

EARTHQUAKE DIPLOMACY: THE EFFORTS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION OF TURKIC STATES AFTER TÜRKİYE QUAKE IN 2023

SAHADA DİPLOMASİ: TÜRK DEVLETLERİ TEŞKİLATI ÜYE ÜLKELERİNİN 6 ŞUBAT 2023 DEPREMLERİ SONRASI TÜRKİYE İLE DEPREM DİPLOMASİSİ

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ABSTRACT

Geliş Tarihi:

12.05.2023

Kabul Tarihi:

04.09.2023

Yayın Tarihi:

25.09.2023

Anahtar Kelimeler

Deprem,
Deprem
Diplomasisi,
Türk Devletleri
Teşkilatı,
Uluslararası
Yardımlar

Keywords

Earthquake,
Earthquake
Diplomacy,
Organization of
Turkic States,
International Aids

There have been many natural disasters throughout the history of the world. These disasters have brought societies and states closer and helped elevate charitable sentiments. So much so that the hostilities between states were halted and human life became the priority during times of disaster. The earthquakes that took place in Türkiye on February 6, hit number one on the global agenda, and diplomatic relations were triggered between many states in an effort to help the earthquake victims. The most important of these was undoubtedly the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), of which Türkiye is a member, and the observer countries. This paper conveys the aids from OTS member states to the disaster areas after the earthquake that occurred in Türkiye on February 6, and discusses the effect of humanitarian aid on international relations in terms of disaster diplomacy. In addition to sending search and rescue teams, OTS member states have also provided in kind and cash support. The information included in this paper is presented by a country breakdown in accordance with the classification stated above. In this respect, the aids received from each OTS member country between February 6 and March 7, 2023, are categorized under search & rescue and medical teams, in-kind support and cash support sub-titles. Literature review and content analysis methods were preferred in this paper. As for the literature review, earthquake diplomacy and OTS were the key topics, and as for the content analysis, national and international press coverage was reviewed, as well as the web pages of institutions. As a result of this work, it has been concluded that the exemplary cooperation shown by the OTS member states and their peoples in the context of earthquake diplomacy prove that there is a will to strengthen mutual political relations among countries that share historical and cultural ties, and to make OTS a more effective actor.

ÖZ

Dünya tarihinde birçok doğal afet olmuştur. Bu afetler özellikle toplumların ve devletlerin yakınlaşmalarına ve yardım etme duygularının en yüksek dereceye yükselmesine vesile olmuştur. Öyle ki devletlerarasındaki husumetler de afet zamanlarında askıya alınmış ve birincil öncelik, insan hayatı olmuştur. Türkiye’de 6 Şubat tarihinde yaşanan depremler de dünya gündeminin bir numaralı maddesi olmuş ve bu çerçevede depremedelere yardımcı olabilmek adına birçok devlet arasında diplomatik münasebetler cereyan etmiştir. Bu devletlerin en başında, şüphesiz Türkiye’nin de bir üyesi olduğu Türk Devletleri Teşkilatı (TDT) üyesi ve gözlemci ülkeler gelmektedir. Bu çalışmada TDT üyesi ülkelerin 6 Şubat tarihinde Türkiye’de meydana gelen deprem sonrası afet bölgelerine yaptıkları yardımlar aktarılmaya çalışılmış ve insani yardımların afet diplomasisi bağlamında uluslararası ilişkilere etkisi tartışılmaya çalışılmıştır. TDT üyesi ülkeler arama kurtarma ekiplerine ek olarak aynı ve nakdi yardımlarda da bulunmuşlardır. Bu çalışmada aktarılmaya çalışılan veriler yukarıda ifade edilen sınıflamaya uygun olarak ülke kırılımlı olacak şekilde sunulmuştur. Bu çerçevede her TDT üyesi ülkenin 6 Şubat – 7 Mart 2023 tarihleri arasında gönderdiği arama-kurtarma ve sağlık ekipleri, aynı yardımlar ve nakdi yardımlar alt başlıklarına ayrılarak, gerçekleştirilen yardımlar kategorik olarak aktarılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu çalışmada yöntem olarak literatür taraması ve içerik analizi yöntemleri tercih edilmiştir. Literatür taraması kısmında deprem diplomasisi ve TDT, içerik analizi kısmında ise ulusal ve uluslararası basına yansıyan haberler, bununla birlikte kurumların web sayfaları incelenmiştir. Çalışma neticesinde, deprem diplomasisi bağlamında TDT üyesi devletler ve halklarının göstermiş oldukları yardımlaşma örneği tarihsel ve kültürel bağlara sahip olan ülkelerin karşılıklı siyasi ilişkileri güçlendirme ve TDT’yi daha etkin bir aktör kılmaya yönünde iradenin bulunduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30783/nevsosbilen.1296450>

Atf/Cite as: Şehitoğlu, R., & Güner, O. (2023). Earthquake diplomacy: The efforts of the members of the Organization of Turkic States after Türkiye quakes in 2023. *Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi SBE Dergisi*, 13(3), 1775-1792.

Introduction

Natural disasters have caused deep scars in human history. These disasters include earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, floods, forest fires, etc. It is seen that disasters happen quite frequently in human history. And they cause mass casualties. On the other hand, they cause serious physical and mental damage to the survivors. This is why mankind has exhibited remarkable examples of solidarity following such natural disasters. Disasters have also brought about the interlocking of both local and international communities and the strengthening of solidarity. The disasters generally created an atmosphere that eliminated discriminations of religion, language, race and nationality.

Türkiye woke up to a completely different morning on Monday, February 6th of 2023. An earthquake hit with a magnitude of 7.7 at 04:17 in the morning, the epicenter of which was the Pazarcık district of Kahramanmaraş. This earthquake caused great destruction and loss in the region. Although the earthquake was also felt in Egypt, Lebanon, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCA) and Iraq, it caused the greatest destruction in Syria and caused casualties there. In the afternoon of the same day, another earthquake with a magnitude of 7.6, hit Elbistan, another district of Kahramanmaraş. The fact that these earthquakes took place on the same day and were higher than 7.0 in magnitude, caused this to be called the “Disaster of the Century”.

Earthquake Diplomacy

There are some periods in international relations that bring states and societies who already have good relations closer to each other, and also delay any crises between two or more states or accelerate slowly progressing relations. In difficult times, such as wars, natural disasters, and epidemics, when lives are lost and properties are damaged, self-serving approaches of states in diplomacy, are conjoined by a humanitarian tendency of helping conscientiously and emotionally. The diplomatic activities carried out by the states in this respect are called “humanitarian diplomacy” in international relations.

Unlike traditional diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy emerged as a new type of public diplomacy, and became one of the fields where states and particularly humanitarian aid organizations are mostly active. When it comes to humanitarian diplomacy, concepts such as humanitarian aid, humanitarian intervention or human rights usually come to mind. To begin with, humanitarian aid is defined briefly as: the activities of providing food, shelter and medical support to save the lives of people in countries/regions that suffered natural or structural crises, and improve their living conditions (Yıldırım, 2019: 40).

