

ICOMOS

international council on monuments and sites

ICOMOS Statement on Earthquakes in Syria and Turkey

Paris, 8 February 2023

On 6 February 2023, two major earthquakes and their aftershocks struck Syria and Turkey. ICOMOS expresses its condolences and sadness at the rapidly rising death toll and numbers of missing and injured, as well as the devastation inflicted on populations, in part already heavily tested by war in Syria, in difficult winter conditions.

Besides the destruction of homes and infrastructure, there is mounting news on damage to cultural heritage. For example, in Turkey, reports show severe damage to Gaziantep Castle and in Syria, the ancient city of Aleppo, already heavily scarred by war and inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger, suffered further destruction. The whole area affected by the earthquakes is rich in cultural heritage and so we unfortunately anticipate more news on impacted sites, as the situation continues to unfold.

ICOMOS immediately offered its assistance to our National Committees in Syria and Turkey, that are both mobilising. Vice-President Zeynep-Gül Ünal is in Turkey as part of a search and rescue team. The ICOMOS President, Teresa Patricio, has assured [UNESCO](#) of our full availability to support joint actions for inventory and damage assessment and recovery.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a non-governmental, not for profit international organisation, committed to furthering the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of the world's cultural heritage. With over 11,000 members, 100+ National Committees (including in the USA and Estonia), 30 International Scientific Committees (including its International Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage) and several Working Groups, ICOMOS has built a solid philosophical, doctrinal and managerial framework for the sustainable conservation of heritage around the world. As an official advisory body to the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, ICOMOS evaluates nominations and advises on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

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