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## SYRIA – MEETING MINUTES

**LOCATION:** Damascus  
**DATE:** 20 May 2013  
**CHAIR:** Logistics Cluster Officer  
**PARTICIPANTS:** ACF, IFRC, IMC, IOM, Mercy corps, Premiere Urgence, Secours Islamique France (SIF), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP and WHO

### Situation Update

#### Border Crossings

- The Jordan/Syria official border crossing point 'Al-Naseeb' faces intermittent opening and closures. One solution is for trucks to wait in Swaida city, until they receive the go-ahead to cross the border (customs procedures are also completed in Swaida). Some organisations shared their experience in transporting cargo through the southern Syrian border.
- The Lebanon/Syria border crossing 'Al-Masnaa' is operational; crossings are fairly straightforward but slow. Coordination with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) is strongly recommended to speed up the process.
- Access to the Lebanon/Syria 'Al-Arida' crossing point depends on the security situation along the northern highway to Tripoli. The highway continues to face intermittent closure and opening as per the changing situation on the ground. Organisations travelling or sending relief cargo via this route are advised to check on the status beforehand and consult with their respective security units.

### Common Services Update (Transport, Storage, and Fuel)

#### Transport

- The Logistics Cluster continues to provide free transport of humanitarian relief items inside Syria, and plans to continue to do so until at least end-June 2013 after which the situation will be re-assessed.
- The Logistics Cluster also offers free overland transport (not inclusive of custom clearance) from Lebanon/Jordan to Syria.
- The Logistics Cluster is currently facing difficulties in accessing some areas: Raqqa, Aleppo, Hassakeh and Daraa. The Logistics Cluster is also facing challenges in sending medical items across the country.

#### Storage

- The Logistics Cluster will continue to provide **free temporary storage** services to all humanitarian organisations responding to the Syrian crisis. WFP has allotted storage spaces to the humanitarian community inside Syria, specifically in rural Damascus, Tartous (Safita), Lattakia, and regionally in Irbid (Jordan).
- Due to the current situation in the Kissweh area of Damascus, the Logistics Cluster's common storage warehouse (JAD warehouse for NFIs) is considered a risk to hold cargo. Therefore, the Cluster is looking at options for alternate storage in Damascus. In the meantime, organizations will need to accept liability for requesting warehouse space in at the JAD warehouse.
- In addition, the Logistics Cluster is in the process of preparing land for the erection of Mobile Storage Units (MSUs)/Wiikhalls in Safita (20 minutes from Tartous in the direction of Homs) to be used by Cluster participants. It is estimated that this facility will be ready for use in end-June/early July.
- The Logistics Cluster is currently using a warehouse in Homs for the Joint Humanitarian Convoys.

#### Fuel

- The Logistics Cluster has Diesel available at the WFP Fuel Depot in Kissweh, Damascus. WFP also plans to import petrol once the UNRWA fuel facility is ready.
- For cost-recovery fuel provision, interested organisations will need to sign an LTA (Long Term Agreement) with WFP. For more details, please contact: [munzer.ahmad@wfp.org](mailto:munzer.ahmad@wfp.org)

### Joint Humanitarian Convoys

- A Joint Humanitarian Convoy, supported by the Logistics Cluster, successfully reached Idleb on 14 May, 2013. The convoy consisted of six trucks, loaded with over 350 m<sup>3</sup> of shelter, protection, WASH, and food items, on behalf of IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, and WFP. (Permission to transport medical supplies via this convoy was denied, however the Logistics Cluster is working with OCHA to resolve this issue for future convoys). Planning for future Joint Humanitarian Convoys continues.

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### Organizations' Update

- **ACF** continues to move items to Deir Ezzour and Hassakeh, and is procuring items locally.
- **IFRC** is working closely with SARC, and importing items via shipping routes into Syria.
- **IMC's** warehouse in Saida Zainab is not accessible. IMC has successfully transported medicines but has not moved Medical equipment. IMC will request the common transport facility in the near future.
- **IOM** is looking for a warehouse facility in Tartous. Participants assessing warehouse facilities in Tartous are requested to share any available information with IOM.
- **Mercy Corps** has signed an agreement with SARC, and its upcoming work-plan is under discussion.
- **Premiere Urgence** is operating in Syria through SARC, focusing mainly on NFIs. Currently it is distributing two main types of kits (hygiene and winterization) in Homs, Hamah and Tartous.
- **Secours Islamique France (SIF)** is operating in Damascus and rural Damascus, and its programmes may extend to include Daraa, Homs, Deir Ezzour and Swaida. It is procuring hygiene materials locally.
- **UNICEF** is procuring items from Jordan, and is currently assessing storage capacity in Damascus, Tartous, Lattakia, Aleppo and Homs.
- **UNRWA** is procuring items internationally, and is currently facing some access issues. UNRWA has one packaging facility in Damascus and is assessing an additional facility in Tartous.
- **WFP** is dispatching food rations to all 14 governorates. WFP has a target of 2.5 million beneficiaries for May cycle, however it is currently facing operational difficulties in reaching this number.
- **WHO** successfully sent two shipments to Homs last month, and will be sending relief cargo to Daraa via the next Joint Humanitarian Convoy. WHO has faced some difficulties in obtaining facilitation letters but is working with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to resolve the issue.

### RITA Tracking System and AOB

- An online survey to assess customer feedback on the Relief Items Tracking Application (RITA) is currently underway. The feedback from this survey will assist in further improving the application.
- For details on RITA and how to send requests to the Logistics Cluster, please refer to [www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a](http://www.logcluster.org/ops/syr12a)
- UNRWA discussed the viability of a Logistics Map with details of open/closed routes. The Logistics Cluster agreed to look at how this information could be gathered and will discuss potential products with the GIS officer.
- The Logistics Cluster will begin contacting agencies by email to confirm receipt of their cargo, to allow the updating of the cargo tracking system (RITA) in a timely manner.

### Contacts

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