Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

"This is a strong resolution that is practical, operational, and will save millions of people’s lives"

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Thank you Mr President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2165 and applauds Luxembourg, Australia and Jordan for their efforts in making this resolution a reality. Today, this Council has taken steps to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches those most in need in Syria.

It is deeply regrettable that this new resolution proved necessary. In February this year, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2139, which should have enabled the widespread delivery of humanitarian aid to people in Syria. Instead, the Syrian regime continued its use of barrel bombs, siege and starvation tactics, and blocking the delivery of aid to its own people. Millions of people were left suffering, while supplies of food and medicine were left waiting, if only access were granted.

Since February’s adoption of Resolution 2139, the Syria humanitarian crisis has significantly worsened. A further 1.5 million people are in need with an additional 1.2 million in hard to reach areas. Resolution 2165 is designed to reverse that trend, and we are determined to make sure that it has a real impact on the ground.

Today’s resolution authorises the United Nations to use four additional border crossings to deliver life-saving humanitarian aid to some of the hardest to reach areas – without any opportunity for the Syrian regime to obstruct, impede or delay that assistance. It means that an additional 1.3 million people can be immediately reached. As such, it marks a major step forward in the international community’s efforts to respond to the horrendous suffering in Syria. It addresses the Syrian regime’s appalling neglect of the human suffering of its own people.

We call on the Secretary-General to swiftly deploy the monitoring mission so that aid can flow through these additional border crossings. And to implement the operation in coordination with the existing NGOs that are already playing a vital role in getting aid to people in need.

Mr President

The number of individuals engulfed in the tragedy of the Syrian crisis is staggering. Over 170 thousand people are dead, hundreds of thousands more injured, more than 10.8 million in need, 4.7 million of those are in hard to reach areas, and 2.9 million refugees.

Today this Council has demonstrated that it is possible to work together to alleviate some of that suffering. But this resolution is just one step in addressing the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The only lasting solution to the crisis in Syria is through a political solution. The United Kingdom urges all parties to work cooperatively with the new UN Special Envoy Staffan De Mistura towards a Syrian led political transition that truly reflects the will of the people.

This is a strong resolution that is practical, operational, and will save millions of people's lives. But much, much more is needed to bring an end to the tragedy taking place every day in Syria. The United Kingdom will continue to work for an end to hostilities and to empower the United Nations to deliver life-saving aid.

Thank you.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/this-is-a-strong-resolution-that-is-practical-operational-and-will-save-millions-of-peoples-lives