European Commission - Speech

Closing Remarks: Commission Statement: Shortage of funding for the World Food Programme aid scheme to Syrian refugees (Strasbourg, 16 December 2014)

Brussels, 17 December 2014

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Commission Statement: Shortage of funding for the World Food Programme aid scheme to Syrian refugees

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Dear Members,

Thank you for your comments and considerations.

Let me finish with three clear conclusions of our debate today:

First, the crisis we are discussing today is unprecedented. Both in terms of its humanitarian consequences for millions of people and for financial implications. It is a crisis that has enormous implications for Europe. A comprehensive response to this crisis cannot be built on our normal budgets. A credible EU response is needed. We have the collective responsibility to find the means to make it possible. And we need to realize that if we do not invest sufficient funds in the region, the consequences will be felt far outside the region.

Second, we are doing everything possible within the European Commission and together with our Member States to respond effectively to the needs. The European Union, as a whole, has led the international response to the Syrian crisis. We are the leading donor to the Syria crisis. We must remain the leaders in this regard.

Third, the humanitarian response cannot stand by itself. This is a protracted crisis. It requires an integrated response in close cooperation with development actors and national authorities. We are already working together with our development colleagues to better integrate the humanitarian aid with the resilience/stabilisation assistance. On this, again, we need to find ways to step up our financial assistance.

At the end of the day the Syria crisis requires a political solution. We need to work hard with all actors involved to achieve this difficult goal.

Again, thank you for your attention. I am looking forward to our continuous cooperation.

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