EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MEMO

Brussels, 6 June 2013

Statement by Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, on new EU funding for Syrian humanitarian crisis

President Barroso's announcement of 400 million euros additional funding for the Syrian humanitarian crisis is not only welcome but timely and urgently needed.

Tomorrow the United Nations agencies will launch a fresh appeal for international donations to fund their life-saving activities in Syria and neighbouring countries. It is vital that donors step up to the plate.

This is a crisis on a scale which we have not seen in many years, evolving rapidly before our eyes in a fragile region. The civil war in Syria has claimed the lives so far of more than 80,000 people. It has created 1.6 million refugees, placing neighbouring states under unbearable pressure. Seven million people are now in need of humanitarian assistance, more than half of them children.

I have seen for myself the bravery of these refugees and the generosity of their hosts as well as the excellent work being done by NGOs and international organisations in the most exacting of circumstances. I know that this crisis can only be ended through dialogue and a political solution but in the absence of that we must all redouble our efforts to provide assistance.

We must also continue to insist upon the primacy of International Humanitarian Law and to call upon all the parties to the conflict to respect and uphold the rights of those caught up, through no fault of their own, in the crossfire.

I trust that the spirit of compassion and generosity – the European core value of solidarity – will inspire other donors to follow the European Commission's announcement and make substantial pledges to help these unfortunate people.

For more information

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

Spokespersons' Service
Service des Porte-parole

MEMO/13/506

Commissioner Georgieva's website:
http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/index_en.htm
Commissioner Georgieva's Twitter and Facebook account:
https://twitter.com/kgeorgievaeu
http://www.facebook.com/KristalinaGeorgieva