

REGIONAL ANALYSIS SYRIA

30 May 2013

Overview

 Red flags indicate new information

This Regional Analysis of the Syria Conflict (RAS) is an update of the [April RAS](#). The RAS seeks to bring together information from all sources in the region and provide a coherent analysis of the overall situation in the region as well as in each of the affected countries. While Part I focuses on the situation within Syria, Part II covers the impact of the crisis on the neighbouring countries. The Syria Needs Analysis Project welcomes all information that could complement this report. For additional information, comments or questions, please email SNAP@ACAPS.org.

 **Conflict:** During May, fighting was reported from all but two governorates of Syria: Tartous and As-Sweida. The involvement of Hezbollah in the battle for the strategic town of Qusair in Homs will have both a significant impact on the trajectory of the conflict inside Syria and wider regional implications. Government forces with the backing of Hezbollah have been making gains in the fight for control of the town but are yet to retake it completely. The town lies on the main road and key supply route between Damascus and the port cities of Tartous and Lattakia.

 **Humanitarian concerns:** Over 6.8 million people were identified as in need in April and the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. The approaching summer bring with it a host of health concerns. Coupled with the critical overcrowding of camps, the risks of communicable diseases causing severe damage are on the rise. Within Syria, the heat will also exacerbate waste-management problems and deplete the availability of water from natural sources.

 Within Syria, food security is a main concern, as highlighted by the J-RANS II assessment. Basic food is available in most regions, but at inflated costs and the population's dwindling financial resources mean that it is becoming harder to access. The lack of cooking fuel also seriously affects food security.

 Lack of access to healthcare and medicines is critical, both within Syria and for the refugee population residing in the host countries. The lack of access to adequate shelter for refugees in host countries remains a major concern. Syrians in Lebanon are increasingly moving into informal tented settlements, where access to services is limited. 7 additional camps are under construction in Turkey, Iraq and Jordan, to relieve pressure on existing camps and host communities.

 Human rights violations in Syria continue, with widespread use of indiscriminatory weapons and violence against civilians. At least 50 civilians were killed in a single attack on Bayda in Banois, heightening fears of worsening sectarian tensions nationwide

 **Displacement:** Large scale displacement continues, both within Syria and across borders. The recent J-RANS II assessment in northern Syria identified over 3.25 million internally displaced persons within parts of 7 northern governorates. Combined OCHA and JRANS II estimates place the total number countrywide at over 5.1 million. Over 1.6 million people have been registered as refugees outside of the country.

 **Host community tensions:** Host communities in neighbouring countries are struggling to cope with the pressures of large refugee populations. Saturation of accommodation, reported competition in sourcing employment and effects on the price of food and basic household items are aggravating relations between refugees and host communities. In Lebanon these tensions have reportedly led to several temporary suspensions of relief projects as a direct result of the security situation.

 **Borders:** Reportedly in response to conflict on the Syrian side, borders have been closed in Iraq, reducing possibilities of flight from the conflict. Movement across Jordanian borders is limited, although the Jordanian Government indicates that its borders remain open and that the decrease in daily arrivals is caused by severe fighting.

 **Spill over into neighbouring countries:** During May, the conflict in Syria has, on multiple occasions, spilt over to neighbouring countries. On 11 May twin bombings occurred in the Turkish border town of Reyhanli and border regions of Jordan were shelled. In Lebanon, regular cross border incidents took place throughout May. Tripoli experienced sustained heavy fighting between factions aligned to the conflicting sides in Syria, while the motives for a rocket attack in the southern suburbs of Beirut on the 26 May were reportedly also related to developments in Syria. Israel's bombing of sites in Damascus, and exchange of fire in the Golan Heights region during May portray further disruptions in the region's stability. Two more incidents of kidnapping of UN troops in the Golan region could lead to the peace-keeping presence being cut back; another factor that has the potential to further destabilise the area.

 **Funding status:** As the numbers of refugees continue to rise, the resources of host communities and the assistance offered by humanitarian organisations are under extreme pressure. In Iraq, for example, the WFP stated that it is highly worried about the funding of the food voucher programme in Domiz camp from May onwards. The same is true of most host countries. As assistance is no longer sufficient to provide for all those in need, tensions are on the rise, which in turn threatens security and hampers aid delivery.

 **Information gaps:** Lack of recent information on the humanitarian situation in central and southern governorates persists, particularly in Rural Damascus, Dar'a and Homs. Throughout the region, there is limited information on the status of refugees living in urban communities and of the host communities impacted by the crisis.

