.3 Improving humanitarian access

If we are to end to the humanitarian freefall in Syria the numerous constraints on access imposed by the Syrian authorities and armed groups must be reversed immediately. The intermittent refusal by neighboring governments to facilitate humanitarian access by reputable NGOs through the most efficient routes is also unacceptable. We urgently need the US Government to use its influence with governments to ensure cross border operations are better coordinated, funded and implemented so that these vital operations can be expanded to assist the millions of people currently not receiving aid.

Millions of people who live in areas that are currently in need of aid can most directly be reached from across Syria's borders^{xiii}. To give one example, when I travelled by car to Aleppo from Turkey one year ago, it took me just over an hour to reach the city. It now can take days for UN convoys to reach Aleppo from Damascus, passing multiple checkpoints. The time has therefore come for the US Government, international donors and countries neighboring Syria to urgently put their full weight behind the delivery of cross border humanitarian assistance. The UNSC Resolution (S/RES/2139) and

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International Humanitarian Law provide the firm legal framework for implementing these operations. Humanitarian assistance is not a right that may be arbitrarily denied to Syrians in need, by their own government. The onus should therefore be on the Syrian government to justify its rejection of cross-border humanitarian operations, including to opposition controlled areas, rather than on the need for the UN to obtain its permission.

I welcome the recent decision by the Syrian government to allow the UN to restock aid supplies using the Nusaybin crossing from Turkey into north eastern Syria.^{xiv} This has the potential to allow tens of thousands of people (living in areas under the government's influence) to access aid. However, it falls far short of what is needed. The Nusaybin crossing is just one of many that need to be fully opened. The Syrian authorities must also allow humanitarian assistance to reach millions of civilians living in locations controlled by opposition forces. The use of the Nusaybin border crossing by aid convoys is positive, but it can hardly be viewed as substantial progress towards the implementation of UNSC Resolution 2139.

There is no excuse for not facilitating a lot more cross border aid operations. The registration processes for reputable aid agencies must be streamlined, existing border crossings must remain permanently open and new crossing points should be established for aid convoys. Setting up low-cost, fast-tracked system for granting residency and work permits for humanitarian staff in Turkey and other neighboring countries would greatly facilitate aid delivery.

Providing assistance from neighboring countries does not absolve the Syrian government of its legal and moral responsibilities to ensure that aid delivered inside Syria, across battle lines, reaches all parts of the country. Having been to Damascus recently, I can tell you that humanitarian agencies are unable to operate freely from the capital. Delays with NGO registration, impediments to working with local aid agencies and severe travel restrictions are unacceptable and must be addressed urgently.

Point 3: US policy should ensure that all humanitarian assistance to Syria is, and is perceived as impartial, neutral and independent from political agendas

Irrespective of how aid is delivered - whether from neighboring countries or from Damascus - access must be granted based on the humanitarian needs of the Syrian population, without political interference. The US and other governments should ensure that humanitarian aid is easily identified as separate from other forms of non-humanitarian supplies entering Syria.

Aid agencies in Syria face severe challenges with perception. Armed actors are suspicious and the population is increasingly impatient after three years of suffering. It is crucial that the US government ensures that its funding is provided in a manner that both is, and is perceived to be, impartial. The use of humanitarian aid by actors to gain influence, control or buy the loyalty of civilian populations in order to further political goals cannot be tolerated. And aid which seeks to portray humanitarians or link humanitarians to any side of the conflict or to a political agenda is dangerous.

Respecting humanitarian principles^{xv} also requires an honest discussion about the unintended harm being done to emergency aid operations by laws intended to target terrorists. The US has put in place some of the most stringent counter-terrorism laws and controls on humanitarian organizations globally. While recognizing the responsibility and necessity of protecting US citizens and people around the world from acts of terror, these measures could have severe detrimental impacts on humanitarian operations if implemented to their full force in Syria. I urge you to support the

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Humanitarian Assistance Facilitation Act (HAFA)^{xvi} introduced in the House of Representatives late last year. This Act can help us to both safeguard against terror and save lives in Syria and in humanitarian crises elsewhere in the world. Humanitarian organizations need your help to safely operate in these contested and extremely dangerous contexts without the misperception of taking sides, or compromising the needs of conflict affected populations.

Counter-terrorism laws have implications for aid operations not only inside Syria but also in Lebanon and elsewhere in the region.

