



**STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY BY THE PUBLIC SERVICES INTERNATIONAL WORLD WOMEN'S
COMMITTEE WITH THE VICTIMS OF THE EARTHQUAKE IN TURKIYE AND SYRIA AND THE
MIGRANT DEATHS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

EXPRESSING the profound sympathy and solidarity of the Public Services International World Women's Committee to the people of Türkiye and Syria who were devastated by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake;

NOTING with great sadness that on February 6, 2023, around 4:00 am, in the dead of winter, with people fast asleep, thus giving them little chance to react, the violent and massive earthquake with 7.8 magnitude ripped through Türkiye and Syria, leaving a trail of death, destruction, and displacement on each side of the border. With more than 53,500 confirmed deaths this is the deadliest on record since the 1999 earthquake that occurred in the region;

CALLING UPON all PSI affiliates to respond to the call for solidarity assistance for the people in Türkiye and Syria, particularly for the workers and their families;

NOTING with deep admiration the bravery and dedication of all public service workers who worked tirelessly day and night in the rescue efforts and who continue to be at the frontlines providing emergency response, care, and support services to the survivors;

CALLING UPON FURTHER all humanitarian aid agencies to ensure that in all rescue, recovery, rehabilitation, and rebuilding efforts, the differential needs of women and girls and their health, safety, and security will be recognized and consciously attended to;

CONVEYING the shock, deep sadness, and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of the 62 migrants who died in the boat wreck in the Mediterranean Sea on February 26;

STATING that the overcrowded wooden boat carrying around 200 people left Turkey days earlier, including among them Afghans, Syrians, Iraqis, Somalis, and Pakistanis fleeing their country to seek refuge specifically to Italy, where the boat was headed before it was wrecked in the stormy seas on the shoals off the Calabrian coast;

STRONGLY APPEALING that the survivors, many of them women, and children, be given international protection, including the needed shelter/settlement, financial, and medical assistance, as well as, trauma counseling;

DENOUNCING the hypocritical response of the European Union (EU) governments in expressing sadness towards this human tragedy, yet continuing to impose stronger security, border controls, and naval blockades that only put migrants and refugees in even more dangerous journeys and making them prey to human smugglers and traffickers;

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CONDEMNING far-right politicians who distort the discourse of migration and asylum to win popular votes, while diverting from addressing the systemic problems that exacerbate poverty, inequality, the climate crisis, and conflicts that force people to migrate and seek refuge;

FURTHER condemning that in the midst of these tragedies, Italy's right-wing coalition government is pushing for a controversial new law that would hinder the operations of humanitarian rescue ships in the Central Mediterranean. The proposed law would require rescue ships to head to port immediately after each rescue, effectively foregoing any additional rescues even though they are in the nearby vicinity. Such law will only see more migrant deaths in the Mediterranean.

REITERATING the call of PSI to countries of origin and destination to stop criminalizing migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees, effectively punish human smugglers and traffickers who profit on the desperation of these people, demand that rich countries assume their fair share of receiving and hosting refugees without discrimination, expand gender-responsive and rights-based channels for migration while addressing the structural drivers and root causes that force people to migrate or flee from their countries.