



Joint Statement on the earthquake in Syria

Background

On 6th February 2023, two earthquakes, with magnitudes of 7.7 and 7.6, struck Türkiye and Syria, affecting more than 6 million people in Syria. Around 293,000 people lost access to a safe and adequate shelter due to the devastating earthquakes and following aftershocks in Syria. In addition, people lost their winter clothes and household items, aggravating their coping in the middle of a harsh winter. Both urban and rural areas have been severely damaged, with already collapsed infrastructure and inadequate housing making it difficult to provide safe accommodation to the people in urgent need, which has led to large population movements.

The impacted areas are already affected by the 12 years of protracted crises that have devastated Syria's infrastructure, provision of essential services and economic situation, resulting in more than 15 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Most of the affected people are very vulnerable, with already exhausted resilience to withstand the additional emergency at this massive scale.

We, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, are extremely concerned about the severe humanitarian impact of the earthquakes and the pre-existing protracted armed conflict situation as well as other crises such as drought, extreme weather, Cholera and COVID19.

Committed to Scaling-up

In face of this crisis, the Movement is committed to an urgent and coordinated scaling up of our actions. SARC immediately mobilized staff and volunteers to provide assistance to affected people. Movement partners mobilized resources and re-allocated in country resources to support of SARC's response. Since the earthquake, the Movement has provided humanitarian assistance to more than 2.8 million people.

Regarding the Movement's Appeals, the Federation-wide network calls for CHF 200 million, for two years, prioritizing the most affected governorates throughout Syria. The ICRC launched a preliminary budget extension appeal of CHF 29 million to address urgent needs and support the affected people, bringing the ICRC's overall operational budget in Syria to CHF 200 million.

With search and rescue efforts concluded, the operation now targets the most vulnerable people and their immediate needs, including food and cash assistance, emergency shelter, essential household items, emergency health, mental health and psychosocial support, water and sanitation. Furthermore, the Movement partners are addressing the protection needs of children who have been orphaned and women who have been widowed. Gaps in medium-term needs will also be supported, such as rehabilitating shelters, education, health and water facilities as well as recovering people's livelihoods.

Working Together as one Movement

A Mini-Summit was held on 2 March 2023, reinforcing the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's (SARC) role as the Convener. It was also agreed that SARC will be supported by the IFRC network and by ICRC to scale up operations and the collective impact. SARC is supported by ICRC as the co-convener for security, while all three components will continue developing to the Movement Security Framework for all Movement partners. SARC and ICRC are responsible for drawing up Movement public communication guidelines and key messages in relation to the conflict, while communication guidelines and key messages related to the earthquake will be the responsibility of SARC with the IFRC.

The Movement partners, coordinated by IFRC, will ensure a coherent approach to National Society Development, strengthening the capacities of the local branches and increasing the Movement's efforts to reinforce the auxiliary role of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

Our commitment

In the interests of helping all people in need, the Movement partners are committed to strong collaboration and coordination, and to complementing each other's activities.

We, the Movement partners will make all efforts to significantly scale up the humanitarian impact reached through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and to ensure solid accountability towards the affected people. We commit to ensuring public communication and related humanitarian diplomacy efforts including advocacy for humanitarian needs relating to the earthquakes both in local and international forums are delivered through a cohesive and coordinated approach.

Representing the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere concern and solidarity with the affected population.

We thank all partners for their support.

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