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Brother and Sisters
Assalamu alaykum, Peace and Blessings be upon you.

Since the beginning of this year, the world has witnessed disaster after disaster. Natural disasters have become so frequent that they are considered by some to be a part of daily life. First an earthquake hit Haiti and it seems as if the tremors have never stopped. They have moved on to hit Chile, Turkey, Taiwan, Mexico and Indonesia.

Zakat Foundation can proudly claim to have been one of the first organizations that reached Haiti with food and water because we have been working in Haiti since 2008. Once the first phase of rescue and relief ended, we took a leadership role in identifying an important next step. That is the Earthquake Resistant Homes Project. We should remember it is not the earthquake, but rather the poorly built houses that kill people and this must be avoided.

We know the people of Haiti are going to build their homes (and not the UN, foreign governments, or NGO’s), so we try to make sure they build earthquake resistant homes. Therefore in early March and late April, we invited scholars, builders, engineers, local Haitian politicians and grass-roots organizations, as well as representatives of foreign governments such as USAID, to talk. Our effort was welcomed by Haitian leaders, grassroot organization and media.

In the next step, our Creole language publications, seminars, adds, will reach large amounts of the Haitian public allowing the people of Haiti to build their homes based upon sound technical knowledge we provide.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to visit our new website. For your convenience, it has been built to make both the navigation and donation process easy. Beyond that, our website will serve you as an information center where you can find many Islamic articles. Teachers, imams, and community leaders can easily download such information. We welcome your feedback as well as suggestions for improvement.

Last but not least, we ask that you please keep us in your prayers (du’a) and support our work. As you know, we depend on our Lord SWT, His name be blessed, then you.

Wassalaam,

Khalil Demir, Executive Director
Country Profile: Haiti

Even before the earthquake Haiti was and remains the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, and is suffering greatly from the current food and fuel crisis. The agricultural sector, in particular, has taken a severe hit due to frequent natural disasters, such as hurricanes. The UN has declared that a large portion of the Haitian population is at high risk of undernourishment and starvation, and that this risk has heightened over the last few years. The majority of the population cannot afford food. The education infrastructure has also been greatly hindered by the current food and fuel crisis, and by natural disasters.

VITAL STATS

Population: 8,924,553
Infant Mortality Rate: 62 deaths /1000 births
Life Expectancy: 57 years
Major Diseases: High risk for bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A and E, and typhoid fever, leptospirosis, dengue fever and malaria.
Religions: 96% Christian (Roman Catholic and Protestant), 4% other
Natural Hazards: Lies in the middle of the hurricane belt and subject to severe storms from June to October; occasional flooding and earthquakes; periodic droughts
Literacy Rates: 53%
Unemployment Rate: Widespread unemployment and underemployment; more than two-thirds of the labor force do not have formal jobs (2002 est.)
Poverty Rate: more than 80%
Zakat Foundation has been intensifying immediate relief efforts in Haiti where a major earthquake struck Tuesday, January 12, 2010 and has possibly killed thousands of people. According to the UN this is the strongest earthquake to hit the Caribbean nation in 200 years.

At the beginning of the crisis, Zakat Foundation came up with a unique model due to the tremendous challenges in Haiti. We purchase supplies daily in the neighboring Dominican Republic and truck them in to their distribution points in Port-au-Prince. Our distribution point is the rectory below the St. Clare Church. Zakat Foundation runs a clinic and daily hot food distribution center feeding 2,000-3,000 regularly. Other distribution locations include the Masjid Tahweed in Port-au-Prince and an abandoned amusement park, Bojeux Park, where our partner organization IMANA (Islamic Medical Association of North America) treats and provides food packages to 300 people daily.

Zakat Foundation's work in Haiti included collaboration with many other local and international organizations. Ahmad Rehab, the current Director of CAIR Chicago and former CAIR Director Yaser Tabbara traveled to Haiti as Zakat Foundation volunteers, working closely with our relief team to get first-hand accounts of the needs of the people.

