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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018) and 2449 (2018)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the sixtieth submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015), paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), paragraph 6 of resolution 2393 (2017), paragraph 12 of resolution 2401 (2018) and paragraph 6 of resolution 2449 (2018), in the last of which the Council requested the Secretary-General to provide a report at least every 60 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on data available to agencies of the United Nations system and obtained from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other relevant sources. Data from agencies of the United Nations system on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for February and March 2019.

II. Major developments

Box 1

Key points: February and March 2019

1. Large numbers of civilians were reportedly killed and injured in Baghuz and surrounding areas in south-eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate as a result of air strikes and intense fighting between the Syrian Democratic Forces and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. From 4 December 2018 through the end of March 2019, more than 63,500 people were displaced out of the area to the Hawl camp in Hasakah Governorate. Some 217 people died either on route or shortly after arriving at the camp and many more arrived in severe condition.

2. Humanitarian conditions in the makeshift settlement at Rukban, on the Syrian-Jordanian border, remain dire despite the deployment of a joint United Nations-Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy in February. As at the end of March, 362 people had left the makeshift settlement and been transported to collective shelters in Homs Governorate.



3. Flooding and severe cold compounded the suffering of millions of people in need across much of the country, with several camps for internally displaced persons in the north-east and north-west experiencing heavy rain, resulting in the destruction of shelters and secondary displacement of already extremely vulnerable people.

4. In the Idlib de-escalation area, artillery shelling and clashes between Syrian Government forces, the Levant Liberation Organization and non-State armed opposition groups significantly increased in mid-February, with reports of air strikes as at 24 February. Scores of people have been killed and at least 105,000 individuals have been displaced to nearby towns where they have been staying out in the open, in public buildings, with host communities or in informal settlements, with very little access to basic commodities.

5. Attacks on educational and medical facilities continued to be reported and verified by humanitarian organizations, with 12 attacks on schools and 4 attacks on hospitals confirmed during the reporting period.

6. In February and March 2019, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need across the Syrian Arab Republic. Humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations agencies included food for an average of 3.2 million people in need, as well as nearly 2.4 million health and medical treatments to people across the country. Cross-border assistance, authorized under Security Council resolutions [2165 \(2014\)](#), [2191 \(2014\)](#), [2258 \(2015\)](#), [2393 \(2017\)](#) and [2449 \(2018\)](#), remained a vital part of the humanitarian response. During the reporting period, 906 trucks (27 consignments) delivered life-saving assistance to more than a million people through cross-border deliveries, including food assistance for some 650,000 people in February and in March (monthly average).

7. At the third Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, on 14 March 2019, international donors pledged a record \$7 billion, to meet needs inside the Syrian Arab Republic and ensure support for refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries. The Conference was an important demonstration of the international community's continued solidarity with the people of the Syrian Arab Republic and with the country's neighbours, which continue to host millions of refugees at great economic cost.

3. In the north-east, military operations against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continued through 23 March, when the Syrian Democratic Forces announced the end of the group's territorial control of its last pocket east of the Euphrates River, in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. Throughout the reporting period, large numbers of civilians were reportedly killed and injured in Baghuz and surrounding areas in south-eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate as a result of air strikes and intense fighting between the Syrian Democratic Forces and ISIL. Since 4 December 2018, more than 63,500 people have been displaced out of the area to Hawl camp in Hasakah Governorate, the overwhelming majority of whom are women and children. A total of 217 people died either en route, shortly after arriving at the camp or after referral to hospitals in Hasakah, and many more arrived in severe condition. The main causes are complications related to severe acute malnutrition; pneumonia; and dehydration and diarrhoea as a result of months without access to basic commodities or health care, exposure to hostilities and inadequate means of transportation from Baghuz to the camp.

4. Humanitarian conditions in the makeshift settlement at Rukban, on the Syrian-Jordanian border, remain dire despite the deployment of a joint United Nations-Syrian

Arab Red Crescent convoy in February. During the reporting period, five children reportedly died owing to the lack of access to adequate health care, bringing the number of children who have died at the settlement from preventable conditions since January to at least 13 children.

5. As at the end of March, 362 people had left Rukban and been transported to collective shelters in Homs Governorate. Of these, 159 women and children had left the collective shelter by the end of March. The United Nations has called for principled and durable solutions for the people of Rukban in line with the results of the intention survey carried out by the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in February, in which 95 per cent of the people surveyed expressed a desire to leave and many also expressed protection concerns. The United Nations facilitated a meeting between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Russian Federation and Rukban community representatives on 26 March to discuss those concerns. The United Nations continues to reiterate the importance of a carefully planned, principled approach to the situation in Rukban that ensures respect for core protection standards and does not expose vulnerable, and in many cases traumatized, displaced men, women and children, to additional harm. All movement must be voluntary, safe, well-informed and dignified, with humanitarian access assured throughout.

