

**STATEMENT ON SYRIA**

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND  
EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, VALERIE AMOS**

(New York, 16 July 2012) The escalating conflict in Syria is having a devastating physical and psychological impact on hundreds of thousands of people.

As the International Committee of the Red Cross has now described the situation as an armed conflict, international humanitarian law applies across Syria in areas where there is fighting.

I call on all parties to the conflict to uphold their obligation to distinguish between civilians and combatants and to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian injury and loss of life. Intentionally directing attacks against civilians constitutes a war crime.

Despite the very dangerous and complex operating environment, humanitarian agencies have managed to significantly scale up assistance in the last month. Food aid is now reaching 850,000 people, and more than 100,000 displaced people have received mattresses, blankets, kitchen sets and other vital supplies in the last four weeks. All parties must allow unimpeded access for humanitarian relief, for all those who need it.

I welcome the commitment by Member States, regional organizations, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations to address humanitarian needs in Syria. However, the appeals for humanitarian operations remain only 20 per cent funded. I urge donors to provide additional funds to enable current operations to continue.

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