Feeding Haiti's Homeless
Immediately after the earthquake struck Haiti on the afternoon of January 12, 2010, relief agencies and governments deployed cargo planes filled with relief goods to Haiti. The unforeseen problem was that the airport outside of Port-au-Prince was also severely damaged in the quake. The relief planes were stuck in a bottle-neck, using only a few runways, and were unable to benefit the desperate and shaken survivors.

Zakat Foundation quickly changed tactics and sent a team to neighboring Dominican Republic to purchase food, water and hygiene packages and swiftly truck the goods into Haiti, reaching those in need as soon as possible. We established a known distribution area at St. Clare Church, the late Father Jean-Juste's parish. Almost every day since the earthquake hit, Zakat Foundation and local partners have been cooking flavorful and nutritious meals of rice and beans. Our distribution of fresh foods warms the bellies of more than approximately 3,000 hungry men, women and children everyday.

Hope Through Medical Care
The Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA) and the Zakat Foundation’s Haiti partnership increases the effectiveness of their relief efforts. IMANA and the Zakat Foundation have developed an exchange program. For weeks at a time, four or five IMANA doctors travel with Zakat Foundation team members to areas of Port-au-Prince and surrounding towns where the lives of survivors of the earthquake hang on a thread. Zakat Foundation’s relief work in Haiti spread in areas that have seen very little aid. Two hours out of Port-au-Prince, the city of Leogane was also devastated by the earthquake. As relief agencies flocked to Port-au-Prince, the people of Leogane were left with no homes, food, or international aid. Leogane was closer than Port-au-Prince to the epicenter of the earthquake and the damage that occurred there is indescribable. Zakat Foundation and our partner, IMANA, sent two primary care physicians to Leogane to care for the injured and the sick.

The Future of Haiti
Zakat Foundation continues to deliver emergency relief while looking towards the future. We are working with NGOs and our partner organizations to establish and promote development programs to help Haiti survive and thrive.
“Thank you very much for all the good work Zakat Foundation does. Zakat Foundation is blessed to have this great team and Br. Halil as its leader, and I mean it.” —Dr. Rasheed Ahmed, Director of IMANA
Light in the Darkness
The Miraculous Survival Story of Sister Aicha in Haiti

Aicha, a native Haitian Muslim woman tells the dramatic story of the day of the January 12th earthquake. She was at home alone when the tremors began. Soon, she was buried under the rubble of her family’s house. To all who saw the fallen pieces of what was once the house, there seemed no chance that Aicha could have survived. Her husband went to the mosque weeping that she had passed.

Aicha said that as she lay crushed flat beneath the rubble in the dark, “a voice” told her to move her body. It told her to try to move some of the debris by twisting her body back and forth. Aicha began to do this and after a while saw some light break through to the place where she was. There was just enough space to force her hand through the place where the light was coming in. She held her hand up in that space until finally she heard someone say “there’s someone there.” She had been spotted by people looking for survivors.

She was pulled out of what remained of her house and went to live in one of the mosques in Port-au-Prince along with her husband, Luqman, and her mother—all now homeless after the earthquake. Aicha explains that her family was not pleased by her conversion to Islam and that her mother, who is not Muslim, was therefore reluctant to seek shelter in the mosque after the earthquake. Yet she was welcomed and has been able to stay there and benefit from the sense of security that the mosque provides. Zakat Foundation continues to aid the Muslim community in Port-au-Prince from the local Masjid Tawheed.
On March 4, 2010, Zakat Foundation of America brought together five experts in earthquake studies and earthquake resistant building for a pointed discussion on what is needed to rebuild a safe and resilient Haiti. Attendees included invited guests from Haitian and American NGO’s, Haitian and American government officials, architects, engineers, and other members of Haitian civil society.