6. Until conditions are met for the implementation of durable solutions, the United Nations continues to strongly advocate for additional and sustained assistance for those who remain in Rukban. The deployment of a third humanitarian convoy to Rukban was requested during the reporting period, to allow essential needs to be met ahead of the Ramadan period, which begins in early May. Food, medicines and other life-saving supplies delivered in February are already running low, and the replenishment of stocks will become increasingly urgent over the coming weeks.

7. Since mid-February, in the Idlib de-escalation area, artillery shelling and clashes between Syrian government forces, the Levant Liberation Organization and non-State armed opposition groups have significantly increased, with reports of air strikes from 24 February. Scores of people have been killed, including more than 100 people in February and more than 90 people in March. At least 105,000 individuals have been displaced to nearby towns where they have been staying out in the open, in public buildings, with host communities or in informal settlements, with very little access to basic commodities. There were also reports of internal clashes within the Levant Liberation Organization and among non-State armed opposition groups, as well as improvised explosive device and vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks. Fighting and insecurity caused severe damage to civilian residences and infrastructure and restriction of civilian movements and hampered access by civilians to medical care and education.

8. Severe and torrential flooding continued to affect many locations in the north-west and north-east of the country during the reporting period, with sites for internally displaced persons being among the worst-affected locations. Humanitarian organizations estimated that more than 80 per cent of the Arishah camp, in Hasakah Governorate, had been flooded by late March. In northern, western and southern parts of Idlib Governorate, 14 collective camps for internally displaced persons were severely damaged and approximately 40,000 internally displaced persons were affected by the floods. Roads leading to the camps and inside the camps were cut off, and education activities had to be suspended.

9. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Geir O. Pedersen, delivered his first briefing to the Security Council on 28 February 2019, wherein he emphasized that resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) contained all the elements required for a political solution to the Syrian conflict. He outlined five goals: first, to begin and

deepen a sustained dialogue with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition on building trust and confidence towards a safe, calm and neutral environment; second, to see more concrete action on detainees, abductees and missing persons through engagement with the Astana guarantors and the Syrian parties and all concerned; third, to engage a wide range of Syrian people and emphasize their stake in the process; fourth, to convene a credible, balanced and inclusive constitutional committee as soon as possible; and fifth, to help the international parties deepen their own dialogue towards the common purpose of a credible and sustainable political settlement of the Syrian conflict that can enjoy international legitimacy.

10. The Special Envoy met with members of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on 18 March in Damascus and with the opposition Syrian Negotiations Committee on 23 March in Riyadh. At both consultations, the participants went into depth on the issues covered in resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) and both parties welcomed a broad-ranging dialogue.

11. At the third Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, on 14 March 2019, international donors pledged a record \$7 billion, to meet humanitarian needs inside the Syrian Arab Republic and ensure support for refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries. The Conference was an important demonstration of the international community's continued solidarity with the people of the Syrian Arab Republic and with the country's neighbours, which continue to host millions of refugees at great economic cost. Participants at the third Brussels Conference also reaffirmed that a sustainable solution to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic could be based only on the Geneva communiqué (2012) and the full implementation of Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#) calling for a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned political process facilitated by the United Nations to reach a political settlement that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. In the context of the emphasis on Syrian women at the Brussels Conference, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, heads of United Nations agencies and a number of Ministers for Foreign Affairs participated in gatherings with the Syrian Women's Advisory Board focusing on how to advance the meaningful participation of women and the women's rights agenda within the political process. On the margins of the Conference, Special Envoy Pedersen and the High Representative of the European Union, Federica Mogherini, also met with Syrian civil society actors, underscoring the importance of including a diversity of voices in the political process.

Protection

12. Hostilities and other forms of violence continued to severely affect civilians in various parts of the Syrian Arab Republic. Civilians continued to be killed and injured as a result of an escalation in ground-based strikes and air strikes in areas within the "demilitarized zone", including in Idlib, parts of Hama and Aleppo Governorates. Civilians, including mainly women and children, also continued to be killed, injured and maimed as a result of an increased use of improvised explosive devices by unidentified armed groups or those affiliated with them, and explosive hazards, including landmines and unexploded ordnances, in various populated and agricultural areas in the Syrian Arab Republic. A number of the improvised explosive device attacks appeared to be targeting civilians directly or were carried out regardless of the impact on civilians. Unidentified armed non-State opposition groups also continued to sporadically shell populated areas in Government-held Aleppo and Hama Governorates.

13. Civilians living under the rule of the Levant Liberation Organization within the "demilitarized zone" in Idlib and its surroundings continued to be abducted, deprived

of liberty and subjected to torture and other forms of physical abuse. They are being targeted mainly for being critical of the Levant Liberation Organization and for failing to comply with its rules. In addition, civilians, including women, continued to be subjected to the strict codes and system of regulations of the Levant Liberation Organization. Journalists, academics and humanitarian and social service providers were being detained and beaten or verbally abused, threatened and at times killed for failing to comply with such regulations. The fate and whereabouts of many of these civilians remain unknown.

