OVERALL

The purpose of this document is to give an overview of the procedures to be followed by UN agencies participating in cross-border operations from Türkiye to Syria through the approved crossing of Bab al-Hawa (BAH) – Cilvegozu, under the UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 2165/2191/2258/2332/2449/2504/2533/2585 and 2642, and explains the procedures that apply before, during, and after transhipment of humanitarian supplies. UN Security Council Resolution 2642 authorises the use of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing until 10 January 2023.

The document is divided in two main parts: Part 1 explains the process to be followed for regular transhipment via the UNSCR-mandated hub; Part 2 outlines the steps to be followed for ad hoc and emergency transhipment operations which take place on short notice. The role of OCHA in the Notification Process is explained in Annex 1.

PART 1
SOPs for Transhipment Operations at Bab al-Hawa hub

The transhipment is conducted at the common UN logistics hub located at Cilvegozu, near the town of Reyhanli, Hatay province in Türkiye. The Logistics Cluster, through WFP as Cluster Lead Agency, provides hub services, including the handling services for the transhipment of humanitarian supplies, and coordinates the entire process with partner agencies. The mobilisation of both Turkish and Syrian trucks is arranged directly by UN agencies and/or their implementing partners.

This document is a live document that reflects the process on the ground and should incorporate changes in procedures and modifications during the course of the operation. Changes will be made when needed, and the updated SOPs will be published and circulated accordingly. When changes are made, users will be consulted and informed ahead of time, as these may have an impact on the operation.

1. UN Actors involved in cross-border operations

- **Logistics Cluster**: Facilitates access to the UN facilities at the hub (including guards), liaises with Turkish Customs, and ensures information sharing and coordination. Free-to-user labour is made available by the Logistics Cluster to humanitarian organisations to tranship cargo from Turkish trucks to Syrian trucks. The Logistics Cluster is responsible for facilitating Syrian truck movements between the border crossing and the hub, and is the focal point for all parties including UN agencies, UN Monitoring Mechanism (UNMM) and UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) before, during and after the shipments, and for any inquiry related to shipments.

- **UNMM**: Mandated by the UN Security Council to monitor the transhipment operations at the hub, the loading of all humanitarian relief consignments of the UN agencies and their implementing partners, and any subsequent opening of the consignments by the customs authority. At least one UN monitor is present at the opening and closing of any truck and during the loading process, and accompanies the convoy of Syrian trucks back to the border when the loading is completed.

- **OCHA**: Facilitates humanitarian advocacy efforts and notifies all concerned parties regarding the planned cross-border operations. (Please see Annex 1: Notification Process and OCHA’s role)

- **UNDSS**: UNDSS team in Türkiye monitors the security situation and issues travel advisories.

- **UN agencies**: are requested to submit their shipment plans to the Logistics Cluster team, as well are responsible for arranging Syrian and Turkish trucks, and have to ensure that customs clearance is obtained for their own supplies. On the day of transhipment, representatives from each UN agency involved in the operation should be on-site to observe the

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transhipment of their cargo. UN agencies are encouraged to share transhipment pipelines with the Logistics Cluster ahead of time to ensure all preparations can be made.

All involved parties must comply with the Covid-19 mitigations measures put in place. More on this at the bottom of this document.

2. One week before the day of the transhipment
   - UN agencies submit their shipment plan (the template is circulated with agencies via email) with the below information on planned movements for the upcoming week(s) to turkey.clustercargo@wfp.org:
     - The approximate number of trucks expected to take part in transhipment operations at the hub (both Turkish and Syrian trucks);
     - Type of cargo;
     - Quantity (mt and m³/cbm);
     - Tentative movement date;
     - Destination (Governorate, District, Sub-district, Community);
     - Governorate and District level information is a must to issue a notification (Sub-district and Village and community level information is not for notification but tracking purposes);
     - Number of targeted beneficiaries (information required for OCHA, and not tracked by the Logistics Cluster).
     - Each line in the notification should include the above information, not merged with other shipment data.
   - The Logistics Cluster will be in touch with each agency focal point two to three hours before each deadline to ensure that the agencies have submitted their shipment plans within the timelines indicated in the table below, and avoid the need to use the emergency notification system (as described in Part 2).
   - The final versions of the shipment plans are shared with OCHA, who compiles these to produce a notification. OCHA then signs, stamps and submits the notifications to the Government of Syria and the Government of Türkiye 48 hours prior to the first crossing date as indicated in the notification (these 48 hours must be working days both in Turkey and Syria).

### Weekly Notification Calendar / Timelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latest submission of shipment plan by the Logistics Cluster to OCHA</th>
<th>Earliest possible day on which the UN cargo can be transhipped</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday by 12:00 noon</td>
<td>Monday and onwards (following week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday by 12:00 noon</td>
<td>Tuesday and onwards (following week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. the above table is the absolute latest cut-off time for submitting shipment plans each week. Agencies should aim to submit shipment plans well in advance.