The presenters spoke about the lessons that could be learned from the January 12th earthquake as Haiti rebuilds. They stressed the need to educate the general Haitian public about no-cost or low-cost changes that could be implemented to avoid a repeat of massive casualties from collapsed houses when the next expected earthquake strikes Haiti.

Seismologist Dr. Roger Bilham explained to the group that the January 12th earthquake was not the “end,” and that the people of Haiti must prepare for additional earthquakes that will no doubt strike the area anytime within the next thirty years. Other presenters, Dr. Rebekah Green of Western Washington University and Dr. Elizabeth Hausler of Build Change recounted public education programs they had previously carried out in other earthquake prone areas such as Turkey and Indonesia and offered suggestions as to how programs that teach people how to build as well as how to identify safe houses could be adapted to the specific needs of Haitian society and cultural norms.

Haiti Earthquake Resistant Housing Experts’ Roundtable
On Friday April 30, 2010, Zakat Foundation organized and hosted a roundtable focused on rebuilding Haiti with earthquake resistant homes.

In the wake of the Jan. 12 earthquake, Haitians have suffered devastating losses in lives and property. The earthquake in Chile shows us that bad buildings, not earthquakes, kill people. We know that when empowered with the right information, people build safer homes.

As Haitians began to rebuild, the Zakat Foundation committed to providing information on safe building practices. Earthquake-resistant housing experts, builders, architects, engineers, government officials, community organizers, and other potential partners were invited to participate in discussions, trainings, and planning.

Topics included Earthquake Resistant and Culturally-Relevant Housing Designs, Challenges of Building Earthquake Resistant Housing, Training the Public on Safer Building Techniques, and How Community Organizers and Civil Institutions Can Participate in Earthquake Resistant Education.
Far Away from Their Old Home, but Hope in Their New Lives

Zakat Foundation Helps Resettle Palestinian Refugees

Last year, the United Nations Commissioner for refugees urged the international community to come to the aid of the estimated 42 million refugees worldwide that are struggling with displacement as they flee from conflict and persecution. In 2009 the United States of America was the largest single recipient of new asylum claims in the world and the Chicago metropolitan area, where Zakat Foundation’s main office is located, continues to serve as a “gateway city” for newcomers to the US.

The humanitarian organizations that support refugees in the US generally offer only three months of support, but we all know that often three months is not enough time for a newcomer to America to become acclimated to the language, customs, and daily life challenges of a large American city such as Chicago. Through our US focused Social Services Program, Zakat Foundation has been assisting individual refugees from Somalia, Darfur, Iraq, and Palestine, and in past years has worked with a partner organization in Indiana to settle Somali and Bosnian refugees in the Indianapolis area.

Now, in response to an increase in the number of refugees being sent to the Chicago area, Zakat Foundation and a local organization that works with Palestinian refugee resettlement and other services have begun a new Refugee Resettlement Program that has accepted 15 Palestinian refugee families who up until recently had been living in Iraq. Helping these families acclimate to life in America is an important responsibility that Zakat Foundation wholeheartedly accepts. Please donate to the Refugee Resettlement Program and help these Muslim families begin a new life in America with the caring support they need.
Blankets for the Poor

Zakat Foundation Provides Warmth for Hundreds in the Slums of India

Zakat Foundation just recently initiated a program in which hundreds of blankets were distributed to the poor in Northern India. It was a truly helpful and rewarding program, for those who distributed the blankets as well as those who received them. Six hundred families are said to have benefited from the program, which is especially significant considering the extreme cold that hits the region this time of year. Many reports have lately been made of people in India dying due to this extreme cold, which makes this program all the more worthwhile.

India has the largest number of poor people in a single country, with 75% of them living in rural areas, which makes up most of Northern India. There have been many attempts to combat poverty in India, as many program have been set up, but not many have been successful.