The increase in globalization has also accelerated international interaction, and humanitarian crises such as wars, poverty, natural disasters, epidemics and drought occurring around the world have become an item in everyone’s agenda from states to non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Hence, humanitarian diplomacy basically means to be involved in the solution of such crises through a human-oriented approach to people’s problems such as security, food, shelter and health. Another definition of humanitarian diplomacy is: “The whole process of convincing and activating decision makers and all actors in the field, on the use of solution-oriented tools and tackling humanitarian problems with a human-oriented approach” (Battır, 2017: 40).

Certain difficulties, disruptions and changes in the global political system and in the world, economy have also lead to an environment where humanitarian diplomacy is needed, and the number of people in need of humanitarian aid has been gradually increasing throughout the world. These can be listed as follows:

- The orientation of the global political system towards multipolarity,
- Income distribution inequalities in the global economy,
- Global financial and economic crisis,
- Global economic recession and unemployment,
- The acceleration of international migration movements,
- The strengthening of far-right parties and institutions in the national political systems,
- Cracks and vulnerabilities in global governance and international organizations,
- Legitimacy crisis in major international organizations such as the United Nations (UN),
- The increase in civil wars and deadly conflicts after the end of the Cold War, (Kınık and Aslan, 2020: 354-355).

It would not be fair to limit humanitarian diplomacy only to humanitarian aid. Development assistance, or foreign aid as it is also called, is also considered to be one of the most important components of humanitarian diplomacy. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides a general definition of development assistance at this point. According to OECD; financial purchases in the form of grants, technical assistance and goods provided to support economic development and welfare are defined as development assistance. Development aids comprise of official development assistance, official aids and other aids in the form of voluntary grants by NGOs, religious groups and private companies (Radelet, 2006: 4). Official development aids are ultimately publicly funded, are delivered to ensure economic development of the beneficiary, the transfer of resources is concessional, and at least 25% of them are allocated in the form of grants (Yıldırım, 2019: 2570).

Türkiye is one of the global actors in the field of humanitarian diplomacy, and carries out humanitarian aid activities around the world with many of its state-supported institutions and NGOs. Turkish Red Crescent, Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) under the T.R. Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of Foundations, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and Human Rights and Freedoms Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) are some of the examples of such institutions and organizations. Through these organizations, Türkiye carries out many humanitarian aid activities in many regions of the world; such as drilling water wells, distribution of supplies, health services, provision of clothing and scholarships. Türkiye ranked first in the list of countries that provided the most humanitarian aid in 2017 with approximately 8 billion Dollars (Ibid., 2583).

Humanitarian diplomacy can also be reviewed under other specific headings in literature and public opinion, based on the crisis it focuses on, and the field of activity. Looking at the recent past, the world was faced with the “Covid-19 Pandemic” as of November 2019, and especially developing countries needed medical supplies and vaccines in this process. In this context, Türkiye has helped out many countries, including developed countries, within the scope of “Health Diplomacy” (Şehitoğlu, 2023: 164-174).

Kahramanmaraş-centered earthquakes took place in Türkiye on February 6, 2023, and the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a “3rd Level Emergency” following the earthquakes. This is the highest level in the emergency declaration category. Then, in addition to the messages of support received from many states around the world, necessary activities began to be carried out such as search & rescue personnel and equipment, support materials, etc. As of February 9, 94 countries had offered assistance to Türkiye, and search and rescue personnel from 51 countries had started to conduct search and rescue activities in the field. In total, more than 5 thousand foreign personnel took part in these activities. In addition to these, international organizations such as the UN, the European Union (EU), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as well as other countries have called for help and provided monetary and in-kind support to Türkiye. In addition, donation campaigns were organized for Türkiye with live broadcasts in countries such as the Netherlands, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even national mourning has been declared in countries such as North Macedonia and Albania. Such diplomacy activities that developed between countries after the earthquake are called earthquake diplomacy in general. Zubaida Mustafa uses the terms earthquake diplomacy or disaster diplomacy to describe diplomatic initiatives that change the course of relations between two countries following a natural disaster (Mustafa, 2006: 35).

Earthquake diplomacy is obviously not a novelty that only emerged after the recent earthquakes in Türkiye. Earthquake diplomacy, which concentrates on humanitarian aids after an earthquake, that is, the humanitarian diplomacy approach in general, has established a communication and cooperation bridge between states and societies throughout history as a special section of humanitarian diplomacy. So much so that disaster-related activities under earthquake diplomacy can significantly influence and advance diplomatic activities that had already started but failed to produce any new diplomatic results (Ibid.) For example, a major earthquake occurred in Istanbul on July 10, 1894, and the United States of America (USA) sent \$9,600 to the Ottoman Empire after this earthquake. And that aid indeed contributed to the positive development of relations between the two states. About two months after the earthquake in Istanbul, forest fires broke out in the USA and more than 400 people died in the fire. Sultan Abdulhamid II did not remain indifferent to this disaster and sent 300 Liras (1,500 Dollars) to the USA (Sancak, 2019: 176-177).

Coming back to recent history, the most frequented earthquake and earthquake diplomacy case that comes to fore in literature and international public opinion, is the 1999 earthquake. On the night of August 17, 1999, an earthquake hit Gölcük, Kocaeli and this earthquake was followed by another one that occurred in Athens, Greece, on September 7. After the earthquake in Türkiye, the international community immediately reached out a helping hand, but the most significant among them was Greece, a country with whom historical tensions were intense. The Greek State carried out an active earthquake diplomacy and performed aid activities for Türkiye after the earthquake. In this respect, Türkiye and Greece - two historically rival countries - displayed a good example of disaster diplomacy after the August 17, 1999 earthquake (Keridis, 2006: 208-209). Meanwhile, Bill Clinton (the US President at the time) came to Türkiye and drew the attention of international community to Türkiye. From a general perspective, it can be seen that the earthquake diplomacy-centered humanitarian diplomacy approach that developed after the 1894 and 1999 earthquakes, helped to soften the relations between Türkiye and the helping state(s), communication improved and cooperation increased.

The saying that every crisis brings with it new opportunities and possibilities has proven to be true in many disasters and post-disaster crises throughout history. Throughout history, disasters have attracted attention as an opportunity for states to assert themselves and to prove their worth. Disaster diplomacy has provided an opportunity for skillful politicians and diplomatic teams of active foreign policy-making states to revitalize or improve diplomatic relations that have fallen into recession. As a matter of fact, a similar situation occurred in the aftermath of Türkiye's recent disaster of the century. Immediately after the February 6 earthquakes, which are considered to be one of the biggest disasters in history, the international community did not remain silent; in a sense, a unique aid mobilization was launched in almost every corner of the world. All over the world, in all states, we have witnessed superhuman efforts in Türkiye in terms of humanitarian aid, search and rescue activities, the establishment of field hospitals, the creation of tent cities, the provision of daily food needs, meeting shelter needs and so on. The world has witnessed an example of solidarity and solidarity from many countries, especially Greece, Armenia and Israel, with which Türkiye has had diplomatic problems from time to time, both at the governmental level and at the community level. So much so that the negative relations that existed before the earthquake with some countries, with which Türkiye had some problems in bilateral relations, were overcome, and the people of the countries that criticized our country "rushed to the aid of the earthquake victims" (Cicioğlu, 2023). On the other hand, "with the cooperation of 30 NATO allies and 37 partner countries, including Australia, Japan, Israel and Colombia, aid from all over the world was delivered to Türkiye" (Ibid.). This aid to Türkiye supported Türkiye's ability to combat disasters and reach the field quickly and provided the opportunity to produce solutions to post-disaster problems.

