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## A Child Dead in Al-Rukban Camp due to Lack of Medical Care

Unwarranted Closure of the only UNICEF Medical Point by  
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The dire medical situation in al-Rukban camp<sup>1</sup>, on the Syrian-Jordanian border, led to the death of a child six days following the closure of the only medical center of UNICIF<sup>2</sup> by the Jordanian authorities on July 14, 2018 for unknown reasons.

Activist Mohammed Hasan al-Ayed<sup>3</sup> Palmyra News Network manager told STJ on September 21, 2018, that the child Mohammed al-Atar,13, died after 15 days of suffering in Sham medical point, of The Revolutionary Commando Army, which provides only analgesics and simple first aid.

Regarding the closure of the UNICEF point, al-Ayed said:

**"It was closed abruptly by the Jordanian authorities which refuse to cooperate with any local organization or to allow the introduction of medical or food stuff to the camp through its territory, in addition to not offering of any facilities for the medical points still operating inside the camp."**

Al-Ayed noted that it's not the first time the Jordanian authorities closed the same medical point:

**"The closure of the UNICEF medical point is a part of the Regime's evacuation plan which started with the sign of an agreement provided for the withdraw of 5,000 civilians along with fighters of a military faction from al-Rukban camp towards northern Syria."**

The Chief of the Civil Affairs Office in al-Rukban camp Abdullah al-Uqba, told a local news agency<sup>4</sup> that the camp doctors' misdiagnosis as well as the refusal of the Jordanian authorities and the UNICEF to transfer him to Jordanian hospitals were the reasons behind the child Mohammed al-Atar's death. Medical analysis and X-rays were desperately needed for diagnosing the child's illness which the doctors said it was likely to be diabetes.

For his part, Jan Egeland<sup>5</sup>, the Special Advisor to the UN Special Envoy for Syria expressed his deep concern about the situation of 50,000 Syrians in the al-Rukban camp, saying:

**"We tried to come with a convoy from Damascus now for months. The last real distribution there, through the UN, was in January."**

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Rukban camp, located at the Syrian-Jordanian border 5km long and 3km width into the demilitarized zone. Tents in the camp are erected randomly by IDPs with no sponsoring from any civil organizations. The camp's population estimated 80.000 and their numbers increase or decrease depending on the fighting intensity in eastern and central Syria, according to statistical and documentation officials in the camp.

<sup>2</sup> The medical point is about 3 km away from Al-Rukban camp, at the berm on the Syrian-Jordanian border (in the Jordanian side), and all its staff members are from Jordan. It is known as "Awn Point".

<sup>3</sup> A local activist. The interview was conducted in Turkey.

<sup>4</sup> "The Death of a Child in Al-Rukban Camp due to Lack of Healthcare after the Closure of the Last Medical Point", Smart News Agency, September 20, 2018; <https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/wires/328570/>, (Last visit: September 21, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> "The Idlib Buffer Zone is a Promising Sign that the Diplomacy Can Win", UN, September 20, 2018; <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2018/09/1017242>, (Last visit: October 8, 2018).

*STJ had earlier published a report on the agreement<sup>6</sup> reached between Russia and the al-Qaryatayn Martyrs Brigade<sup>7</sup>, besides several reports on the dire humanitarian and medical situation in the al-Rukban camp.<sup>8</sup>*

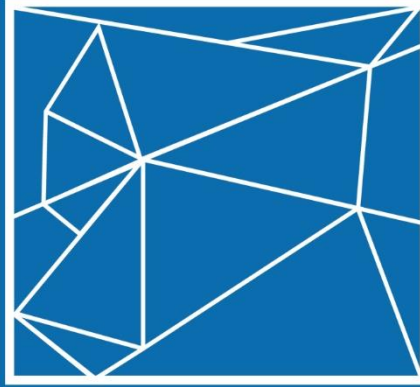
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<sup>6</sup> "Evacuation Agreement Reached in Al-Rukban Camp", STJ, September 20, 2018; <https://stj-sy.com/ar/view/768>, (Last visit: September 21, 2018).

<sup>7</sup> A rebel faction backed by the Military Operations Center (MOC).

<sup>8</sup> "Sharp Deterioration of the Medical Situation in al-Rukban Camp- Jordan Denies Entry of Patients for Cure", STJ, July 23, 2018; <https://stj-sy.com/en/view/640> (Last visit: September 19, 2018).

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## About Syrians for Truth and Justice:

**STJ** is an independent, nongovernmental organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities.

The initiative strives for SYRIA, where all Syrian citizens (females and males) have dignity, equality, justice and equal human rights.

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