

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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Public urged to voice their outrage and demand action to prevent a lost generation in Syria

Children cannot afford another year of bloodshed, suffering and missed education, warn aid agencies

NEW YORK, 24 February 2014 – UNICEF, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Mercy Corps, Save the Children and World Vision today issued an impassioned appeal to the general public, urging it to voice its outrage at the devastating impact on children and alarming long-term consequences of a lost generation as the conflict in Syria approaches its fourth year.

Nearly 5.5 million children are now affected inside Syria and in neighbouring countries. The five organizations warn that without an end to the relentless horror and suffering for children and without increased investment in their education and protection, an entire generation could be lost to Syria and the wider region.

The organizations are calling for the public to join in a massive call for action, hosted on www.change.org (<http://bit.ly/nolostgeneration>). The call for action is directed at all those who have the responsibility and the ability to bring an end to the suffering of children and safeguard their future.

In addition to the immediate protection of children, the call for action stresses the importance of breaking the cycle of violence and providing children and young people with the support they need now to play a constructive role in the future peace and stability of Syria and the region.

The five demands are:

- **An end to the violence against the children of Syria.** All those involved in the fighting must fully respect humanitarian law, end the recruitment of children, and commit to a peaceful resolution to this conflict.
- **An end to blocking of humanitarian assistance.** Humanitarian organizations must be allowed to safely reach all those who are suffering.
- **An end to attacks on humanitarian workers and facilities** – especially schools and hospitals.
- **A renewed commitment to reconciliation and tolerance** – led by all communities affected by the conflict, involving children and young people.
- **More investment in the education and psychological protection of all children affected by the conflict.** Children need help to recover from the traumas they have faced and acquire the skills they will need to help rebuild their country and strengthen the stability of the region.

The public appeal aims to engage at least 1 million voices of support before the war in Syria reaches the end of its third year on 15 March.

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To join the public appeal, please go to the following link on change.org:

<http://bit.ly/nolostgeneration>

Attention broadcasters: Broadcast quality PSAs, b-roll and photo are available at

<http://weshare.unicef.org/mediaresources>

Campaign hashtags: #childrenofsyria #NOlostgeneration

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