$30 million response to Turkey wildfires, flooding

October 20th, 2021 — Doha: Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) signed today a partnership agreement with Turkey’s Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) to respond to the recent wildfires and flooding across the country, with a total budget of $30 million.

Under the two-year agreement, several activities will be carried out, such as reconstruction of affected residential areas, compensation for the losses of the public (such as agricultural crops, commercial facilities, vehicles, and other private property), and cash and in-kind aid for affected families.

These activities are estimated to benefit 247,000 persons in 25 districts across five provinces. The agreement also involves exchange of experience and capacity-building in terms of systems of disaster information management, early warning, communication and technology in emergencies, and risk management/reduction.

Currently, a high-level delegation from QRCS is visiting Turkey, including Ali bin Hassan Al-Hammadi, Secretary-General, Faisal Mohamed Al-Emadi, Executive Director of Relief and International Development Division, and Dr. Fawzi Oussedik, Head of International Relations and International Humanitarian Law.

The signing ceremony was attended by H.E. Sheikh Mohamed bin Nasser bin Jassim Al Thani, Ambassador of Qatar to Turkey, and Yunus Sezer, Head of AFAD.
Mr. Al-Hammadi said, “It is our pleasure at QRCS to work together with AFAD on humanitarian projects for those affected by wildfires and flooding in Turkey, in solidarity with the Turkish people to reconstruct the affected regions, inspired by the historical relations between the two countries”.

He hoped that this agreement would achieve its desired goals. "As humanitarians, we have to intensify efforts to help local communities in the affected areas to overcome the crisis and restore normal life. This is a top priority for us, by adopting a community-based strategy of disaster preparedness/recovery capacity-building,” Mr. Al-Hammadi concluded.

Mr. Sezer stated, “AFAD and QRCS have signed an aid protocol for supporting the aid activities for the forest fires in the Mediterranean and the floods in the Black Sea region. During the signing ceremony, both parties stated the importance of current and future collaborations between AFAD and QRCS”.

Sheikh Mohamed bin Nasser Al Thani welcomed the signing of partnership agreement between QRCS and Turkey’s AFAD. He reiterated Qatar’s unwavering commitment to standing by the Turkish people, building upon the strong and extraordinary relations between the two countries.

In his statement, he hoped that the agreement would achieve all its desired outcomes of serving to help the victims and reduce their losses.

Late in July, wildfire broke out in many parts of Turkey. As a result of winds and too hot weather, the number of wildfires increased to 270 in 53 districts. Large forest areas were damaged, totaling 58,000 hectares, and approximately 30-40 million trees were burned. Other losses include beehive destruction, nine deaths, evacuation of many districts/villages, and death of large numbers of animals.
In August 2021, the Black Sea region in Turkey was affected by catastrophic flooding, as a series of thunderstorms caused several floods and landslides. At least 81 people died, buildings were damaged, bridges were destroyed, and electricity was cut off.

About Qatar Red Crescent (QRCS)

Established in 1978, Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) is a humanitarian volunteering organization that aims to assist and empower vulnerable individuals and communities without partiality or discrimination. QRCS is a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which consists of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and 191 National Societies. QRCS is also a member of several GCC, Arab, and Islamic organizations, such as the Islamic Committee of International Crescent and the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization (ARCO). In this legally recognized capacity, QRCS has access to disaster and conflict zones, thus serving as an auxiliary to the State of Qatar in its humanitarian efforts — a role that distinguishes it from other local charities and NGOs.

QRCS operates both locally and internationally and has ongoing international relief and development projects in a number of countries throughout the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Europe. QRCS's humanitarian actions include providing support in disaster preparedness, disaster response, risk reduction, and disaster recovery. To mitigate the impact of disasters and improve the livelihoods of affected populations, QRCS provides medical services, healthcare, and social development to local communities. It is also active at the humanitarian advocacy front. With the help of a vast network of trained, committed staff and volunteers, QRCS aspires to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity.

QRCS works under the umbrella of the seven international humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.