

An emergency humanitarian initiative for Aleppo

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While we are working tirelessly to bring about a cessation of hostilities, today in the face of the humanitarian tragedy in Aleppo, we as the European Union are taking an urgent humanitarian initiative for Aleppo aimed at allowing humanitarian organisations to do their work and civilians to be rescued and protected. We call on all parties to the conflict to support and facilitate this initiative. This initiative, taken in cooperation with the UN, consists of two main elements: - First it aims at facilitating the urgent delivery of basic life-saving assistance to civilians in East Aleppo covering medical, water and food needs. An inter-aid agency convoy stands ready to move from West to East Aleppo drawing on prepositioned stocks made possible also through EU first line response funding. This convoy can deliver aid to a maximum of 130,000 people. - Second, in parallel and simultaneously, it aims at ensuring the medical evacuations of wounded and sick from Eastern Aleppo in urgent need of medical care, with a focus on women, children and the elderly. The EU calls on all parties to urgently provide the necessary authorisations for aid delivery and for medical evacuations to proceed. It intends to work intensively in the next hours and days with the parties concerned to make this happen. The operations should be conducted under the sole responsibility of humanitarian organisations, and according to their modalities that guarantee the impartiality and neutrality of aid operations and the minimum conditions for the safety and protection of relief workers and civilians. These humanitarian conditions should be those that the international community must work on. The EU is also asking medical evacuations to be allowed not only for Eastern Aleppo, but for all besieged areas, including the « four towns » where lives are also at risk due to lack of drugs and medical treatment. The EU stands ready to facilitate and support the evacuation and referral of patients to the adequate medical facilities in the region and if needed to Europe for specialised medical care not available in the region. The EU is also mobilising a €25 million emergency aid package to support and scale up the first line response of its humanitarian partners to cover urgent medical, water and sanitation, and food assistance in Aleppo and in other priority areas across the country. The EU calls on all its partners and all the parties, to unite on this humanitarian initiative for Aleppo for the sake of humanity and the political future of Syria.

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Statements by the HR/VP

Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and
Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides on « an
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