

PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBILITY-SHARING FOR REFUGEES IN TÜRKIYE AND FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RELOCATION OF SURVIVORS OF THE 2023 TÜRKIYE-SYRIA EARTHQUAKES

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The calls below complement the ones Amnesty International has made to the international community in its briefing “Türkiye/Syria: A human rights response to the 6 February earthquakes”,¹ and on occasion of the International Donors' Conference in support of the people in Türkiye and Syria, organised by the European Union on 20 March 2023.²

RESPONSIBILITY-SHARING FOR REFUGEES IN TÜRKIYE, INCLUDING THROUGH RESETTLEMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ADMISSION

For about a decade, Türkiye has been hosting the world's largest refugee population, with just over 4 million refugees and asylum-seekers under temporary and international protection. About half of Türkiye's refugees were residing in the 10 Turkish provinces most impacted by the earthquakes, including 1.7 million Syrian refugees (out of a total population of 3.5 million Syrians under Temporary Protection).³ Many refugees lost their homes in the earthquakes and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, reported that accommodation for them is a serious challenge.⁴

The magnitude of destruction and follow-up humanitarian crises in the areas affected by the earthquakes, including the widespread loss of livelihood in the regions where most refugees have been living in the last decade, severely limits prospects for durable solutions for refugees in the region. Local communities themselves have been gravely affected by the humanitarian disaster, critically limiting their possibilities of integrating refugees. Resettlement and humanitarian admissions could offer durable solutions for refugees most at risk and help alleviate pressures on local communities while they themselves face the humanitarian consequences of the earthquakes.

Amnesty International is calling on the international community to **share responsibility for the world's refugees with Türkiye**. Recommended measures include:

- **Urgently expedite resettlement of refugees currently in Türkiye.** Thousands of refugees have already been selected for resettlement by UNHCR in the affected regions and their transfer abroad must happen now urgently.
- **Significantly upscale resettlement of refugees currently in Türkiye.** Additional and targeted places and schemes should be offered in numbers adequate to the scale of the humanitarian crisis.
- **Set up new targeted resettlement and humanitarian admission schemes for refugees currently in Türkiye.**
- **Expedite, upscale or set up complementary humanitarian admissions schemes for refugees currently in Türkiye.**
- **Expedite, upscale or set up other complementary pathways, including community sponsorship, labour mobility and education opportunities for refugees currently in Türkiye.**
- **Extend family reunification schemes to beneficiaries of complementary, subsidiary or temporary protection** to allow refugees in other host countries to bring over their family members living in Türkiye.

- **Ensure that commitments for humanitarian assistance adequately address the needs of refugees in Türkiye.**
In particular:
 - Any financial assistance for refugees in Türkiye should be directed toward addressing humanitarian needs rather than migration control;
 - All refugees in Türkiye should be provided with access to humanitarian assistance without discrimination.

EXPANDING POSSIBILITIES FOR SURVIVORS OF THE EARTHQUAKES TO RELOCATE TO OTHER COUNTRIES

Considering the magnitude of destruction, internal displacement and continued humanitarian needs caused by the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, Amnesty International is calling on all countries to **expedite, expand and set up pathways for survivors to seek support abroad**. These pathways should be open for survivors of the earthquakes in both Türkiye and Syria and should include refugees and other third-country nationals or stateless people with habitual residence in the areas affected by the earthquake without discrimination. Recommended measures include:

- **Expediting visa processing**, including increasing capacity in consular representations in the region where necessary.
- **Relaxing visa requirements, applying maximum flexibility as to documentary and other requirements**, as survivors may have lost their passports or other documentation under the rubbles or may otherwise be unable to prove sufficient income or meet other ordinary requirements.
- **Waiving visa fees.**
- **Expediting, expanding, and setting up possibilities for family reunifications for earthquake survivors with family ties abroad**, including by applying broader definitions of family members to include for instance extended and non-nuclear family. Where relevant, EU countries should extend family reunification to beneficiaries of subsidiary or temporary protection with family members in the affected areas.
- **Expediting, expanding, and setting up humanitarian admission schemes** for the earthquake survivors at highest risk of suffering human rights violations in both Türkiye and Syria.
- **Expediting, expanding, and setting up opportunities for educational scholarships or labour migration** for earthquake survivors.
- **Granting extensions and renewal of existing visas and residence permits** for people originating from the areas affected by the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria.⁵

¹ [Türkiye/Syria: A human rights response to the 6 February earthquakes - Amnesty International](#)

² [Amnesty International recommendations ahead of the 20 March Donors' Conference for the people of Türkiye and Syria – European Institutions Office](#)

³ [Türkiye-Syria earthquake | UNHCR](#)

⁴ [Document - Türkiye - UNHCR: Emergency Response to Earthquake - 27.02.23](#)

⁵ Amnesty International opposes all returns to Syria. See [Syria: "You're going to your death" Violations against Syrian refugees returning to Syria - Amnesty International](#).