

Foreign Minister Maas on repatriation from Syria on humanitarian grounds

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20.12.2020 - Press release 

Regarding the repatriation of twelve children and three of their mothers, Foreign Minister Maas stated today (20 December):

I am very relieved that we were able to repatriate another twelve children and three mothers from camps in Northeastern Syria yesterday. The repatriation was based on humanitarian grounds and involved (amongst others) orphans and sick children – cases in which a repatriation was deemed particularly necessary and urgent. Shortly before Christmas, this is good news and an encouraging sign that we will be able to make repatriations happen in other cases, too. We will continue to work on this in the coming weeks and months.

However, it must not be forgotten that yesterday's repatriation was a huge undertaking which required months of intense preparation and arrangements. The already difficult situation in Northeastern Syria has turned even more precarious this year as a result of ongoing fighting and the COVID-19 pandemic. People on the ground, including those who were in charge of the operation locally are already faced with many tough challenges on a day-to-day basis. We are all the more grateful to them and their efforts to make this operation happen - and to our Finnish partners, with whom we carried out this operation.

Background:

On Saturday, twelve children including seven orphans and three women from the camps Roj and Al Hol in North East Syria were repatriated. German and local authorities had assessed their need for repatriation and protection as particularly high. In this operation, Germany joined forces with Finland, which repatriated another six children and two women.

Overview "Newsroom"

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