14. In the Government-controlled Dar‘a Governorate, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) documented at least three incidents in which civilians, including one woman, were detained. The reasons for their deprivation of liberty remain unclear, raising concerns about arbitrariness of arrest and detention. OHCHR also documented two cases in Dar‘a Governorate of families who received notifications of the death of relatives while held in Government custody. In neither case were the bodies of the deceased returned to their families, and no information was provided concerning the circumstances of their deaths.

15. Many of those who were displaced from the last ISIL-controlled areas of Baghuz in eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate face a number of protection concerns, including family separation, the confiscation of identity documents and restrictions on freedom of movement. Children under the age of 15 and women allegedly or actually associated with ISIL remain deprived of their liberty by the Syrian Democratic Forces. Reports obtained by OHCHR suggest that some foreign children and women, mainly Iraqis, are verbally and physically abused by the Syrian Democratic Forces in the Hawl camp, and many fear that they may face a risk of ill-treatment or other irreparable harm in breach of human rights law if repatriated to Iraq.

16. Attacks on educational facilities continued to be reported by humanitarian organizations. On February 6, in Jarjanaz, Idlib Governorate, a primary school was affected by a rocket that landed within its vicinity. On 13 February, in Khan Shaykhun, Idlib Governorate, a school was affected by a rocket that landed in one of its yards, leaving some damage but no reported casualties. On 17 February, in the southern part of Ma‘arrat al-Nu‘man city, Idlib Governorate, a school was affected by a rocket that landed on the street. Also on 17 February, in Ma‘arrat al-Nu‘man town, Idlib Governorate, a school was hit by shelling that caused destruction to most of the school windows and doors, although no casualties were reported. On 4 March, in Ma‘arrat al-Nu‘man, Idlib Governorate, a school was affected by shelling that caused material damage to the school playground and to some of the doors and windows. No casualties were reported, as the school was on suspension. On 5 March, in Qal‘at al-Madiq, Hama Governorate, a school was hit by a rocket that landed in the schoolyard, causing massive damage to some of the classrooms. On 7 March, in Saraqib city, Idlib Governorate, a kindergarten was hit by a rocket, causing damage. No casualties were reported. On 10 March, in Tah village in Idlib Governorate, a primary school was shelled, causing partial destruction to its building and damaging its furniture. On March 13, in Idlib city centre, a school was shelled, causing moderate damage, but no casualties were reported as the incident took place after school time. On 19 March, in Zahra’ neighbourhood in Aleppo, a female teacher was injured and a five-year-old boy was killed when a sniper fired shots on a kindergarten bus. On 26 March, in Shaykh Idris village, Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Ali Rajab Diban primary school was hit by a rocket that landed close to it, causing material damage to the facility and killing two boys and injuring one. Also on 26 March, in Shaykh Idris village, Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Shaykh Idris primary school was hit by a rocket, causing material damage to the school and killing two boys and injuring five. All the children were in classrooms when the attack took place. As a result of insecurity, education activities were suspended multiple times in and around Idlib Governorate.

17. During the reporting period, the Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care of the World Health Organization reported three cases of attacks that struck health-care facilities and assets. All three attacks occurred on 9 March, in Saraqib: (a) a blood bank was hit, injuring one medical worker and putting the facility temporarily out of service; (b) a hospital supported by a non-governmental organization (NGO) sustained structural damages; and (c) the Saraqib ambulance system headquarters was damaged.

Humanitarian response

18. During the reporting period, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need throughout the Syrian Arab Republic. Humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations agencies included food for an average of 3.2 million people in need each month and nearly 2.4 million health and medical treatments to people throughout the country (see table 1).

Table 1

Average number of people reached each month by the United Nations and other organizations through all modalities throughout the Syrian Arab Republic: February and March 2019

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Average number of people reached monthly</i>
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	4 445
International Organization for Migration	85 000
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1 900 000
United Nations Children's Fund	2 800 000
United Nations Development Programme	611 000
United Nations Population Fund	610 000
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	150 000
World Food Programme	3 200 000
World Health Organization	2 400 000

19. From inside the Syrian Arab Republic, humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations agencies included food for a monthly average of 2.55 million people in Government-controlled areas and in the north-east. More than 2 million people received water, sanitation and hygiene services and supplies. Some 3.6 million children and mothers were reached with primary health-care and immunization services. Moreover, approximately 380,000 people benefited from protection and psychosocial support services and child protection services. United Nations operations from within the Syrian Arab Republic also included nearly 1.6 million health and medical treatments to people throughout the country.

