



## Letter to the International Donors Conference

on 16 March, Brussels

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Donors at the Brussels Conference, we address you on behalf of tens of thousands of members of our free unions in northern Syria.

The world has witnessed the magnitude of the humanitarian catastrophe left by the devastating earthquake that struck southern Turkey and northern Syria and left tens of thousands of victims and injured in addition to destroying entire cities and the displacing millions of their people. The lack of heavy and necessary equipment at the White Helmets (Civil Defense) has led to the loss of many survivors stuck under the rubble, while the health sector has suffered severe attrition of human cadres, medical devices and consumables.

Northern Syria is an area of armed conflict that has seen the Assad regime and its backers -Russia and Iran- bomb opposition areas in North and Northwest Syria, inflicting many times the human and material losses caused by the recent earthquake.

The earthquake disaster came to add a new burden on the population, which moves the humanitarian situation from a state of "humanitarian relief" under the provisions of international humanitarian law to a state of "complex humanitarian situation" and needs be dealt with on this basis in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and the annexed protocols, and the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on the provision of humanitarian assistance in the event of natural disasters.

Since the principles of humanity, neutrality and non-discrimination must be above all considerations for all those who provide humanitarian assistance.

- Since North and Northwestern Syria is the most affected region by the earthquake and is outside the authority of the Syrian regime who is working to exploit this catastrophe to blackmail the international community to lift sanctions and break its international isolation. These sanctions have been imposed on the Assad regime because of its crimes against humanity (including killing thousands of innocent Syrians with chemical weapons) and stealing humanitarian aid to finance its repressive institutions and practice more oppression, criminality, and violation of international law.
- Since the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome affirmed that: The principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States is subjected to the responsibility of international protection whenever a State is unwilling or unable to protect its citizens from actual or anticipated loss of life, genocidal intent or lack thereof, or widespread ethnic cleansing.
- Since the sovereignty of the State is not an end in itself, but a means and the end is the good of the people of the State, respect of human dignity and fundamental rights; and the notion of the obligation to protect is the first goal of the State and a justification for its existence.



- • Since the Syrian regime has not been entrusted with people's lives so, cannot be entrusted with the international aid provided to its victims. This regime turned Syria into a failed state, due to rampant corruption, lawlessness, mass killing, forced displacement, and destruction.
- • Since one of the most important purposes of the United Nations, as enshrined in its Charter, is to achieve international cooperation in the solution of economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.
- • Due to the fact that the international community now relies on the United Nations to coordinate humanitarian assistance operations according to the nature of the disasters that occur, which requires great efforts beyond the capacity of the authorities and the national geography.
- • Since leaving victims of natural disasters and other victims of other similar emergencies without humanitarian assistance is life-threatening and an affront to human dignity, as stated in the preamble to United Nations General Assembly resolution "43/131" of 1988.
- Based on the foregoing and based on the two resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly No. "43/131", December 7th 1988 and resolution No. "45/100", December 14th 1990, regarding the provision of humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and similar emergencies.
- Based on UN Security Council Resolution 770 of 1992 and UN Security Council Resolution 2672 of 2023 on the extension of cross-border aid operations for Syria.
- And while we thank the Governments, peoples, bodies and organizations that have sympathized with our people in the successive ordeals they have endured, we see this meeting as an opportunity to compensate for the delay in providing relief to our people in the first weeks of the disaster, and we look forward to your agreement to gently meet our following requests:
  - 1- To Consider this area a disaster area due to the 'complex' humanitarian situation, re-examine the mechanism for developing the protection of Syrian population and establish a "safe zone" in the absence of any political solution in the foreseeable future.
  - 2- To open the Central Emergency Response Fund, urgently allocating an international budget for the affected areas in North and Northwest Syria, which includes empowering organizations and bodies working in the field of emergency and alleviating the suffering of those in need of housing and adequate shelter, and financing development projects that restore life to the residents of the region and qualify them to overcome the effects of the disaster.



- 3-** To be aware of Assad regime's disinformation, preventing it from exploiting the disaster under the pretext of "national sovereignty." The Assad regime ceded this sovereignty to the Russians and Iranians who, collectively, besiege the inhabitants of this region, bombing them even during the earthquake disaster. This abandonment of its duty in providing aid to the afflicted transfers responsibility for this to the United Nations.
- 4-** To provide humanitarian assistance to the affected areas without the requirement of obtaining the approval of the Assad regime, based on UN Security Council Resolution 770 (1992), which requires all States to 'take, individually or through regional agencies and arrangements, all measures that ensure, in coordination with the United Nations, the facilitation of humanitarian access', as NATO did in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995.
- 5-** To provide urgent assistance to Syrian refugees in Turkey who have been afflicted by this disaster.

Thank you for your interest and efforts  
North Syria 7/ 3 / 2023

Free Syrian Students Union  
General Federation of Trade Unions  
Central Nurses, Technicians and  
Administrators Syndicate

Syrian Contractors Union for Construction  
Free Syrian Academics Syndicate  
Free Economists Syndicate  
Aleppo Physicians Association

Free Lawyers Association in Syria  
Free Syrian Engineers Syndicate  
Free Pharmacists Syndicate  
Free Syrian Teachers Syndicate