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Evacuation Agreement Reached in Al-Rukban Camp

Russia and Al-Qaryatayn Martyrs Brigade Came to an Agreement, but the Date is yet to be Set

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Russians and the US-backed al-Qaryatayn Martyrs Brigade reached an evacuation agreement, on September 16, 2018, under which the group's fighters and around 5,000 civilians will be allowed to withdraw from the al-Rukban refugee camp¹ to northern Syria, according to witnesses.

The armed group fighters surrendered after the Pindostan suspended its support and left them living in al-Rukban camp with no resources.

The agreement was brokered by the two former SFA commanders Abu Omar Maheen and al-Dabe', in the region of Eastern Qalamun, who had earlier signed reconciliations with Regime forces in al-Dumeir city, according to a media activist who testified to STJ on September 19, 2018.

The agreement provided for the withdrawal of 5,000 civilians, including 1840 women, 800 men, and 2960 children, mostly from al-Qaryatayn town, Homs eastern countryside, along with all 200 fighters of the al-Qaryatayn Martyrs Brigade, 12 military vehicles and 2 cargos, free of weapons, on condition not to be searched by the Syrian regime checkpoints, in addition to the handover of about 40 pick-up vehicle loaded with medium weapons, according to the activist.

Members of Syrian Red Crescent and Russian forces will accompany buses of the evacuated which will head to Jarabulus city, Aleppo northern countryside, and to Idlib at a date yet to be determined.

Russia allowed only 5,000 civilians out of al-Rukban camp to northern Syria where they have to find shelters as there are no prepared ones for them.

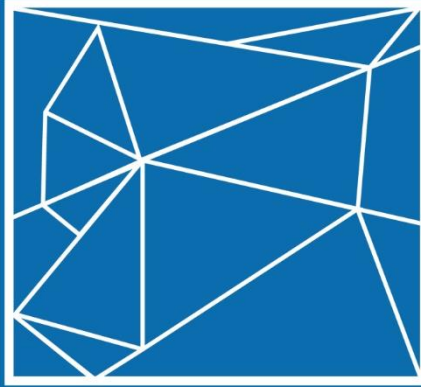
STJ has earlier published reports and news on the dire humanitarian and medical situations in al-Rukban camp.²

¹ 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.

² "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>.

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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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