



### [Turkey and Syria Continue to Receive Criticism over Slow Response to the Earthquakes](#)

The recent earthquakes in Syria have caused tremendous devastation and have highlighted the failures of the international community in providing timely and effective aid to those affected. The UN-appointed investigative committee has now criticized the slow response to the earthquakes and identified several actors, including the UN itself and the Syrian government, for their role in the delay. The slow military response in aid from Turkey's military has also raised concerns about the government's ability to mobilize and use the military in search and rescue efforts. The earthquakes, which struck Syria and Turkey last month, claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people, with the majority of the casualties in Syria in the rebel-held northwest close to the Turkish border. Despite the scale of the disaster, humanitarian aid was slow to arrive, leaving Syrians feeling abandoned and ignored by those who were meant to protect them. According to the commission's chair, Paulo Pinheiro, there was a general failure on the part of the government and the international community, including the UN, to quickly direct life-saving assistance to Syrians in the greatest need. The slow response to the earthquakes is a tragic reflection of the ongoing conflict in Syria, which has been raging since 2011. With over 500,000 people dead and almost half of Syria's pre-war population ejected from their homes, the situation in Syria remains one of the most pressing humanitarian crises of our time. The commission's findings suggest that the international community is failing to provide the necessary support to those who need it most, leaving them vulnerable to further suffering and devastation.

One of the key actors identified by the commission was Turkey's military, which has been criticized for its slow response in providing aid to Syrians affected by the earthquakes. Given Turkey's close proximity to Syria, it is concerning that the military was not able to provide more timely and effective support to those in need. While Turkey has taken in millions of Syrian refugees throughout the conflict, the slow response to the earthquakes raises questions about its commitment to providing ongoing support to those affected by the crisis. According to reports, the military was not one of the primary reaction teams in Turkey's disaster response strategy. This lack of proper engagement was attributed to the country's poor history of civilian and military relations. Some opposition figures even speculated that the government limited the use of the military out of concern for an eventual coup against the government. The Humanitarian Assistance Brigade, a military search and rescue unit, was sent to the disaster area in the early days after the earthquake, but the force consisted of little more than 400 personnel. The military actively sent ships to provide medical aid and deployed its air force to transport relief. However, the military reaction in the earthquake zone differed depending on the location, and there were technological issues that slowed down the response in addition to the alleged rivalry between the interior and defense ministers. The slow response from Turkey's military has also raised concerns about the country's crisis management strategies, particularly as it makes up the second-largest ground force in NATO. The government's ability to coordinate and mobilize the military during disasters needs to be

reevaluated to ensure that aid reaches those in need as quickly as possible and the delays in aid are not repeated.

The UN's own failures in responding to the earthquakes are also cause for concern. While the UN has been working to provide humanitarian aid to Syrians throughout the conflict, the commission's findings suggest that more needs to be done to ensure that aid is delivered quickly and effectively. The UN must take a more proactive approach to identifying and addressing the barriers that prevent aid from reaching those who need it most. The situation in Syria is complex and challenging, but that is no excuse for inaction. The international community must come together to provide the support Syrians need to rebuild their lives and communities. This requires a comprehensive ceasefire that is fully respected and safe access for aid workers. The recent earthquakes have shown that the people of Syria cannot wait any longer for the help they so desperately need. It is time for the international community to step up and take action.