EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MEMO

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Additional €34 million contribution to Syria's children, as EU becomes largest donor to UNICEF

New York (24 September) **–** UNICEF and the European Union signed a new cooperation agreement today that provides an additional €34.2 million ($45 million) to protect children affected by the Syria crisis and promote access to learning in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon.

"*Today's signing shows our on-going commitment to help those who are most vulnerable in any conflict: children and young people. We need to do all we can to prevent a lost generation growing up without the access to school as a result of the terrible conflict in Syria. With our overall assistance 2.5 million children in the region will be given a chance to receive education and with it hope for a better future*," Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle said after signing the four contracts in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly.

"*With the crisis in Syria now well into its third year, we must continue to do all we can to prevent the loss of an entire generation*," said Yoka Brandt, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director. "*Education should never be a casualty of conflict or a cost of crisis and this support from the EU will help prevent that loss and in doing so, benefit millions of children in Syria*."

By the end of 2013, the EU contribution to UNICEF's operations in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey is expected to reach more than €74 million ($ 100 million).

A Back to Learning campaign is under way in all affected countries supported by UNICEF and its partners, which aims to reach more than 1.5 million children in the region.

Today's event took place in the context of the comprehensive response of the European Union to the consequences of the Syria crisis. Much of the EU assistance to people affected by the conflict in and around Syria is channeled through UN agencies.

About the EU response to Syria crisis:

The EU is the largest international donor in the context of the Syria crisis accounting for a significant proportion of the overall global funding. The EU has so far mobilised € 1.8 billion in relief, recovery and development aid from both the Commission and Member States. European assistance reaches up to 80% of the population affected by the conflict.

About UNICEF:

UNICEF works in more than 190 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. For more information about UNICEF and its work visit www.unicef.org. Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

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