Immediately after the February 6 earthquakes, the international community started to mobilize aid to Türkiye, which is thought to have been largely influenced by Türkiye's "humanitarian diplomacy" launched in 2013 and its "entrepreneurial and humanitarian foreign policy" activities in the following years (Dursun, 2023). It has been observed that the aid that Türkiye has delivered to all parts of the world with both its official institutions and non-governmental organizations has created a tradition. This example set by Türkiye has been put into action for Türkiye even by the poorest countries of the world. On the other hand, many international institutions and organizations did not refrain from coming to Türkiye's aid. As a matter of fact, the European Union countries launched the largest aid mobilization in history, and even Sweden and Finland, which had voted against Türkiye's entry into NATO, were among the countries sending aid.

In fact, natural disasters create a moderate and positive atmosphere for the restoration of relations between countries experiencing diplomatic problems. It is known that disaster diplomacy has revitalized and improved many bilateral relations that had been severed around the world. It is certain that Türkiye will also engage in disaster diplomacy and re-establish diplomatic relations with the countries with which it has had problems within this framework. This understanding has turned into an attitude and paved the way for Türkiye's diplomacy. So much so that on March 31, 2023, the proposal on Finland's protocol of accession to NATO was accepted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM), paving the way for Finland to become the 31st member of NATO. Undoubtedly, Finland's support and assistance to the people of Türkiye during the February 6 earthquakes played an important role in the adoption of this decision by the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

On the other hand, President Erdoğan, in his introductory article on the earthquake in the book titled “Asrın Dayanışması (Solidarity of The Century)” prepared by the Presidency of Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications in the aftermath of the earthquake, expressed his appreciation for the sensitivity shown by the international community due to the earthquake with the following words:

“Immediately after the earthquakes, leaders of countries around the world, international institutions and organizations expressed their condolences and support to our country. Nearly 11,500 search and rescue personnel deployed from 90 countries, as well as field hospitals and medical personnel, and the support provided by land, air and sea, our friends stood by our country in this process. In the face of global crises and disasters, great loyalty was shown towards the helping hand extended by our nation to all corners of the world, the solidarity and generosity displayed (Presidency of Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications, 2023: 9-10).”

In addition, Fahrettin Altun, The Republic of Türkiye Director of Communications, who wrote a foreword on the importance of this book, in which earthquakes are discussed and evaluated in almost every aspect, underlined that the book draws attention to “the capacity to combat disasters with the power and energy of national and international solidarity” and that it also includes the steps taken “for the reconstruction and development of cities as well as the activities carried out to heal the wounds caused by earthquakes” (Ibid: 11). Considering that “the length of the fault that ruptured in these earthquakes was equal to the length of the landmass of Taiwan, South Korea and Portugal”, it should be noted that the earthquake was a world first and may be recorded as the largest earthquake in the last 500 years (Ibid: 24).

The magnitude of the earthquakes and the losses and destruction they caused were widely covered in the world press. So much so that CNN International reported the February 6 earthquakes as “the biggest earthquake the region has ever experienced and remembered”, while French Le Monde covered the earthquakes with the headline “Earthquake in Türkiye and Syria is the fifth deadliest earthquake of the 21st century”. The New York Times reported it as “the deadliest earthquake in 10 years”, while USA Today headlined it as “the worst disaster of the century”. The Wall Street Journal described it as “the most relentless earthquake of this century”, while Reuters reported it as “the 7th deadliest natural disaster of this century”. The Financial Times said, “the scale of the devastation and grief is beyond comprehension”, while the Bild newspaper said of Germany that “the whole country would have been shaken if it had happened in our country” (Ibid: 34-36). These news reports were very effective in creating a worldwide public opinion centered on Türkiye and the disaster of the century.

In the age of communication, it is very easy to reach and mobilize the masses, and this situation is now seen as an ordinary case in today’s world. In this direction, the use of communication for its intended purpose results in the benefit of societies. For this reason, it is of great importance that technology-supported new media instruments and almost every opportunity in this direction is used for the benefit of humanity. The support of names such as Morgan Freeman, Mark Eliyahu, Jamala, Matwe Middlekoop, Azerin, Maher Zain, Reshad Strik, Amir Khan, Per Hillo, Yasmin Levy, Della Miles and Antonio Guterres for the “We Stand with Türkiye” campaign launched by the Presidency of Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications in the aftermath of the earthquake has taken its place in the literature as one of the firsts in earthquake diplomacy (Ibid, 110). The success of this campaign demonstrates the success of Türkiye’s public diplomacy. Active public diplomacy, which Türkiye is trying to present as an alternative to the whole world, has been accepted all over the world and it is pleasing that it is also used in favor of Türkiye as a powerful instrument in disaster diplomacy.

Earthquake Aids from Members of the Organization of Turkish States (OTS)

In this section, brief information on the historical development of OTS is first presented. Then, aids provided by the member states following the earthquakes referred to as the “Disaster of the Century” are discussed in the context of earthquake diplomacy.

Historical Development of OTS

In the bipolar world created by the Second World War, Türkiye sided with the western bloc, and the Turkic Republics remained in the eastern bloc as they were part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). For this reason, communication between Türkiye and the Turkic Republics was limited. The fact that the

Turkic Republics within the USSR could not act separately from the union in their foreign affairs, also played an important role in this limitation. But then, Mikhail Gorbachev became the President of the Soviet Union in 1985. And following his resignation in 1991, the USSR disintegrated and consequently, the five Turkish Republics gained their independence. After gaining their independence, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan established their own political administration systems, and intensified cooperation initiatives with each other.

Throughout history, Turkish communities have always had the intent to act together, to be united and - in a sense - to form a unity. In this context, it is possible to evaluate the attempts towards the formation of OTS within this framework. The process of Turkish cooperation started with the Turkic Speaking Countries' Heads of State summit in 1991, and 10 summits were held until 2010. The decisions taken at these summits were all for the continuation of cooperation and the institutionalization of coordination. In this respect, the first step towards an institutional structure was taken at the summit of 1994, by envisioning an "advisory mechanism" with a secretariat-like structure, that would follow the implementation of the decisions taken at the summits, and act as a consultant when needed (Şahin, 2015: 89). However, solid institutionalization was achieved under the organization called "Turkish-Speaking Countries Cooperation Council", shortly "Turkic Council" with the agreement reached at the summit in Nakhchivan on October 3, 2009 with the participation of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The purpose of the Turkic Council was determined as establishing cooperation and coordination among Turkish states. The Nakhchivan Agreement, signed to realize this goal, states that the cooperation will be inspired by the solidarity between member states, based on features such as common history, belonging to the same ethnic origin and a common language. With this agreement, the principles of determining common steps in areas such as foreign policy, trade and economic development were decided. In addition to these, issues such as having a united front against terrorism, increasing cooperation in the fields of defense industry, education, culture and tourism were also determined as the main goals and common targets (MFA, 2023). Following the agreement, many discussions were held on cooperation and the structure of the union was formed in these meetings. 9 ordinary, 2 extraordinary and 1 informal summits were held with the participation of the Turkic Council heads of state (Organization of Turkic States, 2023).

