
Meeting Minutes, 4 March 2020

Syria Operation, Damascus



This is an unofficial UN meeting record and should not be considered as a verbatim account of the UN meeting or position.

LOCATION	Gaziantep, Turkey
DATE	4 March 2020
CHAIR	Logistics Cluster
PARTICIPANTS	Global Communities, Hand in Hand for Aid and Development (HIHFAD), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Malteser International, Muzun for Humanitarian Development (MHD), Relief International (RI), Shafak, Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations (UOSSM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Welthungerhilfe, Woman Support Association (WSA), World Vision (WVI).
ACTION POINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partners requested to share updates to the suppliers list before Friday 20 March 2020.• Partners requested to share their warehouse location and capacities in northwest Syria with the Logistics Cluster.• UN Agencies are requested to submit their transshipment plans to the Logistics Cluster.• The Logistics Cluster to share OCHA's border crossing status infographic via the mailing.• The Logistics Cluster to share link to access live border status information.
AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Whole of Syria Update2. Scale-up plan for Northwest Syria3. AOB

1. Whole of Syria Update

- In February, the Logistics Cluster received 344m³ (equivalent to 25 x 20' containers) of WASH items on behalf of UNFPA into common storage facilities in Rural Damascus, Qamishli and Homs.
- The Logistics component of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has been submitted to OCHA for their review. The Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) review of the Logistics component will take place in Amman 30-31 March.

Crossborder, Turkey hubs

- The Logistics Cluster coordinated the transshipment of a total of 927 Syrian trucks through Bab al-Hawa (BAH) and Bab al-Salam (BAS) during the month of February.

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- In February, the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) facilitated the transshipment of a total of 753 trucks through BAH, BAS, Cobanbey and Yayladagi. Organisations who wish to use TRC transshipment services can contact them directly or via the Logistics Cluster.
- The daily transshipment capacity across the two hubs in Turkey has been increased at both Bab al-Hawa and Bab al-Salam from 46 to 100 trucks and from eight to 24 trucks respectively.
- Final notification whether or not to move transshipment operations to the dedicated transshipment hub in Kilis has still not been received. With the new hub, the Logistics Cluster would be able to increase its “scale-up capacity” to 100 trucks daily.
- The suppliers list, which includes supplier information for all sectors, was shared via the mailing list for partner updates. The Logistics Cluster reminded organisations to provide feedback if updates are required before Friday 20 March 2020.
- The new Deputy Cluster coordinator, Christophe Vial, arrived in Gaziantep 26 February.
- Brian Lander, WFP Emergency Coordinator welcomed the US Ambassador to the UN, Kelly Craft, and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock to the transshipment hub in Reyhanli on 3 March 2020.

2. Scale-up for Northwest Syria

From inside Syria

- In response to developments in Northwest Syria (NWS), OCHA Syria have submitted requests to the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) for inter-agency convoys to access parts of the area.
- Organisations inside Syria have advised that they are at the preliminary stages of planning for a potential scale-up of operations to newly accessible areas of Idlib from inside Syria.

Crossborder from Turkey

Pipelines and Forecasts

- The Logistics Cluster and UNMM are requesting UN agencies to provide the cluster with their future transshipment pipelines or general forecasts, ideally with 4 weeks’ advance. This is essential for effective preparation and planning to ensure that humanitarian assistance is sent in a timely manner without delays.
- OCHA requested UN agencies to ensure that they respect the Wednesday and Friday deadlines for the submission of their transshipment notifications.
- OCHA emphasised that emergency notifications for UN agency transshipments should be used for emergencies only, and should be submitted at least 48 hours in advance with a strong justification.

Logistics Gaps inside NWS

- I/NGOs briefly described their logistics gaps and challenges inside NWS, including storage, transport and funding gaps.
- Due to developments in NWS, transport and storage services have become less available in the area:
 - Transport prices have increased between 20-30%.
 - Storage prices have increased between 20-40%.

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- One INGO specifically advised that they are in need of support with storage expansion inside NWS. The Logistics Cluster will work to find a solution bilaterally.
- One partner advised that they use trucks as mobile storage following the recent developments in NWS.
- Partners were requested for an update to their warehouse locations and capacity inside northwest Syria after the most recent developments. Partners are encouraged to share this information by Friday 20 March. It was reiterated that this information will remain internal.
- In response to the potential scale-up, I/NGOs were encouraged by both OCHA and the cluster to voice their funding gaps for logistics operations in order for advocacy to take place.

Procurement into NWS

- One INGO is regularly procuring fuel from Turkey into NWS for operational support.
- It was mentioned that rice originating from China dispatched after 5 February are not being allowed to come into Turkey due to COVID-19. The cluster will investigate further to gather more information.
- NGOs face difficulties obtaining approvals for the importation of specialised medical items into NWS.

Status of border crossings

- One INGO advised that they will share a link with the Logistics Cluster which can provide live updates regarding the status of border crossings. The cluster will share the link via the mailing list.
- The Logistics Cluster will share OCHA's infographic on the Border-Crossing Status via the mailing list.

3. AOB

- The Iraq Ibrahim Halil border is closed for humanitarian and commercial crossing.
- The next Logistics Cluster meetings will be held at the beginning of April. Exact dates will be communicated via the mailing list.

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