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EU must step up humanitarian response in and around Syria, MEPs say

EU must step up humanitarian response

Brussels/Vienna, 07.11.2012, 11:18 Time

USPA NEWS - The EU has a duty to help victims of violence in Syria and its neighbour countries, said members of the foreign affairs and development committees in a debate with Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva on Tuesday.

The EU, its member states, but also other major players, including Russia and China, must do more to relieve refugees and internally displaced people, they stressed.

MEPs praised Commissioner Georgieva and her services for their work in getting EU aid (over €250 million representing 74% of the registered assistance) to those in need, coordinating international support and advocating the importance of providing humanitarian relief in full compliance with international law of war. MEPs stressed that the EU should provide all the support it can, both within Syria and to neighbouring countries, in particular Jordan and Lebanon.

The EU's key humanitarian concerns are to gain access to people in need in a situation where fighting is moving rapidly from one place to another, persuade Arab donors and Russia to step up their contributions, and bring about a political solution to the conflict, which is the only way to end the suffering, Ms Georgieva said.

Asked about the contributions of China and Russia, Ms Georgieva said that these were "weak, given their economic strength and political stance.

." She agreed that "they have an obligation to do more". She also agreed with MEPs who pointed out that atrocities were being committed not only by the government, but also rebel forces and that the EU assistance should go to the most vulnerable neighbours, Jordan and Lebanon, without forgetting Turkey.
In the chair: Elmar Brok (EPP, DE) and Eva Joly (Greens/EFA, FR)

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-199/eu-must-step-up-humanitarian-response-in-and-around-syria-meps-say.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Simone Mayer - europarl

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