In 2011, the first summit was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, with the theme of "Economy and Trade". In 2012, the second summit was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, with the themes of "Science and Culture". The agenda of the third summit held in Gebele city of Azerbaijan in 2013 was "Transportation" and the fourth summit in 2014 was held in Bodrum, Türkiye with the theme of "Tourism". In 2015, the fifth summit was held in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan with the topics of "Press, Broadcasting and Media". Afterwards there could not be a summit until 2018 due to the coup attempt in Türkiye on July 15, 2016. At the 6th Summit held in Cholpan Ata, Kyrgyzstan in 2018, the themes of "Youth and Sports" were discussed. The 7th Summit was held in Baku, Azerbaijan on October 15, 2019, with the theme of "Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)". At this summit, Uzbekistan also joined OTS after they passed the Nakhchivan Agreement in their Senate and integrated it into their municipal law (Union of Turkish World Municipalities, 2019).

The heads of states of the Turkic Council members held an extraordinary meeting on April 10, 2020 via video conference with the theme of combating the corona virus epidemic that emerged in early 2020 and cooperation in the field of health. The summit was held with the initiative of Ilham Aliyev, the President of Azerbaijan, via video conference, and Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) also attended the meeting. President of the Republic of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan emphasized the necessity for member countries to develop alternatives in transportation and customs clearance in order to combat the social and economic crisis caused by the epidemic, and explained the activities of the Turkic Council that could help WHO. OTS's cooperation and active role as an international organization in the fight against the epidemic also reflected positively on the global community.

The 8th Summit was held on November 12, 2021, in Istanbul with the theme of smart cities, and participation was quite high from all member states. At the summit, the leaders decided to change the name of Turkic Council to "Organization of Turkic States" (Öztürk, 2022: 49 and Organization of Turkic States, 2023) as well as a number of other important issues concerning the future of the institution. The most important feature that separates this summit from its predecessors was the decision of heads of state to change the name of the

Turkic Council, the umbrella organization of Turkic Republics. Although this may seem like a simple name change, it was a milestone. The summit was of particular importance as it coincided with the 30th anniversary of the Independence of the Turkic States, and because Turkmenistan joined the organization as an observer member. At the summit, OTS published a 121-item statement, which was an important breakthrough towards unity in the Turkic World and in the policies of member states (Organization of Turkic States, 2021).

One of the most important issues of the summit was the declaration that “the demand to invite the Turkish Cypriot People to participate in the activities of the OTS was acknowledged” in the 7th article of the declaration, which signaled that the TRNC would be recognized by the member states of the Organization in the near future. Another important item of the issued declaration was to support Azerbaijan in the joining and commissioning of the Zangezur corridor and the Caspian corridor as soon as possible.

The Ninth Summit of the OTS was held on November 11, 2022 in Samarkand, which was declared the Capital of Civilization of the Turkic World, hosted by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Şevket Mirziyoyev. The theme of this historic Summit was “A New Era for Turkish Civilization: Towards Common Development and Prosperity”, where the strong commitment of the Leaders, Member and Observer States to Turkish integration and the 2040 Vision of the Turkish World were highlighted, and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was recognized as an observer country (Organization of Turkic States, 2022).

Aids Provided by OTS Member Countries in the Context of Earthquake Diplomacy

On February 6, 2023, Türkiye experienced two earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.7 and 7.6 in Kahramanmaraş, which is a rare occurrence in the world. These earthquakes created a great need for humanitarian aid, and so Türkiye called for international assistance. Support activities were commenced by many countries of the world in response to Türkiye’s call for help following these major earthquakes.

Azerbaijan

After the earthquakes in Türkiye, Azerbaijan immediately sent teams to Türkiye and subsequently provided in-kind and cash support. Azerbaijan provided assistance not only at the state level, but also through NGOs, and even individuals.

Deployed Search & Rescue Teams and Medical Teams

A few hours after the earthquake, the officials of the Azerbaijan Ministry of Emergency announced that they were ready to send medical personnel and search & rescue teams to Türkiye. In the first stage, Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) and Middle Urban Search and Rescue Teams (MUSAR) and Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Teams (HUSAR) arrived in Türkiye in 3 planes, and were transferred to the earthquake zones. Azerbaijani authorities sent a total of 867 people to Türkiye, consisting of search & rescue and medical teams, to work in the earthquake zones (Rehimov, 2023). Thanks to their efforts, 53 people were rescued from the rubble by the Azerbaijani search & rescue teams, and 780 dead bodies were extricated, according to the data of Azerbaijani authorities. In addition, 1,410 earthquake victims were provided medical treatment (61 of whom had medical operations). As of March 7, 278 personnel are continuing to work in the field (Temizer, 2023).

In-kind Support

7 planes and 14 vehicles carrying humanitarian aid was sent from Azerbaijan to Türkiye in convoys so far. Azerbaijan banks even waved their commission fees for direct monetary aid to Türkiye (Rehimov, 2023). In the following period, the Presidency, National Assembly, Ministry of Emergencies, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Defense Industry, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Digital Development and Transport, New Azerbaijan Party (YAP), KOBIA and SOCAR, as well as Azerbaijan official institutions, and civilian platforms consisting of businesspeople and citizens provided in-kind donations to the earthquake zone in 395 trucks, 15 planes and 25 train cars.

Azerbaijan also deployed more than 10,731 tents, 183 containers (as of February 25) for the erection of a 1000-container-city in Adıyaman, 2234 generators, 20,881 heaters and technical equipment, 32,249 blankets, 8,136 beds, 435 bedchairs, 1,977 sleeping bags, 4 mobile kitchens, 3 vehicles, 152 construction equipment, 115 pieces of communication equipment, 1,724 lighting devices, 1,494 tons of food, 2 field hospitals, 500

thousand pieces of winter clothes, 1 million 412 thousand drugs and medical supplies, as well as 64,368 sets consisting of a mattress, a duvet cover and a sleeping bag (AA, 2023).

Ceyhun Bayramov, the Foreign Affairs Minister of Azerbaijan, stated that they delivered 5 thousand 300 tons of humanitarian aid to Türkiye and deposited 45 million dollars to the accounts of the relevant organizations, at the conference organized by the EU Commission in Brussels for those affected by the February 6th earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria. Bayramov also stated that Azerbaijan will always stand by its sister Türkiye and will continue their financial and technical support for the reconstruction works after the earthquake, and said: “*Azerbaijan will build housing, public buildings and educational institutions, worth 100 million dollars in the region*” (Rehimov, 2023).

Azerbaijan Women Entrepreneurs Association also organized a shipment to be sent on Women’s Day. A total of 5 trucks were prepared within the scope of this aid. Women’s clothing, warm overalls and tons of dry food were loaded onto trucks. In addition to these, 70 tents, 6 containers and a container-kitchen were also sent to the region in line with the needs in the earthquake zone.

Cash Support

The Turkish Religious Foundation (TRF) collected approximately 2 million Turkish Liras in the aid campaign launched for the disaster victims in Baku Turkish High School (TDV, 2023). Azerbaijan’s Vice President Anar Alekberov stated that the total cash aid sent to AFAD’s account by state institutions/organizations, NGOs, companies and individuals from all regions of Azerbaijan (including Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic) was USD 13,160,413.00 as of February 27, 2023, 17:00 Azerbaijan time (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Kazakhstan

After the earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, Kazakhstan sent teams to participate in search and rescue activities. They also provided many in-kind donations and cash support.

