

**CO-HOSTS DECLARATION OF THE SUPPORTING SYRIA AND THE REGION CONFERENCE,
LONDON 2016**

1. The leaders of Germany, Kuwait, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United Nations have today hosted the “Supporting Syria and the Region 2016” Conference in London, bringing together over 60 countries, international organisations, business, civil society, Syrians and people affected by the conflict to agree a comprehensive new approach on how we respond to this protracted crisis, building on the 2014 Berlin Conference and the three Kuwait Pledging Conferences.
2. As we enter the sixth year of this conflict in which widespread violations of International Humanitarian Law continue, the humanitarian situation is worse than ever before. With more than 250,000 people killed, 1.2 million injured and 6.5 million people displaced, there are now 13.5 million vulnerable people inside Syria alone. Over 4.5 million refugees from Syria have fled to neighbouring countries particularly Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Daesh/ISIL has further exacerbated this situation making life inside Syria even more desperate and putting further pressure on Syria’s neighbours. Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt have shown extraordinary generosity in hosting refugees but their communities are under considerable strain as basic services are overstretched. We pay tribute to all those who work to support and help refugees and civilians inside Syria, sometimes under very difficult conditions.
3. The international community must step up its efforts: the 2015 UN-coordinated inter-agency appeals were only 56% funded. We must support the efforts of the neighbouring countries so that Syrians see a future for themselves and their children in the region, rather than risking their lives by fleeing even further from their homes. Our efforts must keep in sight the aim that refugees will eventually be able to return voluntarily, in conditions of safety and dignity, to Syria, equipping them with the knowledge and skills they will need to rebuild their lives and their country. Women and girls must participate fully in all aspects of building peace and be protected, particularly from sexual violence.
4. That is why today participants at the Conference have committed to a step change in assistance and raised significant new funds for those affected by the crisis. We have pledged over \$10bn - [\$5.6] billion¹ for 2016 and a further [\$5.1] billion¹ has been committed for 2017-20 to enable partners to plan ahead. In addition Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and donors announced around [\$40 billion]¹ loans of which elements are on concessional terms. We welcome this commitment to the region and will support MDB efforts to develop new ways of responding to protracted crises and increasing access to sustainable lending by Spring.

Protection of civilians

5. The **protection** of civilians has been at the heart of the Conference. Participants condemned the continuing, intolerable levels of violence against civilians in Syria. There is an urgent need for an immediate lifting of all sieges across Syria and an end to attacks on medical facilities and schools and the violence against humanitarian workers. Participants demanded that all parties to the conflict bring

¹ Pledges received as of 15.00 on 4 February 2016.

an end to the ongoing violations of both International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, and stressed the need for international protection, access to safety and protection from forced return. We welcome the commitment of Conference participants to use their influence with all parties to the conflict to halt abuses, to allow humanitarian agencies rapid, safe and unimpeded access throughout Syria in order to reach besieged and hard-to-reach areas; to release any arbitrarily detained persons, particularly women and children; and to abide fully by the terms of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 2139, 2165, 2191, 2254 and 2258.

6. The pledges made today are an opportunity to ensure that, by funding the UN-coordinated and Red Cross/Red Crescent appeals and providing longer term support, urgent assistance reaches Syrians. The funding for the appeals will provide immediate healthcare, water, food and education including on mine risks, prevention of violence against women and girls, provision of support to children, rehabilitation of infrastructure and support for sustainable agriculture.

Supporting the Political Transition

7. Participants welcomed the start of talks in Geneva aiming at direct negotiations between the Syrian conflict parties and urged all sides to redouble their efforts to build confidence in negotiations, work towards a ceasefire, and alleviate the suffering of Syrians on the ground, ahead of the resumption of talks after 25th February. Only through a **political transition** which ends the conflict, based on the UN Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015) and the 2012 Geneva Communique, will there be a Transitional Governing Body in Syria which meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, providing safety and security for all. We called on all States, in particular International Syria Support Group (ISSG) countries, to use their influence on all parties to the conflict to constructively and meaningfully engage in negotiations and implement Confidence Building Measures.
8. Political transition in Syria, which must be inclusive and meet the needs of all Syrians, will require our support to stabilise the situation on the ground and to build peace. The international community needs to plan so we are ready to support a Transitional Governing Body, once it is established, building on the current humanitarian and resilience efforts inside Syria. The UN stands ready to coordinate **civilian stabilisation**, post-conflict peace building and recovery efforts and will begin planning work promptly. The UN will update the ISSG on these efforts on a regular basis. Participants agreed to give their full support to the planning process and to working in partnership with the UN, including by committing immediate resources in support of these efforts.

Transforming opportunities for refugees from Syria and the region

9. Participants agreed to reduce the pressure on countries hosting refugees by supporting them in providing access to jobs and education that will benefit both refugees and host communities. Through linking relief and development efforts, this will provide a lasting benefit for those countries as well as the tools for Syrians to re-build their own country once they are able to return.
10. Lack of **economic opportunity** is damaging for refugees and their host communities. We welcome the bold commitment of host governments to open up their labour markets to refugees, alongside their

determined efforts to create new jobs for their own populations, and to improve regulation and the investment climate in their countries. In recognition of this, participants agreed to support them in areas such as access to external markets, access to concessional financing and increased external support for public and private sector job creation. Donors will support employment creation programs, such as the ‘P4P initiative’ and we encourage municipalities and communities in our countries to strengthen collaboration with municipalities and communities in host countries for example by sharing know-how through a network of experts. Leading private sector partners added their commitment to these efforts, and their willingness to help bring new investment that will create jobs and decent work. With these efforts, we estimate that up to 1.1m jobs will be created for refugees from Syria and host country citizens in the region by 2018.

11. On **education**, participants agreed today that there will be No Lost Generation of children as a result of the Syria crisis. They committed that by the end of the 2016/17 school year 1.7 million children – all refugee children and vulnerable children in host communities - will be in quality education with equal access for girls and boys. We also committed to increasing access to learning for the 2.1 million children out of school in Syria itself. Participants noted that funding of at least \$1.4bn a year will need to be met from pledges to the UN appeal and additional bilateral and multilateral commitments. Participants also agreed the need to prepare young people for work, by increasing access to vocational training.

Conclusion

12. The attached documents² outline in more detail our shared commitment with the Governments of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey to work with the international community to support implementation of the above. They also outline our plan for civilian stabilisation; and set out the pledges made today for continued scrutiny which will be tracked by the co-hosts in co-ordination with the UN Financial Tracking Service and other mechanisms. We also note that funding raised through the UN appeals will support refugees and host communities in Egypt and Iraq. We agreed that delivering on these commitments was a priority and that progress should be tracked and reported to the co-hosts and other interested parties three months after the Conference and reviewed at the World Humanitarian Summit.
13. We have a responsibility to keep the Syria conflict and dire humanitarian crisis in sharp focus and to ensure that support reaches those who most need it and that their hope in the future is kept alive. Today’s Conference has not only generated financial commitments, but ensured that we take a new approach to how the international community responds to protracted crises. The international community, host countries and civil society now need to see through and implement our commitments, while actively pursuing a lasting political solution. We will review implementation at the World Humanitarian Summit in May; Top Donors Group in Kuwait; and at UNGA in September.

*Agreed by the Governments of Germany, Kuwait, Norway and the UK, & the United Nations Secretary General
London, 4 February, 2016*

² Updates available on www.supportingsyria2016.com