4. US policy should address the enormous burden and long-term challenges faced by Syria's neighbors

I commend the Governments of Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt for their immense efforts in hosting millions of refugees. I urge the US and Europe to respond with similar hospitality in terms of increased resettlement for Syrians. The UN's Refugee Agency (UNHCR) aims to resettle over 100,000 Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2016. Syrians who need it should receive temporary protection outside of the Middle East.^{xvii}

Lebanon, in particular, has been extraordinarily generous in providing safety for families fleeing the horrors of the conflict. Lebanon is now the highest per capita refugee-hosting nation on earth. The crisis in Syria has cost the country more than \$7.5bn, with municipal budgets, infrastructure and basic services facing total collapse.^{xviii} Jordan^{xix} and Turkey have also been severally affected, *as have Iraq and Egypt, which risk being forgotten by the world's media, donors and governments.*

There are millions of personal tragedies behind these statistics.

4.1 Growing harassment and exploitation

While most host communities are exceptionally welcoming of refugees, there are signs of growing discontentment and discrimination against people who have fled Syria's violence. They face increasingly severe restrictions on their ability to register as refugees, access basic services, earn an income, and receive protection from harassment and exploitation.

Host populations and refugees alike face rising food and rental prices, overcrowding in schools and increased competition for paid work. Daily labor wages in Lebanon and elsewhere have hit rock bottom. Refugees in Jordan are not allowed to work at all. Rental prices have risen 300 per cent in some parts of Jordan, while 170,000 Lebanese have been pushed into poverty by the Syrian crisis.^{xx} This risks further destabilization of the entire region.

Syrian families are increasingly pressing their young sons to work or their daughters into early marriage to support the family economically. I saw children as young as five packing fruit or picking vegetables, often for eight hours or more a day, instead of going to school. Every tenth child is estimated to be working – often in dangerous conditions - while one in every five registered marriages of Syrian refugees in Jordan involves girls under the age of 18.^{xxi}

These are just some the problems Syrian children must routinely endure.

4.2 Finding homes and schools for children

As the conflict in Syria continues, children who have fled the fighting continue to miss out on an education. 1.2 million children now live as refugees in host countries,^{xxii} but only half attend school, most often in over-crowded classrooms. Some of the Lebanese public schools I visited have more Syrian refugee children than Lebanese children attending their classes.

Syrian refugee children still tell me about their dreams of becoming teachers, carpenters, engineers and doctors. They want to help their families and contribute positively to their society. We have a responsibility to give them the chance to fulfil their dreams. To prevent the loss of an entire generation of children, much greater support is urgently needed to ensure there are adequate schools and teachers for the millions of Syrian children and children in host communities in need of an education. Informal tuition and vocational training programs provided by NGOs are essential programs which require the support of governments so these children can become positive members, even future leaders, of their society. We cannot forget that one day they will lead the rebuilding of their country.

Parents struggle not only to cover the cost of school-books, tuition and transport,^{xxiii} they are increasingly unable to afford homes for their families to live in.

On a recent visit I heard stories of countless families facing eviction and growing debt. I met some Palestinian families in Lebanon who had fled the fighting in Syria a year ago. After long and dangerous journeys – often in the dark, with small children and only some bags of clothes – they finally managed to cross into Lebanon. All other borders were closed to them. Eventually, shelter was found for them in small, one-room flats that the Norwegian Refugee Council was able to add to existing, crowded homes in pre-existing Palestinian refugee camps. As additional families keep coming across the border to escape the violence in Syria, refugees already living in Lebanon have had to share their meagre accommodation with the new arrivals. Some families are now living ten or twelve to a room.

The lack of affordable shelter in Jordan and Lebanon is an alarming problem. More than 80 per cent of refugees live outside formal refugee camps,^{xxiv} often residing in run-down and overcrowded flats, rudimentary structures, tents, or in abandoned or partially constructed buildings. With hundreds of thousands of refugees unable to repay debts or afford rising rental prices, large parts of the Middle East face an unprecedented housing crisis that requires your urgent attention.

Addressing this housing crisis will not be easy. The governments of Lebanon and Jordan require significant technical and financial support to help them develop more comprehensive shelter strategies. These strategies need your backing to ensure more homes are available on the market and rental price inflation is tackled.

The growing social and economic problems in countries hosting refugees can create pressure to close borders to new refugees fleeing Syria or introduce forced encampment.