Deployed Search & Rescue Teams and Medical Teams

The first search&rescue team of 41 people from Kazakhstan came with medical assistance to Türkiye on February 7, and the second team of 60 arrived in Türkiye on February 8 (TRT Haber, 2023). The Kazakh team of 101 people also had 6 K9 dogs participating in the works. The first team that went to Gaziantep on February 7, returned to Almaty on February 19, and the second team that also went to Gaziantep on February 8, returned to Astana on February 20. As a result of the works carried out by the Kazakh search teams in Gaziantep, Hatay and Kahramanmaraş, 7 of our citizens were rescued from the wreckage and the bodies of 88 citizens, 10 of whom were children, were recovered (AA, 2023). Members of the Kazakhstan search and rescue team were awarded a state medal by President Kasım Cömert Tokayev (KAZAKİSTAN.KZ, 2023).

In-kind Support

With the instruction of President Tokayev, 55 tons of humanitarian aid was sent from Kazakhstan to Türkiye. The first plane that was sent on February 17, carried 18 tons of supplies, worth \$67,695. Among these supplies were; 1500 winter coats, 1500 winter trousers, 88 pieces of 10-pax winter tents, 660 mattresses, 900 pillows, 1800 sheets, 900 blankets, and 900 pillowcases. On the second plane that was sent on February 18, there were 40 tons of supplies, worth \$117,876. Among them were; 150 toilet booths, 150 pieces of 10-pax winter tents, 1500 metal beds, 840 mattresses, 600 pillows, 1200 sheets, 600 blankets and 600 pillowcases (TRT Haber, 2023).

After the earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş, more than 260 tons of support materials collected from Kazakh people and institutions, and Turkish citizens living in Kazakhstan, under the coordination of the Turkish Embassy and its affiliated representatives, were shipped to Türkiye by a cargo plane provided by Turkish Airlines (THY), by MNG Cargo flights, and other scheduled aircrafts. Meanwhile, there are still 120 tons of materials waiting to be shipped in the warehouse of the Almaty Consulate General. A total of 450 tons of relief material were sent from Kazakhstan by land (Türkiye in Kazakhstan, 2023). As of March 2, 679 tents were delivered from Kazakhstan to Türkiye. 441 of these tents were in kind donations brought to Türkiye’s

missions in Kazakhstan; and 238 of them were provided by the Kazakh state. Approximately 100 of these tents were traditional Kazakh tents (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Cash Support

Upon the intense demand from Turkish expats in Kazakhstan and the Kazakh people, a cash aid campaign was launched in coordination with the Türkiye-Kazakhstan Businessmen Association. Under this campaign, donations collected in the account opened at Ziraat Bank Kazakhstan by the Turkish Consulate General in Almaty, were sent to the official account of AFAD. As of March 3, a total of 15 million 54 thousand 382 USD was transferred from this earthquake fund in Kazakhstan to the official account of AFAD. Upon the instruction of President Tokayev, 1 million Dollars of emergency fund was provided to Türkiye by the Kazakhstan State (Ibid).

Uzbekistan

After the earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, Uzbekistan also sent teams to participate in search and rescue activities. They also provided many in-kind donations and cash support.

Search and Rescue Teams and Medical Teams Sent

Between February 6 and 13, six separate cargo flights carrying search and rescue teams, healthcare professionals, and humanitarian aid supplies to Adana made by Uzbek Airlines cargo planes allocated by the Government of Uzbekistan. As part of these efforts, a team of 100 Uzbek search and rescue personnel arrived in Türkiye and conducted rescue operations in the province of Hatay (Milliyet, 2023). Search and rescue teams returned to Uzbekistan on February 25. Uzbek teams rescued 18 people alive and recovered 190 bodies from the rubble (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

In addition, a medical delegation of 71 people, which included a team of 50 doctors and nurses, a rescue dog team of 5, and a support team, arrived in Hatay on February 8 with field hospital equipment. They established a field hospital where they treated earthquake victims. An official from the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Ankara stated that 3200 people were treated until February 25. Uzbekistan supported Türkiye in the earthquake zone with a search and rescue team of 100, and a medical team of 71 staff (AA, 2023).

Aids in-kind

Aids made in-kind from Uzbekistan were provided in coordination with the Government of Uzbekistan and the Turkish Embassy. The humanitarian aid materials with priority collected within the campaign of the Embassy was also transported to Türkiye by the scheduled passenger planes of Turkish Airlines to arrive Adana between February 12 and March 3, 2023. A total of 77 tons of materials were transported by 12 scheduled flights of Turkish Airlines. After consulting the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, approximately 129 tons of humanitarian aid materials were shipped to the cargo terminal in Istanbul by 22 scheduled passenger flights operated by Uzbek Airlines until March 3. In addition, a 48-ton shipment of humanitarian aid supplies arrived in Türkiye on February 15 via the airport in Navoi by one cargo plane that belongs to MNG Cargo and delivered to the Turkish Red Crescent. Uzbek cooks also went to the earthquake zone and distributed 2 meals a day for 10 thousand people (AA, 2023). Besides, the staff of the Ministry of Emergency prepares Uzbek pilaf by using 80 kilograms of rice every day in the tent camp established in Ovakent and distributes it to around 700-800 local people and search and rescue staff (Compiled from Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Information on the total 498 tons of in-kind aid material delivered until March 1, 2023 in the coordination of the Turkish Embassy and the Uzbek Government is as follows in summary; 325 tents, 5000 square meters of tent cloth, 12250 blankets/sleeping bags, 477 beds, 236 generators, 1175 heaters, 86 tons of clothing, 96 tons of hygiene/medical supplies, 77 tons of food supplies, 126 tons of other miscellaneous items. The Consulate General of Samarkand also loaded 102 tons of humanitarian aid materials on 9 trucks and delivered them to Türkiye. Thus, the amount of humanitarian aid delivered from Uzbekistan to Türkiye reached approximately 600 tons as of March 3, 2023 (Ibid).

Cash Assistance

Within the aid campaign organized under the coordination of the Turkish Embassy, more than 600 thousand dollars had been collected in Uzbekistan as of March 5 for the earthquake victims in Türkiye. It is also known that the campaign continued thereafter.

Kyrgyzstan

Following the earthquakes that took place in Türkiye with its epicenter in Kahramanmaraş, Kyrgyzstan sent teams to Türkiye to participate in the search and rescue operations. It also provided a large number of in-kind donations and send cash aid.

Search and Rescue Teams and Medical Teams Sent

Upon the orders of President Sadir Caparov, Kyrgyzstan sent a search and rescue team consisting of 173 people and 5 dogs to Türkiye. The Civil Protection Academy's team was also included in these figures. The first search and rescue team and 2 detection dogs left Kyrgyzstan on February 7, by the flights no. TK 347 and TK 345 of Turkish Airlines. They arrived in Gaziantep on February 8 and right after started their search and rescue activities in Kahramanmaraş. The second and the third search and rescue teams arrived in Gaziantep on February 2 and 13, 2023, on transport airplanes chartered by the Kyrgyz Republic and then they arrived in Kahramanmaraş thereafter (Ibid).

