
World Zakat and Waqf Forum (WZWF) Press Conference
WZWF Calls on Global Zakat and Waqf Institutions
to Help Earthquakes in Turkiye and Syria

An earthquake measuring 7.8 magnitude rocked Gaziantep in the central region of Turkiye on Monday, 6 February 2023 at 4.17 in the morning local time. The United States Geological Survey said that the magnitude 7.8 earthquake occurred at 04:17 local time (01:17 GMT) at a depth of 17.9 km (11 miles) near the city of Gaziantep. The first quake was one of the largest ever recorded in Turkiye, even the shaking took two minutes to stop. The epicenter of the second or aftershock was in Elbistan District in Kahramanmaras Province and had a magnitude of 7.5.

This earthquake resulted in thousands of residents being killed and not a few who are still in the search process due to being buried under the rubble of buildings. According to Turkiye's Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD), at least 2,379 people in Turkiye were killed, several thousand were injured and at least 5,606 buildings collapsed. This earthquake also caused many casualties in Syria. At least 1,451 people died. According to Syria's national news agency (SANA), the 711 people killed were mostly in the areas of Aleppo, Hama, Latakia and Tartus.

The World Zakat and Waqf Forum (WZWF) invites zakat and waqf institutions worldwide to play an active role in helping earthquake victims in Turkiye and Syria. WZWF, as a forum for synergy between zakat management organizations, practitioners, academics and other zakat and waqf stakeholders, has a deep concern in the crisis caused by the earthquake that is currently happening in Turkiye and Syria. For this reason, WZWF invites all zakat organizations around the world to show their commitment to provide assistance to earthquake victims.

The World Zakat and Waqf Forum (WZWF) recognizes this natural disaster and calls upon all parties, and in particular, the WZWF member countries, to stand together to deliver emergency aid and humanitarian assistance to those affected by the earthquake in Turkiye and Syria. Zakat, Infaq, Waqf and Sadaqah is meant to alleviate poverty and create social welfare, thus as a global zakat and waqf institution it is urgent for the World Zakat and Waqf Forum to take action and respond to this tragedy. The WZWF calls for all nations across the globe to take action in humanitarian assistance and to provide aid from zakat, infaq, waqf, shadaqah, and other types of donation, to be distributed to the affected areas in Turkiye and Syria. In particular, the WZWF states the following:

1. Recognizing the World Zakat and Waqf Forum as the main forum at the global level for strategic advice coordination and partnership development for zakat and waqf, and recognizing also the contribution of the members;
2. Expressing gravest concerns about the humanitarian impacts of and risks posed by the short- and long-term effects of the earthquake which recently occurred in Turkiye and Syria, including on the already significant levels of humanitarian and development needs and suffering of people, including those in vulnerable situations and communities and acknowledging the related challenges for disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts;
3. Noting with concern that women, persons with disabilities, older persons, children and youth are often disproportionately affected in natural disasters, and stressing the need to ensure that their specific needs are identified and addressed in emergency preparedness and response;
4. Stressing the need for all relevant actors ensure that such responses are tailored to context, make use of appropriate tools and support local systems, including by building on local expertise and capacities;
5. Calls upon all member states to organize and prioritize the distribution of zakat and other Islamic Social Funds to Turkiye and Syria.

On behalf of the World Zakat and Waqf Forum, we would encourage all members to pray to Allah SWT to bless our Brothers and Sisters in Turkiye and Syria with His Mercy and Blessings and grant patience to all affected by the calamity.

The World Zakat and Waqf Forum

Jakarta, 7 February 2023

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