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**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

*Regarding the earthquake in Turkey*

**885<sup>th</sup> PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**27 October 2011**

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to express our deep gratitude to those, namely the Chairman-in-Office, the EU, as well as to my distinguished colleagues from the USA, the Russian Federation, Canada, Belarus, Norway, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Armenia, the Holy See, Switzerland, Uzbekistan, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Georgia and Kazakhstan for expression of condolences and sympathy regarding the tragic earthquake of a magnitude of 7.2 at Richter scale, that struck the province of Van in the eastern part of Turkey, on 23 October.

It is for me a sad duty to note that, as of this morning, 534 people lost their lives and 2.300 were wounded as a result of this disaster. The only relatively consoling news in this tragic situation is that, through the intensified search and rescue efforts, it could be possible to rescue 185 survivors from the rubble.

On this occasion, I would like to express the appreciation of my Government and people for the generous offers of assistance from the international community. And certainly, when we are going through such difficult moments, such a display of solidarity means a lot to us.

Nationwide efforts are ongoing on the search and rescue activities as well as in overcoming the effects of this tragic disaster.

To date, nearly a total of 5.000 search and rescue and medical personnel have been dispatched to the disaster zone. Besides, around 25.000 tents, 60 prefabricated houses as well as 100.000 blankets were transferred to the area.

Regarding the search and rescue phase, my authorities have assessed that there was no need for international assistance to supplement the local capacities. In this respect, offers of assistance from numerous countries and international organizations have been noted with gratitude and appreciation.

On the other hand, for the reconstruction phase, which will follow the conclusion of search and rescue works, my authorities have identified a need for winter tents, prefabricated houses and container shelters. This need has been communicated to those countries which have expressed their readiness for assistance after the earthquake. And currently, my authorities are in contact with the countries that are prepared to swiftly dispatch the relief materials.

I also take this opportunity to express my personal gratitude and appreciation to all my colleagues, whose names I cannot cite here, who have sent messages of sympathy or called me personally.

Thank you.