



THE ANDREA BOCELLI FOUNDATION RESPONDS TO POPE FRANCIS' APPEAL AND SUPPORTS THE SYRIAN EMERGENCY (TOGETHER WITH THE UNITED NATIONS REFUGEE AGENCY)

The Andrea Bocelli Foundation as part of its program Break the Barriers, dedicated to breaking down the barriers such as poverty and marginalisation in Italy and Developing Countries, has decided to accept the appeal that Pope Francis earnestly launched on Easter Sunday in the search for a political solution to the Syrian crisis and to help the increasingly serious situation afflicting thousands of refugees.

Thanks to the relationship with UNHCR (United Nations Refugee Agency), the Foundation has decided to support, the purchase of basic necessities for refugee camps that are home to millions of Syrian refugees forced to leave their homes and their lives due to the prevailing situation in their country.

"There are causes, appeals, to which we feel obliged to respond", said the Chairperson Laura Biancalani, "because in our fight against poverty and inequality we always try to work, beginning with the deep respect for the dignity of all people, to create conditions in which each individual is free to express themselves or in this case be able to express themselves once again. Furthermore, in this case, we cannot but empathise with these people, refugees are people like us, of different social and economic backgrounds who from one day to the next have had to give up everything in order to survive."

In the past seven weeks, 400 thousand people have fled, bringing the total number of Syrian citizens registered as refugees or awaiting registration to 1,367,413. If the current trend continues, estimates suggest that by the end of this year 3.5 million refugees and 6.5 million internally displaced Syrians will be in need of assistance.

These are frightening figures. The situation is not only serious and worrying but is likely to be unsustainable. There is no way to cope adequately with the enormous humanitarian needs that this data suggests. And it's really hard to imagine how a nation can endure such suffering.

"We thank UNHCR for keeping us constantly updated on the situation of the refugee camps that have been welcomed by neighbouring Syrian countries (Jordan, Lebanon, but also Iraq, Turkey and Egypt) and we invite everyone to do their part because a small gesture can help our brothers and sisters survive in a dignified manner whilst they wait to return to their loved ones, their homes, their Land. "

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