20. As part of its country-wide humanitarian response, the United Nations and NGOs continued to deliver life-saving assistance to more than 700,000 people each month in the three governorates of the north-eastern part of the Syrian Arab Republic. This included supporting some of the most vulnerable people in camps for internally displaced persons, such as those who had recently been displaced owing to intense fighting in what was then the last ISIL-held areas in Hajin, in south-eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. At the Hawl camp, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners rapidly mobilized a major relief operation and continued to scale up the response, in many cases redirecting capacities and stocks from other parts of the country. Food, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, non-food items and

health and protection services were provided to all new arrivals to the camp. Yet, as at the end of the reporting period, there remained an urgent need for additional shelter plots, with a gap of some 3,000 additional plots to accommodate approximately 19,000 people currently being hosted in family-size tents and rub halls. There was also a huge strain on water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and services, including latrines, and access to sanitation and clean water. In addition, there were a number of protection concerns, with more than 350 unaccompanied and separated children identified to date, numerous pregnant girls and women, unaccompanied elderly persons and persons with disabilities, as well as the notable absence of adolescent boys and men between the ages of 15 and 65 years old. The United Nations requires some \$27 million to sustain the response for the next several months.

21. During the reporting period, the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent conducted a humanitarian convoy to assist some 41,000 people at the Rukban makeshift settlement. The convoy was the largest and one of the most complex carried out by the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent since the beginning of the humanitarian response. The mission lasted 10 days, included more than 300 staff and involved 118 trucks loaded with essential humanitarian assistance, vaccines and logistical items, including food, health and nutritional supplies, basic household items, water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, education items and children's recreational kits. An additional 15 trucks contained logistical items to support the convoy. Essential medicine and equipment were provided and thousands of children were vaccinated. The United Nations also distributed education supplies covering the needs of some 8,000 children. Comprehensive distribution oversight and monitoring took place by United Nations and Syrian Arab Red Crescent teams to ensure that assistance reached civilians in need. In addition, the teams carried out needs assessments and an intention survey on durable solutions, in which close to 2,900 households took part. The assistance delivered was critical and will save lives. However, the gravity of the dire situation for civilians in Rukban means that, until the conditions are met for durable solutions, sustained humanitarian access to the makeshift settlement is needed moving forward. The deployment of a third humanitarian convoy to Rukban was requested during the reporting period, to allow essential needs to be met ahead of the Ramadan period, which begins in early May. Food, medicines and other life-saving supplies delivered in February are already running low, and the replenishment of stocks will become increasingly urgent over the coming weeks.

22. On 7 March, the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent completed an inter-agency convoy delivering humanitarian assistance to meet the needs of 50,000 people in Manbij and surrounding areas in north-east Aleppo Governorate. A total of 37 trucks carried 862 metric tonnes of food, non-food items, education materials and nutrition and medical supplies. Households headed by women, people living with disabilities and those living in informal settlements – all considered particularly vulnerable – were prioritized during the distribution. The food supplies for 50,000 people are expected to last for approximately 30 days and the medical supplies will treat more than 80,000 people.

23. Humanitarian partners resumed the provision of aid along the Euphrates River in early February and reached vulnerable people in makeshift settlements and host communities from Basirah to Hajin. This includes food assistance by the World Food Programme to 57,500 people in February and 78,500 people in March. On 15 February, a Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy carrying United Nations supplies, including food assistance, hygiene kits, non-food items and nutrition supplies, reached Hajin town and distributed assistance to 5,000 people. On 19 February, the United Nations Children's Fund, through an implementing partner, reached Hajin city with hygiene kits and provided nutrition services.

24. During the reporting period, flooding and severe cold compounded the suffering of millions of people in need across much of the country, with several camps for internally displaced persons in the north-east and north-west experiencing heavy rain, resulting in the destruction of shelters and the secondary displacement of already extremely vulnerable people. For example, in northern, western and southern parts of Idlib Governorate, 14 collective camps for internally displaced persons were severely damaged with some 40,000 people affected by the floods. Roads leading to the camps and inside the camps were cut off and education activities had to be suspended. In Hasakah Governorate, some 40 villages and Arishah camp were directly affected by heavy rains, with more than 80 per cent of the camp estimated as flooded in late March. A total of 5,600 people were moved to a new site to the west of the camp and assistance was provided by humanitarian partners on the ground.

25. Humanitarian mine-action partners continued to implement humanitarian mine-action programmes in the north-western part of the country, which included the delivery of risk education and victim assistance to vulnerable populations. In Damascus, the first United Nations Mine Action Service risk education teams completed their training and are expected to be deployed in the coming period to affected communities in Rural Damascus, Dar‘a, Qunaytirah and Suwayda’ Governorates. Preparations for the launch of a countrywide risk awareness campaign were finalized, with messaging through newspapers, text messaging, social media and other outlets planned for early April.

26. Cross-border deliveries continued under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017) and 2449 (2018) (see table 2). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including its contents, its destination and the number of beneficiaries expected to be reached. In February and March, 906 trucks (27 consignments) delivered life-saving assistance for more than 1 million people through cross-border deliveries (see figure I).

