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l'Arche de Noé

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ECONOMY

The EU supports Armenia-Georgia and Armenia-Iran energy and economic links

The European Union has provided EUR 10.2m in investment grant and technical assistance for the electricity grid interconnection with Georgia to be implemented by the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) under the Caucasus Transmission Network project.

The link allows continuous energy trade between the two countries, and in particular allows Armenia to better access regional and European markets. The link will improve



security of electricity supply in both participating countries.

"The EU Neighborhood Investment Fa-

city (NIF) grant will not only ensure the overall financing, but have a positive economic impact on the project finally resulting in limiting the potentially required end user tariff increases for the Armenian consumers thereby contributing to energy affordability especially for the poorer part of the population. In addition the EU NIF funds will be used to adapt energy sector regulation approximating EU standards," said the EU Ambassador, Andrea Wikström.

UN releases \$2 million for lifesaving humanitarian assistance to war-affected people in Armenia



The United Nations has released \$2 million for the delivery of lifesaving humanitarian assistance to people who have sought refuge in Armenia as a result of the recent conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. These funds will immediately support the Armenia Inter-Agency Response Plan launched last week, which outlines response needs for the UN and humanitarian partners to meet the critical needs of those displaced and host communities.

Six weeks of fighting last year in the Nagorno-Karabakh area ended with a trilateral ceasefire statement on 9 November, after more than 90,000 people, mostly women and children, had been displaced to Armenia.

"The United Nations began supporting people forced to flee their homes at the onset of the conflict and will continue

as long as people remain vulnerable" said the UN Resident Coordinator in Armenia, Shomsi Shup. The UN is committed to supporting and ensuring the protection, especially of the women, men, girls and boys from in and around Nagorno-Karabakh who are in Armenia and who have been impacted by the recent conflict.

Funding from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) will help provide prioritized assistance for persons in refugee-like situations and host communities. Delivered through UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM, this will include protection support to ensure that all vulnerable groups, especially children, have access to schools, psychosocial support and primary health services, as well as shelter and non-food items assistance to endure the winter. Women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities will be prioritized for life-saving assistance as the funding is disbursed.

The Response Plan scales up support already provided since the beginning of the conflict. From October until December 2020, the UN agencies and partners distrib-

uted over 33,310 non-food items, including bedding items, towels, hygiene supplies, and household items, in addition to providing 1,000 foldable beds, psycho-social support services to women and children and covering the utility costs for 64 collective shelter facilities. Some 11,500 school-age children, who are currently enrolled in primary and secondary education in Armenia, were also assisted. Further, hundreds of metric tons of food assistance has been provided to approximately 18,000 people each month, along with a number of other actions.

The Armenia Inter-Agency Response Plan was launched last week, under the joint leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and UNHCR, the United Nations Country Team, together with NGO partners. The Response Plan involves 36 humanitarian partners and 188 projects with total financial requirements amounting to \$ 62.6 million across six key sectors: protection, including child protection; education; shelter and non-food items; food security and nutrition; health, and early-recovery.

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