- Requirements for Syrian trucks set and monitored by Turkish Authorities Customs officers:
  - Should not have more than 70 litres of fuel when crossing into Türkiye.
  - Should have only one person (the driver) in the vehicle, meaning no passengers neither assistant.
  - Should allow for the trailer to be closed once loaded. At the hub, sealing is not required for Syrian trucks unless it is an exceptional case, such as special/ad hoc transhipments where special procedures may apply (See Part 2).
  - Should be properly covered, meaning that the tarpaulin should be able to securely cover all the goods.
  - Must have a Syrian license plate (and not a third-country plate).

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Must be fully insured to drive on Turkish roads.

- The Logistics Cluster strongly discourages the use of double-trailers (locally known as *cift romork*). In instances where this cannot be avoided, the Logistics Cluster must be notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance.
- Detailed information on the Syrian trucks (plate number, truck type, brand, colour) and driver (name, ID number and phone number) need to be shared by the UN agencies at least 24 hours prior to the operation with the Logistics Cluster. The Logistics Cluster will transmit these details to the Turkish authorities and OCHA. **Once this information is shared, trucks or drivers should not be changed** (in case of changes, the Logistics Cluster should be informed immediately).
- UN agencies are responsible for the custom clearance of their shipments. The Logistics Cluster is not responsible for the custom clearance of the cargo to be transhipped.
- Custom declarations and waybills should match the notification request made by the UN agency. Issued notifications do not substitute the requirement of compliance with customs regulations. Agencies are responsible to ensure their shipment follows customs regulations and is consistent with the issued notification.

3. One day before the transhipment

- The Logistics Cluster must be informed of the details of staff and vehicles requiring access to the hub during the transhipment day for security reasons.

4. The day of the transhipment

- All UN staff, truck drivers, labourers, customs officers, and visitors to the hub must ensure they follow COVID-19 mitigation measures put in place. Please see Annex 3 for details.
- **At least one staff member of the respective UN agency must be present at the hub on the day of movement and must bring identification. In instances where this is not possible for security reasons, the Logistics Cluster will advise on alternative arrangements.**
- The empty Syrian trucks (arriving from the Syrian side) must be ready for examination at the Syrian side of the Syria-Türkiye border at 6:00 a.m.
- The customs brokers arranged by the UN agencies will gather the trucks and prioritise them to approach the Turkish gate.
- Syrian trucks must travel in convoy when arriving from and returning to Syria. This movement is monitored by the customs officer, Gendarmerie or police, UNMM, and the Logistics Cluster. No single truck will be allowed to leave the border.
- All empty Syrian trucks will be screened with an X-ray machine in the Turkish Customs area. This process takes between 10 to 20 minutes per truck.
- From the Turkish Customs area, the Syrian truck convoy will be escorted to the weighbridge by the Turkish Gendarme and the Logistics Cluster.
- All trucks (whether Turkish or Syrian) must pay weighbridge fees. The UN agencies sending the cargo across to Syria are responsible for the payment. Payment is made by the transporter on the day. The weighbridge service provider reserves the right to refuse the weighing process, which is mandatory by Turkish Customs, should the weighbridge fee not be paid.
- From the weighbridge the Syrian truck convoy will be escorted to the hub by the Turkish Gendarmerie and the Logistics Cluster.
- A copy of cargo manifests/waybills per truck should be provided to the UNMM team at the transhipment hub.
- The transhipment operation takes place at the hub. Free-to-user labour is made available by the Logistics Cluster to tranship the cargo from Turkish to Syrian trucks.

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• When the transhipment from Turkish to Syrian trucks is complete, the Syrian trucks must be closed. Although not a standard practice, Turkish Customs reserve the right to seal them, so trucks must be suitable for closure and equipped with adequate ropes.
• Once the process is complete, the trucks are escorted in convoy by the UNMM team, the Gendarme, and the Logistics Cluster to the border.
• When Syrian trucks cross the second gate of the Turkish border prior to the zero-point, transhipment is complete and UNMM will notify local officials of completion.

5. After the day of transhipment

• Each UN agency is responsible to inform the Logistics Cluster of any difference between the actual shipment and the original shipment plan (such as type of items loaded on trucks, location, completion of the shipment with less or more trucks). The Logistics Cluster communicates this information to OCHA for tracking purposes.

Procedure for requesting the Turkish Customs to work on weekends or official holidays

In situations where the UN agencies need to load or tranship outside business hours of Turkish Customs, each agency is responsible for working with its customs broker to facilitate the request to Turkish Customs to work outside of business hours (08:00 – 17:00). If the request is not accepted, the UN agency can submit a written request to the Logistics Cluster asking for OCHA’s support. OCHA will liaise with the Turkish Government to facilitate the request. Currently, the Logistics Cluster, OCHA and Turkish Customs have an agreement to tranship 100 trucks daily, seven days a week if so required.

Procedure for Returning of Bonded Trucks

In situations where UN agencies have trucks departing from a bonded warehouse in Türkiye (e.g. from Mersin to BAH) and would like the trucks to return back to the warehouse before crossing into Syria, each agency is responsible for working with its customs broker to facilitate the return of bonded trucks from customs in compliance with the Turkish Customs regulations. If approvals are not granted by the authorities, the UN agency can submit a written request to the Logistics Cluster asking for OCHA’s support. OCHA will liaise with the Turkish Government to facilitate the request.

