

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND  
EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR VALERIE AMOS**

**Security Council Briefing on Syria**  
**25 November 2014**

*As delivered*

Mr. President,

Nine months ago this Council adopted resolution 2139 which sets out a comprehensive series of proposals to tackle the significant protection, access and humanitarian challenges facing civilians and humanitarian partners in Syria.

After several months of detailed reporting to the Council setting out the continued horror of the situation inside Syria with thousands of people trapped in besieged and hard to reach communities and the lack of implementation of the provisions in resolution 2139, this Council passed resolution 2165 aimed at increasing access to people most in need. The purpose was to support a 'whole of Syria' approach which would enable UN agencies, international and national NGOs to choose the best method for delivery of desperately needed assistance. Across conflict lines inside Syria, or cross-border, including through four additional border-crossing points, as authorized by the Council.

Mr. President,

Security Council resolution 2165 has helped the United Nations overcome some of the challenges we faced by permitting direct delivery to hundreds of thousands of people, complementing the considerable cross-border deliveries conducted by NGOs. Collectively, since the adoption of the resolution and primarily through cross-border deliveries, we have delivered to nearly all the hard-to-reach locations in the four governorates – Aleppo, Idlib, Dar'a and Quneitra. This expanded reach has already led to a more effective response. And that is why I hope that this Council will renew the provisions in resolution 2165. They have made a difference.

But despite the progress we have made it is still not enough. We have faced considerable challenges in implementing resolutions 2139 and 2165 and continue to fall short of meeting the humanitarian needs of all the people we aim to reach in Syria.

No more than two besieged locations have been reached in any month since the adoption of resolution 2165 and only one location has been reached in each of the past two months.

Mr. President,

This is a conflict that is affecting every Syrian. Syria's economy has contracted some 40 per cent since 2011. Unemployment now exceeds 54 per cent. Three quarters of the population live in poverty. School attendance has dropped by more than 50 per cent. Young people have few prospects of a bright future. We have lamented the possibility of a lost generation of Syria's children: it is now a reality.

One of the consequences of resolution 2165 is that we now have better data with respect to the numbers of people in need. Some 12.2 million people are now in urgent need of humanitarian assistance throughout the country. More than five million of those in need are children.

Violence has forced nearly half of Syrians from their homes, many of them multiple times. There are now some 7.6 million people displaced inside Syria. In addition, more than 3.2 million people have fled the country, with countries in the region and communities hosting refugees bearing an enormous burden. This is the largest number of people displaced from conflict in the world.

Mr. President,

Despite the repeated calls from this Council for the fighting to stop and hard hitting reports from the Independent Commission of Inquiry of ongoing abuses of human rights, civilians continue to be killed and injured every day. The Commission's recent report documented ISIL's brutality, including its barbaric treatment of women and children and the systematic use of torture, murder, rape and enslavement. Opposition groups, including designated terrorist groups, mete out brutal punishment and attack civilian services. And the government's aerial attacks, including with barrel bombs, have pounded civilian areas, IDP camps and civilian facilities.

Today, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we particularly remember Syria's women and children. Sexual violence has been used as a form of torture, to injure, to degrade, intimidate and as punishment.

As detailed in this month's Secretary-General's report to the Council, UN organizations and their partners continue to work in extreme and dangerous circumstances. 69 workers have been killed since the beginning of the conflict. We should all be humbled by the commitment and bravery of the thousands of workers who risk their lives to deliver much needed aid to people throughout Syria. As the situation on the ground becomes more dangerous and difficult it is even more important that humanitarian actors are able to use all tools at their disposal to reach people in need, from within the country and across borders.

I hope that Member States will continue to use their influence with the parties to the conflict to remind them to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law and guarantee regular and unhindered access.

This Council must also:

- Continue to call for an end to the bureaucratic steps which hinder the delivery of assistance;
- Push for the inclusion of medical supplies in convoys;
- Call for the lifting of sieges. At the passing of resolution 2139 in February, there were 220,000 people besieged by either Government or opposition forces. 212,000 remain besieged today. 185,500 people by Government forces and 26,500 people by opposition forces;

And this Council must also:

- Push for an end to the violence that is destroying the people and the country and having such a destabilizing impact on the region.

Mr. President,

Humanitarian appeals for Syria and the region remain critically underfunded. I again appeal to donors to do more to fund humanitarian action in response to the Syria crisis. The appeal is less than half funded.

Every day that passes more Syrian children, women and men die. More look to the international community for help and support. We on the humanitarian side will continue to do all we can.

But, as I have said to this Council on many occasions, this crisis requires a political solution. I hope, for the sake of the people of Syria, that one is found soon.

Thank you.