Syria – humanitarian emergency. Aid from Italy – Senate gives go-ahead for participation in UN Mission

2012-06-14

Italy is stepping up its political, diplomatic and humanitarian commitment to help find a solution to the Syrian crisis. The Senate has approved the decree – with 260 votes in favour and one abstention – on our country's participation in the UN Observers' mission. The provision now passes to the Chamber. The financial cover, of around 800,000 euros, will be obtained from the 2012 funding for the mission in Lebanon.

The observers' mission, known as United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria(UNSMIS), was decided by a Security Council Resolution on 21 April. Its task is to monitor the full implementation of the proposal submitted by the United Nations and Arab League Envoy, Kofi Annan, and accepted by the Syrian Government. The UN Resolution envisages an initial deployment of 300 unarmed military observers and an appropriate civilian component, for an initial period of 90 days.

Medical kits for 30,000 people

To help tackle the humanitarian emergency in Syria, and on Minister Terzi's instructions, Italian Development Cooperation has sent medical kits for the Syrian people suffering the effects of the violence in their country. The kits left from the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in Brindisi.

The medical kits, which will enable over 30,000 people to be treated, will arrive directly in Damascus. From there, they will be delivered to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) for distribution through the Syrian Red Crescent.

In Jordan, medical supplies for the treatment of 20,000 people will be distributed by the Italian Embassy and by Italian Development Cooperation personnel. The aid will be concentrated in the Mafraq and Ramtha regions, to which about 21,000 Syrian refugees have fled from the attacks in their country.

A credible pathway to a political solution

Italy's diplomatic action is focusing on the implementation of "a credible pathway to reach a political solution", in which Russia has a "fundamental" role. Minister Terzi has discussed the question with Secretary General of the Arab League, Nabil El Araby. The goal, explained

Terzi, is to find a concrete mode of implementing the Annan Plan, which thus far has not produced results. Its application, however, is “urgent”, because the population is being subjected to “repeated massacres”.

The solution of the crisis should also entail the “constructive involvement of Russia, whose input is vital”, in view not just of its role on the United Nations Security Council but also of its policy of maintaining a “real relationship” with Damascus. In the meantime, the UN mission “should be strengthened to have a real impact on what’s happening on the ground, with vehicles and equipment that enable it to operate more freely and in safety”.

Amnesty International has accused the Syrian regime of “crimes against humanity” affecting communities suspected of supporting the insurgents. In its report, Amnesty claims to possess recent evidence that soldiers from the Syrian army have dragged numerous Syrian civilians from their homes and killed them. The victims, says Amnesty, include children.

Source :
https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/approfondimenti/2012/06/20120614_siria_si_senato/