# Syria: SOS refugees – chemical weapons, Damascus must allow UN access, says Bonino

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In Syria and throughout the region “the approach of winter makes life harder for everyone” and we are therefore “planning the better and more rapid use” of mission funding, said Minister Emma Bonino at the end of a press conference in Rome with President of the International Red Cross Committee Peter Maurer.

Italy’s pledge

Bonino pointed out that “the next missions decree should incorporate Premier Letta’s pledge at St. Petersburg”. The minister underscored that the foreign ministry intended to “avail itself of the International Red Cross, which is equipped” to assist populations in need.

“Excellent” collaboration

Defining collaboration with the IRCC as “excellent”, Bonino announced renewed funding of 2 million euro for “normal” business and 1.5 million for emergencies. For his part, Maurer expressed his “appreciation for Italy’s commitment”, adding that in crisis theatres “political problems cannot be resolved through humanitarian aid, but without political support humanitarian aid is not possible”. Also present at the meeting was President of the Italian Red Cross Francesco Rocca.

UN: chemical weapons, Damascus must ensure inspector access

“I am very satisfied with the UN Security Council’s adoption on 27 September 2013 of a resolution on Syria calling for the complete destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. Now Damascus will have to assure the UN and OPCW inspectors immediate and unconditional access to the sites”, Minister Emma Bonino said at the end of the joint press conference.

“Direct threat to peace”

“The use of chemical weapons is a direct threat to international peace and security, and Italy will do its part to ensure the full implementation of the 27 September 2013 decision by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons delineating special procedures for the rapid and verifiable destruction of the Syrian chemical arsenal”, Minister Bonino added.

Significant contribution

The minister confirmed that Italy intends to make a significant contribution in logistical, financial and technical terms to the efforts that the OPCW will be called upon to make in the coming weeks toward implementing the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons.

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