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**PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release



## **TURKIYE AND SYRIA: TERROR AND PANIC AS NEW EARTHQUAKES LEAVE MORE PEOPLE HOMELESS AND FREEZING**

Islamic Relief teams on the ground in southern Turkiye and northwest Syria report widespread panic and damage to buildings as two more strong 6.4 and 5.8 earthquakes hit the region this evening (Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February), just two weeks after the deadly earthquakes that have killed at least 47,000 people so far.

**Ahmed Mahmoud, Islamic Relief’s Head of Mission in Turkiye and Syria, says:**

“Our teams on the ground felt the latest earthquake as they worked this evening. There is widespread panic tonight and the streets are full of people as children and families are leaving their homes as they don’t feel safe. There are reports of people being injured as they jumped from shaking buildings to try and escape. Many people will now have to spend the night outside in the freezing cold with temperatures well below zero.

“In Syria, reception centres for homeless families are already massively overcrowded from the last earthquakes. There are two, three or even four families sharing single tents, with nothing to keep them warm. I saw one tent with 32 people sheltering in it, including 17 children, as there aren’t enough tents for everyone. We need more emergency aid on the ground as soon as possible.

“There are reports of more buildings collapsed and damaged tonight. We are getting reports of the latest damage and we are supporting hospitals and health facilities in Syria with medical supplies. People here have gone through unimaginable horror and suffering and now tonight they are faced with sheer terror once again.”

Islamic Relief has so far provided emergency aid including shelter, medical supplies, food and water to help more than 637,000 people in Turkiye and Syria since the first earthquakes struck on 6<sup>th</sup> February.

In the past few days in northern Syria Islamic Relief has been clearing rubble from roads so that more aid can get through, supplying hospitals with essential medicine and beds, supporting mobile clinics to provide targeted support for women and girls, and providing basic psychosocial support for children who have witnessed extremely traumatic events. In Turkiye Islamic Relief is distributing food parcels and hygiene items and providing vouchers for people to buy whatever they need most at local shops and supermarkets.

Since launching a RM103 million emergency appeal on 6 February, Islamic Relief has so far raised more than RM48 million generously donated from communities and supporters worldwide.

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### **About Islamic Relief**

Islamic Relief is an independent international humanitarian aid and development organization. Islamic Relief is headquartered in the United Kingdom and was founded in 1984. Islamic Relief serves in more than 45 countries, assisting more than 120 million people. The scope of Islamic Relief assistance covers emergency assistance, integrated sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and advocacy.

Islamic Relief has been operating in Syria since 2011 and in Turkey since 2012 by implementing various humanitarian aid projects involving the emergency sector, health, food, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, shelter, and sustainable livelihood.

## **About Islamic Relief Malaysia**

Islamic Relief Malaysia was established in 2005, which aspires to continue Islamic Relief humanitarian assistance in the Asia-Pacific region. Islamic Relief Malaysia serves as a fundraising and project implementer for international and local projects.

Kindly visit the Islamic Relief Malaysia website, [www.islamic-relief.org.my](http://www.islamic-relief.org.my) for more information.

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