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Syria: EU, UN to co-chair second Brussels Conference on 24-25 April



As the situation on the ground in Syria deteriorates, the second Brussels Conference on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the region" will focus on humanitarian support and bolstering the UN-led political peace process in Geneva.

The second Conference on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the region" will take place in Brussels on 24-25 April, EU High Representative Federica Mogherini announced

today in Sofia, Bulgaria. The announcement came after an informal discussion with the 28 European Union's Foreign Ministers in the Bulgarian capital.

The Conference will focus on two goals, Mogherini explained: "First and foremost, humanitarian support to Syrians, both inside Syria and in neighbouring countries, namely Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. And – perhaps even more important – support to the UN-led political process in Geneva." Mogherini explained that all diplomatic efforts must strengthen the Geneva talks: "All roads must lead to Geneva," she noted.

The second Brussels conference will be co-hosted by the European Union and the United Nations. Mogherini said she "discussed this with the UN Secretary General [António Guterres] a couple of days ago in Kuwait," at an international donors conference for Iraq.

Speaking at a press conference in Sofia, the High Representative highlighted that "the situation on the ground [in Syria] is deteriorating" and "this is something the world shouldn't forget. The European Union doesn't forget." She confirmed that EU Ministers discussed "how to mobilise this humanitarian support, but also how to use the convening power of the European Union to support the UN-led political process that, as you know, is facing difficult moments in these weeks."

The first Brussels Conference on "*Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region*" took place in April 2017: it managed to raise US\$6 billion in funding to support humanitarian, stabilisation and development activities in 2017 in Syria and the region, and a further US\$3.7 billion for 2018-20. International financial institutions and donors also announced almost US\$30 billion in loans.

Like last year's Conference, Brussels II will offer the opportunity to gather the entire international community and review all key aspects of the Syria crisis: humanitarian, economic – that is, pledging – and political.

"The Conference – Mogherini concluded – will be the opportunity for us to mobilise both political support to the UN-led process and humanitarian aid for the Syrians inside the country and in the region. I have seen yesterday a clear unity and a clear determination of all our colleagues around the table in making sure that this is and becomes the strong contribution of the European Union to the efforts to find a solution to the crisis."

Photo credit: AFP

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[Supporting the future of Syria and the region](#)

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