Carrying on their works in Kahramanmaraş, the search and rescue teams moved to Hatay on February 16, to carry out search and rescue activities upon the request of Minister of Interior Suleyman Soylu. Boobek Azhikeev, Kyrgyzstan's Minister of Emergency, Deputy Ministers Azamat Mambetov, Urmatbek Samirkanov and Edelbek Kulmatov, and Head of the Department of International Relations at the same Ministry Kanat Karıbai Ulu arrived in Türkiye with Kyrgyz search and rescue team.

Kyrgyz search and rescue teams returned to Kyrgyzstan on February 21, 2023. The field hospital set up by Kyrgyz teams has been handed over to the relevant Turkish authorities. Kyrgyz search and rescue teams rescued 8 people from the rubble and recovered the bodies of 198 people. Madina Bahtacieva, a citizen of Kyrgyzstan, also lost her life in Hatay (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023). President Sadir Caparov received Minister of Emergency Boobek Azhikeev on February 22, 2023, following the return of the Kyrgyz search and rescue team, which was active in Kahramanmaraş and then Hatay due to the earthquake in Türkiye. Minister Azhikeev noted that this was the first time in the history of the Ministry of Emergency that a Kyrgyz team had traveled abroad on a rescue mission. Four trucks loaded with the supplies collected during the aid campaign in Kyrgyzstan were also sent to Türkiye. 746 thousand dollars was deposited into the account opened by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Finance (TRT Haber, 2023).

Aids In Kind

Together with the search and rescue teams and tents sent from Kyrgyzstan, a team of 5 people to set up Kyrgyz tents, 6 paramedics, 1 field hospital, 20 boxes of medicines, 2 generators, 2 heating fans and 2 vehicles were shipped to Gaziantep on February 12 and 13, 2023 by transport aircraft chartered by the Kyrgyz Republic (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

The Ministry of Emergency sent 127 Kyrgyz tents (Boz Üy), 2 containers made of felt, 7 standard tents and 6 tents prepared by the Ministry of Interior to Türkiye. The 2.5 tons of materials collected by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Interior to be sent to the earthquake zone, consisting of 500 mattresses, 500 sleeping bags, 100 heaters and 1000 blankets, were delivered to Türkiye via Turkish Airlines. The total number of tents provided by the Ministry of Emergency and the Ministry of Interior is 142 (Ibid).

Collected by the people of Kyrgyzstan, non-governmental organizations in the country, Turkish citizens and compatriots, 25.3 tons of supplies were delivered to Türkiye by Turkish Airlines and Pegasus Airlines flights, and more than 50 tons of supplies were sent to Türkiye by land. As of March 3, 2023, a total of 77 tons of in-kind aid was delivered from Kyrgyzstan.

Cash Assistance

While the Kyrgyz government stated that the aid campaign for earthquake victims in Türkiye continues, the Ministry of Finance announced on its official website that 210 thousand dollars was deposited into the bank

account opened to collect aid for earthquake victims in Türkiye until February 15. Kyrgyz religious officials shared the information that 16 million 417 thousand 294 Kyrgyzstan Soms (3 million 667 thousand Turkish liras) in cash aid was collected in mosques across the country and the aid money was deposited into the account opened by the government (Tayfur, 2023).

994 thousand 364 US dollars was deposited into a bank account opened under the coordination of the Turkish Embassy in Bishkek. As of March 6, a total of 1 million 117 thousand US dollars was collected in the bank account opened by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Finance to collect aid to Türkiye (AA, 2023). Employees of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Emergency donated a total of 4 million 622 thousand 407 Kyrgyzstan Soms (1 million 23 thousand Turkish liras), which is one day's earnings of their salaries, for the earthquake victims in Türkiye (TRT Haber, 2023).

Turkmenistan

Following the earthquakes with the epicenter in Kahramanmaraş in Türkiye, Turkmenistan sent teams to participate in search and rescue operations. It has also provided a large number of in-kind donations and sent cash assistance.

Search and Rescue Teams and Medical Teams Sent

On February 7, 2023, 7 doctors, 3 medical personnel, medicines and medical supplies allocated by Turkmenistan to participate in humanitarian aid activities in Türkiye were sent to Gaziantep by a private plane. The Gurbangulu Berdimuhamedov Relief Foundation sent a total of 92 tons of relief aid for earthquake-stricken children, including medicine and medical supplies, furniture and food products, to Adana on 10 February 2023 on the second plane allocated by Turkmenistan (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Aids in Kind

The people of Turkmenistan and Turkish investors in the country also launched a blanket campaign for earthquake victims and sent 4,000 blankets to Türkiye, while many aid planes from the country were mobilized for Türkiye. 11 tons of aid departed from Turkmenistan for the earthquake victims. Humanitarian aid supplies including hygiene materials, clothing, and food were loaded onto trucks and shipped to Türkiye (Velhanov, 2023).

6 mobile toilets (930 kg) provided by Turkish and Turkmen donors through the Turkmen Red Crescent and 3.8 tons of winter clothes provided by Turkmen citizen donors were delivered to AFAD's warehouse in Gaziantep on February 17, 2023, by a truck provided by the Turkmen logistics company contacted by the Turkish Embassy.

On 28 February 2023, 8.6 tons of winter clothes, shoes, beds/mattresses and hygiene materials provided by Turkmen donors through the Turkmen Women's Union of Turkmenistan were shipped to Gaziantep Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation by a truck provided by a Turkmen logistics company (Compiled from Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023). In addition, a third truck loaded with 10.7 tons of clothing, food, and hygiene materials provided by the Turkmenistan Women's Union, the Turkmen Red Crescent, Turkmen companies, and Turkmen citizens departed for Türkiye on March 3 to be delivered to Gaziantep Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation (Ibid).

In Turkmenistan, Kızılayımay Relief Organization sent 100 beds and 60 heaters to those affected by the earthquake. As a result of the aid campaigns organized by non-governmental organizations and the Embassy of Türkiye in Ashgabat in Turkmenistan, 8.71 blankets, 390 beds, 20 generators, 8 thousand 71 blankets, 390 beds, 20 generators, 60 heaters, 6 mobile toilets, 11.2 tons of clothing, 44.4 tons of medical supplies, and 67 tons of food were delivered to the earthquake victims in the first stage (Anavatan Turkmenistan, 2023).

The total amount of in-kind aid as of March 3, provided by the Turkmen Red Crescent, Turkmen Women's Union, UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in Turkmenistan, Turkish companies operating in Turkmenistan, citizens living in the region, and Turkmen citizens and sent to Türkiye by air and land as part of the aid campaign organized by Turkish Embassy and Turkmenistan Government are listed below:

8,835 blankets, 667 beds/mattresses, 20 generators, 60 heaters, 6 mobile toilets, 29 tons of clothing, 45.8 tons of hygiene/medical supplies, 70.8 tons of food supplies were sent. In-kind aid materials sent from Turkmenistan to Türkiye amounted to 168.13 tons (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Cash Assistance

As part of the aid campaign carried out under the coordination of the Turkish Embassy in Turkmenistan, the donation amount of USD 132.065, which was accumulated in the bank account opened with the contributions of Turkmen citizens, was transferred to AFAD's account and the total amount of cash aid accumulated has reached up to USD 135.110 as of today together with the current account balance (Ibid).

