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## About the Assad Regime's Request to Unfreeze its Stolen Money

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Media Statement  
Syrian Coalition  
Istanbul, Turkey  
August 08, 2013

The Syrian Coalition takes this opportunity to express an obvious statement – the international community should not heed the Assad regime's attempts in the public arena to appeal for the release of frozen funds, allegedly to purchase food, and should instead take steps to deliver aid directly to the Syrian people without conditions or discrimination.

We must not forget that these funds are not for the Assad regime to use or access – they are funds that members of the regime stole and stashed in other countries, where they could not be used by their rightful owners, the Syrian people. While Assad's requests to access these funds purports to be for the purchase of food, the reality is that the Assad regime cannot be trusted with any funds. Moreover, allowing the regime to use these funds for food would simply make its existing funds available exclusively for purchase of additional weapons and further prosecution of its war against the Syrian people. Rather, if the regime's intentions are as stated, it should use its existing funds, including those provided by the illegitimate sale of Syrian resources to Iran, to purchase food and invest in diplomacy, instead of heavy weaponry and ammunition from its allies like Russia.

Furthermore, the premise of these media reports is false. Although US and EU sanctions permit the delivery of food to Syria under qualifying circumstances, a member country would need to issue a special exemption for the export of the requested items or funds to Syria, and sanctioned entities (such as the Syrian Government and the Commercial Bank of Syria) may not be involved. On the other hand, the US and EU have issued licenses for the delivery of aid through humanitarian organizations and the Syrian Coalition. Just yesterday the US announced an additional \$195 million in additional humanitarian aid to the Syrian people. There are countless non-governmental organizations, as well as the United Nations and in particular the SC Assistance Coordination Unit, which are more appropriate and more capable of distributing food and aid to Syrians without discrimination, rather than the remnants of the Assad regime.

Moreover, the international community must establish robust delivery of aid across all borders of Syria, and secure humanitarian access into areas outside of the regime's control, in order to distribute humanitarian assistance more directly and effectively.

We ask for mercy for our martyrs, health for our wounded and freedom for our detainees.

Long live Syria, and its people, free and with honor.

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