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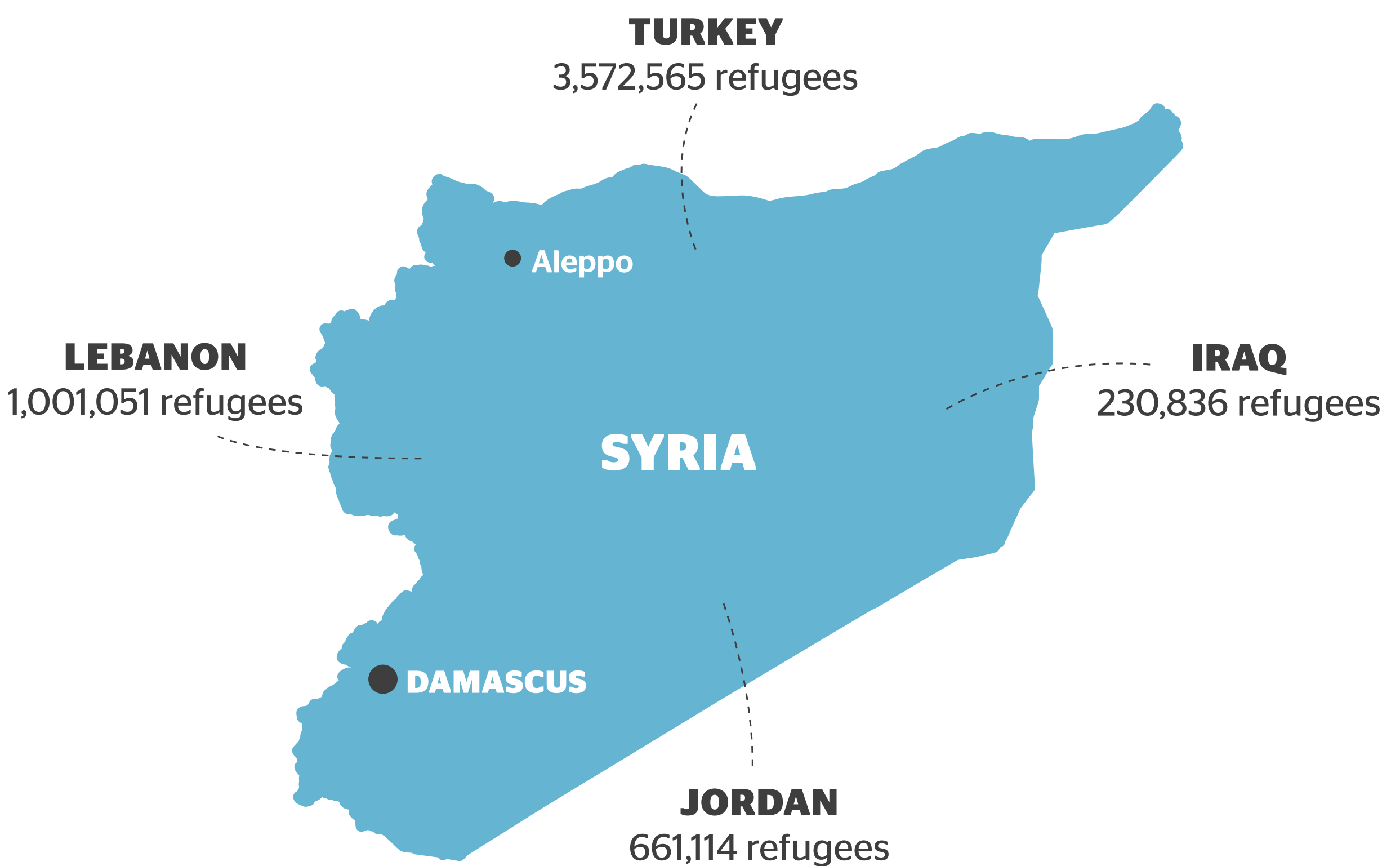
**SYRIA,  
WE HAVEN'T  
FORGOTTEN YOU**

A summary of the seven-year civil war

## THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR IS ONE OF THE MOST DEADLY CONFLICTS OF THIS CENTURY.

What began as a peaceful uprising against President Bashar al-Assad's regime quickly escalated into a war that has claimed more than 400,000 lives as of April 2018, according to a United Nations official.