Zakat Foundation’s partner from India reported that “…people are using these blankets and are extremely thankful for the brother Khalil and Zakat Foundation”.

www.zakat.org
Teaching Valuable Skills

Zakat Foundation Brings Sewing School to the Slums of India

Zakat Foundation has partnered with Affus Woman Welfare Association (AWWA) in India to establish a women’s sewing center in poverty-stricken Hubli City in the south of India. The Creative Embroidery and Tailoring Center is a skill-training initiative that provides instruction in the art of tailoring and training for more than 120 women.

This project also aims to promote computer literacy training to 60 girls, women, and youth for ready employment in a local garment export firm’s production unit. Beneficiaries were selected from the poorest households of Hubli old city slum areas in North Karnataka. Zakat Foundation has also made sure that employment is also always readily available in this factory, so that as the women hone their trade, they are also able to support themselves and their families. Hubli Apparels Pvt., Ltd has also given the organization a Letter of Appreciation and Preference for women trained from Zakat Foundation and AWWA’s sewing school. These women will receive good salaries, which will increase their income and life standards.

Zakat Foundation has been delivering relief and establishing development programs in Hubli City for over a year. We hope to give men, women, and children in the slums where we work the hope to survive today and the skills to prosper tomorrow.
Imagine a child who has lost her parents to the violence of civil war. This young orphan has no family and has been driven away from her home. Chased by violence to an unfamiliar and threatening city, our little orphan survives by scavenging food from garbage, sleeping on the streets and begging for petty change. The orphaned children in Sri Lanka face this stark reality.

For over two decades, Sri Lanka has been ravaged by civil war and intermittent natural disasters. Gun battles are interrupted only by deadly monsoons and tsunamis and the mass casualty caused by both manmade and natural disaster has created a bleak future for those children left behind. Hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankan children have been forced to flee the fighting and are unable to receive proper healthcare or education. These orphans are left on the streets to beg and many of them do not survive.

Zakat Foundation has begun to sponsor orphans in the towns of Bible and Moneragala in Eastern and South Eastern Sri Lanka. Presently, around 50 children are receiving comfortable homes, healthy and consistent meals and a chance to go to school. Through our Orphan Sponsorship Program, Zakat Foundation’s goal is to provide care and assistance to those children who have lost their parents’ love and support, allowing them to thrive and receive an education. Children are the most vulnerable members of society who need consistent and comprehensive care and support to grow and prosper. Zakat Foundation’s Orphan/Orphanage Sponsorship Program provides orphaned children with hope, love and prospects for the future.
### ZF Takes Part in Religion Communication Congress Expo

On April 7-9, 2010, Zakat Foundation took part in the RCCongress 2010 (Religion Communication Congress) a once-a-decade multi-faith forum of all levels of communicators of religion. The theme of the gathering was “Embracing Change: Communicating Faith in Today’s World.” This extraordinary event brought together hundreds of communications professionals to expand their experience and broaden their perspective on embracing change. Zakat Foundation represented a Muslim Humanitarian organization, describing the importance of Zakat for sustainable social change.

### ZF Highlighted at Global Activism Expo

Zakat Foundation was featured at National Public Radio’s (NPR) Global Activism Expo in Chicago on April 17th, 2010. Hosted by Worldview’s Jerome McDonnell, Chicago Public Radio Present, this remarkable celebration focused on over 100 Global Activists, all featured guests of Worldview’s Global Activism Series. Participants at the Expo network with other humanitarian and social activism groups and illustrate their programs through presentations. Zakat Foundation has been featured three years in a row at the Expo and has led seminars on relief work for the more than 3,500 guests. This year, in a panel discussion, Zakat Foundation’s Director, Khalil Demir, addressed the guests about Zakat Foundation’s work in Haiti.

### ZF to Participate in ICNA Convention

Zakat Foundation will be taking part in the Islamic Circle of North America’s (ICNA) 35th Annual Convention in Hartford, Connecticut May 29-31, 2010. This year’s theme is “Save Family, Save Society” which emphasizes the ayah of the Quran. “Save yourselves and your families from a Fire …” (Al-Quran, 66:6). Zakat Foundation and ICNA have a long relationship and have partnered together for various programs and dawah initiatives. At this convention, Zakat Foundation will highlight our ongoing programs, including Haiti emergency relief and development as well as other development projects like building wells, mosques and schools.

