

UN Warns More People Would Die from Starvation in Syria



Mark Lowcock, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA). Reuters

The United Nations has warned of death due to famine in war-torn Syria.

UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock announced Wednesday that if a ceasefire was not implemented in Syria, “we will soon see even more people dying from starvation and disease than from the bombing and shelling.”

In his report before the UN Security Council in New York, Lowcock said that Syria has not witnessed any actual improvement in the humanitarian situation since it demanded a cessation of hostilities, without delay, for at least 30 consecutive days throughout Syria.

He reiterated the International Committee of the Red Cross’ assessment that it is impossible to deliver humanitarian aid in five hours, noting that it often takes convoys with all the required clearances a day just to get through checkpoints.

On the other hand, civilians in eastern Ghouta refused, on the second day of the short Russian cease-fire, to leave through the “humanitarian corridor,” which was established by Moscow in light of the exchange of accusations between the regime and Russia on the one hand and the opposition on the other hand about the reasons behind the never ending humanitarian crisis.

Although the UN Security Council on Saturday adopted a resolution demanding a comprehensive cease-fire in Syria, “without delay,” Russia announced on Tuesday a daily “humanitarian” truce in Eastern Ghouta, which lasts only for five hours.

According to AFP, the air strikes and clashes that killed 600 civilians in 10 days have dwindled since the Kremlin announced the five-hour halt in bombardment.

“The humanitarian corridor is open to all those who wish to return to the fold of the homeland, but so far nobody came and this is the second day,” said a military officer at a checkpoint.

“The terrorists are impeding those who want to cross, either by putting pressure on them or by firing on the humanitarian corridors,” the military officer said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“The truce was meant to last three days. It could be extended, but why go on if there are no results,” he said.

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