

## **CBi Turkey becomes the world largest business platform to address disaster risk**

In a signing ceremony with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation (TÜRKONFED) has on Saturday announced in Hatay that it will host the Turkish membership of the Connecting Business initiative (CBi)<sup>1</sup> one of the first global partnerships creating bridges between the private sector, the United Nations' development and humanitarian arms and country-based disaster risk management structures.

TÜRKONFED brings to the initiative the world broadest network ever at a country level. The platform of 25 federations and 190 associations with 40,000 member companies, mainly small and medium enterprises, is an unprecedented opportunity for the Turkish private sector to play a significant role in managing and reducing risk from natural and manmade hazards.

The signature ceremony for CBi Turkey was held in the margins of TÜRKONFED 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Event in Hatay on 16-17 November, in the presence of Orhan Turan, TÜRKONFED President, Irena Vojáčková Sollorano, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Turkey and, Claudio Tomasi, UNDP Turkey Country Director.

“From individuals and communities to governments and companies, understanding disaster risks is becoming everyone’s business. Private sector can play an integral role in ensuring that lives and assets are saved, and that local economies are able to recover from shocks more rapidly,” Ms. Sollorano said. “The United Nations stands with you to go through all shocks you may face, to keep the Turkish economy strong and diverse; through the Connecting Business initiative, you are now connecting internationally with people and businesses facing similar hazards in the world,” the UN Resident Coordinator concluded.

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<sup>1</sup> The Connecting Business initiative (CBi) was jointly launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016. Thirteen CBi networks have been created around the world, promoting collective action from the private sector in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery. In 2018, seven of these networks have responded to 11 emergencies in disaster-prone countries. The CBi Secretariat is hosted by OCHA in Geneva, with technical guidance from UNDP’s International Center for the Private Sector and Development in Istanbul. UNDP in Turkey provides support to the CBi Member Network at country level.

“Many companies in Istanbul and Anatolia are at risk of earthquakes, and – as we all know – they have in recent years been hit by other natural disasters such as floods,” Orhan Turan said. “CBI Turkey will work on unique solutions to help our members better prepare for those hazards, learn from each other and protect their businesses and employees, including addressing the pressure of the current refugee crisis,” TÜRKONFED President underlined.

CBI Turkey will work to identify the needs and capacity of the private sector in disaster risk management and, mainly, to strengthen its resilience against natural hazards. Turkey is also one of three countries, which will pilot together with the global Connecting Business initiative a *Guidance toolkit on complex emergencies* for the private sector dealing with manmade hazards, including conflict and refugee crises.

### **Disaster risk in Turkey**

Turkey is a disaster-prone country. More than 95% of the country lies in one of the most active earthquake and landslide regions in the world. Landslides and floods exacerbated by deforestation, avalanches and technological disasters are among the risks that the country faces. There are three different major fault systems tectonically control Anatolia from east to west and 70% of the population lives in areas (mostly urban) highly vulnerable to earthquakes. The main industrial and commercial capital of Turkey, Istanbul with a population of close to 15 million is predicted to be affected by a worse-case scenario earthquake of 7.5 in the coming decades.

In addition, as of November 2018, Turkey hosts over 3,5 million Syrians under temporary protection, the largest refugee population in the world. Syrian refugees are mainly located in the Southeast Anatolia region bordering Syria, but as the crisis continues, the population has expanded to other regions as well.

The Government of Turkey provides a rights-based legal framework through the Temporary Protection regulation, which offers access to education, health care, employment and social security to Syrians. The Government of Turkey claims to have spent US\$30 billion over the last 5 years on the response to the Syria crisis.

### **Losses to the global economy**

The global economy lost 320 billion dollars to disasters and emergencies in 2017. Disasters mostly hit the poor and other vulnerable groups. In the past 30 years, more than 2.5 million lives and nearly 4 trillion dollars were lost due to such complex emergencies as earthquakes, cyclones, floods and armed conflicts. The private sector was also deeply hit. Economic losses suffered by the entire range of

businesses from big multinationals to SMEs due to disasters and emergencies increasingly threaten business continuity and sustainability.

**For more information**

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