4.3 Keeping borders open

Neighboring countries have absorbed a huge burden on behalf of the international community. The solidarity shown towards the Syrian refugees is admirable. Whilst it is difficult to ask, we need your help to ensure borders remain open to refugees – including Palestinians who face systematic discrimination. The creation of so-called ‘safe zones’ and camps along the Syrian side of borders

could be a recipe for increased violence against civilians, making matters worse, not better, for Syrian men, women and children.

Governments beyond the region, including in the US, must also significantly increase the number of refugees they are willing to host or resettle to ease the pressure on neighboring countries. The meagre responses from nearly all Western nations, including my native country Norway, are simply not good enough. Media reports suggest that at least 135,000 Syrians have applied for asylum in the United States.^{xxv} However, the current immigration policies have kept almost all of them out.

To help keep borders open and share the overwhelming burden, countries neighboring Syria will need both short and long term financial assistance.

4.4 Meeting long and short term needs

The United Nations has launched the largest appeal in its history, for \$6.5bn. This sounds like a vast amount of money, but it is the same as Harvard University is asking for in its current fundraising drive.^{xxvi} To date, only 12.5 percent of the UN appeal has been funded.^{xxvii} Furthermore, this appeal does not include the millions more needed to fund cross-border humanitarian operations.

The United States and ordinary Americans have given extremely generously and this assistance has provided protection and life-saving aid for millions of Syrians. I would like to thank you for your efforts in this regard. Yet, with the region becoming increasingly unstable and the number of refugees expected to almost double by the end of 2014,^{xxviii} even more resources will be needed. I am therefore asking you to dig even deeper and to consider all options, including pressing for greater backing from Gulf donors and international financial institutions.

4.5 Supporting refugee-hosting governments

As an experienced humanitarian, I have seen that the average refugee crisis lasts more than a decade. And there is no end in sight to the fighting in Syria. When it does end, reconstruction will likely take decades. We will likely be responding to the Syria crisis for the next generation.

In order to deal with Syria's 'protracted crisis', US and other donors will need to provide much needed emergency response together with longer-term development and macro-economic assistance. Years of experience demonstrate that this must be done in parallel to ensure that immediate needs are met and that refugees and host communities have sustained access to health, education and other services as well as viable livelihoods.

This comprehensive approach will require support by the international financial institutions, and much greater support to national development frameworks such as Jordan's national resilience plan and Lebanon's stabilization plan. It will also require greater funding to local authorities providing housing, access to health, water, education and employment to both poor local people and refugees across the region.

The task at hand for the US government and the entire international community is therefore not only to meet the obligation set by the UN appeals – though this will remain critical. It is also to help support those communities and governments that will continue to bear the brunt of the refugee crisis for years to come.

If we do not act now to protect the region's future, the fallout from this conflict will be felt for generations.

Conclusion

The humanitarian free-fall experienced in Syria and across the region over the past three years must end now. Syria is testing our commitment to ensure the horrors of Srebrenica and Rwanda are not repeated and so far we are failing.

As with the conflicts raging now in South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and elsewhere, which should not be forgotten, the United States has the opportunity, and responsibility, to show real leadership to end the suffering in Syria. Together with the international community, I urge you to ensure that the United States makes use of all peaceful means to ensure that those in urgent need can access humanitarian assistance using the most direct routes, that ceasefires are negotiated and respected, that Syria's neighbors receive the support they require to prevent a societal breakdown, and that a political solution to the conflict is found without further delay.

For the Syrians who have fled the violence and will be unable to return to their homes for years to come, the right kind of short and long term assistance is required for them and for the communities and countries that host them. The Syrian children I have met across the region demand to know; when will they return home, go back to school and be reunited with their families. The international community, led by the US, has an obligation to find the answers to these questions, and urgently.

If there is no hope for Syrian youth, we will all see a more unstable future. If there are no schools and no jobs or new homes, we will see fertile grounds for extremism, violence and terrorism. It is therefore both in line with our values and our interests to act now to protect and assist civilians caught in the crossfire.

I would like to thank you again for inviting me to testify and would welcome any questions you may have.

