

Special Representative Rücker visits the Turkish-Syrian border

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Welcome

12.02.2016 - Press release 

During his visit to Kilis and Gaziantep on the Turkish side of the Turkish-Syrian border, Joachim Rücker, Special Representative of the Federal Government for the Stability Partnership in the Middle East, issued the following statement on 12 February:

My visit today was dominated by the commitments made by the Syria contact group in Munich. The cautious hope for a possible cessation of hostilities and for unhampered humanitarian access to the besieged areas was a recurring theme in my talks.

Looking to the fighting over the last few days in the Aleppo region and the new refugee flow of tens of thousands of people, my interlocutors indicated clearly just how catastrophic it would be for the humanitarian situation also and indeed especially in the days leading up to a potential nationwide cessation of hostilities if troops manage to encircle the besieged Aleppo. It is therefore decisive that all parties respect the commitments made in Munich in both letter and spirit.

Rücker's visit to the refugee camp in Öncüpınar and to a field hospital run by Malteser International in Kilis made plain the unbearable suffering in Syria and the need for further support from the international community. We greatly respect the enormous contribution made by Turkey in providing the people with supplies and accommodation and integrating them and we thank the country for its efforts in tackling the current refugee flow from the Aleppo region.

I am also impressed by the almost super-human work of volunteers and non-governmental organisations on both sides of the border. Talking to seriously injured and traumatised patients and to doctors and medical staff in the mobile field hospital, it became abundantly clear how important it is to strengthen our commitment given the desperate situation endured by the people of Syria, particularly in the region around Aleppo.

Thus, the German Government is providing additional assistance for new projects run by German Agro Action and Malteser International also given the particularly harsh winter – tents, blankets, preparing the ground in refugee camps. And we plan to bring a mobile clinic to the region around Aleppo without delay also because the ongoing fighting means the last remaining access routes are threatened.

Background:

Ambassador Joachim Rücker, the new Special Representative of the Federal Government for the Middle East Stability Partnership, visited Kilis and Gaziantep on the Turkish-Syrian border on 12 February to see for himself the humanitarian situation following the most recent attacks in and around Aleppo. His visit took him for example to the Öncüpınar refugee camp and a mobile field hospital run by Malteser International in Kilis.

In talks with representatives of international organisations and non-governmental organisations, including the UN (United Nations) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Syria Recovery Trust Fund, GIZ, Malteser International and German Agro Action, he focused on developments and on possible additional support. Ambassador Rücker also met Nader Othman, Deputy Prime Minister of the so-called interim government and Usama Talja, representative of the Aleppo City Council.

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