Figure I
Number of beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, by cluster: February and March 2019 (monthly average)

(Thousands)

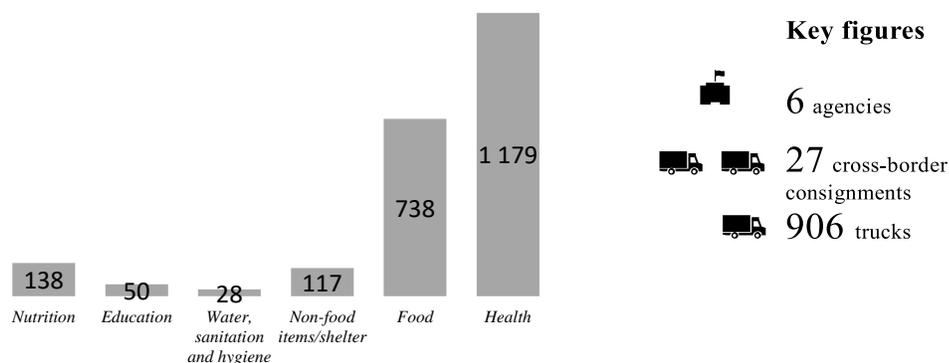


Table 2
Number of beneficiaries targeted through cross-border deliveries, by sector and by district: February and March 2019 (monthly average)

<i>Governorate</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Non-food items/ shelter</i>	<i>Nutrition</i>	<i>Water, sanitation and hygiene</i>
Aleppo	Al-Bab	–	–	41 040	2 000	–	–
Aleppo	L'zaz	–	92 088	130 030	28 648	55 156	7 500
Aleppo	Jarabulus	–	–	1 010	–	–	–
Aleppo	Jebel Sim'an	13 644	481 500	131 955	4 270	–	–
Hasakah	Qamishli	–	–	334 200	–	–	–
Hama	Suqaylibiyah	–	–	5 105	3 000	–	–
Hama	Hama	–	–	–	–	–	–
Idlib	Ma'arra	–	87 318	97 328	–	–	–
Idlib	Ariha	–	41 085	54 425	5 000	–	–
Idlib	Harim	–	–	296 465	64 655	82 900	20 000
Idlib	Idlib	36 800	36 393	79 507	9 128	–	–
Idlib	Jisr al-Shughur	–	–	8 080	–	–	–

27. During the reporting period, the Russian Federation sent informational bulletins to the United Nations from the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides and Refugee Migration Monitoring, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian access

28. The provision of humanitarian assistance requires timely, safe, sustained and unimpeded access by the United Nations and all humanitarian partners. The access landscape in the Syrian Arab Republic is complex, with different areas serviced differently and different types of services requiring different operating modalities. Access is critical for principled humanitarian action, which depends notably on an ability to assess needs and to monitor and evaluate impact independently, including by regularly engaging directly with affected people.

29. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to provide assistance from within the Syrian Arab Republic to millions of people in need in thousands of locations throughout the country. As much of the country has come under the control of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, an estimated 62 per cent of people in need are now reachable from Damascus, as well as a significant portion of those living in the north-eastern part of the country. In recent months, the focus of access has moved from a simple model of tracking the number of convoys to also looking at access of staff, not only for delivery but also for assessments and monitoring and evaluation, as well as at the ability to ensure protection to those in need. More than 1,700 United Nations staff members remain deployed in the country, with more than 500 in nine hubs outside Damascus (Aleppo, Dar'a, Dayr al-Zawr, Hama, Homs, Ladhikiyah, Qamishli, Suwayda' and Tartus).

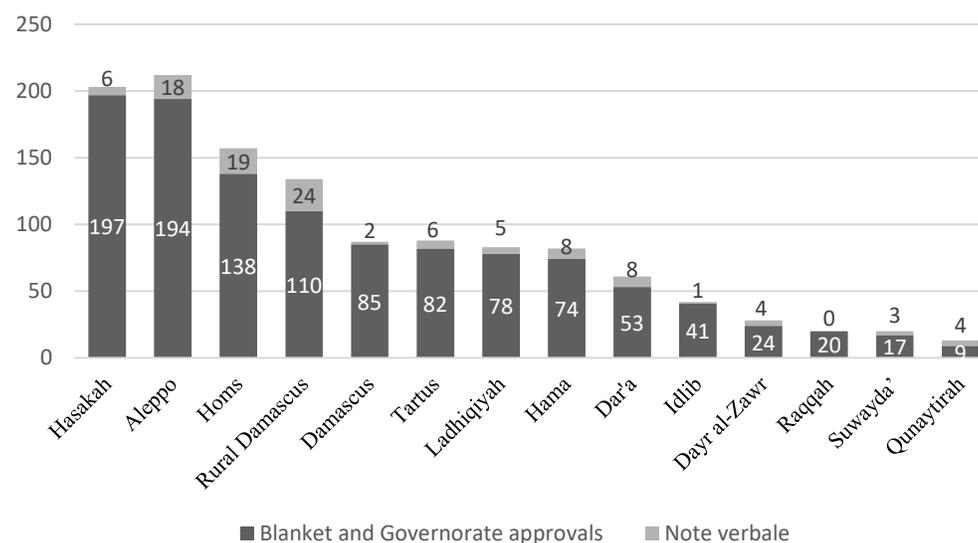
30. Many of the aid deliveries are implemented through national partners, in particular the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. The United Nations is regularly deployed alongside the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, including to undertake assessments, accompany deliveries and follow up with monitoring and evaluation missions. In February and March, the United Nations undertook hundreds of missions throughout

the Syrian Arab Republic (see table 3). Some of those missions required formal approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see table 4), while others were deployed in accordance with part of broader agreements with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, where individual mission permissions are not required, including in locations for which blanket approval has been granted.