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- ⁱ Figures as of March 2014. See UNHCR regional data on refugees: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
- ⁱⁱ Figures as of March 2014. See UNHCR Lebanon data: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122> and <http://www.unhcr.org/5321cda59.html>
- ⁱⁱⁱ For the full text of the resolution see: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/sres384/text>
- ^{iv} Figures as of March 2014. See UNOCHA data on the Syria crisis: <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/syria-6-facts-start-4th-year%20syria%E2%80%99s-conflict>; <http://syria.unocha.org/>
- ^v Figures as of March 2014. See UNOCHA figures: <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/syria-6-facts-start-4th-year%20syria%E2%80%99s-conflict> and <http://syria.unocha.org/> and UNICEF: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Under_Siege_March_2014.pdf. Page 2
- ^{vi} Average family size in Syria is 6.2 people. Around 6.59 people are forced to flee every minute in Syria. For more information, see Internal Displacement Monitoring Center's page for Syria: <http://internal-displacement.org/middle-east/syria/>
- ^{vii} John Kerry, US Secretary of State, 25 July 2013: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45497#.Uy3X0PmSwWI>
- ^{viii} The figures given in this section are based on the latest estimates provided by UN OCHA and other aid actors on the ground. The information on the situation in these locations has been provided by operational aid agencies working in these areas. For a humanitarian overview by the UN see: <http://foodsecuritycluster.net/sites/default/files/OCHA%20Syria%20Humanitarian%20Bulletin%204.pdf>; <http://syria.unocha.org/>
- ^{ix} Including in the towns of Douma, Erbin, Ein Terma, Zamalka, Mileha, Saqba, Hamourieh, Harasta, Jisreen and Kafr Batna and many more locations across Syria
- ^x Figures as of March 2014. See UNOCHA data on the Syria crisis: <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/syria-6-facts-start-4th-year-syria%E2%80%99s-conflict>; and <http://syria.unocha.org/>
- ^{xi} Figures have been provided by UNOCHA. For more on background on the evacuation of Homs, see: <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/syria-valerie-amos-aid-convoy-homs>; <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp/story.asp?NewsID=47132&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.Uy3PnPmSwWI>
- ^{xii} In total, UN OCHA now estimate that there are 240,000 people living in besieged areas. The latest breakdown of the figures are based on UN estimates as of March 2014.
- ^{xiii} Based on estimates from aid organizations, which estimate that between 5.5 and 7.5 million people in northern Syria can most easily be reached across border.
- ^{xiv} For more on this March 20, 2014, UN aid operation see: <http://unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/syria-cross-border-aid-convoy-arrives-northern-syria>
- ^{xv} These include the principles of Humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. For more information see for example: https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf
- ^{xvi} For the full text, see: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr3526/text>
- ^{xvii} For more details, see: <http://www.resettlement.eu/news/crisis-syria>
- ^{xviii} The World Bank estimates that the total cost of the crisis to Lebanon, through the end of 2014, will reach US\$ 7.5 billion; this includes neither the serious impact on employment, nor the demographic and political pressures exerted upon the country's stability. For more on the cost of the regional crisis see: <http://www.unhcr.org/525fe3e59.pdf>
- ^{xix} For more on the situation in Jordan see UNDP: <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/Jordan%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20November%202013.pdf>
- ^{xx} UNICEF, 'Under Siege The devastating impact on children of three years of conflict in Syria', March 2014, page 5: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Under_Siege_March_2014.pdf
- ^{xxi} UNICEF, 'Under Siege The devastating impact on children of three years of conflict in Syria', March 2014, page 5 http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Under_Siege_March_2014.pdf
- ^{xxii} http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Under_Siege_March_2014.pdf
- ^{xxiii} UNICEF, 'Under Siege The devastating impact on children of three years of conflict in Syria', March 2014, page 14 http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Under_Siege_March_2014.pdf
- ^{xxiv} See for example UNDP: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/Syria_Resilience_Brochure_final_Eng_v3_Jan_14.pdf
- ^{xxv} See for example: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/05/us-syria-crisis-usa-refugees-idUSBREA141ZQ20140205>; <http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/01/07/syria-crisis-usa-idINDEEA060JH20140107>
- ^{xxvi} See Harvard Appeal: <http://www.oui-iohe.org/harvard-u-announces-a-6-5-billion-campaign/>
- ^{xxvii} As of March 2014, the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response plan is only 10 percent funded and the Syria Regional Response Plan is 15 percent funded, according to the UN. See: <http://fts.unocha.org/>
- ^{xxviii} UNHCR estimates. See: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp/story.asp?NewsID=47084&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.Uy3W5vmSwWI>