*Millions more have been displaced, and the country lies in ruins.*



# WHO ARE THE KEY PLAYERS?

Even though there are many parties involved in the Syrian civil war, there are four main groups we'll focus on in order to understand the conflict better.

## 1. SYRIAN GOVERNMENT

Government forces loyal to Assad have tried to rein in the chaos of protesters and other militia agencies. However, the government has been accused of using brutal tactics such as chemical attacks against their own people and bombing hospitals in the process of driving out rebels.

## 2. ANTI-GOVERNMENT MILITIAS

Since many Syrians have accused the government of brute force in its attempt for peace, several different militias have risen up. Groups ranging from pro-democracy activists to al-Qaeda extremists have tried to take justice into their own hands.

## 3. KURDISH PEOPLE

The Kurdish people are a minority group in northern Syria that have systematically had their rights taken away. In 2011, they held a peaceful protest called "day of lament," which resulted in the killing of a Kurdish leader and several mourners. Now the Kurds are fighting for their own independence in the nation of Syria.

## 4. ISIS

Feeding off the chaos in Syria, the militant group called ISIS grew in power. They quickly seized the city of Raqqa for their headquarters. ISIS also controlled a large portion of the border between Iraq and Syria. However, by 2017, they had lost a lot of their power and influence.

# SO, WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON IN SYRIA?

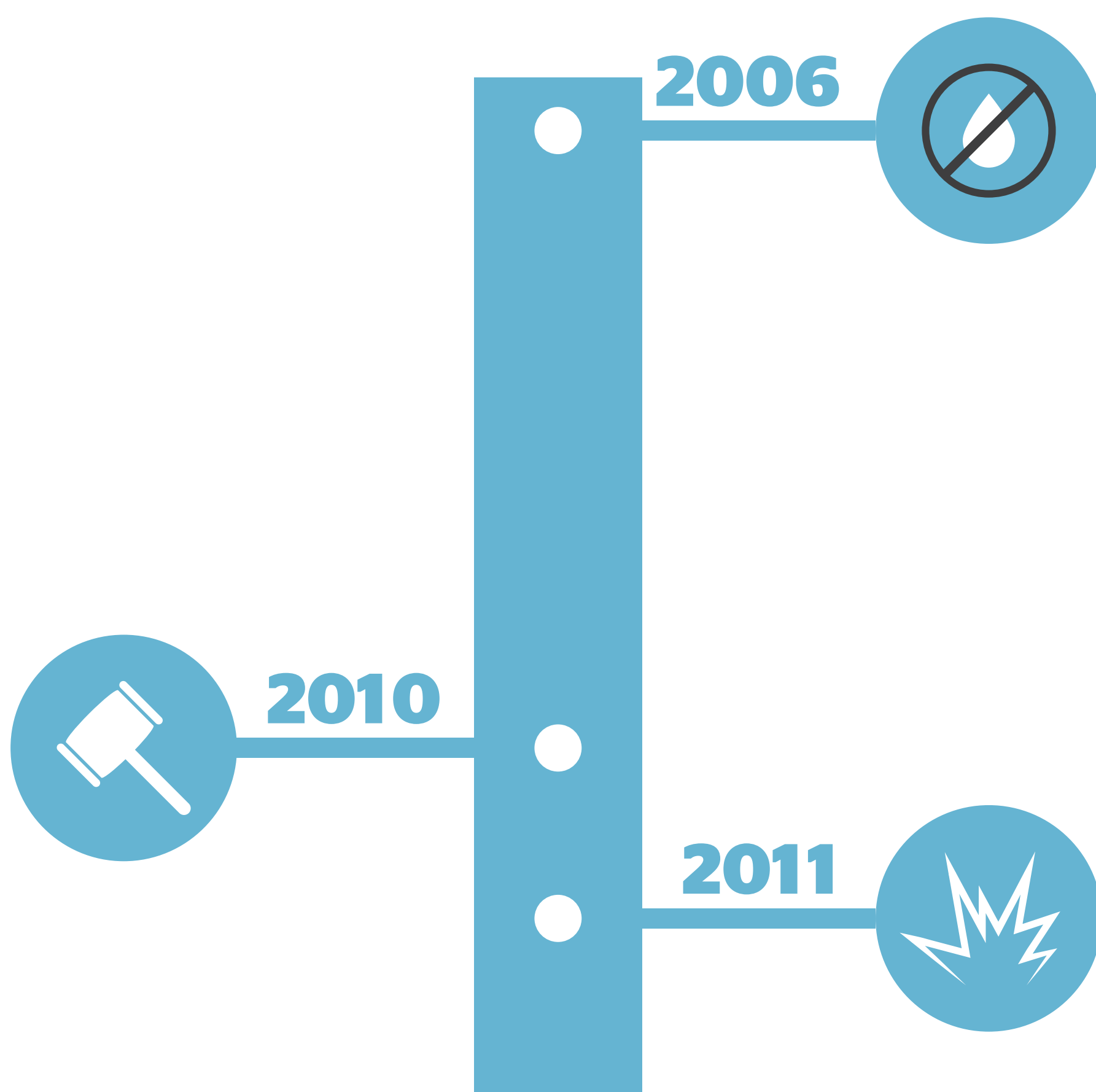
To understand what's happening now, we need to go back to **2006** when Syria's hardships began – five years before the fighting broke out ...

