

Minimization of Earthquake Effects by Working on Settlement Legislation

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The planning of houses, buildings and cities is determined by many factors. Settlement Legislation refers to the placement of buildings and settlements. In this sense, it plays an important part in preventing earthquake damage to buildings.

Settlement legislation includes laws and regulations ranging from city planning to housing. In the past, Turkey suffered huge damage from earthquakes because the legislation was either disobeyed or was incomplete. Therefore the present laws and regulations should be re-evaluated.

There are problems regarding the sites covered by the legislation, together with their choice, planning and building structures and materials:

- The Settlement Regulations of the greater municipalities and the regulations covering building volumes and sites do not work particularly well with regard to earthquake protection. In addition, no legislation exists regarding workmanship and building materials ;
- The legislation is contained in Settlement Law No. 3194 and related regulations, in Law No. 23098 regarding buildings in Natural Disaster Areas, in Shore Law No. 3621 and in Environment Law No. 2872. However these laws contradict one another, and there are therefore problems in their proper application. As a result, the choice of sites for earthquake protection is complicated;
- Settlement legislation is overseen by the Regional Development Directorates and by the municipalities. However the way in which this is done contrasts with the economic and technical situations of the municipalities and prevents the laws from working as they should. The planning process also allows local governors to benefit politically from the situation.

As a result, the Settlement legislation covering the regulations for earthquakes must be revised. This is a better solution than completely rewriting the existing legislation.