It has been three months since the Security Council passed Resolution 2139. It’s a resolution which is extremely comprehensive and seeks to address issues related to access to people in need inside Syria, the obligations by the parties to adhere to international humanitarian law, and the demilitarization of schools and hospitals.

The monitoring reports presented to the Security Council show that the resolution has not delivered what it intended and, as Assistant Secretary-General Kyung-wha Kang reported to Council members last week, we continue to see rising levels of violence in Syria.

Since the Secretary-General’s last report we have seen a marked increase in the indiscriminate use of barrel bombs by the Government, mortar attacks by opposition groups, poisonous gases allegedly used against civilians, and the collective punishment of civilians.

These are all violations of the most basic principles of international humanitarian and human rights law.

The 6.5 million mothers, daughters, grandfathers, brothers and sons displaced in Syria today are approximately 20 per cent of the total number of people internally displaced by conflict across the world.

241,000 people remain under siege, and at least 2.5 million people in Aleppo were deliberately deprived of water for over a week in May when armed opposition groups shut down the city’s main pumping station. Just this morning, we received an appeal from Aleppo - for flour, for food, for a stop to the violence.

At least 90,000 people in hard-to-reach areas were denied medical assistance as a result of removal of medicines and health supplies from inter-agency convoys.

But with the lack of progress on the political front, the pressure and expectations placed on humanitarian actors has increased.

We continue to look at what more we - the humanitarian community - the United Nations, NGOs and the Red Crescent - can do.

The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.
I do think that it is important to remind everyone that UN agencies and our partners continue, day after day, week after week, to try to find ways to scale up life-saving assistance throughout Syria in an extremely complex environment. Humanitarian workers are putting their lives on the line. They are unarmed but undeterred. Just two days ago the Syrian Arab Red Crescent lost two volunteers, and I spoke this morning to their president, Doctor [Abdul Rahman] Attar.

But as the numbers in need rise, we need to take additional steps to increase our humanitarian delivery.

We were able to reach only around 7 per cent of the people living in besieged areas. It’s a stark reminder of the reality on the ground: active conflict, bureaucratic hurdles, and conditions imposed by the parties on aid delivery, which have resulted in a decline in vital help for the most vulnerable people.

To reach every Syrian in need we need to use all delivery routes. That means cross-line and cross-border, and we need donors to fund UN agencies and our NGO partners.

Our objective is not political and it is not military. It’s about providing emergency aid and protection to people in desperate need, wherever they are in Syria.

Our challenge now is to keep pace and to scale up assistance to the level required.