

UN chief 'deeply alarmed' by escalating hostilities in Syria's east Ghouta

Deeply alarmed by the escalating violence in Syria's east Ghouta, the United Nations has reiterated a call for an end to hostilities so that the sick and wounded can be immediately evacuated and humanitarian aid deliveries can reach those in need.

"Nearly 400,000 people in Eastern Ghouta have been subjected to [airstrikes, shelling and bombardment](#)," said a statement issued Monday by UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

Secretary-General António Guterres "is deeply alarmed by the escalating situation in Eastern Ghouta and its devastating impact on civilians," noted the statement, adding that more than 100 people were reportedly killed since Monday, including at least 13 children, while five hospitals or medical clinics were hit by airstrikes.

Over 700 individuals require immediate medical evacuation. In addition, there are reports of shelling from Eastern Ghouta on Damascus.

"Eastern Ghouta is part of a de-escalation agreement reached in Astana," the statement said, referring to the Syria talks brokered by Russia, Iran and Turkey in the Kazak capital.

"The Secretary-General reminds all parties, particularly the guarantors of the Astana agreements, of their commitments in this regard," the statement added.

The Secretary-General urges all stakeholders to ensure basic principles of international humanitarian law are adhered to, including unhindered humanitarian access, unconditional medical evacuations, and the protection of civilians and their infrastructure, the statement said.