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**THE HON ANDREW GILES MP**  
MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION, CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

Ref No: MC23-010916

The Hon Zoe Bettison MP  
Minister for Tourism  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
State Member for Ramsay  
GPO Box 2343  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Minister *Zoe,*

Thank you for your correspondence of 20 March 2023, concerning the Australian Government's response to the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria.

Australia's Humanitarian Program operates flexibly to respond effectively to global resettlement needs and international humanitarian crises as they arise.

Australia's initial response to those affected by the earthquakes and aftershocks in Türkiye and neighbouring countries focuses on providing a range of financial and material aid to governments and affected populations. The aim is to quickly assist those in immediate need and to assist local communities to rebuild vital infrastructure.

The Department of Home Affairs is prioritising processing for those displaced persons in Türkiye who have already lodged an application for a refugee or humanitarian visa, and now find themselves in especially urgent and compassionate circumstances as a result of the recent earthquakes.

Prioritisation will occur on a case by case basis, in line with advice from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), so that we can assist those most vulnerable who are faced with persecution, substantial discrimination or violation of human rights, focusing on vulnerable women and children.

Applications lodged under the Special Humanitarian Program will be prioritised and processed as quickly as possible.

People who have existing refugee and humanitarian visa applications already lodged with the Department can contact [immigration.ankara@dfat.gov.au](mailto:immigration.ankara@dfat.gov.au) to update the Department about their current circumstances.

People who have not lodged a visa may apply, further information can be found on the Department of Home Affairs' website at: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program>.

Thank you for raising this matter.



ANDREW GILES

10/5 / 2023