Table 3
**Total number of missions conducted by United Nations agencies, by type:
February and March 2019**

Type of mission	Note verbale	Blanket approval	Governorate approval	Total number
Assessment missions	22	42	35	99
Missions accompanying aid deliveries	17	332	0	349
Monitoring missions	48	437	126	611
Security, logistics and administrative support missions	21	147	3	171
Total	108	958	164	1 230

Figure II
**Total number of missions conducted by United Nations agencies, by
Governorate: February–March 2019**



Note: Missions to Dar'a were conducted by third-party monitors for the United Nations, partners and/or consultants, not by United Nations staff.

Table 4
Requests for United Nations access for single-agency missions: February and March 2019

<i>Type of request</i>	<i>Number requested</i>	<i>Number approved</i>	<i>Percentage approved</i>
Assessment missions	67	33	49
Missions accompanying aid deliveries	38	21	55
Monitoring missions	203	75	37
Security, logistics and administrative support missions	80	41	51
Total	338	170	50

31. The United Nations continued to face access challenges owing to a number of constraints, including administrative restrictions and insecurity. Some 1.16 million people remained in areas categorized by the United Nations as hard-to-reach. Of the 338 requests by the United Nations to conduct the humanitarian missions referenced in table 4, 168 were either unanswered or denied. Insecurity in some areas of Idlib also impacted humanitarian aid deliveries. This considerably affected United Nations access to certain locations with high severity of need, including in eastern Ghutah, Idlib and the southern part of the Syrian Arab Republic. In some cases, particularly in Dar‘a, this was compensated for by deploying consultants or third-party monitors to areas that the United Nations could not itself access (see figure II).

32. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations as authorized under Security Council resolutions [2165 \(2014\)](#), [2191 \(2014\)](#), [2258 \(2015\)](#), [2332 \(2016\)](#) and [2393 \(2017\)](#). On 13 December 2018, Council resolution [2449 \(2018\)](#) was adopted, extending authorization for cross-border humanitarian assistance operations for another year. During the reporting period, the Mechanism monitored the delivery of 27 consignments by six United Nations agencies, consisting of 906 trucks, from three border crossings: 16 from Bab al-Hawa (761 trucks); 9 from Bab al-Salam (132 trucks); and 2 from Ya‘rubiyah (13 trucks). There were no concerns or questions about the humanitarian nature of the consignments sent. The United Nations provided 48-hour notice to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding all shipments. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Iraq, Jordan and Turkey.

Visas and registrations

33. The United Nations continues work with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to allow for the timely provision of visas to staff (see table 5).

Table 5
Requests for United Nations visas: February and March 2019

<i>Type of request</i>	<i>Number requested</i>	<i>Number approved</i>	<i>Number rejected</i>	<i>Number pending</i>
Visas requested during reporting period	147	95	10	35
Renewals requested during reporting period	174	127	3	43
Visas pending from before reporting period	28	16	5	7
Renewals pending from before reporting period	49	48	0	0

Note: During the reporting period, the United Nations withdrew seven visa requests, one request for renewal and one pending request for renewal from before the reporting period (January 2019).

34. A total of 26 international NGOs are registered with the Government to operate in the country.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

35. The United Nations and NGOs continued to implement programmes in areas affected by frequent clashes among parties to the conflict, by air strikes and by the regular exchange of indirect artillery fire and other attacks. Humanitarian relief personnel also operate in areas highly contaminated with unexploded ordnance, explosive remnants of war and landmines.

36. Since the beginning of the conflict, hundreds of humanitarian workers have reportedly been killed, including 22 staff members of the United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system, 18 of whom were staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); 66 staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent; and 8 staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Many staff members of international and national NGOs have also been killed.

37. A total of 31 staff members of agencies and programmes of the United Nations system (1 staff member of the United Nations Development Programme, 1 staff member of the United Nations Population Fund, 1 staff member from the Department of Safety and Security and 28 staff members of UNRWA) were detained or missing at the end of the reporting period.

