

BRUSSELS, 20 MARCH 2023

INTERNATIONAL DONORS' CONFERENCE FOR THE PEOPLE IN TÜRKIYE AND SYRIA FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE

STATEMENT BY H.E. PASCAL SCHAFHAUSER, AMBASSADOR, EMBASSY AND MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Commission and the Swedish Presidency for their leadership in convening today's crucial conference. Deeply saddened and shocked, we witnessed the disastrous effects and human suffering caused by the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria in February.

The earthquakes have also worsened the suffering of the Syrian people, which was already extremely high before. Liechtenstein has supported the people affected by the war in Syria since its outbreak 12 years ago. So far, we have contributed a total of over CHF 7 million for humanitarian aid and development projects in Syria and the neighbouring countries.

Now, the needs are greater than ever. But the Syrian regime continues to abuse humanitarian assistance for political purposes and to deny its own population access to life-saving assistance, in violation of international law.

At the time of the earthquake, only one border crossing from Türkiye into Syria was open, in accordance with the most recent UN Security Council resolution on cross-border access. In the crucial first days after the earthquake, this prevented humanitarian organisations from getting help to those whose lives depended on it. The need for unhindered, safe and sustainable access to north-west Syria through all border crossings could not be any clearer today. Liechtenstein calls on all states to increase their political support for unhindered aid delivery, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

In this regard, Liechtenstein welcomes and supports the temporary humanitarian exception in the relevant EU sanctions regime, which we have autonomously implemented. This has

the aim of facilitating the speedy delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance to the people in north-west Syria.

Our thoughts are also with the tens of thousands of dead and injured and their families in Türkiye. On the day of the earthquake, Liechtenstein announced a first contribution of CHF 200'000 to provide emergency relief for the victims of the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria. In light of the huge destruction and skyrocketing humanitarian needs, today, Liechtenstein increases its contribution by pledging further CHF 200'000, resulting in a total of CHF 400'000, divided equally between Türkiye and the people of Syria.

I thank you.