

Foreign Minister Gabriel on the situation in Syria

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Welcome

Breadcrumbs

11.12.2017 - Press release 

Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel issued the following statement today (11 December) on the situation in Syria:

“No matter how much we wish there were peace after the long years of violence and conflict, the Syria crisis is not yet over. The ongoing fighting continues to affect many people with unrelenting severity, while the humanitarian situation remains dramatic. For this reason, the German Government is providing a further 120 million euros for humanitarian assistance in Syria and its neighbouring countries.

Over 13 million people – two thirds of the original population of Syria – need help to survive. Every day, we see images of starving children and almost indescribable destruction in areas that remain under siege by the regime such as Ghouta in eastern Damascus.

Syria’s neighbouring countries, which provide so many desperate people with refuge and protection, continue to need our support. They deserve our great respect for everything they have done to help overcome the enormous need. Lasting peace cannot be achieved by military means. Syria will only find stability through an inclusive political settlement. We thus call on Assad’s supporters, particularly Russia and Iran, to do their utmost to ensure that the regime finally meets the opposition around one table in Geneva, begins substantive negotiations and no longer blocks the path to a sustainable solution to the conflict.”

Background information:

Deprivation and humanitarian need are becoming increasingly evident in areas that are only now opening up to aid workers, the more IS is forced to retreat. In addition to providing people with food, medicine and other aid relief, humanitarian efforts are focusing on protecting groups that are most vulnerable, such as children, women and senior citizens.

Before winter starts, UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (the UN (United Nations) Refugee Agency) will receive an additional 60 million

euros and the UN (United Nations) humanitarian funds a further 15 million euros to protect people in Syria and its neighbouring countries who are particularly in need and to provide internally displaced persons and refugees with warm clothing and accommodation that can withstand winter conditions.

The Federal Foreign Office is providing a further 15 million euros to the World Food Programme (WFP (World Food Programme)) to safeguard food supplies for hundreds of thousands of refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.)) will receive a further 25 million euros and 5 million euros respectively. Palestinian refugees are one of the groups in Syria most in need of protection and support.

The United Nations' aid programmes for Syria and the region are significantly underfunded. In 2017, the German Government provided approximately 720 million euros in total for humanitarian assistance in the context of the Syria crisis, thus making it the second largest humanitarian donor in the world after the United States.

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