PRESS RELEASE

Switzerland: the Terre des Hommes movement calls on the Swiss government to increase its support to Syrian refugees.

Syrian children. Twice as victims of the conflict

Lausanne / Geneva/ Basel, 15 October 2013

Even though an opening by the Swiss government has to be acknowledged, the Terre des Hommes movement in Switzerland calls on the Swiss government to welcome more Syrian children and refugee families and to strengthen its assistance on the field, with the support of the population.

The movement Terre des Hommes in Switzerland recognizes the efforts of the Swiss government in the Syrian conflict and its engagement to welcome a group of 500 refugees. Nonetheless, keeping in mind the scope of such a huge humanitarian disaster, it incites the government to speed up the arrival of additional groups, giving priority to the most vulnerable persons, mainly children and their families. The NGOs appeal also to the authorities and to the Swiss people to keep up with and to strengthen their support on the field, in order to relieve people who are already severely affected by the armed conflict.

«On the threshold of winter, without a massive intensification of the engagement by the international community, the survival of thousands of children will drop dramatically. Then, we could not but deplore more tragedies connected to forced migrations, which endanger the lives of refugees», states Vito Angelillo, General Director of Terre des Hommes – Helping children worldwide, referring to the recent slaughter of women and children in the Mediterranean Sea. «We cannot accept that children and youth, who have already been traumatized by the harshness of the war and who have succeeded in escaping from it, end up by dying on the gates of Europe» Angelillo rises up «The reinforcement of field assistance is essential to prevent such tragedies».

Indeed, Terre des Hommes local staff has observed that access to services, such as water, sanitation, health, food, work and education and to a safe environment for children, is narrowing more and more in Syria’s neighboring countries (which are receiving more than 2 millions refugees). According to the UN, the number of refugees will rise 5 millions by the end of next year.
The assistance to children and their families, along with the support to hosting communities in neighboring countries, is a humanitarian obligation that the international community as a whole must take on and to which Switzerland must keep on giving its contribution to.

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Sources

German version: http://assets.terredeshommeschweiz.ch/downloads/medienmitteilung_terre_des_hommes_zu_syrien.pdf