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

In the aftermath of the earthquakes with the epicenter in Kahramanmaraş in Türkiye, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus sent teams to participate in search and rescue operations. It has also provided a large number of in-kind donations and sent cash aid.

Search and Rescue Teams and Medical Teams Sent

A civil defense team of 30 people sent by the TRNC Presidency of Civil Defense and 8 specially equipped ships arrived in our country on February 6, 2023 around noon. Then, a search and rescue team of 10 people reached Adiyaman via Adana Airport. Trained search and rescue teams, including a 31-member civil defense team, arrived in Adiyaman by a special flight with another 102-member team of nurses and doctors on 7 February 2023, (Ibid).

Gaziantep Nurdağı, Islahiye, and Kırıkhan were each sent a team affiliated to KTBK on the same date. Four battalions of KTBK were deployed in Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş and Adiyaman on the same day at night (a total of 1037 military staff). In addition, construction equipment such as trucks, cranes, lowbeds, forklifts, excavators and diggers, and operators/drivers capable of using this construction equipment were transferred to Türkiye by ships in order to support search and rescue activities.

In-kind Aid

Starting from February 6, 2023, 97 trucks (approximately 1,922 tons) of in-kind aid including tents, blankets, winter clothing, food, milk, fruits, halloumi, etc. were delivered to our country by 20 different ship services. In addition, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus sent 40 prefabricated houses to be built in Hatay (Ibid). The aids were sent to Mersin and Iskenderun Ports in coordination with AFAD. The Prime Ministry of TRNC has also confirmed that they aim to send 500 temporary prefabricated houses to our country by the end of March and their shipment will start with 60 prefabricated houses on March 3, 2023, on the ship departing from TRNC to Iskenderun. The remaining houses are planned to be shipped with 3 different ship voyages, 180 units per week (Ibid).

Cash Assistance

The TRNC Central Bank reported that as of February 27, 2023, financial aid amounting to TRY 13,167,889.00 was directly transferred to AFAD's accounts (Nogayeva, 2023). Since our country has a common banking system with TRNC, all donations were made directly to AFAD accounts. Similarly, Turkcell and Telsim companies collected donations via SMS. This amount reached up to a total of TRY 2,134,960.00 as of March 1, 2023. According to the latest data available from the TRNC authorities (March 1, 2023), a total of 15,302,849.00 Turkish Lira (approximately USD 810,532) was transferred to AFAD's accounts (Compiled from data of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Hungary

After the earthquakes with the epicenter in Kahramanmaraş in Türkiye, Hungary sent teams to participate in search and rescue operation. It has also provided a large number of donations in kind and send cash assistance.

Search and Rescue Teams and Medical Teams Sent

A total of 167 staff from Hungarian authorities and NGO's (55 from the Ministry of Interior the General Directorate of Disaster Management, 16 from the Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Unit of the Ministry of Interior and 96 from 5 different NGO's) and 28 specially trained dogs participated in search and rescue operations in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş. Hungarian search and rescue teams rescued 35 earthquake victims from the rubble. 4 engineers from Budapest University of Technology were participated in checking the condition of buildings in the earthquake zone (Ibid).

In-kind Aid

The Hungarian Ministry of Defense announced that the organizers of the World Athletics Championships to be held in Budapest on August 19-27, 2023 will bring 23 earthquake-affected children and 7 accompanying persons (maximum 30 people in total) to Budapest. Hungarian authorities will cover the airfare and accommodation expenses of the children (Ibid).

The Hungarian Ministry of National Defense sent 52 military tents. On the occasion of the visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Peter Szijjarto to Türkiye on 27 February 2023, 361 sleeping bags, 500 mattresses, 1500 blankets and various medical supplies were delivered to Türkiye as part of Hungary's official aid program "Hungary Helps". On March 1, 2023, 239 additional sleeping bags, which did not fit on the Hungarian Minister's plane, were shipped to Türkiye by Turkish Airlines cargo. Hungarian officials reported that the in-kind aid weighed 10 tons (Ibid).

During his meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu, Minister Szijjarto handed over a list of medical supplies that they could send and stated that they would send the needed supplies in a short time. The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade also donated 8 tons of disinfectant. The in-kind aids collected by the Turkish Embassy in Budapest, i.e. 378 tents, 15,131 blankets, 838 sleeping bags, 2,054 mattresses, 234 generators, 173 heaters, 5 tons of clothing, 39 tons of hygiene/medical supplies, 32 tons of food as of March 6, 2023 were delivered to Türkiye. In-kind aid consisting of 1,070 blankets, 40 sleeping bags, 6 mattresses, 7 heaters, 5 tons of hygiene/medical supplies and 1 ton of food is in the shipment process (Ibid).

Cash Assistance

The "Docler Foundation," an organization based in Hungary, contacted the Turkish Embassy in Budapest and stated that they intend to transfer 8 million Forints (approximately USD 22,460) to the earthquake donation account of the said embassy. As of March 6, 2023, USD 318,000 (together with the donation of the Hungarian Parliament) was collected by our Embassy in Budapest and USD 241,000 was transferred to AFAD. Approximately USD 14,000 was donated by the Hungarian National Assembly. Tapolca Mayor launched a cash aid campaign (Ibid). Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Szijjarto announced that the Hungarian Government donated 50 million Forints (approximately EUR 125,000) to the non-governmental organization "Malteser Charity Service" for the establishment of mobile health units in the areas affected by the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria (Ibid).

Hungary launched aid campaigns for Türkiye after the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes. As part of these campaigns, EUR 293,870 was collected in an account opened by the Embassy of Türkiye in Budapest (Temizer, 2023).

Conclusion and Evaluation

Natural disasters can doubtlessly bring states closer together politically and diplomatically. The grief experienced in these disasters has been recognized many times as a "shared grief" and has triggered massive aid mobilizations around the world. The earthquakes in Türkiye on February 6 will take its place in the history as the greatest example of this kind of mobilization of solidarity. In this study, the efforts made particularly by the OTS countries, of which Türkiye is a member, and the citizens of these countries in the aid mobilization, are presented in the light of the data on the first month after the earthquake. It would not be fair to say that all the wounds of this earthquake disaster, which has been recorded as the disaster of the century, were completely healed within a month.

As a supranational organization, OTS has successfully passed a test by uniting in times of disasters and will continue to do so in this disaster. Although OTS is a new organization in the literature of international

organizations, it is making valuable efforts to become a global actor by going beyond being a regional actor. Although it has not yet completed its development like the EU did in the past, it is considered as an organization that will ensure its economic and political integrity in the future with the advantage of having a common history in terms of language, culture, customs and traditions.

