

**Joint Statement by UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, Adam Abdelmoula, and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, Muhannad Hadi, on one-year anniversary of the earthquakes**

**Damascus and Amman, 6 February 2024** - Today marks one year since the devastating earthquakes hit Syria and Türkiye. In Syria, some 6,000 people have been killed and nearly 13,000 injured. The event not only shattered the lives of millions of people, it wreaked havoc on the country's infrastructure and economy, both of which had already been ravaged by 12 years of conflict.

The tragedy came during a time when Syria was facing an unprecedented economic crisis – with 15.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. The earthquakes exacerbated the situation further yet. Billions of dollars in damage aside, the human toll of this disaster is incalculable. Many people remain displaced to date, waiting for solutions and shelter.

Humanitarian partners, many of whom were themselves impacted by the earthquakes, did not hesitate to begin working on the response from the first moment. Facing immense challenges, including severe fuel and electricity shortages, a lack of essential equipment and an overwhelmed healthcare system, the emergency response delivered life-saving aid to the stricken population.

In the first two months of the response the partners delivered ready-to-eat meals to 1.1 million people; nearly 1 million treatment courses to health facilities together with around 400,000 outpatient consultations, and over 530,000 mental health consultations; over 800,000 people benefitted from protection support; some 112,000 received emergency tents; 560,000 had improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene; more than 43,000 farmer families received agriculture assistance and much more.

The earthquakes were a violent wake up call to the fact that the crisis in Syria is untenable and a clear indication that early recovery must become an imperative. Today, a staggering 16.7 million people require humanitarian assistance. This shocking number comes against the background of a bleak funding outlook and conflicts raging across the globe. This trend must urgently be reversed.

Today, we recommit ourselves to serve the people of Syria by addressing the root causes of the Syria crisis, by enabling communities to recover and rebuild, and by inspiring hope in the future generations of the country.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors and their steadfast support. But much more is needed as our 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan was just over 36 per cent resourced by the year's end. Inaction will lead to more suffering and will affect all of us.

Time is not on our side.