

Foreign Minister Steinmeier joins a Syrian refugee family for the breaking of the Muslim fast

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Welcome

Breadcrumbs

1. [Federal Foreign Office](#) ›
2. [News](#) ›
3. [Newsroom](#) ›
4. **Foreign Minister Steinmeier joins a Syrian refugee family for the breaking of the Muslim fast**

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On the evening of 21 July, Foreign Minister Steinmeier will visit a Syrian refugee family in Berlin for the traditional breaking of the Muslim fast (iftar). The family was admitted to Germany at the end of 2013 under the First National Programme for refugees from Syria.

Foreign Minister Steinmeier said:

For Muslims, the importance of Ramadan, the month of fasting, goes far beyond fasting from sunrise to sunset. Solidarity within the family also plays an important role during this month. The fact that millions of Syrian families have been torn apart by the war is an additional tragic burden during Ramadan. Many Germans sympathise with the plight of these families, and the admission of Syrian refugees to Germany via federal and Länder programmes is an expression of our solidarity.

Background information:

According to estimates by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (~~UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)~~), over three million people have had to flee Syria as a result of the conflict in the country. Most of them have fled to the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan.

Since 2013, the German Government has offered admission programmes for up to 20,000 Syrian refugees. The Länder also have their own admission programmes. Including people admitted through asylum procedures, over 47,000 refugees from Syria have found shelter in Germany since 2011.

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. Muslims do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset during this month. The breaking of the fast (iftar) each evening is traditionally celebrated in the family or with guests.

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