OTS convened in Ankara, the capital of Türkiye, due to the 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquakes on March 16, 2023 and the theme of the convention was “Disaster-Emergency Management and Humanitarian Aid.” An agreement on the establishment of the OTS Civil Protection Mechanism was signed at the meeting. This situation is undoubtedly meaningful in terms of showing that the institution stands by a member country of the organization, beyond individual relations. In conclusion, in terms of earthquake diplomacy, the February 6 earthquakes are considered as a great test for the member countries of the organization and the institutionalization of the organization. In the light of these developments, the establishment of OTS with its positive impact on the foreign relations as a result of the political and economic progress that have been made by the member countries since their independence and the joint declaration of the heads of the state on the goals and principles of the Nakhchivan Agreement signed to establish the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States demonstrates that a new supranational actor was introduced to the discipline international relations. With the establishment of the OTS, it is obvious that the Turkic World has strengthened its position in the regional and global arena with the opportunities provided by the geopolitical changes in the world.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

6 Şubat 2023 tarihinde Türkiye’de 11 farklı ilde (Adana, Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis, Malatya, Osmaniye ve Şanlıurfa) 7,7 ve 7,6 büyüklüğünde iki büyük deprem meydana gelmiştir. Kuşkusuz yüzyılda bir meydana geldiği tahmin edilen bu depremler, bölgede yaşayan yaklaşık 13.500 kişiyi derinden etkilemiştir. Bu depremlerin ardından AFAD’a göre 6 Şubat - 6 Mayıs 2023 tarihleri arasında 33.000’den fazla artçı sarsıntı yaşanmıştır. Türk halkını derinden yaralayan bu depremlerde 50.000’in üzerinde insan hayatını kaybetmiştir. Ölümünün yanı sıra depremler, bölgede birçok ev ve işyerinin yıkılmasına neden olmuş, depremlerin ardından çadır kentler ve konteyner kentler kurulmuş, ardından Türk Cumhuriyeti Devleti konut yapmaya karar vermiştir.

Yüzyılın felaketi olarak adlandırılan bu deprem felaketi, dünya tarihinin en etkili doğal afetlerinden biri olarak hatırlanacaktır. Ancak Türkiye’de meydana gelen depremleri, diğer ülkelerde meydana gelen depremlerden farklı kılan birtakım nedenler olduğu bilinmektedir. Nitekim deniz ve kara dikkate alındığında bu depremlerin daha önce hiç yaşanmamış büyüklükte olduğu düşünülmektedir. Türkiye tarihinde 7’den büyük deprem sayısı oldukça azdır. Örneğin 7,8 büyüklüğündeki Erzincan depreminde 33.000 kişi hayatını kaybetmiştir. Bu deprem, 1939 yılında meydana gelmiştir. Öte yandan 6 Şubat 2023 depremlerindeki kayıpların nedenini, depremin 5 ila 5,5 km derinlikte meydana gelmesine bağlamak gerekmektedir.

Bilindiği üzere depremler, günümüzde teknoloji ne kadar gelişmiş olursa olsun önceden bilinmesi veya tahmin edilmesi mümkün olmayan olaylardır. Bu nedenle depremler, yıkıcılığı ve yol açtığı can kayıpları bakımından en şiddetli doğal afetler olarak kabul edilmekte, kaygı ve korku yaratmaktadır. Dolayısıyla depreme karşı sadece yerel ya da ulusal bazda önlem almak yeterli değildir. Bu konunun uluslararası boyutu bulunmakla beraber yeni binalar, şehirleşme, çevre düzenlemeleri vb. alanlarda yasal düzenlemeler yerelde yerine getirilmeli ve mevcut yasalar buna göre revize edilmelidir.

Türkiye gibi deprem gerçeği ile yaşamak zorunda olan ülkeler için en önemli sonuçlardan biri, ulusal bir afet yönetiminin gerekliliğidir. Çünkü ulusal bir afet yönetiminin kurulması, hem can kayıplarını en aza indirecek hem de afet sonrası hayatın normale dönme sürecini hızlandıracaktır. Ancak afetlerle mücadelede sadece devlet erkinin rol sahibi olması, elbette sürecin kadük kalmasını sağlayacaktır. Bu mücadelede bireylere, kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarına, sivil toplum örgütlerine, üniversitelere, akademisyenlere, öğrencilere, belediyelere, özel şirketlere ve iş insanlarına bazı görev ve sorumluluklar düşmektedir. Ayrıca deprem gibi bir afetin büyüklüğüne bağlı olarak (7.4+) uluslararası topluma da bazı görev ve sorumluluklar düşmektedir. Nitekim afet sonrası can kayıplarının giderilmesi, canlıların enkaz altından çıkarılması gibi süreçlerin yanı sıra afetzedelerin gıda ve barınma gibi hayati ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması için de söz konusu yardım ve yönlendirmeler vazgeçilmez bir ihtiyaç olarak görülmektedir. Dolayısıyla genel olarak insani yardım olarak değerlendirilen bu girişimler, afetzedelerin acil yaşamsal ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasında büyük ve kritik bir öneme sahiptir. Depremzedelere temiz su sağlanması, tıbbi destek ve rehabilitasyon hizmetlerinin yanı sıra kadınlar, çocuklar ve dez avantajlı gruplar (engelliler) gibi hassas grupların korunması birincil öncelik olarak kabul edilmektedir.

Etki oranı ve yol açtığı zararlar göz önüne alındığında uluslararası bir boyut kazanan 6 Şubat 2023 depremleri, dünya devletlerinin bir numaralı gündem maddesi haline gelmiştir. Afetlerin özellikle toplumların ve devletlerin yakınlaşmasına ve yardımlaşma duygularının en üst düzeye çıkmasına vesile olması nedeniyle, depremin ilk saatlerinden itibaren birçok ülke Türkiye’ye yardım elini uzatmıştır. Bu çerçevede diplomatik ilişkiler başlatılmış, Türkiye’ye ayni ve maddi yardımlar hızla gönderilmiştir. Depremin geniş bir alanı yıkıma uğratması nedeniyle Türkiye ile temasa geçen hemen her ülke, arama kurtarma faaliyetlerini yürütmek üzere kendi arama kurtarma ekiplerini Türkiye’ye göndermiştir.

Türkiye ile temasa geçerek yardım talebinde bulunan ülkelerin başında hiç şüphesiz Türkiye’nin de üyesi olduğu Türk Devletleri Teşkilatı’na (TDT) üye ve gözlemci ülkeler (Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Özbekistan, Macaristan, Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti ve Türkmenistan) gelmektedir. Bu çalışmada, 6 Şubat 2023 tarihinde Türkiye’de meydana gelen depremlerin ardından TDT üyesi ülkelerin

afet bölgelerine yaptığı yardımlar aktarılmaya çalışılmış ve afet diplomasisi bağlamında insani yardımların uluslararası ilişkilere etkisi tartışılmıştır.

Arama ve kurtarma ekiplerinin yanı sıra, TDT üyesi ülkeler de aynı ve nakdi yardım sağlamıştır. Bu çalışmada sunulan veriler ülke bazında ayrıştırılmıştır. Bu çerçevede 6 Şubat-7 Mart 2023 tarihleri arasında TDT üyesi her ülkenin gönderdiği arama kurtarma ve sağlık ekipleri, aynı yardım ve nakdi yardım alt başlıklarına ayrılarak yapılan yardımlar kategorize edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada yöntem olarak literatür taraması ve içerik analizi yöntemleri tercih edilmiştir. Literatür taraması kısmında deprem diplomasisi ve TDT incelenmiş, içerik analizi kısmında ise ulusal ve uluslararası basına yansıyan haberlerin yanı sıra kurumların web sayfaları analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda karşılıklı siyasi ilişkilerin güçlendirilmesi ve TDT'nin deprem diplomasisi bağlamında daha etkin bir aktör haline getirilmesi yönünde bir irade olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.