Statement by Mr. Al-Za’tari, the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria and Mr. Kevin Kennedy, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Crisis in Syria, on Attack on UN Offices in Western Aleppo

Damascus and Amman, 31 October 2016

The United Nations strongly condemns an attack on the building where UN offices and staff are based in west Aleppo city. The UN presence in the building is long established and well known. On 30 October, the top floors of the building were damaged by a tank shell.

“It is appalling that the building that houses the UN offices was directly targeted,” said Ali Al-Za’tari, the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria. “We strongly condemn the increased violence in all of Aleppo, east and west, which has resulted in the death and injury of scores of civilians, including children,” he stressed.

In the last few days, over 40 people have been killed and many more injured due to a high number of rockets indiscriminately launched by non-state armed groups on civilian areas in western Aleppo.

At the same time, 275,000 people remain trapped in east Aleppo besieged by government forces and in some cases held against their will to leave by non-state armed groups (NSAGs). All access routes to or out of the area remain closed, preventing freedom of movement for civilians since 7 July, leaving no option for the civilian population to leave the area, or for UN aid to reach this part of the city.

“It is imperative that humanitarian organizations are granted unconditional, safe, and unhindered access, to reach all people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, wherever they are,” said Kevin Kennedy, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis. “The people of Aleppo have suffered far too much, and for far too long,” he added.

The UN calls on all parties to the conflict to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure including humanitarian offices and personnel, from the effects of hostilities as required by international humanitarian and human rights law.

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