

# Scottish Government pledges extra £1m for refugees



*First Minister announces funding to help refugees integrate into Scotland.*

The work of the taskforce co-ordinating Scotland's practical response to the humanitarian crisis in southern Europe will be supported by an initial £1 million in Scottish Government funding to ensure that services across Scotland are prepared to deal with the arrival of refugees. Further support will be considered as the taskforce progresses its work.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon confirmed the funding will help the taskforce as it begins its work this week establishing Scotland's capacity in a range of areas such as housing, language support, transport, health and social services.

The group, which was established following a humanitarian summit convened by the First Minister that brought together political and religious leaders, humanitarian groups and wider civic Scotland, is also tasked with establishing how the goodwill of the public in Scotland can be harnessed and turned in to practical steps to help those in need.

The First Minister confirmed that the group – to be chaired by Europe and International Development Minister Humza Yousaf – will now use the funding to support local authorities, the third sector and humanitarian groups in delivering the practical steps required to welcome to Scotland those fleeing persecution in Syria and elsewhere.

The First Minister said:

“The heartbreaking scenes of desperate people fleeing their

homes and looking for refuge in Europe have touched many people in Scotland and I know that there is great support across the country for us to play our part in offering what help we can.

“During the humanitarian summit I convened on Friday, we heard the personal testimony of those who escaped persecution or war and have now been welcomed in Scotland and made to feel part of the community. Their stories are inspirational and I hope that the steps we are now taking can help many more refugees like them make a better life for their families.

“After that summit I announced that the steps required for us to accommodate our fair share of refugees would be examined and co-ordinated by a taskforce, which will begin work this week establishing Scotland’s capacity in a range of important areas such as housing and health services. It will also have a crucial role in harnessing the good will that exists in Scotland and turning that into practical help for those in distress.

“Today I am pleased to confirm that the work of that taskforce will be supported by an initial £1 million in Scottish Government funding. This initial funding will ensure that the frontline organisations who will help refugees integrate into Scotland will have resources to carry out their work. We will consider what further support is required as the taskforce progresses its work..”