### ZF at ISNA Convention

Zakat Foundation will be at the 47th Annual ISNA Convention at Rosemont Convention Center, IL from July 2-5, 2010. Please come visit us at booths 916, 918, 1017 and 1019! Zakat Foundation has reserved a multipurpose room at the ISNA Convention to benefit organizations that need a space for meetings and gatherings. For more information, or to reserve a time slot in this spacious room, please call 1-888-ZAKAT-US (1-888-925-2887).

### ZF Launches New Website!

Come see our new and improved website. Stay informed about our programs. A new, easy to use donation process.

Visit us today at: [www.zakat.org](http://www.zakat.org)
**ZAKAT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Is Prepayment of Zakât Permissible?**
Yes. One may pay Zakât in advance on assets whose nisâb requires passage of a year, such as livestock and money—especially if the payer has the necessary nisâb and the Zakat recipient(s) has suffered (or will otherwise endure) a calamity. One may also pay his or her Zakât weekly or monthly, if that is easier, or more conducive. For salaried employees, this helps spread the Zakât payment over an entire year, which greatly reduces any financial burden, while fulfilling Zakât’s purposes and one’s divine obligation to the poor. But one who prepays Zakât must still make a final calculation at the end of the Zakât-year to ensure compliance in full with the obligation (Fiqh az-Zakât, 518-521).

**Is A Delay of Zakât Payment Permissible?**
No. It is sinful, unless there is a truly extenuating circumstance or valid reason or injunction from a legitimate authority. When Zakât on any of one’s property or holdings falls due, one must pay it in full immediately (without waiting to aggregate it with other Zakât expected to fall due) because it is not one’s money, but a right owed to the poor (Fiqh az-Zakât, 522).

**What If one Has Unpaid Zakât for Past Years?**
Whoever has not paid due Zakât for past years, must pay it retroactively at the soonest possible moment. Estimate past payments for all unpaid years. Then pay it for the entire period. This does not relinquish one from the obligation of payment for the current Zakât-year. Converts to Islam owe no Zakât for years prior to their acceptance of faith. (Fiqh az-Zakât, 522).

**MATCHING GIFT:**

**Where You Can Double Your Donation**

Many companies in the US are very generous when it comes to supporting humanitarian causes. These corporations are giving back by supporting education and development, as well as healthcare and the fight against poverty. One of the ways in which they provide this support is through a matching gift program. The corporations encourage their employees to donate for good causes and then match their donations. Corporate matching gift programs are a great way to maximize your generous donations! Employees from companies like Pfizer, Microsoft, and General Electric have taken the initiative to double their donations. Here is how you can maximize your donation:

1. Simply contact your employer’s human resource department and ask if the company participates in matching gift programs.
2. Request a matching gift form and review the programs guidelines to see if the Zakat Foundation is eligible.
3. Mail completed form to the Zakat Foundation and we will handle the rest! If approved, your company will send its matching donation directly to the Zakat Foundation.

Imagine more for emergency aid, more for education and vocational schools, more for orphan sponsorship. You work hard to support your family; here is an effortless way to support needy families all over the world.

If your company does not currently support matching programs, please ask for it to do so.
Zakat Foundation Continues to Bring Immediate Relief to Haiti

Your donations = food...medicine...hope.

Zakat Foundation is committed to immediate relief and to the long-term development programs to follow, such as a clinic and an orphanage. Our guarantee: your donation reaches Haiti earthquake survivors within eight hours.

www.zakat.org | 1-888-ZAKAT-US

See website for updates on Haitian relief efforts
Please use our online Zakat Calculator at www.zakat.org to pay your Zakat today!