

UN Says 500,000 Palestinian Children May Miss School This Year



United Nations, July 24 (RHC)-- The United Nations has warned that some 500,000 Palestinian children may be kept out of school due to limited funding from donor countries.

Schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) will not be able to reopen in the autumn due to a shortage of USD 100 million unless the international community donates the amount to the UN agency, according to the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Nikolay Mladenov.

He added that the donors' contribution could avert a "serious risk" by allowing "UNRWA schools, which educate 500,000 children throughout the Middle East," to open.

Lack of the funding "will have grave implications for Palestine refugee children in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and for the stability and security of a region already in turmoil," Mladenov told the UN Security Council.

According to UNRWA, over 1.5 million Palestinians - almost a third of the registered Palestinian refugees - live in 58 recognized refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the besieged Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank.

UNRWA is currently facing its biggest funding crisis since it was set up in 1949.

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