
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 Turkey to Syria through the UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 2165/2191/2258/2332/2393/2449/2504 and 2533 approved crossing of Bab al-Hawa (BAH) - Cilvegozu, and explains the procedures that apply before, during, and after transshipment of humanitarian supplies. UN Security Council Resolution 2533 authorises the use of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing until 10 July 2021.

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

PART 1

SOPs for Transshipment Operations at Bab al-Hawa hub

The transshipment is conducted at the common logistics hub located at Cilvegozu, near the town of Reyhanli, inside Turkey. WFP provides the hub as well as the handling services for the transshipment of humanitarian supplies from Turkish to Syrian trucks arranged by UN agencies and/or their implementing partners. The Logistics Cluster coordinates the entire process.

The process below is subject to modifications and should be flexible to allow for new or changed circumstances that may arise 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:** Coordinates access to the WFP facilities at the hub (including guards), liaises with Turkish Customs, and ensures information sharing and coordination. Free-to-user labour, provided by WFP, is available 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 control/observe the transshipment operations at the hub. It is obligatory that at least one UN monitor is present at the opening and closing of any truck and during the loading process. They also accompany the convoy of Syrian trucks back to the border when the loading is completed.
- **OCHA:** Notifies the Syrian Government, the Turkish Government, and the relevant UN bodies regarding the planned cross-border operations. (Please see Annex 1: Notification Process and OCHA's role)
- **UNDSS:** Monitors the security situation and issues travel advisories.
- **UN agencies:** Submit their shipment plans to the Logistics Cluster, are responsible for arranging Syrian and Turkish trucks, and ensure that customs clearance is obtained for their own supplies. On the day of transshipment, representatives from each UN agency involved in the operation should be on-site to observe the transshipment of their cargo. UN agencies must share transshipment pipelines with the Logistics Cluster ahead of time to ensure all preparations can be made.

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

2. One week before the day of the transshipment

- UN agencies submit their shipment plan (the template will be shared with agencies via email) with the below information on planned movements for the upcoming week(s) to turkey.clustercargo@wfp.org:
 - Approximate number of trucks expected to take part in transshipment 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, the Logistics Cluster does not track this).
 - Each line in the notification should include the above information, not merged with other shipment data.
- The final version of the notifications are shared with OCHA, who must sign, stamp and submit the notifications to Government of Syria and Government of Turkey 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

Latest submission of shipment plan by the Logistics Cluster to OCHA	Earliest possible day on which the UN cargo can be transhipped
Wednesday by 12:00 noon	Monday and onwards (following week)
Friday by 12:00 noon	Tuesday and onwards (following week)

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 (monitored by Turkish Authorities Customs officers):
 - Should not have more than 70 litres of fuel when crossing into Turkey.
 - Should have only one person (the driver) in the vehicle, meaning no passengers.
 - 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 transshipments 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).
 - 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.

<https://logcluster.org/ops/syr12a>

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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 is in compliance with customs regulations and consistent with the issued notification.

3. One day before the transshipment

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

4. The day of the transshipment

- 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-Turkey 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. Payment is made by the transporter on the day. The UN agencies sending the cargo across to Syria are responsible for the payment. 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 Gendarme and the Logistics Cluster.
- A copy of cargo manifests/waybills per truck should be provided to the UNMM team at the transshipment hubs.
- The transshipment operation takes place at the hub. Free-to-user labour, provided by WFP, is available to tranship the cargo from Turkish to Syrian trucks.
- When the transshipment 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 gendarmerie, and the Logistics Cluster to the border.
- When Syrian trucks cross the second gate of the Turkish border prior to the zero-point, transshipment is complete and UNMM will notify local officials of completion.

5. After the day of transshipment

- 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 Turkey (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 transshipments

The same procedures as outlined in Part 1 apply to ad hoc transshipments, 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.

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

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 transshipment. 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 and asks for liaison 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

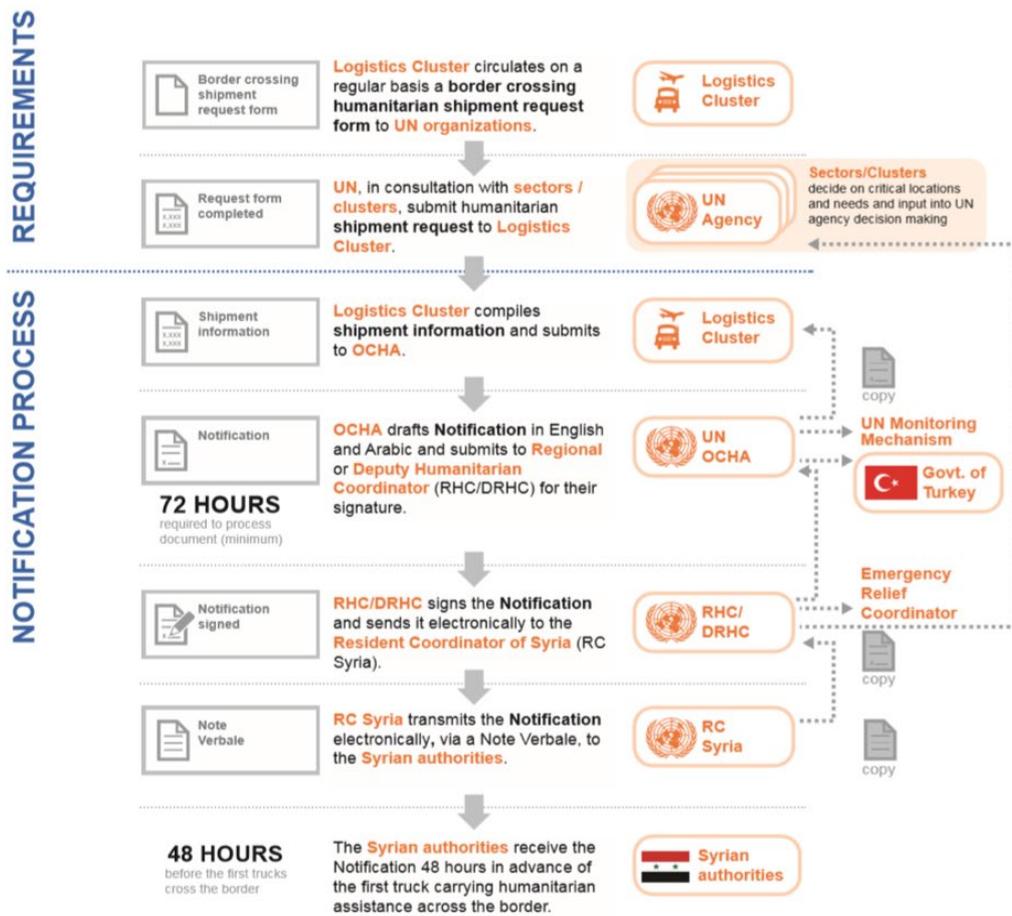
Annex 1: Notification Process and OCHA's role

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.



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.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Creation date: 28 August 2014 www.unocha.org www.reliefweb.int

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