III. Observations

38. As the conflict enters its ninth year, Syrians continue to suffer from one of the worst conflicts of our time. Hundreds of thousands have been killed, many more have been maimed physically and psychologically, and Syrians in the north-east and north-west remain under constant fear of yet another humanitarian catastrophe unfolding. A total of 8 in 10 people in the Syrian Arab Republic today live below the poverty line. Monthly food costs are six times higher than before the war. Access to adequate health care, including maternal and reproductive health-care services, mental health and psychological support, nutrition support and treatment for non-communicable diseases, is despairingly inadequate in relation to basic needs. Some 6.2 million people inside the country are still displaced from their homes and 2 million children are out of school. Syrians have lived through a litany of horrors and nearly 12 million remain in need of protection and humanitarian assistance.

39. At the third Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, on 14 March 2019, international donors pledged a record \$7 billion for 2019, to meet needs inside the Syrian Arab Republic and ensure support for refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries. The Conference was an important demonstration of the international community's continued solidarity with the people of the Syrian Arab Republic and with the country's neighbours, which continue to host millions of refugees at great economic cost. I urge Member States to disburse their pledges as a matter of urgency. Without continued funding, humanitarian activities would be interrupted, cutting deliveries of life-saving food, water, health care, shelter and protection.

40. In view of the escalation of violence in the north-west since mid-February, I urge all sides to maintain their commitments to uphold the memorandum on the stabilization of the situation in the Idlib de-escalation area signed by the Russian Federation and Turkey on 17 September 2018 (see [S/2018/852](#), annex). In all instances, whether in the north-west, the north-east or elsewhere in the Syrian Arab

Republic, the United Nations strongly encourages international diplomatic efforts to ensure that military escalation is avoided at all costs to avoid devastating consequences for civilians. I also remind all parties to the conflict that their counter-terrorism operations must comply with their obligation to respect and protect civilians. In addition, counter-terrorism measures must not impede principled humanitarian action.

41. I am gravely worried about the situation of tens of thousands of people in Hawl camp, 92 per cent of whom are women and children. Many of the people in the camp have already been exposed to extreme violence and trauma under ISIL and are now living in extremely challenging conditions where they face a range of protection concerns and an uncertain and disconcerting fate. For many, this includes not knowing the location of family members and fears around their own personal safety and that of their children. I remind all parties and Member States to comply with their obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law, in particular regarding the right to a fair trial and due process, as well as the need to respect international standards, including with respect to prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children, and relevant Security Council resolutions.

42. I welcome efforts in support of the creation of conditions conducive to durable solutions for the more than 41,000 people who remain in the Rukban makeshift settlement. Some 95 per cent of the people surveyed by United Nations and Syrian Arab Red Crescent teams during the reporting period expressed a desire to leave the settlement, although most also highlighted significant protection concerns. I continue to reiterate the importance of a carefully planned, principled approach that ensures respect for core protection standards and does not expose vulnerable, and in many cases traumatized, displaced people to additional harm. All movements must be voluntary, safe, well-informed and dignified, with humanitarian access assured throughout. In parallel, I also continue to strongly advocate for additional and sustained humanitarian assistance for those who remain in Rukban.

43. I continue to be concerned about the treatment and conditions of persons who are detained throughout the country by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as by United Nations-listed terrorist groups and non-State armed opposition groups. I call upon all parties to ensure fundamental guarantees for persons in their custody and to allow them to inform family members of their detention.

44. Continued impunity for alleged serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by parties to the conflict remains of grave concern. I call upon all parties to the conflict, in particular the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, all States, civil society and the United Nations system to cooperate fully with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, in particular by providing relevant information and documentation. Accountability for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law is central to achieving sustainable peace in the Syrian Arab Republic. I reiterate my call for the situation in the country to be referred to the International Criminal Court.

45. In view of ongoing serious concerns repeatedly raised with regard to the protection of civilians and other human rights concerns in the Syrian Arab Republic, I strongly urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, in line with Human Rights Council resolutions [S-18/1](#) and [19/22](#), to cooperate with OHCHR, including through the establishment of a field presence with the mandate to protect and promote human rights.

46. I strongly support the efforts of my Special Envoy to advance the political solution mandated by Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#). As he continues to endeavour to facilitate this Syrian-led process between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition, I urge the international community, in particular the Security Council, to strengthen their dialogue, cooperation and support for his efforts. In particular, the plight of civilians obliges all concerned to take concrete steps towards confidence-building measures that can lead the way towards a sustainable peace for the Syrian people, who have endured unimaginable suffering for far too long.

Annex

Reported incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: February and March 2019*

Dayr al-Zawr and Hasakah Governorates

- On 10 February, at least four civilians, including two women and two boys, were killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes by the Syrian Democratic Forces that hit a populated area in the village of Baghuz in the eastern rural Abu Kamal area in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 27 February, one civilian was killed and at least three others injured as a result of what was alleged to be an unexploded ordnance that detonated near the killed civilian while he was at work in the Taym oilfield in the vicinity of Government-held Sukhnah area in Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 22 March, one civilian woman and her boy were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an unexploded ordnance that detonated near them in the vicinity of a residential building in southern Dayr al-Zawr city.
- On 23 March, a civilian man was arrested by Government-affiliated forces at his home in Buqrus Tahtani in eastern Dayr al-Zawr for unknown reasons. The family could not obtain further information about his whereabouts.

