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**To:** "Jeevacation@gmail.com" <Jeevacation@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Fw: Soros on Syria  
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**From:** George Soros [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 08, 2013 01:38 AM  
**To:** Terje Rod-Larsen  
**Subject:** Soros on Syria

## GeorgeSoros.com Newsletter



Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Last night George received the Freedom Award from the International Rescue Committee in recognition of his lifelong support of human rights and open society. He used his acceptance speech to offer the following analysis of the situation in Syria and also pledged \$1 million to help the IRC with humanitarian efforts in the war torn country.

All best,

Michael Vachon

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Remarks at the International Rescue Committee Gala (excerpt)

November 6, 2013

George Soros

We are witnessing a major unresolved humanitarian crisis in Syria. People are starving, soon they will be freezing. Children are malnourished and the first cases of actual starvation have been observed. If the situation stretches into winter, the death toll from hunger and illness could begin to exceed deaths from violence, the New York Times reports. If the crisis lasts longer, a generation of Syrians may become stunted.

This situation has arisen because both the government and the rebels use the denial of humanitarian aid as a tool of war.

While the prospects for political settlement have actually improved since Russia and the Western powers found common ground on chemical weapons, conditions for the civilian population are deteriorating because both sides continue to interfere with aid delivery in order to improve their negotiating positions in the coming peace talks.

As the International Crisis Group concluded in its recent report, we are today in a paradoxical situation where rebels, refugees, traders, and civilians—everybody except those delivering humanitarian aid—can freely cross the borders.

This cannot be tolerated. Urgent action is needed to provide access for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The UN Under Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos was meticulous in delivering aid only through government channels but she has now recognized that this is not working.

A Presidential Statement of the Security Council called on all parties to the conflict to facilitate safe and unhindered delivery of aid. Unfortunately this appeal had no effect on the ground. Amos is now calling for humanitarian aid to be allowed to move across borders and combat lines.

This is an absolute necessity. The IRC has to take the lead in two areas. First it must continue to show the way to governments by providing assistance inside Syria and in the neighboring countries. In fact, the IRC is already providing cross border assistance working in numerous location. And my foundation recently committed more than one million dollars to humanitarian groups for the same purpose. This all needs to be done on a much larger scale.

Second, the IRC must continue to lead a campaign to raise public awareness about the humanitarian crisis in Syria. Both the public and the governments are suffering from donor fatigue. That is why the Security Council has failed to back up its Presidential Statement with a binding resolution and that is why the UN aid program for Syria is only 40 percent subscribed.

I can understand why the public is so apathetic. I also consider the humanitarian crisis in Syria a glaring failure of international governance. My Open Society Foundations aim at preventing humanitarian catastrophes and engage in humanitarian assistance only as an admission of failure. But we prefer to confront harsh reality than to put our heads in the sand. It is better to admit defeat than to allow the humanitarian catastrophe to continue. And by helping to end the humanitarian crisis we are laying the foundation for strengthening international governance.

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 George Soros

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