Background

Representatives from Member States, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations gathered in Kuwait City on 30 January 2013 to attend the high-level International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria. The conference, which was hosted by the Emir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah, and chaired by the Secretary-General, raised some US$1.5 billion pledged by 43 member states for humanitarian work to help Syrians. Those funds were used to support life-saving help for millions of displaced people in Syria and refugees in the region, including emergency food rations, mobile medical care and vaccinations, clean water and sanitation, and basic shelter. The money has also supported vital logistics, psychosocial and protection work.

The humanitarian situation in Syria and the conditions for refugees in neighbouring countries continue to deteriorate. More than 9 million Syrians now need assistance, and 6.5 million of them are displaced inside their own country, struggling to survive and cope with the crisis. More than 2.2 million people have fled to neighbouring countries since January 2012. While a political solution to this crisis is sought, as neutral and impartial humanitarians, efforts must continue to protect civilians and deliver aid.

Purpose

The second Pledging Conference for Syria is scheduled to take place on 15 January 2014 in Kuwait City and will be chaired by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and hosted once more through the generosity of the Emir of Kuwait.

Despite the best effort of generous nations in the region and beyond, appeals for humanitarian needs in Syria remain underfunded including the Revised Syrian Humanitarian Assistance and Response Plan (SHARP) and the Regional Response Plan (RRP). This has a significant impact on the ability of humanitarian agencies, the UN and partners to assist the Syrian people. The SHARP and RRP for the year 2014 representing the new requirements will be launched on 16 December 2013, with a combined requirement of $6.5 billion to address urgently needed humanitarian assistance inside and outside of Syria. The aim of the Conference is to mobilize the required financial resources to enable the United Nations and its partners to meet urgent humanitarian needs, and to harness solidarity among concerned nations for the plight of the Syrian people.

Participation

The Conference will be at the Ministerial-level with invitations sent by the Secretary-General to member states encouraging their participation and pledges during the conference.

The Secretary-Generals of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), League of Arab States (LAS), the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the European Union (EU) will be invited to participate in the conference. Furthermore, key UN Agencies and non-governmental organizations will be invited to attend.

Format

The Conference will be a one day event dedicated to mobilizing the required resources to enable strengthening of the humanitarian response in Syria and neighbouring countries and highlight challenges in the response.

Opening: The Conference will be opened by the Emir of Kuwait (but not chaired), followed by a statement of the UN Secretary-General (UN-SG) as Chair of the Conference.

Brief Film/ Video Presentation: After the opening, a short (3 min) film will be screened summarizing the humanitarian issues in Syria and highlighting the need for solidarity with those affected by the humanitarian crisis in Syria.
Reporting back from previous pledging conference, and outlining latest humanitarian situation and challenges: A more detailed overview of actions in the past 12 months, and humanitarian challenges and priorities, the main elements of the revised Syria humanitarian response plans, and the resource requirements and shortfalls will be presented by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/ the Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA) and the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

*Member States from the Floor:* Participants will be invited to announce pledges (maximum 3 minutes each) against funding requirements for humanitarian action for the Syria crisis.

*Closing:* Closing remarks to be delivered by the Foreign Minister of Kuwait H.E. Sheik Sabah al-Khaled al-Hamad al-Sabah and the UN Secretary-General.

*Press Conference:* participants to be determined.

*Note:* Arrangements will be made for bilateral meetings to take place in the margins of the conference.