Beat: Politics

Death toll from Syrian;s civil war surpasses 100,000

-, 30.11.-0001, 00:00 Time

USPA News - More than 100,000 people have now been killed in Syria`s ongoing civil war, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Thursday, more than two years after the conflict began with a government crackdown against pro-democracy protesters. Ban revealed the updated death toll during a joint press conference with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in New York, where both politicians appealed for new efforts to convene a peace conference.

"Military and violent actions must be stopped by both parties, and it is thus imperative to have a peace conference in Geneva as soon as possible," Ban said. Navi Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, had said on June 13 that at least 92,901 people were killed in fighting between government troops and forces seeking to oust President Bashar Al-Assad in the period from March 2011 through April 2013. Thursday`s new figure indicates the UN documented at least 7,099 additional deaths since last month. "The conflict is now continuing for almost two and a half years. More than 100,000 people have been killed," Ban said during Thursday`s press conference. "Millions of people have either been displaced or become refugees in neighboring countries. We have to bring this to an end." British International Development Secretary Justine Greening said the updated death toll demonstrates "the scale of the ongoing tragedy and the desperate need for real action from the international community." She said the British government continues to lead by providing medical help, food, shelter and clean water. "Other donors must now honor their funding promises and it is time that all parties to the conflict allow humanitarian access to all areas of Syria. I call on all sides to respect the work of humanitarian agencies and to move towards a political resolution to this crisis," Greening said. In June, Pillay said the number of deaths in Syria continues at "shockingly high levels" and that more than more than 5,000 killings have been documented every month since July 2012. "Unfortunately, this is most likely a minimum casualty figure. The true number of those killed is potentially much higher," she said. The June figure was based on information from eight different sources, resulting in a combined list of 263,055 reported killings. But deaths which did not include the identity of the victim, as well as the date and location of the death, were excluded from the confirmed list of casualties. Each reported killing was then compared to all the other reported killings in order to identify duplicates, resulting in 92,091 documented cases of individuals killed. But 37,988 reported killings which contained insufficient information were excluded from the final death toll, but many of them may have been victims of the conflict while other victims may have gone unreported. Up to November 2012, a figure of 60,000 documented deaths was recorded. About 80 percent of the victims documented were male, with the sharpest increase in deaths since November 2012 in Rural Damascus and Aleppo. The UN also documented the the killings of at least 6,561 minors, including at least 1,729 children under ten years old. "There are also well-documented cases of individual children being tortured and executed, and entire families, including babies, being massacred," Pillay said in June, adding that along with the devastatingly high death toll, this is a terrible reminder of "just how vicious this conflict has become."

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1293/death-toll-from-syrians-civil-war-surpasses-100000.html

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