European Commission - Speech

Concluding remarks at the Second Brussels Conference "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region"

Brussels, 25 April 2018

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Dear Excellences,

Dear friends,

The Second Brussels Conference on the future of Syria and the region has come to an end.

After two very intense days of exchanges and dialogue, I would like to thank you for your valuable contributions. A particular word of thanks to civil society representatives. From Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. They are the everyday-heroes, working in the field to help those who are truly helpless.

During these 2 days, we addressed our number one priority: A political solution in support of the UN-led talks in Geneva. And the transition to a peaceful, democratic and stable Syria.

We also sought concrete solutions to address the most acute humanitarian challenges. We focused on protection, education and the effective delivery of assistance.

We tackled Resilience, Livelihoods and Economic recovery.

And of course, we addressed the tremendous assistance given by Syria's neighbours: Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. And ways to maintain the international support for them.

Dear Friends,

Millions of people are still in need. Suffering inside Syria. Or far away from home. I repeat what I said last year, in this room:

We must not let down the people of Syria.

I am proud to announce that the delegations here today have made a collective pledge of 4.4 Billion US Dollars for this year alone.

Moreover, for next year and beyond we have pledges for 3.4 Billion Dollars.

The European Union, as a whole, has pledged almost 6 Billion Dollars until 2019 (three quarters of the total pledge). We are again leading by example. By being the largest donor.

For Syrian refugees in Turkey, the European Union and Member States will uphold their commitments and mobilise additional three (3) billion Euros in the coming two (2) years.

The latest pledge tracking report from last year's conference, published this month, shows that, by the end of 2017, 7.5 billion US dollars were contributed in the form of grants. Exceeding the original pledge by 26%. This is a great collective achievement. I want to thank you for your generosity and for your commitment.

So, dear colleagues. Now, every single cent we pledged today, needs to be swiftly translated into action. Spent in an effective and transparent way. This is our common responsibility.

Our objectives have not changed. We must fight to help secure a better future for the people of Syria. We want to make sure that next generation of Syrians will live in peace and prosperity.

Today we reaffirmed our concrete commitment to these objectives. With solidarity, determination and an acute sense of urgency.

Thank you for your attention.