

Air and Light for Syria

A proxy war, an embargo and sanctions have been driving many people in Syria into abject misery for many years. As I was able to witness during a visit to several places in Syria in September 2024, there is still no end in sight to this downward spiral. When I was talking to a man, he said to me that he felt as if he was being strangled by the devastating effects of the economic embargo. After a war which was basically fought about the country's resources and which abused the population for this purpose, the political measures continue to virtually cut off the breathing air from those people who have remained in the country.

People currently are lacking not only essential medicines, fuel, electricity or heating oil for an even marginally bearable winter, but also any hope for a better future. When visiting a mother and her three daughters who are dependent on aid, the young women were asked about their plans and dreams for the future. One of the young women replied: "Future? There is no future for me here anymore..." when she left the room in tears.

Ever more people in Syria get the feeling that there is no light at the end of the darkness, not even enough air to breathe. These are the anonymous and invisible victims of war, embargo and sanctions. It is our responsibility to openly say how and by which means the inhabitants of Syria have been pushed into this precarious situation. In my view, leaving these people alone and stopping to think about them in their plight, continuing our own lives as if they did not exist, would amount to committing a crime against humanity.

In an environment marked by power outages day after day, which is therefore often dominated by darkness, I met people who are turning into shining rays of light themselves. Despite the fact of being constantly confronted by their own future fears, they still think of their fellow human beings and give them courage and comfort through their mere presence, even when they have nothing else to give. With their selfless deeds, these helpers outshine every source of light, and they manage to conquer darkness.



Personal impressions gathered
by Günter Kaltenbrunner
Volunteer helper of the foundation
Korbgemeinschaft
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