Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Gifting of equipment to Syria

2013-11-19

Foreign Secretary William Hague:

It is now over two years since the Syrian conflict began and the situation remains catastrophic. The UK is committed to doing all it can to alleviate the humanitarian suffering and to promote a political settlement to end the conflict.

In my 11 November statement to the House, I outlined the intensive political and practical support we are providing to the Syrian moderate opposition. Today I am setting out in more detail our plans to gift non-lethal equipment to General Idris' Supreme Military Council, which is closely aligned to the Syrian National Coalition. This gift will be: commercially available communications equipment, such as laptops with satellite internet connection, mobile telephones and push-to-talk radios; commercially available vehicles, such as pick-up trucks; fuel; portable generators less than 3MW in power; logistics supplies such as clothing, rations and tents; and individual medical kits. The total cost of the proposed gift is £1 million, which will be met by the Government's Conflict Pool Fund. Use of these funds has been approved by the Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs, Defence and International Development.

This is the UK's second gift to the Supreme Military Council; in August 2013 we sent them equipment to protect them from chemical weapons attack. This gift has been scrutinised to ensure that the provision of this equipment is consistent with export controls and complies with our international obligations. Recipients have been carefully selected to prevent equipment being given to those involved in extremist activities or human rights violations.

The gifting Minute was laid before the House of Commons yesterday. If, during the period of fourteen Parliamentary sitting days beginning on the date on which the Minute was laid, a Member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or of a Motion in relation to the Minute, or by otherwise raising the matter in the House, final approval of the gift will be withheld pending an examination of the objection.

Further information

Follow the Foreign Secretary on twitter

@WilliamJHague

Follow the Foreign Office on twitter

@foreignoffice

Follow the Foreign Office on

facebook

and

Google+

Media enquiries

For journalists

Email

newsdesk@fco.gov.uk

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/gifting-of-equipment-to-syria