**Beat: News**

# U.N CALLS FOR $1 Bn TO HELP MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN TURKEY AFFECTED BY DEVASTATING

### U.S SEC. BLINKEN IS TO TRAVEL TO TURKEY

Paris, Washington DC, 17.02.2023, 00:08 Time

**USPA NEWS -** The United Nations today launched a three-month flash appeal for US$1 billion for Turkiye so that humanitarian agencies can help more than 5 million people affected by last week's cataclysmic earthquakes — the largest to hit the country in a century — in support of the Government-led response.Secretary Blinken will visit Incirlik Air Base in Turkiye on February 19 to see firsthand U.S. efforts to assist the Turkish authorities responding to the devastation caused by the February 6 earthquakes. He will then travel to Ankara, where he will meet with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavu?o?lu and other senior Turkish officials to discuss continued U.S. support to Turkiye and the Turkish people after the devastating earthquakes, as well as ways to further strengthen our partnership with Turkiye as a valued NATO Ally. Secretary Blinken will also thank the Government of Turkiye for its support for cross-border aid to affected areas of Syria.?

"The people of Türkiye have experienced unspeakable heartache," said Martin Griffiths, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, who visited the country last week. "I met families who shared their stories of shock and devastation. We must stand with them in their darkest hour and ensure they receive the support they need."? ?More than 9 million people in Türkiye have been directly impacted by the once-in-a-generation disaster, with more than 35,000 people having lost their lives as of 15 February, according to the Turkish Government.? ?The earthquakes struck at the peak of winter, leaving hundreds of thousands of people – including small children and elderly people – without access to shelter, food, water, heaters and medical care in freezing temperatures. Some 47,000 buildings have been destroyed or damaged, and thousands of people have sought refuge in temporary shelters across Türkiye.? ?Schools, hospitals and other essential services have been damaged or destroyed by the earthquakes. Many families have been separated, with hundreds of children now orphaned or unable to be reunited with their parents.? ?

Furthermore, Türkiye hosts the world's largest number of refugees. More than 1.74 million refugees live in the 11 provinces impacted by the earthquakes, according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).? ?The UN is coordinating the operations of thousands of search-and-rescue personnel in Adiyaman, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmara? and Malatya Provinces, and humanitarian organizations have begun relief operations in the hardest-hit areas, in support of the Government-led response. The UN and its partners are delivering hot meals, food, tents, warm winter clothing, blankets, mattresses and kitchen sets to people in need and dispatching medical supplies and personnel to affected areas. Psychosocial support is being provided, and child-friendly spaces and safe spaces for women are being established.? ?The funding from today's new appeal will target 5.2 million people. The resources will allow aid organizations to swiftly ramp up their operations to support Government-led response efforts in areas including food security, protection, education, water and shelter. (Source UNHCR)

**Article online:**
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-22302/un-calls-for-1-bn-to-help-millions-of-people-in-turkey-affected-by-devastating.html

**Editorial office and responsibility:**
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jedi Foster, Rahma Sophia RACHDI

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