



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Syrian crisis: EU pledges €100 million for humanitarian aid

The European Commission will pledge €100 million of humanitarian funding at the International Pledging Conference for Syria convened by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and hosted by Kuwait on 30 January. This funding, to be disbursed in 2013, will add to the €100 million already contracted for the crisis in 2011/2012, bringing the Commission's humanitarian funding for the crisis to €200 million.

In view of the catastrophic humanitarian situation and the growing needs both within Syria and in the neighbouring countries, these vital funds will provide assistance to some of the 4 million people in need of aid in Syria, including two million displaced, as well as to 700,000 refugees to date.

Prior to her departure for the Conference, Kristalina Georgieva, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, said:

"This additional €100 million is desperately needed. People inside Syria are cold, hungry and scared. Those who have managed to cross the borders often arrive with no more than the clothes on their backs. Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq must be praised for their generosity towards refugees fleeing Syria, but the flow is ever-increasing and these countries need more support.

At the conference in Kuwait, I will also reiterate the need to respect International Humanitarian Law and to apply humanitarian principles at all times when delivering assistance. This is the only way to reach the largest number of people in need.

This funding is a concrete expression of the unwavering solidarity of Europeans with all those affected by the Syrian crisis. I can only hope that this will encourage additional pledges from the EU Member States and the rest of the international community. Funding is key in avoiding a further deterioration of this massive humanitarian crisis."

The additional funds will cover the top priority needs in Syria and neighbouring countries: emergency medical response, with both medical and psycho-social care to the wounded and the traumatized (in particular children); provision of food and safe water; provision of shelter, registration and thus protection of refugees. Medicine will also be provided to limit drugs shortages and sanitation systems will be built or repaired to avoid waterborne diseases. Help will continue to be provided to the displaced and refugees - who often arrive destitute - as well as to their host communities, whose resources are exhausted.

The assistance will be channelled through the European Commission's humanitarian partners: UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent family and international non-governmental organisations.

Background

The **consequences of the crisis for the civilian population** are grave. Over the last six months of 2012, the number of civilian casualties has more than doubled (+126%). According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the violence has led to the killing of over 60,000 men, women and children, including some deliberately targeted.

The consequences for the **humanitarian situation** in Syria and in the refugee camps in the neighbouring countries are most serious, with an increasing numbers of people being displaced both internally and across borders. The most recent working figures from the United Nations give an estimated number of **4 million people in need of assistance**, including **2 million displaced in Syria, and over 700,000 refugees in neighbouring countries**.

These recent developments have led the United Nations to issue on 19 December two revised appeals for January-June 2013: the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan for USD 519.6 million and the Regional Refugee Plan for USD 1 billion. Compared to the previous versions of these plans, these new requests for a total of USD 1.52 billion represent an increase of 82%.

The first high-level **International Pledging Conference for Syria** will take place in Kuwait on 30 January. It will be hosted by the Emir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah, and chaired by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon and attended by Representatives from UN Member States who have contributed humanitarian funding for the Syrian crisis, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations. The one-day conference will provide an opportunity to scale up the much-needed humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis.

For more information

Factsheet on the humanitarian situation in Syria and the region:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria_en.pdf

The European Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

Arabic website of European Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection:

<http://echo-arabic.eu>

Commissioner Georgieva's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/index_en.htm

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