

Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries
The Chair

Joint statement on Syria

“The Bab al-Hawa humanitarian aid corridor must remain open and the delivery of humanitarian aid must not be politicised. We cannot abandon the Syrian people”, say leading MEPs.

Ahead of the UN Security Council vote on the renewal of the Bab al-Hawa humanitarian aid corridor into north-west Syria on 10 July, the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, David McAllister (EPP, Germany), the Chair of the Committee on Development, Tomas Tobé (EPP, Sweden), the Chair of the Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries, Isabel Santos (S&D, Portugal), the Committee on Foreign Affairs’ Standing Rapporteur on Syria, Nathalie Loiseau (Renew Europe, France) and the Committee on Development’s Standing Rapporteur on Humanitarian Aid, Mónica Silvana González (S&D, Spain) said:

“The humanitarian corridor of Bab al-Hawa is a major lifeline for the 4.4 million Syrians living in north-west Syria, and we urge the members of the UN Security Council to renew the cross-border aid resolution in the upcoming vote on 10 July 2022. In order to avoid a major humanitarian crisis in the region, it is vital that humanitarian aid to civilians is allowed to continue.

Last year, in March 2021, the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling for the ‘renewal of the cross-border resolution in order to avoid a worsening humanitarian crisis’. Now, we are reiterating this call and asking for another renewal. We also call on the European Union to condemn and vigorously oppose any attempt, by any party, to politicise the delivery of aid to the Syrian people.

The humanitarian crisis in Syria is at its most dire and the need for humanitarian assistance is at its highest since the start of the war more than 11 years ago. In north-west Syria, more than 90 % of the population is dependent on aid and more than 60 % are internally displaced, with 1.7 million of them living in camps. At this moment, 4.4 million Syrians in north-west Syria depend on the cross-border delivery of humanitarian assistance for their daily survival. The provision of aid through the Bab al-Hawa crossing is therefore vital if we are to prevent a large-scale humanitarian catastrophe.”

Background

On 10 July 2022 the UN Security Council will vote on extending the exceptional authorisation for humanitarian aid delivery through the last remaining border crossing into north-west Syria at Bab al-Hawa. At a Security Council meeting on 20 June 2022, UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged the Security Council to extend the resolution that allows cross-border deliveries of lifesaving aid into north-west Syria for another 12 months. According to UN OCHA, “The Government of Syria is notified in advance of each shipment and a UN monitoring mechanism was established to oversee loading in neighbouring countries, including to confirm the humanitarian nature of consignments”.

On 11 March 2021 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising in which it condemned the actions of those UNSC members that have

sought to limit humanitarian access for political purposes; and urged all UNSC members to support the renewal of the cross-border resolution in order to avoid a worsening humanitarian crisis and to ensure the expansion and support for cross-line interventions carried out in line with humanitarian principles.