



For Immediate Release

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE launches an emergency appeal to support its work among victims of the war in Syria

Montreal, June 21, 2013 – The extremely violent conflict rocking Syria for the last two years has led to the death of nearly 93,000 people, has caused over 4 million individuals to become internally displaced, and has forced more than 1.6 million others to flee to neighbouring countries. DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE has worked in the Middle-East since its founding in 1967 and has been intervening for 10 months to assist the most vulnerable populations, those who are victims of the civil war. As of today, the organization intends to reinforce its work and provide greater support for its partners in the region so as to respond to the growing needs of millions of individuals.

Since October 2012, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE has been taking action to help the victims of the civil war in Syria, and providing support for its partners in the region, mainly Caritas Syria, Caritas Lebanon, Caritas Jordan, Caritas Turkey and Menapolis. These partners work with refugees from the conflict, both inside and outside camps, and with host families, by offering medical and psychological and social services, establishing mobile medical clinics, providing medical and other equipment, and distributing food and non-food items. The most vulnerable individuals receive priority assistance: pregnant women, children, and the wounded. Bombardments in densely populated zones have claimed and continue to claim numerous victims within civilian populations.

Faced with the crying needs of the Syrian people, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, in conjunction with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), is launching an emergency appeal to all Catholics and to the Canadian population as a whole, asking them to support the work of the various partner organizations of the region. “We note today that despite the diplomatic pressure on the parties to the conflict, civil populations are being deliberately targeted, in defiance of international humanitarian law,” deplores Michael Casey, Executive Director of DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, adding, “It has become obvious that the human tragedy unfolding before our eyes unfortunately shows little sign of abating. We must reinforce our actions in dealing with a conflict that is dragging on and making the lives of the most vulnerable increasingly difficult with each new day.”

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE is responding to the message of Pope Francis, calling upon us to assist the Syrian people “without regard for ethnic or religious affiliation, as the most direct way to contribute to peace and to the upbuilding of a society open and welcoming to all of its different constituent parts.” The organization is also reacting to emergency appeals from the various Caritas branches of the region and other local partners so that they can pursue their activities with Syria’s displaced persons and refugees, as well as with increasingly vulnerable host populations. A special fundraising drive will be held in parishes from June 30 to September 14, 2013. Donations may be made right now by telephone (1-888-664-3387), on line at www.devp.org/donate/syria, or by mail, by sending a cheque made out to DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE (please specify *Crisis in Syria*) to the following address :

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