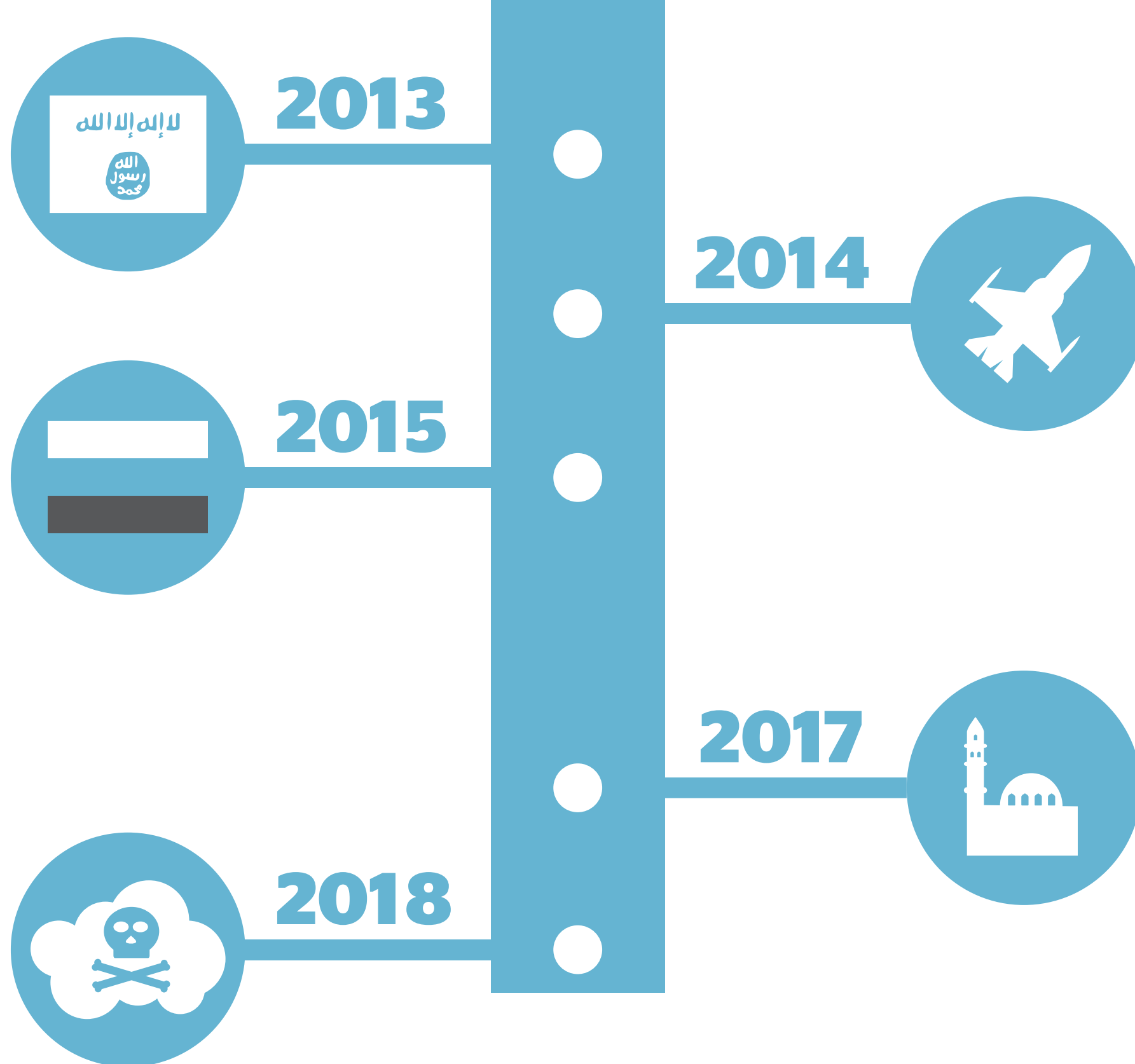
Syria was facing the worst **drought in almost 1,000 years**. Farmers with failing crops and dying livestock fled to urban areas such as Aleppo, Damascus, and Homs. But the cities' supplies depleted quickly, which led to a nation of unrest.

