

**UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN
AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, STEPHEN O'BRIEN**

STATEMENT ON HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO EASTERN ALEPPO, SYRIA

I am pained and disappointed that a United Nations convoy has yet to cross into Syria from Turkey, and safely reach eastern Aleppo, where up to 275,000 people remain trapped without food, water, proper shelter or medical care.

Today's 20-truck convoy would have been the first of two that would have carried flour and other food supplies, enough to feed some 185,000 people for one month. As you are well aware, humanitarians have not been able to reach eastern Aleppo since clashes started on 7 July between the Government of Syria forces and non-state armed groups.

I hope that all parties to the conflict, and those with influence over them, would see the convoy as an opportunity to move forward. All parties must facilitate regular and sustained access to families in all the besieged and hard-to-reach areas across the country, through both cross-line and cross-border routes.

The people of Syria have suffered long enough. Millions of Syrian civilians continue to face horrific deprivation and violence, especially those trapped in besieged and hard-to-reach areas.

The United Nations continues to call for unconditional, unimpeded and sustained access to the millions of Syrian men, women and children in hard-to-reach and besieged locations. The delivery of humanitarian assistance is urgently needed, as is access for medical teams to examine, treat patients and support the evacuation of critically ill, the elderly, people with disabilities and children.

Humanitarian aid must remain neutral, impartial and free of political and military agendas. The United Nations and our partners remain ready to meet people's needs regardless of who or where people are.

New York, 19 September 2016