



EU steps up humanitarian aid to Iraq by €25 million as more planes arrive to help Mosul

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Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management announces additional funding to help civilians in Iraq

Today the European Commission is stepping up its response to the humanitarian crisis in Iraq by a further €25 million, bringing total EU humanitarian aid to €159 million in 2016. The new funding comes in addition to aid deliveries this week by EU Member States which were channelled via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism for the current emergency in Mosul.

"The EU's aid operations are fully underway to support the Iraqi people suffering at this critical time, as the military campaign in Mosul reaches its tipping point. We are matching humanitarian aid funding with aid deliveries through the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism to help those most in need, like families who have been forcibly displaced by the conflict. It is crucial to ensure the protection of all civilians and respect of International Humanitarian Law, during and after the conduct of hostilities," said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**, who addressed a High level Informal Donor Meeting on the Humanitarian Response to the Iraq Crisis today in Brussels.

The EU humanitarian aid will prioritise emergency assistance to civilians in active conflict areas and those most likely to receive people fleeing ongoing military operations. Aid will include crucial health care, essential shelter and winterisation support, water, sanitation and hygiene items, food and protection where it is needed most.

€80 million of the EU's overall humanitarian funding for Iraq is dedicated to supporting preparedness and response to the Mosul and in Hawija emergencies.

Two planes carrying Austrian and German in-kind assistance are due to arrive today, in addition to other two planes with supplies from Finland, Denmark and Sweden that had already landed in Erbil city earlier this week.

Background:

Since 2015, EU humanitarian aid accounted for a total of over € 266 million and enabled life-saving operations throughout the country, especially in hard-to-reach areas and locations directly affected by the conflict. The European Union channels its substantial aid, through partner organisations, to where needs are the highest and in full respect of the humanitarian principles.

In addition to EU funding, supplies can also be channelled from EU Members States via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, which is managed by the Commission. The transport is co-financed by the Commission to 85% and coordinated by its Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC).

Humanitarian situation

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq is one of the largest and most complex in the world. More than 10 million Iraqis are currently in need of humanitarian aid, including more than 3.3 million civilians displaced within the country. As many as 13 million Iraqis are expected to require humanitarian aid by the end of the year. Active fighting in densely populated areas like Mosul has dramatically increased the threat to civilians and further limited humanitarian access to people in need. Military operations in and around Mosul could trigger mass displacement.

For more information

Mosul emergency: First in a series of planes delivering EU aid touches ground in Iraq: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-4352_en.htm

EU Humanitarian Assistance to Iraq: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/middle-east-north-africa/iraq_en

EU Civil Protection Mechanism: <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/node/524>