

For the immediate attention of the University of Toronto Mississauga community,

The powerful earthquakes of 7.8 magnitude and 7.7 magnitude that struck Türkiye and Syria last week have caused widespread destruction and claimed the lives of thousands in the region. There were in fact over 90 earthquakes, with the largest two being the largest magnitudes in recorded history, with the epicenter being located on landmass.

As of today, February 15 2023, there are millions of people left homeless, over 80 thousand injured, and over 40 thousand deaths.

At UTM, there are Turkish and Syrian students who were directly impacted by this natural disaster. We send our condolences to these students and all of those who have been impacted in the Turkish cities of Kahramanmaraş, Adana, Osmaniye, Hatay, Malatya, Adiyaman, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Diyarbakır, and Kilis, as well as the Syrian cities of Aleppo, Lattakia, and Idlib. We would also like to extend our sentiments to all those who may have been negatively affected by this tragedy.

In a statement earlier this week, Joseph Wong, University of Toronto's Vice President, International, expressed concern and sympathy for those affected by the disaster.

We encourage the University of Toronto to take a step further to support students by providing additional mental health and academic resources to support the well-being of students. If students require additional academic accommodation in these dire times, we encourage the University to provide such accommodations. We also encourage the University to consult with the Turkish Students' Association (TSA) and the Syrian Students' Association (SSA) when publishing future communications.

The Turkish Students' Association (TSA) has been in direct contact with affected Turkish students and have verified their troubling stories. If you are one of the students affected and are in need of support, please check out the resource list at the end of the statement.

We also encourage everyone to support those who were affected by checking out the links below.

The TSA tri-campus alliance and the The Syrian Students' Association (SSA) have been fundraising ever since the disaster struck, and encourages all UTM students and community members to donate to the impacted families. Please visit the links at the end of the statement.

Thank you for being with us during this difficult time.

Resources for affected students:

- Check healthcare providers covered by UTMSU [Health and Dental Plan](#)
- UTM [Health & Counseling Centre](#)
- UTMSU Peer Support Program - peer@utmsu.ca
- [My Student Support Program](#) - 24 hour support for any school, health, or general life concern at no cost to students

How can I help?

- Donate at [Red Cross Canada](#)
- Donate at [UNICEF](#)
- Donate at [UN Crisis Relief](#)
- Donate via [Governmental Disaster and Emergency Presidency of Türkiye \(AFAD\)](#)
- Donate via [Türk Kızılay](#)
- Donate via [Non-Governmental transparency organization \(AHBAP\)](#)
- UTM Turkish Student Association email (volunteer for fundraisers) - turkish@utmsu.ca
- UTM Syrian Student Association (volunteer for fundraisers) - syria@utmsu.ca

Signatories:

Turkish Students' Association

Syrian Students' Association

UTM Students' Union