



The United Nations and the European Union today said that pledges made at a two-day conference in support of Syria in Brussels were “a good start.”

Pledges worth \$4.4 billion were made at the conference. “We would have liked to raise even more and have our appeals fully funded, but it is a good start,” Mark Lowcock, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs said.

Mr. Lowcock, said that more pledges were likely to be made, since many countries including the US were still engaged in internal budget discussions. In addition pledges worth \$3.3 billion were made for 2019 and onwards. Mr Lowcock singled out the EU, Germany and the UK for praise for their generous pledges.

The Brussels Conference was convened by the European Union and the United Nations, aimed at raising funds to support Syria and the region, amid efforts to reinvigorate diplomatic efforts to end the violence that has left 13.1 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.



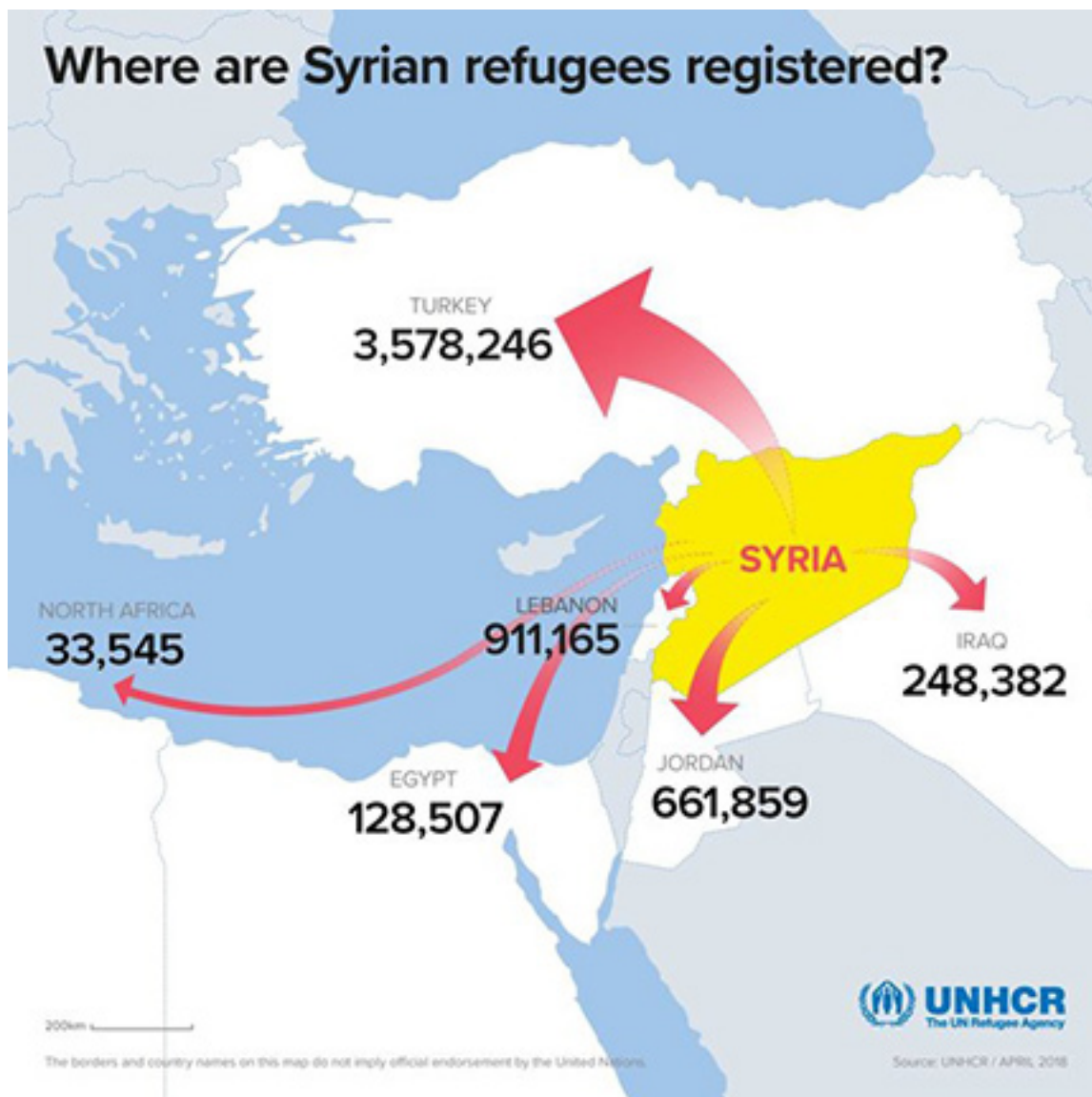
Staffan de Mistura, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Syria, said that no one had expected a political breakthrough at this Conference, but the simple fact that there was no confrontation was a good sign.

“Remember, one week ago we were on the brink of a very serious crisis, there was very tense cold war rhetoric and even military activities taking place. Thank God this was avoided, thanks to mature thinking,” de Mistura said.

The 24-25 April Conference on is the second one that the EU and the UN have held to highlight the dramatic humanitarian crisis, a dire shortfall in funding and continued shortages for food, medicine, water, shelter, education, protection and other pressing needs. According to Mr. Lowcock \$6 billion were raised at the last conference.

Syrians are not the only people who have suffered from the conflict in Syria. Palestinians are among those worst affected. Of the estimated 438,000 Palestine refugees remaining inside Syria, over 95% (418,000) are in critical need of sustained humanitarian assistance. Almost 254,000 are internally displaced.

While the focus of the Brussels Conference is the dire humanitarian situation of Syrians inside the country as well as those who have fled to others, EU and UN officials pointed to the need to end the violence and find a political solution. "It is time for high diplomacy," De Mistura told journalists. "We need the arms to be silent," High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Federica Mogherini.



# **\$4.4 billion raised for Syria at EU/UN Conference**

Wednesday, 25 April 2018 00:00

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