

# *Syrian government calls on displaced citizens to return to liberated areas*

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Damascus, July 9 (RHC)-- The Syrian government has called on its citizens who have fled the conflicts in the country to return to their homes as the majority of areas have been liberated from terrorist groups.

An official source at the Syrian foreign ministry told SANA on Tuesday that the government will provide security and safety for its citizens in the recaptured areas. The official also called on the international community and humanitarian organizations to facilitate the voluntary return of Syrian refugees to their country.

According to the UN human rights office and refugee agency UNHCR, 270,000 people have fled the recent fighting in the southwestern province of Dara'a.

Two weeks ago, Syria began the operation to recapture Dara'a, which together with the provinces of Quneitra and Suwaida, forms the Arab country's southern tip. During the push, the government first tried to clinch surrender deals with the terrorists before staging anti-terror operations.

Jordan and Russia are to hold talks on the situation in the Syrian province of Dara'a, where an anti-terror operation drives crowds of civilians towards the Jordanian border. According to UNHCR spokesman Andre Mahecic, an estimated 40,000 Syrians have gathered near the border with Jordan, which already hosts 650,000 registered Syrian refugees.

The crisis in Syria, which flared in March 2011, has so far claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and displaced nearly half of the Arab country's population within or out of its borders.

The UNHCR has registered over 5.6 million Syrian refugees overseas, including 3.5 million in Turkey and others mainly in Lebanon, Jordan and Germany.

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