

Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan

At the request of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Director-General has the honour to transmit to the Sixty-third World Health Assembly the attached report by the Ministry of Health of the Syrian Arab Republic.

In addition to the report, the Secretariat has received detailed health centre construction plans.¹

¹ Available upon request.

ANNEX

HEALTH CONDITIONS IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN

1. In order to inform WHO about feasibility studies carried out by the Ministry of Health on the construction of health facilities in the occupied Syrian Golan, as well as about the nature and type of health services required for Syrian nationals living there, we would like to indicate the following.
2. As regards the health conditions, Syrian nationals of the occupied Syrian Golan continue to face numerous health problems that are closely related to their affiliation to their country of origin and refusal to hold Israeli identity. There is no doubt that practices exercised by the occupying Israeli authorities against the Syrian Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan are contrary to their basic right to enjoy access to necessary health care.
3. Syrians living in the occupied Syrian Golan have no access to treatment unless they hold Israeli identity or have health insurance. In addition, the prohibitive costs imposed on medical diagnosis and care, as well as health insurance, are well beyond these people's modest income.
4. Syrian villages in the occupied Syrian Golan also suffer from a severe shortage of health and first-aid centres, specialized medical clinics, doctors in general, and specialists in particular. This is in spite of concrete efforts made by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, through international humanitarian organizations working in the field of health, to build medical centres in the occupied Syrian Golan, together with a specialized hospital working under the supervision of the Syrian Red Crescent, in order to help the Syrian population of the occupied Syrian Golan and reduce their suffering as a result of the inhuman practices of the occupying Israeli authorities.
5. The suffering of the medical sector is evident in the occupied Syrian Golan. There is a lack of integrated medical centres to serve the population, forcing them to seek such services from relief centres and hospitals in the Safad area of the occupied Palestinian territory. There are also reports that certain diseases are becoming widespread, especially renal failure, and there is insufficient coverage available to people needing dialysis on a constant basis.
6. **Syrian prisoners held in Israeli occupation prisons** suffer alongside other Arab prisoners from the severe physical and psychological torture to which they are exposed. Due to the inhuman detention conditions, they face many diseases and suffer from the deterioration of their health, with many of them dying as a result in the absence of any medical care. We therefore hold the occupying Israeli authorities fully responsible for any harmful consequences suffered by Syrian prisoners in the occupied Syrian Golan and call upon the international community to put pressure on Israel, as the occupying force, to comply with the rules of international humanitarian law and related Geneva conventions, in line with hundreds of international resolutions, the latest of which is the resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 24 March 2010.¹
7. **Israeli landmines** constitute a real and constant threat to the **population of the Syrian Golan**. Landmines are spread everywhere including in fields and pastures belonging to the inhabitants of areas

¹ Resolution A/HRC/REC/13/5.

neighbouring the occupied villages of the Syrian Golan, which limits the movement of the Syrian population and causes the death of many farmers and their children as well as their livestock.

8. The **dumping of nuclear waste** constitutes a threat to the Syrian population of the Syrian Golan, both in the short term and in many years to come when the glass containers and reinforced concrete chambers begin to deteriorate due to climatic and other natural conditions, causing enriched uranium to leak out. There is proof that Israel has used a wide piece of land parallel to the demarcation line as a dump for nuclear waste without any outside control. The fear caused by such dumping has been expressed in Israel itself through the press and by members of the Israeli Knesset.

9. With respect to **higher education**, the occupation authorities do not grant permits to allow Syrian doctors and pharmacists to practise their profession in the occupied Syrian Golan, thus forcing them to emigrate. Students also are deprived of the possibility of completing their academic education and of studying certain disciplines – such as medicine, dentistry and pharmacy – unless they accept the occupation and hold Israeli nationality. Moreover, they have to pay high tuition fees and other difficult conditions are imposed on them that hamper their admission into universities. In addition, nationals who have pursued their studies at Syrian universities find it impossible to have their degrees recognized in order to be able to work accordingly.

10. As regards the **environment**, the occupation authorities deprive Syrian nationals living in the occupied Syrian Golan from using the Golan waters and steal those waters for the benefit of the nearby Israeli colonies. Syrian nationals are deprived of the right to access their own water resources by measures and policies limiting access to land and water, which has a negative impact on their living conditions. These are only a few among many examples of the practices of the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Syrian Golan as regards health conditions. They also constitute part of a settlement policy affecting every economic, social and cultural aspect of life.

Technical assistance needed in relation to health

11. Technical assistance is needed as set out below.

- Efforts, in collaboration with international entities and organizations, are required to provide health services in the occupied Syrian Golan, especially since all relevant international resolutions consider nationals in the occupied Syrian Golan as Syrian nationals under occupation according to international humanitarian law and the fourth Geneva Convention.
- Efforts are required to activate the construction project for medical centres in the occupied Syrian Golan. Studies in relation to the project are ready and have been translated into English. They include the construction of four medical centres in Majdal Shams, Baqaata, Mas'ada, Ain Qania and El Gajar.
- Efforts are required, in collaboration with international entities and organizations, to supervise the construction of health facilities in villages of the occupied Syrian Golan and provide them with the equipment necessary for their functioning, as well as with doctors who have completed their studies at Syrian universities and are returning to their villages of origin in the occupied Syrian Golan. The creation of health facilities will enable Syrians living in the occupied Syrian Golan to have access to health care and services, a basic right for all human beings.
- Efforts are required by WHO, UNICEF or any other international entities to conduct a comprehensive study of the health conditions in the occupied Syrian Golan and a study of the spread of disease in the villages of the occupied Syrian Golan.