

SUPPORTING SYRIA & THE REGION LONDON 2016

Co-chaired by Germany, Kuwait, Norway, the UK and the United Nations

4 February 2016

Objectives

1. Raise significantly increased funding both to meet immediate needs as outlined in the UN-coordinated inter-agency 2016 appeals – the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) - as well as mid-term humanitarian, resilience and development financial commitments (up to 2020);
2. Address the longer-term needs of those affected by the crisis by identifying ways to strengthen resilience by creating economic opportunities and jobs and providing education opportunities. This includes Syrians who are within Syria and those who have fled to neighbouring countries as well as the communities hosting them.
3. Maintain pressure on parties to the conflict to protect civilians affected by the conflict; and ensure the international community is well prepared to support a coordinated stabilisation effort once the conditions allow.

Background

The international community has a responsibility to help the 13.5 million vulnerable and displaced people inside Syria, and the 4.39 million Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries. Local communities in refugee hosting countries in the region are also under considerable strain as basic services are overstretched, and unemployment is on the rise. We must step up our efforts: the 2015 UN-coordinated inter-agency appeals which serve as the key coordinating mechanisms to highlight needs – the Syria Response Plan and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan - were only 53% funded, with \$3.86 billion secured against an appeal for UN and NGOs of \$7.4 billion.

For 2016 the needs are even greater: the 2016 UN-coordinated inter-agency appeals for the Syria crisis are an estimated US\$7.73 billion. An additional US\$1.23 billion in funding is required by affected regional governments as part of national response plans, making a total funding requirement of \$8.96 billion.

We will together host a Conference on the Syria humanitarian and refugee crisis in London in February 2016, building on three previous conferences generously hosted by the Government of Kuwait as well as on the Berlin Conference on the Syrian Refugee Situation in 2014 and the recent Resilience Development Forum in the Dead Sea. The Supporting Syria and the Region Conference will pave the way for a broader discussion about how the international community responds to protracted crises, in advance of the UK, UNHCR and World Bank Forum on Protracted Forced Displacement later in 2016 and the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016, and the UN High Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants at the UN General Assembly in September 2016.

The fundraising objective

The Conference is seeking to raise significant new funding to meet the needs of all those affected by the crisis within Syria as well as Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt). It is also seeking to support the neighbouring countries which have shown enormous generosity in hosting refugees, to cope with the impact of the crisis. In addition to commitments towards the 2016 UN-coordinated inter-agency appeals, the Conference is looking to raise significant funding for subsequent years to enable partners working in the region to plan ahead.

Policy objectives

Humanitarian assistance must help improve the situation of the millions in need inside Syria and look ahead to stabilisation needs. We must also create opportunities for refugees and their host communities in neighbouring countries, and support the efforts of the governments in the region hosting large numbers of refugees. Our efforts must keep in sight the aim that refugees will eventually return to Syria, equipping refugees with the knowledge and skills they will need for a successful return.

Economic Opportunities and Jobs

The large increase in numbers of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries is placing a significant economic and social burden on host-governments and communities which have shown great generosity in hosting refugees. Lack of economic opportunity is bad for refugees and bad for host governments. Participants in the Conference will aim to support efforts by host governments to strengthen economic opportunities for Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities, in areas such as access to external markets, access to concessional finance and increased external support for public and private sector job creation.

Education

It is estimated that there are 1.4 million refugee children from Syria in the five countries hosting refugees. Over 700,000 of these refugees are not receiving any education. Our overarching goal is to ensure that all refugee and host community children and young people are able to access education in refugee hosting countries by the end of the 2016/17 school year. We will aim to prepare young people for work, setting qualitative targets for providing and scaling up vocational training and improving access to higher education. We also aim to increase access to safer learning for the more than two million children who are currently out of school inside Syria.

Inside Syria

The Conference will reaffirm the international community's commitment to protect civilians from harm and the need for humanitarian access. It will provide a platform to demand an end to abuses and commit essential support to deliver safer communities, access to healthcare and safer education in Syria (e.g. mine risk education, activities to prevent gender-based violence, rehabilitation of health facilities, and provision of support to children). Improvements in daily life on the ground will constitute important confidence-building measures to underpin the political process. The Conference will also provide a platform to discuss how the international community will work together to start rebuilding Syria in line with the Vienna process and UN Resolution 2254, whilst supporting resilience-building initiatives already underway in Syria.

Programme

Over 70 Member States have been invited along with key United Nations, International and Regional Organisations, NGOs and Private Sector representatives. The leaders of co-host countries and key regional countries will have prominent roles, including opening, closing or chairing key sessions or side events. The Conference agenda will aim both to facilitate pledges of funding and to focus attention on how the international community can work together more efficiently to help create economic and education opportunities for those affected by the crisis inside Syria and in the region.

CONCEPT NOTE - FINAL

The day will be opened by speeches by the co-hosts. Thereafter, the plenary sessions will be divided into pledging segments each introduced around a key theme of the Conference. Themes under consideration include humanitarian; economic opportunities and jobs; inside Syria, including protection of civilians from harm; and education. The plenary will be broken up with more dynamic content in the form of films, video link ups, and other speakers such as NGOs and private sector representatives.

The main Conference will be supported by side events and associated events that will be structured and sequenced to feed into the plenary. There will be an NGO conference and a business event on 3 February that will provide input to the main Conference.

Conference co-hosts
20.01.2016