PART 2
Special/ad hoc transhipments

The same procedures as outlined in Part 1 apply to ad hoc transhipments, with the following special requirements:

1. Procedure for Emergency Notification Submission

Applies to situations where UN Agencies plan a shipment that cannot comply with the agreed notification timelines (i.e. less than 48 hours’ notice). The procedure is as follows:

• The UN agency’s Head of Office in Gaziantep must first obtain the approval from the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) based in Damascus before a notification can be issued.
• The HC will have to sign a notification that a shipment is approved for crossing within less than 48 hours.
• Once the approval from Damascus is received, the UN agency informs the Logistics Cluster to process the notification. OCHA will issue the notification as per normal procedures.

2. Special Operational Requirements
• Syrian trucks are sometimes required to be sealed by the UNMM team before leaving the hub.
• Trucks should be sealable.
• A rope of approximately 25 m length per truck is to be provided by the transporter to allow for proper closure of cargo and sealing.

3. Procedure for overnight stay of the Syrian trucks in Türkiye

Applies to exceptional cases when the security, access or logistics parameters prevent the loaded Syrian trucks from crossing back into Syria on the same day of transhipment. The procedure is as follows:

• It is the responsibility of each UN agency to request authorisation for the trucks to stay overnight.
• The UN agency must communicate to the Logistics Cluster that an overnight stay is required for their trucks. The Logistics Cluster transmits the request to OCHA for liaison and support with the Turkish authorities.
• The approval and location for overnight stay of trucks will be determined by the Turkish authorities.

COVID-19 MITIGATION MEASURES

As per the latest WHO guidelines, the Logistics Cluster has put in place health and safety protocols at BAH to ensure the health and safety of all staff, workers, labourers, and visitors at the hub during operations. A full document outlining the procedures in place can be found via this link.
ANNEXES

Annex 1: Notification Process and OCHA’s role

The below process applies under subsequent UNSC Resolutions 2585 and 2642 and outlines the modality and actors mandated of the Notification Process.
NOTIFICATION PROCESS
IN TURKEY UNDER SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2533

Security Council resolution 2533 requires the United Nations (UN) and its implementing partners to notify Syrian authorities of any UN cross border humanitarian assistance or personnel crossing. The following outlines the Notification process to the Syrian authorities that UN humanitarian assistance will enter Syria through Bab al-Hawa from Turkey.

REQUIREMENTS

- Border crossing shipment request form
- Request form completed
- Shipment information
- Notification
- Notification signed
- Note Verbaile

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

- Logistics Cluster circulates on a regular basis a border crossing humanitarian shipment request form to UN organizations.
- Logistics Cluster compiles shipment information and submits to OCHA.
- OCHA drafts Notification in English and Arabic and submits to Regional or Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (RHC/DRHC) for their signature.
- RHC/DRHC signs the Notification and sends it electronically to the Resident Coordinator of Syria (RC Syria).
- RC Syria transmits the Notification electronically, via a Note Verbaile, to the Syrian authorities.
- The Syrian authorities receive the Notification 48 hours in advance of the first truck carrying humanitarian assistance across the border.

Note:
The Resolution further requires that the UN confirms the humanitarian nature of the relief consignment being delivered. This process is undertaken by a UN Monitoring Mechanism independent of OCHA and the RHC/DRHC.

The UN Monitoring Mechanism has their own Notification process.

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Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) - UN Cross-border Operations from Türkiye to Syria, October 2022

Syria Operation, Türkiye

UN SCR 2533 Cross Border UN Notification and Shipment Process from Turkey

Denotes OCHA's Role in the process

BEFORE

UN organisations submit shipment request to Logistics Cluster

Logistics Cluster compiles shipment & submits to OCHA (minimum 72 hrs in advance of shipment)

OCHA drafts Notification for RHC / DRHC signature in English & Arabic (48 hrs in advance of submission to GoS)

RHC / DRHC signs the Notification and sends to the HC/RC Syria for submission to GoS

Government of Turkey (GoT)

Government of Syria (GoS)

During

OCHA liaises with GoT, Customs & Syrian side when requested

OCHA keeps track of shipment based on the Notifications to the GoS

OCHA sends a copy of the Notification to the GoS, NY/ERC, UNMM, Logistics Cluster, and UNOSS Turkey

Logistics Cluster coordinates on shipment days with UNMM, agencies and GoT & GoS Customs at Border Crossings

DURING

Logistics Cluster liaises with UN organisation, logistics officers and GoT Customs at Border Crossing

Turkish trucks arrive at UN Transhipment Hub

Syrian trucks arrive, are loaded with humanitarian aid and depart the UN Hub to cross to Syria (UNMM monitors are present)

UNMM and the Logistics Cluster accompany the trucks to the Turkish border crossing

Logistics Cluster updates OCHA daily about the agencies and # of trucks that crossed

AFTER

UN Monitoring Team issues second Notification

OCHA reviews all tracking the Logistics Cluster on a daily basis and from the UN Agencies on an monthly basis

OCHA reports cross border shipments to NY/ERC and to the humanitarian community and donors through Fact Sheets & Bulletins

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