

Statement (Turkey): “Our country does not deserve this cruelty - we stand in solidarity with our people with all our strength”

Wednesday 8 February 2023, by [Workers’ Party of Turkey \(TİP\)](#) (Date first published: 7 February 2023).

Upon receiving the news of the earthquake that shook our country this morning, we in the Workers’ Party of Turkey took immediate action, and rapidly established a Disaster Coordination Center. Since then, we reached out to many compatriots in the earthquake zone and coordinated humanitarian aid coming from citizens in other provinces.

So far, the TİP Disaster Coordination Center has received more than 1500 calls for help. The number of calls reveal the severity of the situation we are facing.

- > In many neighborhoods of the Hatay province, especially in Defne and Samandağ, as well as in provinces Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep and Adiyaman, people have been left to their fate in the harsh winter conditions.

- > In these areas, many buildings, old and new, subcontracted via state tenders under the AKP government -public institutions such as hospitals, dormitories, hotels, AFAD and municipality buildings- collapsed. The pro-government construction companies, and the ministries and directorates which awarded these tenders to them are responsible for the death of the young, the children, and the patients. We demand the prosecution of those who caused the death and suffering of thousands of citizens.

- > Against all the protests of Hatay residents, experts, and environmental activists, Hatay Airport was built on the Amik Plain, and is now unusable. With the cities’ highways and viaducts damaged, it is now impossible to reach Hatay, and tens of thousands of people cannot receive aid.

- > Institutions such as the Turkish Armed Forces and AFAD are tasked with search and rescue and providing food during emergencies. However, under the AKP rule, they have been systematically disempowered, their staff and personnel reduced, and thus they have been rendered useless in search and rescue operations. Besides, many specialized, volunteer search and rescue groups were not allowed to get involved because they couldn’t get the necessary certification issued by the pro-AKP bureaucracy.

- > In the aftermath of the massive earthquake of 17 August 1999 in northwestern Turkey almost 25 years ago, the “earthquake taxes” collected nationwide were not spent on preparing for earthquakes and ensuring the safety of the citizens, but on roads and bridges that the AKP has built in order to generate political gains and enrich pro-government contractors.

- > Our country was hit by two very severe earthquakes during the coldest days of winter. Effective search and rescue in the earthquake region, especially in Hatay, Kahramanmaraş and Adiyaman, is virtually impossible. Besides, there is a lack of food and water supply. Our citizens are trying to rescue their relatives from the rubble by digging with their hands, while those who survived struggle

in the freezing cold.

- > Our country has been facing a great challenge for hours since the two devastating earthquakes. But the state, the government institutions, specialized experts, means for transportation and sustenance are nowhere to be seen.

The people of our country do not deserve to be abandoned to such despair, nor do they deserve the remorselessness of the government.

We will never forget and never forgive those who abandoned our people to this fate.

We have mobilized with all our power to stand with our fellow citizens who have been left to fend for themselves in these harsh winter conditions.

Our people will heal their wounds through solidarity.

Our fellow citizens will never be alone and helpless.

7 February 2023

WORKERS PARTY OF TURKEY (TPI)