Situation overview - May 2013

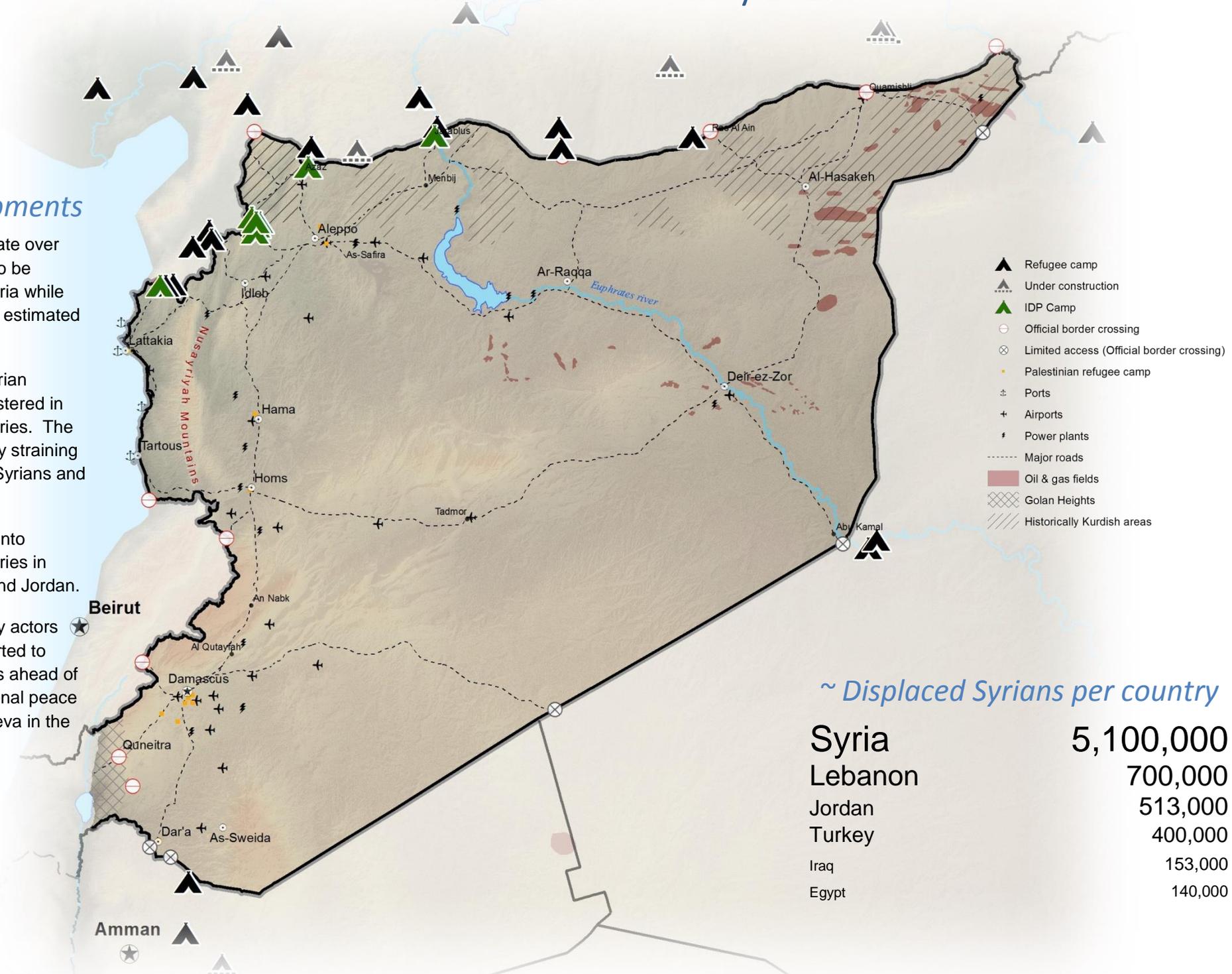
Key developments

Assessments indicate over 5.1 million people to be displaced within Syria while over 6.8 million are estimated to be in need.

Over 1.6 million Syrian refugees have registered in neighbouring countries. The influx is increasingly straining relations between Syrians and host communities.

Conflict spills over into neighbouring countries in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

Political and military actors appear to have started to position themselves ahead of proposed international peace conference in Geneva in the coming weeks.



~ Displaced Syrians per country

Syria	5,100,000
Lebanon	700,000
Jordan	513,000
Turkey	400,000
Iraq	153,000
Egypt	140,000