

Fighting in Syria's Hama Province Displaces 100,000: UN

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Many people have fled from fighting in northern rural Hama as well as the the northwestern countryside toward Hama city and neighboring villages.

Fighting in Syria's Hama governorate displaced an estimated 100,000 people between Aug. 28 and Sept. 5, the United Nations said in on Wednesday, citing the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the governor of the province.

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Many people had fled from fighting in northern rural Hama and its northwestern countryside toward Hama city and neighboring villages. There were originally about 4,500 families in the town of Halfaya, and 1,700 fled but 2,800 remain trapped by the fighting, the U.N. report said.

On Tuesday, the United States said it was making progress with Russia on how to achieve a cessation of hostilities in Syria and held out the possibility a nationwide ceasefire need not begin immediately.

The two powers support opposite sides in the conflict, with Moscow using its military to back Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and Washington taking the position that Assad must go while supporting opposition groups seeking to oust him.

"We continue to feel like we are making progress, and believe we are making progress, on some of the remaining issues, but we are not going to settle," U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said at his daily briefing in Washington.