

On Germany's taking in of Syrian White Helmets

 auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/taking-in-syrian-whitehelmets/2121054

Welcome

Breadcrumbs

22.07.2018 - Press release 

Joint press statement of the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of the Interior on Germany's taking in of eight Syrian White Helmets:

Following the evacuation of White Helmets from southern Syria, preparations in Germany are under way for taking in eight of the humanitarian search and rescue workers and their families.

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas has expressed his relief:

It is good news that, in close cooperation with our international partners, we have succeeded in safely evacuating many White Helmets from southern Syria.

The White Helmets and their work deserve our admiration and respect. We have wholeheartedly supported their efforts. Since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, the White Helmets have rescued more than 100,000 people. For more than 250 White Helmets, their courage and humanity have cost them their lives, and many more have suffered lasting health damage.

With the advance of the regime's forces, many White Helmets now face danger to life and limb. It is a humanitarian imperative to provide asylum and protection to many of these courageous search and rescue workers, including in Germany. We are grateful to all of the partners who are contributing to this.

Federal Minister of the Interior Horst Seehofer has stated the following:

I have decided that Germany will take in and grant protection to eight White Helmets – members of the Syria Civil Defence opposition movement – and their family members. The ongoing military offensive and ever greater territorial gains by the Syrian regime in southern Syria have created a clear and present danger for the White Helmets and their families. These people, who have risked their lives to aid and rescue the civilian population, and to reduce their suffering, are now themselves in need of help. Granting them protection is, I believe, a humanitarian duty and an expression of my policy to uphold humanity and order in migration policy.

Background information

Since the establishment of the organisation in 2013, the White Helmets have rescued more than 100,000 people from houses reduced to ruins, often following air strikes by the Syrian regime; White Helmets themselves were also repeatedly targeted by attacks. More than 250 White Helmets have died during search and rescue missions. In 2016, the White Helmets were awarded the Right Livelihood Award, which is widely known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize”, for their civic courage and bravery. The Federal Foreign Office has provided a total of 12 million euros in funding to the organisation since 2016.

The White Helmets and their families are being admitted from abroad pursuant to Section 22, second sentence, of the Residence Act, following a decision by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

Overview "Newsroom"

© 1995 – 2022 Federal Foreign Office