

# SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON SYRIA

THURSDAY, April 27<sup>TH</sup> 2023

## JOINT STATEMENT BY BRAZIL AND SWITZERLAND

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I deliver this statement on behalf of Brazil and Switzerland as co-penholders of the Syria humanitarian file.

First, I would like to thank Special Envoy Pedersen and OCHA Director Doughten for their precious updates. The shared information makes it evident that the humanitarian situation in Syria is dire, with needs more significant than ever before.

The protracted armed conflict in Syria has led to one of the most serious humanitarian crises of our time. The effects of the earthquake have added additional suffering and trauma for the civilians in Syria. It is important to consider the long-term impacts of this natural disaster of great magnitude that will go well beyond the scope of the initial emergency response. Increasing food insecurity, that today affects as many as 12 million people across Syria, and growing inability to maintain their livelihoods makes the situation of many Syrians even more challenging.

The impact that the last 12 years had on both the water and health infrastructure of the country have contributed to the outbreak of Cholera in Syria, affecting in particular small children. Limited access to water and inadequate sanitation increases the risk of disease outbreak. The erosion of the social and economic fabric risks to accelerate the collapse of critical infrastructure such as water systems, which could trigger further public health issues. The earthquakes have added another dimension of

vulnerability to overburdened communities. Overcrowding in inadequate shelters, displacements, unequitable access to water and health services are inhumane living conditions and they further contribute to increasing those risks.

In order for the UN and its partners to react and prevent such challenges, funding of both, the Syria Earthquake Flash Appeal, as well as the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2023 is crucial. It is important that all pillars of the Humanitarian Response Plan receive funding, including the third pillar. Resilience and early recovery activities contribute to enhancing livelihood as well as increasing access to basic services.

As clearly outlined in the Secretary-General's 60-day report, cross-border assistance remains an indispensable part of ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable. The measures introduced by the government of Syria in the aftermath of the earthquakes have contributed to broader access, including of UN staff, to vulnerable populations. We hope that this expanded and facilitated access continues for as long as necessary in line with OCHA's assessments.

Brazil and Switzerland reiterate the calls on all parties to facilitate timely, unimpeded and sustainable access for humanitarian assistance. All modalities of aid – including cross-border and cross-line – are necessary. In this regard, we welcome the improved humanitarian access in north-west Syria, including the opening of the two additional border crossings and the high number of UN inter-agency cross-border missions.

Furthermore, we once again recall that all parties must abide by their obligations under International Humanitarian Law. This includes taking concrete measures to prevent and minimize the effects of armed conflict on the most vulnerable, such as children.

Mr. President,

Without a political solution, there can be no lasting peace in Syria and the humanitarian needs will remain prevalent. The international community has a moral and humanitarian duty not to abandon the Syrian people at a time of acute need. The Security Council should place the wellbeing of the Syrian people at the center of its decisions and unite behind the humanitarian imperative.