



IN DEFENSE
OF CHRISTIANS

IDC Calls on the Biden Administration to Expand Humanitarian Aid for Earthquake Relief in Turkey and Syria

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Washington, DC – In Defense of Christians (IDC) calls on the Biden Administration to expand humanitarian aid for earthquake relief in Turkey and Syria.

In the early morning of February 6, 2023, areas in southern Turkey and northern Syria were struck by a series of catastrophic earthquakes and devastating aftershocks. Thus far, over 12,000 people are reported dead, with hundreds of thousands missing and displaced. The casualty count is climbing rapidly.

As the international community responds to this humanitarian crisis, the United States must consider all means available to contribute to the rescue effort and deliver humanitarian relief. Vetted NGOs, civil society organizations, churches and other faith-based organizations on the ground are ready to assist in the time-critical rescue effort and provide relief.

This catastrophic series of earthquakes dramatically exacerbates the human tragedy left in the wake of the twelve-year Syrian Civil War.

This disaster has devastated civilians—not governments. In the face of a human tragedy of this magnitude, the international community should not condition humanitarian support on a political litmus test. According to the U.S. State Department, “U.S. and international sanctions include exemptions for humanitarian aid.”

According to IDC Executive Director Richard Ghazal, “Southern Turkey and northern Syria are home to some of the world’s most ancient Christian communities.” Ghazal continued: “At a juncture in history when these Christian communities are on the brink of eradication due to longstanding social, political, and extremist threats, a natural disaster of this magnitude must be responded to with the utmost urgency and human compassion.”

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