

STATEMENT FROM TÜRKONFED PRESIDENT SÜLEYMAN SÖNMEZ ON THE KAHRAMANMARAŞ EARTHQUAKE

“WE ARE IN COOPERATION WITH THE STATE, NGOS, AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS”

Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation (TÜRKONFED) President Süleyman Sönmez made a statement to the press regarding the earthquakes, the epicenter of which was Kahramanmaraş and which caused huge devastation in the surrounding cities. Sönmez stated that they are ready to provide all necessary support to identify needs and to meet them including search and rescue efforts and stated that they act in coordination with the Earthquake Crisis Coordination established within the Governorships through member federations and associations in the regions. Expressing that they have implemented the natural disaster crisis management roadmap, Sönmez stated that they also provide for the region through their international cooperation.

Sönmez said in the statement:

6 February 2023-Istanbul / With two major earthquakes, the epicenter of which is Kahramanmaraş and affecting 10 of our cities, we are saddened to face the reality of earthquakes in our country, once again, in an extremely painful way. We wish God's mercy on those who lost their lives during the earthquakes and a speedy recovery to the injured ones. Now, our biggest wish is that our search and rescue teams reach our citizens under the rubble safely, that the injured recover, and that the needs of our people in the region are determined and met by considering the harsh winter conditions. We will overcome these difficult days by acting in unity and solidarity.

As TÜRKONFED, from the first moment of the earthquake, we are in an intensive coordination process with all relevant actors, especially our governors in the provinces and local governments. We have initiated our natural disaster crisis management roadmap to urgently fulfill all our duties, including to support search and rescue efforts, to identify needs and to meet them. In this context.

In the first stage, we have contacted the presidents of our 5 federations and 44 associations in 10 cities affected by the earthquake and asked them to actively support and contribute to the Earthquake Crisis Coordination established in our governorates and act in coordination. In this context, our federations and associations continue to work to determine the needs in their own regions.

As we have experienced before, the economies of disaster areas are seriously affected, and it is difficult for them to recover. For this reason, **in the second stage,** we will determine the status of the economic activity, the extent of the damage, and what needs to be done and meet with all the actors of the economy in the region through our federations and associations.

For the third stage, we have contacted AFAD. Our Earthquake and Disaster Crisis Management Teams within TÜRKONFED will go to the regions after the completion of the search and rescue efforts to identify humanitarian and economic needs. We will ensure that necessary steps are taken to meet these needs by coming together with representatives of public-local administrations, business world and civil society actors.

“Mexican and Venezuelan teams on their way via CBI”

In addition to these stages, we took action to cooperate on an international level. Mexican and Venezuela teams departed to help search and rescue efforts through the Connecting Business initiative (CBI) network, which operates within the United Nations and of which we, as TÜRKONFED, are the founder of the Türkiye Platform of it. As TÜRKONFED, we follow the processes closely, from search and rescue efforts to conditions of living, from economy to healing of wounds, in coordination in terms of international coordination, and maintain a facilitating task herein.

We extend our condolences to our country, especially to the earthquake region.