AGBU, ARS ASSIST SYRIAN-ARMENIANS

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Category: Opinions

In response to the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Syria and its impact on the 80,000-strong Syrian-Armenians, the AGBU and the ARS have announced they would assist the community, mainly financially.

In a media announcement from the AGBU's New York head office, the organization said, "The ongoing and expanding militarized conflict in Syria has created a serious humanitarian crisis for the population and is threatening, among others, residential areas where concentrations of our Armenian community and institutions are situated, particularly in Aleppo, Damascus, and Kamishli. Several families have already been dislodged as a result of the fighting among government and opposition forces and the use of heavy artillery involved."

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The Central Board of Directors moved on August 3, 2012 to set aside an AGBU Emergency Fund for Humanitarian Assistance to the Armenian Community in Syria, in the amount of $1M (USD one million).

A special task force, in cooperation with the District Committee of Syria, is in the process of assessing the emerging needs, to create the appropriate logistics in compliance with federal and international guidelines, to help and support our community there. Necessary arrangements are also underway in AGBU's centers locally in Aleppo, Damascus and Kamishli, to make them operational hubs for coordinating the relief efforts, extending help to families in other locations as well, wherever the need arises. They will also be prepared to accommodate those who may have to be temporarily moved out of their homes. The possibility of making AGBU facilities in Cyprus available as temporary shelter for families, who may need to move out of the country, is under consideration.

AGBU is in close communication with officials in Armenia to be appraised of the diplomatic efforts and social and organizational initiatives being taken to address the situation.

AGBU President Berge Setrakian sent out today an urgent appeal to the Union's membership worldwide to join forces and use their resources to help the Syrian community that has symbolized

historically the ultimate humanitarian refuge for the survivors of the Genocide.

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ARS Eastern USA 92nd Convention Raises $22,000 for Syrian Schools

Delegates attending the 92nd annual Eastern Regional ARS Convention in Florida this week responded to a resolution calling for assistance to Syrian-Armenian schools caught in the wake of recent turmoil in that country.ARS Logo Blue Crowdrise 4e0240d8a96a4 300x300 ARS Eastern USA 92nd Convention Raises $22,000 for Syrian Schools

Upon hearing an appeal for immediate help, members from 19 chapters volunteered the sum of $22,000 (chapter donations of $13,400 and individual contributions of $8,600).

Silva Kouyoumdjian, chairwoman of the Eastern Region's Executive Board, praised the outpouring of support. "Our members, many of whom are from that region and have acquaintances there, truly rose to the occasion," she said. "We pray for those who are caught in the uprising and hope that conditions improve quickly."

The ARS recognizes that as a consequence of recent developments in Syria, the Armenian community may face social and financial instability. In response, funds for "tuitions to needy students" was also set up, in an attempt to alleviate the financial burden of needy Syrian- Armenian families and, at the same time, promote the continuity of the educational mission of the schools.

"The economic crisis has inevitably affected the Armenian community and the number of families and students receiving aid," the Executive Board announced. "We have no doubt that Armenian communities throughout the world, along with global ARS entities, will join the Eastern Region in responding to the crisis in Syria. It hits home with many of our ungerouhis."

The 41 delegates also passed a resolution to provide $25,000 to assist with a construction project at Camp Haiastan of Franklin, Mass.