Idlib Governorate

- On 3 February, a civilian pharmacist was arrested by gunmen of the Levant Liberation Organization in the village of Ma'arr Dibsah in the Saraqib district of south-eastern Idlib. His fate and whereabouts remain unknown.
- On 4 February, gunmen of the Levant Liberation Organization abducted a school headmaster in Idlib city. His fate and whereabouts remain unknown.
- On 6 February, one boy was killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in the village of Jarjanaz in the Ma'arrat al-Nu'man district of south-eastern Idlib.
- On 9 February, six civilians, including three women and one boy, were killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in the eastern part of the city of Khan Shaykhun in southern Idlib.
- On 15 February, at least four civilians, including two women, were killed and nine civilians – four women and five children (three boys and two girls) – were injured as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit several areas in Khan Shaykhun.
- On 16 February, five civilians, including two women and two boys, were killed and at least three other civilians injured as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in Khan Shaykhun.
- On 16 February, 4 civilians, including one woman, were killed and at least 11 other civilians injured as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in Ma'arrat al-Nu'man area in southern Idlib.

* The list of incidents exemplifies human rights issues of concern raised in the report. Owing to the changing patterns of conflict and the loss of networks of credible and/or reliable sources in many conflict-affected areas, however, verifying incidents is increasingly difficult. The list, which contains only those incidents that were reported to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and that have been verified according to its methodology, should not be considered comprehensive.

- On 18 February, twin attacks, reportedly with improvised explosive devices, occurred in Idlib city. The first explosion was allegedly due to an improvised explosive device attached to a vehicle that detonated in Qusur neighbourhood in Idlib city. The second explosion soon followed, caused reportedly by a suicide attack with an improvised explosive device attached to a motorbike that detonated in the vicinity of the Jarrah roundabout among a crowd of civilians, including medical personnel, first responders and journalists who had rushed to the scene to respond to the first attack and rescue people. As a result of the two attacks, at least 16 civilians, including one woman and two children, were killed and scores of others injured. The attacks also caused significant infrastructure damage.
- On 19 February, three civilians, including one boy and one man with a disability, were killed and one civilian injured as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in Khan Shaykhun city. The shelling also damaged a bakery known by the name of “Rawdah”.
- On 22 February, seven civilians, including one woman and four children, were killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit residential areas in Ma‘arrat al-Nu‘man.
- On 25 February, three civilians, including one boy and one girl, were killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit within the vicinity of their home in Hubayt village in the Khan Shaykhun area of southern Idlib.
- On 9 March, a three-year-old boy was killed and at least two other civilians from the same family injured as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes and air strikes that hit a residential area in Saraqib city in eastern Idlib.
- On 10 March, three civilians, including one woman and one boy, were killed and six other civilians, including four children, injured as a result of what were alleged to be air and ground-based strikes that hit residential areas in Khan Shaykhun.
- On 10 March, other reports suggested that several health-care facilities and other civilian infrastructure were also impacted by the intensified strikes on Saraqib, including the “Hayat Hospital”, “Tawleed Hospital”, the so-called Ambulance System Control office, a blood bank and a bakery.
- On 12 March, at least one infant boy was killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes by on Tamani‘ah town in southern Idlib.
- On 13 March, several air strikes hit multiple areas in Idlib city, including within the vicinity of the “Idlib Central Prison” run by the Levant Liberation Organization and located west of the city. Allegedly, 300 prisoners escaped the prison following the air strikes but were recaptured by the Levant Liberation Organization in the following days. As a result of the strikes, 16 civilians, including two women, five boys and two girls, were killed and 44 civilians injured. Other unverified reports suggested that the air strikes also impacted civilian infrastructure, including health-care facilities in Idlib city (the hospitals of Muhafatha and Ibn Sina) and the power plant of Kasih.
- On 22 March, at least 15 civilians, including one woman, one girl and five boys from the same family, were killed and 27 other civilians injured as a result of what were alleged to be air strikes that hit the villages of Kafraya and Fu‘ah in central rural Idlib.
- On 26 March, one child was killed and at least three others injured as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit a residential area and also

impacted a primary school (Ali Diban School) in Shaykh Idris villages in eastern Idlib.

Dar'a

- On 4 March, one boy was killed as a result of what was alleged to be an unexploded ordnance that detonated near him in an agricultural field in Yadudah area in western Dar'a city.
 - On 4 March, one civilian woman was arrested by Government-affiliated forces for unknown reasons. She was reportedly arrested at one of the Government-controlled checkpoints along the Damascus-Dar'a highway.
 - On 12 March, the Government police in Busra al-Sham area in eastern Dar'a received an official notification from the Syrian authorities about the death of two detainees in Government custody. Both detainees were students arrested at the University of Damascus nine months earlier. The reason given by the authorities was heart failure, but the bodies have not been returned to the families.
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