

German Government welcomes humanitarian airlift in Syria

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Welcome

11.04.2016 - Press release 

A Federal Foreign Office Spokesperson issued the following statement in Berlin on 11 April concerning the situation in Syria:

The German Government welcomes the fact that yesterday food was finally delivered successfully by air to the people besieged by ISIS in the town of Deir ez-Zor. 26 pallets containing 20 tonnes of food supplies were successfully dropped.

The United Nations has expressly thanked Germany, among others, for its assistance. We gave €5 million to the World Food Programme for the operation, thereby underscoring our conviction that humanitarian assistance must be able to get through to all the people who need it, regardless of any political criteria.

Without wishing to play down the success of this operation, it must be said that this delivery can only be considered a first, small step. The vast majority of people in Deir ez-Zor still have no access to humanitarian assistance.

Elsewhere in Syria the situation is also bad, if not to say even worse. Some progress was indeed made in the humanitarian field after the meeting in Munich. But the process has since stalled: 7 out of 18 besieged areas still haven't received any aid supplies at all. Last week the ~~UN~~ (United Nations) had to cancel four planned aid transports because they had not been authorised. Very clearly, it is the regime's responsibility to end the siege and ensure access for humanitarian assistance.

The ceasefire in Syria has now been in place for six weeks. It is not perfect. It has been violated, sometimes seriously. But it is a first success for diplomacy, and it has meant an urgently needed respite for many people in Syria. You will have seen the pictures of people out on the streets, repairing their houses.

For this reason we are highly concerned by the fact that new regime offensives have been reported near Aleppo and east of Damascus, with considerable air support. All sides, including the countries involved in the Vienna process, must help enforce the ceasefire. Anyone who puts the ceasefire in question is also jeopardising political progress.

The priority now must be to finally make further progress on the political process in particular. That's why it is so important that the negotiations on Syria resume in Geneva this week.

The people of Syria expect both delegations to negotiate in earnest, and to find viable compromises to give Syria a peaceful future. They must in particular address the two difficult but unavoidable issues: the formation of a transitional government and comprehensive reform of Syria's constitution.

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