



General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

Red Cross Memorial Peace Appeal

On 11 November 2018 the centenary of the end of the First World War will be commemorated worldwide. Let us reflect on the truly terrible scale of death and destruction it caused.

Approximately 10,000,000 combatants were killed.

21,000,000 were wounded, disabled, lost limbs or blinded.

Up to 8,000,000 were confirmed missing.

Around 8,000,000 civilians lost their lives.

Unknown millions mourned the deaths of loved ones.

Millions of innocent animals, including 8,000,000 horses, were sacrificed.

The loss of countless billions in economic damage resulted. In France alone around 3,000,000 buildings and millions of hectares of agricultural land and forest were destroyed.

The environmental damage of the war was incalculable.

The war's eventual legacy was unprecedented political and economic dislocation, the rise of Fascism and the even more devastating global catastrophe of the Second World War, which itself claimed over 60,000,000 lives.

It has been estimated that the total number of lives lost in wars over the last century is well in excess of 100,000,000 men, women and children. We are still living with the human and environmental consequences of these murderous conflicts.

It is therefore fitting that we should solemnly remember all the dead of the First World War and all subsequent conflicts and the loss of over 100 million lives not just by commemorative words but by humanitarian action to save millions of lives today in the two most murderous wars being waged in our own time: Syria and Yemen. It is also appropriate that this life saving appeal should go through the Red Cross, which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its humanitarian works of mercy during and after the First and Second World Wars.

The war in Syria has lasted for over 7 years, longer than even the Second World War. More than 11.6 million people have fled their homes and over five million now live as refugees. Working with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the Red Cross is

providing shelter and delivering emergency aid, including food, water, blankets, soap and other essentials, across front lines to reach people most in need.

Yemen was plunged into civil war in March 2015. The economy and health services have collapsed, leaving 7 million people destitute. Children are dying of malnutrition. The country has been hit with the fastest growing cholera epidemic ever recorded, with more than half of the suspected cases children. Deadly clashes have left tens of thousands dead and over two million people displaced. Essential medicines are extremely scarce and only half of the health facilities are functioning. If war continues, Yemen could, according to the UN, be facing the worst famine in 100 years.

If you wish to respond to this emergency appeal please either donate online or send your cheque, made out to the **British Red Cross**, to: Red Cross Memorial Peace Appeal, British Red Cross, 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL and please mark it for the attention of Louisa McLellan. Thank you.

Signatories:

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