**Then, in 2010, came the Arab Spring.** Countries including Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen had their authoritarian governments brought down. And Syrians were hopeful that their country would soon follow suit.

This new age of democratically minded citizens rang in an era of protests. Syrians called for President Assad to abdicate his power after an 11-year reign. But that didn't happen. The government tried to subdue the protesters, but the situation only worsened.

In 2011, [Syria erupted in violence.](#)





The country descended into chaos, and beginning in **2013**, ISIS took advantage of the power vacuum to spread their extremist agenda.

In **2014**, the U.S. and Arab countries launched airstrikes at the ISIS strongholds of Raqqa and Aleppo. Unfortunately, there were a number of civilian casualties.

Then in **2015**, Russia stepped in to help the Assad regime flush out rebel and jihadist groups. However, many claimed that Russia was targeting anti-Assad forces with their missiles.

ISIS was finally driven out of their de facto capital of Raqqa in **2017**. With this group virtually defeated, Syrian forces turned their full attention toward defeating the rebels.

In February **2018**, the Assad regime launched one of the fiercest assaults of the war on the rebel-held enclave of eastern Ghouta. Airstrikes killed hundreds of civilians and created a fresh wave of refugees fleeing the violence. An alleged chemical attack in the city of Douma suffocated dozens of innocent children.

No one knows for sure when the civil war will end. But one thing is certain: [Syrian refugees need your help now.](#)

# WHOSE SIDE SHOULD YOU BE ON?

With so many different groups and factors involved in the Syrian civil war, it's challenging to tell who the "good guys" are. So who should you be rooting for? The government? The protesters? Here's how one of our partners in Syria responded:

*If you want to know which side of the conflict we're on, it's the side of those whose lives have unraveled in all the violence. We're on the side of bombed-out, driven-out desperate children, mothers, and fathers who've lost everything.*

## ROOT FOR ARIA

Aria is an **innocent teenager** whose name we've changed to protect her identity. One day she was tragically injured when a bomb hit her house in Syria. Although she escaped with her life, she was horribly disfigured.

While the war in Syria may feel elusive to us, it's very real to Aria, whose home today is an overcrowded refugee camp. She still bears the physical and emotional scars of the civil war.

[Read Aria's story.](#)



## **ROOT FOR ADNAN**

Adnan is a 6-year-old boy who has only ever known life as a refugee. When he was just 7 months old, a bomb hit his house. His older brother, grandfather, and 11 other family members died in the blast.

“Home” for Adnan is tiny room he shares with his family of five. His father, who was injured in the war, can’t work, so most nights the family goes to bed with growling stomachs.

[\*Read Adnan’s story.\*](#)



## **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

The Syrian war isn’t simply a series of dates or people groups that are fighting.

It’s the acrid smell of gasoline and burning flesh. It’s the nightmares and the aching, empty stomachs. It’s 1 million orphaned children suffering from trauma and psychological stress. It’s hollow-eyed people who have lost everything ... and who are too terrified to think about the future.

But you can bring comfort to a Syrian refugee who has fled the violence. You can meet someone's most urgent physical needs. You can remind one innocent Syrian civilian there are still good people in the world.

[Your \\$35 gift](#) will provide essentials such as medical care, food, and clothing to someone like Aria or Adnan.

## WAYS TO GIVE



**ONLINE:** Making an online donation is quick and easy. Give now at [worldhelp.net/Syria](https://worldhelp.net/Syria).



**PHONE:** A member of our team will happily assist you. Call toll free [800-541-6691](tel:800-541-6691).



**MAIL:** Send your check or money order to

World Help  
P.O. Box 501  
Forest, VA 24551

Give today, and show refugees you haven't forgotten Syria.

[Help a Syrian Refugee](#)

