

Third International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria in Kuwait

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Press Statement

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President of the Syrian Coalition

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“As the conflict in Syria grinds on, the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate by the day. Over 12 million people, including 5.6 million children, are now in dire need for assistance. Nearly 3.9 million people are registered as refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt. Humanitarian needs have increased a massive twelvefold during the past four years. With a brutal dictator in Damascus, there is no end in sight to the suffering of the Syrian people.

“The massive scale of the humanitarian crisis unfolding, coupled with the shortage of funding, have caused severe disruption to UN agencies’ humanitarian efforts in Syria and across the region. The UN World Food Programme was forced to suspend its food vouchers to thousands of Syrian families in December last year for nearly 15 days due to lack of funds, but was able to resume assistance after a social media fundraising campaign that saw considerable donations pouring in from the public, as well as donor countries.

“I welcome the pledging conference to be hosted tomorrow by the Amir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and I call on the participants to give generously to ensure enough funding is available for the UN and its agencies to continue their outstanding work. The UN 2015 Syria Response Plan and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015-2016, designed to provide basic needs for Syrians and much needed support to host communities across the region, are only 9% and 6% funded respectively.

“The lack of funding has already forced UN humanitarian agencies to reduce food rations for Syrians by 30%. Generous pledges by the international community are needed to help ease the suffering of millions of people inside Syria and across the region. Donor countries delivering on their promises is also essential to making sure hundreds of thousands of Syrian families get the lifesaving assistance they need, including food, clean water, shelter and medicine.

“Humanitarian assistance can indeed offer a lifeline to vulnerable Syrians, but there is no humanitarian solution to the crisis in Syria. Only a political process that stops the cycle of violence and brings about a transition to democracy can end the suffering of the

Syrian people, and allow millions to return to their homes and build a self-sufficient, inclusive, and democratic Syria.”