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Jordan and the international community need to renew the commitments made at London, aid agencies say

The commitments secured at London a year ago to invest in Jordan's economic growth and stability for all citizens' benefits and improve Syrian refugees' access to education, legal employment and sustainable livelihoods opportunities are as important today as they were in early 2016, fifty-four aid agencies stress today.

The Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) welcomes the opening today of an international conference on the Syria crisis in Brussels. This important gathering should serve as an opportunity to further the strong partnership between the Government of Jordan, the international community and the civil society to jointly work together to improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria and vulnerable Jordanians, who continue to struggle with the consequences of six years of conflict.

A year ago, the Government of Jordan and the international community took the courageous steps to ensure all Syrian children would have access to formal education and their parents would have improved access to economic opportunities in return for increased investments in Jordan. The groundbreaking and innovative Jordan Compact has delivered on many fronts but much more is still required to lift vulnerable Jordanians and Syrians out of poverty and support the economic growth and stability so that the crisis is turned into a real "development opportunity" for Jordan.

"Jordan has shown more solidarity and compassion with Syrian refugees than most countries present in Brussels today. Now is not the time to leave Jordan without support, particularly when we are beginning to see tangible improvements in people's lives on the ground" said Marta Rodriguez Country Director for Oxfam.

While the primary focus of the Brussels conference looks into Syria itself, it must also tackle the protection needs and realities of the civilian population on the ground including reiterated commitment to international human rights and legal standards. This includes the right to registration and legal documentation for refugees in Jordan, the voluntariness of return to Syria and the assurance to avoid simplifying the debate on the establishment of safe zones in Syria as a solution to the displacement situation. For Syrian refugees to feel safe and protected is the fundamental underpinning to the promises made in London. The conference should review and assess progress made against these commitments, and identify obstacles which require policy changes to ensure the Jordan Compact adequately benefits Jordanian communities and Syrian refugees.

The conference needs to demonstrate continued commitment and support to Jordan who will continue to bear the brunt of the consequences of the crisis, including through the announcement of new pledges to meet ongoing humanitarian needs and consider other funding mechanisms to support its economy.

"At a time when there is no political solution in sight in Syria, and new Syrian families are being displaced on a daily basis, this conference should not blur the humanitarian and political agendas by overly focusing on reconstruction efforts inside Syria. Syrian refugees need to be properly protected and assisted at the places of their current residence" warned Said Karmaoui, Country Director for Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale.