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GCC's Disaster Diplomacy toward Morocco and Libya

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Preface

This report traces all governmentally announced aid from the six Gulf States of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman to the earthquake victims of Morocco and flood victims of Libya until the end of September 2023. Furthermore, it combines information from governmental and nongovernmental organizations and charities that have announced their donation sums on their official platforms or via media sources. Surveying these data is important, as it demonstrates the Gulf states' crisis response and its effectiveness in the region, while considering the regional instability and regional political dynamics. We hope that this report paves the way for further research on the topic and most importantly, on the effectiveness of foreign aid in times of crisis.

Prof. Mahjoob Zweiri

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GCC's Disaster Diplomacy toward Morocco and Libya

On 8 September 2023, a rare magnitude 6.8 earthquake struck Morocco, marking the deadliest seismic event the country has experienced in over six decades, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives and injuries to many. In response, the international community swiftly mobilized to provide humanitarian assistance to the North African country. In addition to emergency aid, several countries dispatched search and rescue teams to assist the efforts to rescue the survivors. The magnitude of the earthquake and scale of destruction in its aftermath prompted the governments and civil society organizations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to launch aid and fundraising campaigns in support of the victims.

Just four days after this devastating incident, on 10 September, northern Libya was hit by torrential rainfall resulting from the Mediterranean Storm Daniel. It was the deadliest flooding for over a century, causing thousands of lives, and leaving more than 9000 missing up until today. On 28 September, UNICEF warned that the tragedy in the country due to the devastating flood was not over.¹ In a similar swift response, the GCC countries once again directed their agencies to provide aid and dispatch rescue teams to assist.

The GCC, as a regional bloc, also extended condolences and sympathy to the governments and people of Morocco and Libya for the earthquake and flood victims. The North African countries hold considerable significance for the GCC states.

Morocco, ruled by a monarchy with strong partnerships with most Gulf countries, received an invitation to join the GCC in 2011.² The GCC states have consistently supported Morocco's territorial integrity and sovereignty over Western Sahara.³ Despite maintaining close relationships with each GCC member state, Morocco tried to maintain a neutral stance during the 2017 Gulf crisis, while offering to mediate between the parties involved. This diplomatic neutrality demonstrated Morocco's political *savoir-faire* policy.⁴ Additionally, Morocco is a significant country for the GCC, being one of the four Arab states – along with the UAE, Bahrain and Sudan,

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/09/1141627>

² <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/44181>

³ <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2021/12/346023/gcc-countries-reiterate-support-for-moroccos-territorial-integrit>

⁴ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/6/11/morocco-offers-to-mediate-qatar-gcc-crisis>

which moved closer to Israel following the U.S. driven diplomatic initiative for normalization in 2020. Morocco boosted its ties with Israel after the UAE and Bahrain's signing of historic Abraham Accords and agreed to move towards full diplomatic relations in return for the U.S. recognition of its sovereignty over the territory of Western Sahara, which is claimed by an Algeria-backed independence movement.⁵ Morocco also made headlines by becoming the first Arab country to reach the quarterfinals of the World Cup in Qatar in 2022, the first to be held in an Arab country. Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum has praised the Moroccan team's historic World Cup knockout victory over Spain – describing it as a victory for the entire Arab world and a “source of pride for all Arabs.”⁶ Against this backdrop, the GCC states promptly responded to the disaster in Morocco.

The GCC countries relations with Libya in the last decade have been largely shaped by the overall regional environment and the intra-Gulf relations. During the 2011 overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi, which was one of the main events marking the Arab Spring, the Gulf countries adopted a unified position and supported the international coalition led by the Western countries. Their engagement with this process also came to be seen as one of the major turning points for the new era of Gulf military activism beyond their immediate neighborhood, spanning to the broader Middle Eastern context. However, the inability of the international community to stabilize Libya since then, the deepening of the conflict, and the resulting divisions on the ground between rival factions also pitted the Gulf actors, mainly Qatar and the UAE against each other. Disagreements over Libya not only added yet another dimension to the post-Arab Spring divisions between Qatar and others, but also Libya turned into a playground on which the rivalries among the GCC countries were played out. While Qatar, together with Turkey, supported the internationally-recognized Government of National Accord, the UAE backed the Libyan National Army. The two sides' direct and indirect support were exercised not only on economic and political level, but also through the military aid to their proxies. The UAE's aggressive push to support LNA forces' campaign to take over the capital Tripoli was halted by Turkey's military intervention in 2020. Since then, like other international actors, the GCC countries have been also recalibrating their strategy on Libya, looking for ways of military de-escalation and a more cautious support to the

⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/morocco-delays-abraham-accords-summit-until-after-summer-2023-06-23/>

⁶ <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/gulf/2022/12/07/World-Cup-Qatar-2022-Morocco-s-win-inspires-Arab-pride-says-Dubai-ruler>

local actors. As much as the situation has calmed since 2020, the local parties failed to achieve unity around a UN-led national reconciliation. The local actors on the Libyan scene have continued their bickering, seeking to attract the support of different regional powers. Nonetheless, the intra-Gulf dynamics since the Al-Ula summit and the new wave of regional normalization became a game changer. As the UAE has deescalated its involvement on the ground, followed a policy of equidistance to rival political actors, and prioritized normalization with Turkey on regional affairs, Libya has been no longer one of the hot spots dividing the GCC countries.

This report will delve into the disaster response efforts of the six Gulf States in addressing the humanitarian crisis resulting from the earthquake in Morocco and flood in Libya. The report will assess each country's response to the humanitarian emergency across two main categories, namely official diplomatic response to the crisis, the official emergency financial and humanitarian aid, as well as the aid offered by civil society. The conclusion section will explore how the provision of disaster response has interacted with the regional political developments, considering that the disaster diplomacy was hardly devoid of political considerations.

The State of Qatar

Diplomatic and State Responses to Natural Disasters in Morocco and Libya

Qatar was very prompt to respond to the earthquake in Morocco as the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani expressed the condolences to the King of Morocco in a post on social media platform X on 9 September.⁷ The same day, Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani held a phone call with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Morocco Aziz Akhannouch.⁸

Qatar's Emir send his condolences to Libya through a post on social media platform X and Emir Tamim also sent a cable of condolences to the Chairman of the Presidential Council of Libya Mohamed Al Menfi on the victims of the floods.⁹ Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Thani sent a similar cable to Al Menfi. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar

⁷ HH the Amir Expresses Sincere Condolences to King of Morocco on Victims of Earthquake (qna.org.qa)

⁸ Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Holds Phone Call with Prime Minister of Morocco (mofa.gov.qa)

⁹ 0001-HH-the-Amir-Expresses-Condolences-on-Victims-of-Catastrophic-Floods-in-Libya (qna.org.qa)

also sent a cable of condolences to the Head of the Government of National Unity of Libya, Abdul Hamid Al Dbeiba.¹⁰ As a diplomatic gesture, at the request of Qatar, Human Rights Council observed Minute of Silence in Memory of Victims of Floods in Libya during its 54th regular session in Geneva.¹¹

Humanitarian Aid to Disaster-stricken Morocco and Libya

Qatar's Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani urged the dispatch of medical aid and rescue teams to the earthquake-hit areas in Morocco. Following the deadly earthquakes, Emir deployed Lekhwiya forces for rescue missions in the High Atlas region, joining an international aid coalition with Spain, the UAE, and the UK, as Morocco declared the quake its worst in a century.¹² Qatar's organizations swiftly extended their support to their sister nation, with Qatar Red Crescent Society donating QAR 1 million (equivalent to \$274,000) for immediate relief. Qatar Charity has now committed an additional QAR 5 million to aid the disaster victims.¹³

On 13 September, two Qatari Air Bridge planes, carrying 67 tons of aid from institutions such as the Permanent Committee for Search and Rescue, Qatar Red Crescent, and the Qatar Development Fund (QFFD), have landed in Benghazi's Benina International Airport to assist those affected by floods and torrents in eastern Libya.¹⁴ As of 24 September, the seventh and eighth Qatari planes from the Qatari air bridge arrived at Benina International Airport in Benghazi, delivering 58 tons of humanitarian aid, bringing the total Qatari assistance to 267 tons for those affected by floods and torrents in eastern Libya. The aid includes shelter essentials, generators, food, and relief and medical items from institutions including the Standing Committee for Rescue and Relief Works and Humanitarian Aids for Afflicted Areas in Brotherly and Friendly Countries, Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), Qatar Red Crescent Society, and Qatar Charity.¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ At request of Qatar, Human Rights Council Observes Minute of Silence in Memory of Victims of Floods in Libya (mofa.gov.qa)

¹² Morocco's king thanks Qatar as Lekhwiya forces wrap up rescue operation - Doha News | Qatar

¹³ HH the Amir sends aid; Qatar Charity pledges QAR 5 million to Morocco | Qatar Living

¹⁴ First Two Planes of Qatari Air Bridge to Help Flood-affected Arrive at Benina Airport in Libya (mofa.gov.qa)

¹⁵ Two Qatari Planes from Qatari Air Bridge Arrive at Benina Airport in Libya to Aid Flood-Hit People (mofa.gov.qa)

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Diplomatic and State Responses to Natural Disasters in Morocco and Libya

As the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz was among the first leaders to express condolences and sympathy to the government and the people of Morocco.¹⁶ King Salman sent cables of condolences to King Mohammed VI of Morocco¹⁷, while Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman held a phone call with the Moroccan monarch in which he offered condolences and stressed that the relevant Saudi authorities were directed to provide necessary relief and humanitarian aid to the North African country.¹⁸ In an official statement, the Foreign Ministry also expressed deep solidarity with Morocco and its citizens during this time of great sorrow.

Saudi Arabia was swift to respond to the floods that devastated Libya as well. Through a statement issued by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Kingdom expressed condolences for the victims' families and relatives.¹⁹ King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman also sent separate cables of condolence to the head of Libya's Presidential Council Mohammed Al-Menfi.²⁰ King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman also directed King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief), the primary humanitarian entity of Saudi Arabia, to provide food and shelter assistance to people affected by the floods in Libya.²¹

Humanitarian Aid to Disaster-stricken Morocco and Libya

Saudi leadership urged relevant bodies to send medical aid and rescue teams to the earthquake-hit areas in Morocco. Following the deadly earthquakes, Saudi King have directed the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre to launch an air bridge to provide relief to

¹⁶ <https://www.spa.gov.sa/en/2f2a2c61151>

¹⁷ <https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/635659/SAUDI-ARABIA/Saudi-Arabia-extends-condolences-to-Morocco-after-devastating-earthquake>

¹⁸ <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/saudi-arabia/2023/09/11/MBS-offers-condolences-in-phone-call-with-Morocco-s-king-after-devastating-earthquake>

¹⁹ <https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/635751/SAUDI-ARABIA/Saudi-Arabia-offers-condolences-to-Libya-for-flood-victims>

²⁰ <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2372366/saudi-arabia>

²¹ <https://english.aawsat.com/gulf/4546686-saudi-leadership-directs-ksrelief-provide-aid-flood-victims-libya>

Morocco, dispatch a search and rescue crew to participate in relief and humanitarian activities to help the people affected by the earthquake.²² A Saudi search and rescue team under the General Directorate of Civil Defense, along with teams from the Saudi Red Crescent Authority (SRCA), led by KSrelief, actively engaged in relief and humanitarian operations in Morocco. The Saudi Embassy in Rabat also coordinated with Moroccan officials to evacuate nationals from quake-hit region.²³

In response to the destructive floods in Libya, as of 20 September, the fifth Saudi relief plane carrying 90 tons of food assistance has landed at Benghazi's Benina International Airport.²⁴ The initiative was a direct response to directives issued by Saudi leadership, funneling aid through KSrelief, in cooperation with the Libyan Red Crescent. Given the scale of the disaster and the number of people affected, more aid flights are expected to follow. The relief operation is a testament to the Kingdom's stated humanitarian role of supporting countries during times of crisis and hardship.

The United Arab Emirates

Diplomatic and State Responses to Natural Disasters in Morocco and Libya

The President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Mohamed bin Zayed expressed his country's condolences for the earthquake in Morocco via several platforms. President Zayed took social media platform X to show Emirates' solidarity as he said "We in the UAE stand with the Kingdom of Morocco during this difficult time and wish a speedy recovery ahead to all those affected."²⁵ President Zayed also held a phone call with King Mohammed VI of Morocco.²⁶ The other UAE leaders, Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, and Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister

²² <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/saudi-arabia-launches-air-bridge-to-send-aid-to-quake-hit-morocco/2988821>

²³ <https://en.wenews.pk/saudi-embassy-in-morocco-confirms-nationals-safety-after-earthquake/>

²⁴ <https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/636030/SAUDI-ARABIA/Fifth-Saudi-relief-plane-arrives-in-Libya>

²⁵ محمد بن زايد on X: "I extend my deepest condolences to my brother King Mohammed VI and the people of Morocco over the devastating earthquake that struck the country. We in the UAE stand with the Kingdom of Morocco during this difficult time and wish a speedy recovery ahead to all those affected." / X (twitter.com)

²⁶ UAE President offers condolences to Morocco's King over earthquake victims - News | Khaleej Times

of the Presidential Court, also dispatched similar messages to King Mohammed VI.²⁷ To show solidarity, the Adnoc building in Abu Dhabi and the Burj Khalifa in Dubai lit up in the colors of the Morocco flag in support of earthquake victims.²⁸

According to the UAE Foreign Ministry, the UAE President Al-Nahyan held two separate phone calls, one with Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh, Prime Minister of Libya's Government of National Unity, and another one with Khalifa Belqasim Haftar, Commander of the Libyan Armed Forces, to convey condolences over the floods.²⁹ The Libyan Armed Forces under Haftar, a (former) close ally of the UAE, are effectively controlling the eastern parts of Libya, including the most affected city Derna. UAE Prime Minister and the Ruler of Dubai Al Maktoum conveyed their condolences to the people of Libya on the X platform, adding "The UAE will always support its Arab brothers at all times."³⁰

Humanitarian Aid to Disaster-stricken Morocco and Libya

UAE's immediate response to the earthquake in Morocco was to establish an air bridge to provide essential aid.³¹ President of the UAE also directed the Emirates Red Crescent (ERC) to send emergency aid to Morocco, and according to Emirates News Agency (WAM), ERC began implementing the relief program by providing sizable quantities of essential supplies, including tents, blankets, food, medical stuff and hygiene kits.³² The Prime Minister of UAE and the ruler of Dubai Al Maktoum directed Dubai Police rescue teams to support rescue efforts, and ordered the creation of a humanitarian airbridge to enable the charity institutions affiliated to the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives to send relief aid.³³

On 11 September, president of UAE ordered the dispatch of urgent relief aid, search and rescue teams to Libya³⁴ and on 12 September, Emirati rescue teams, equipped with vehicles, jet

²⁷ Emirates News Agency - UAE leaders extend condolences to King of Morocco over earthquake victims (wam.ae)

²⁸ UAE landmarks light up in Moroccan flag colours in support of quake victims (zawya.com)

²⁹ UAE President offers condolences by phone to Libya's Dbeibeh and Haftar over flood victims (mofa.gov.ae)

³⁰ Sheikh Mohammed condoles Libya after devastating floods kill hundreds - GulfToday

³¹ Earthquake: UAE Initiates Air Bridge for Critical Aid Delivery to Morocco (bnn.network)

³² Emirates News Agency - Under UAE President's directives, Hamdan bin Zayed directs ERC to provide humanitarian aid to quake victims in Morocco (wam.ae)

³³ Mohammed bin Rashid orders urgent relief aid to support Morocco's earthquake victims (mediaoffice.ae)

³⁴ Emirates News Agency - Breaking / UAE President directs urgent relief aid, search and rescue teams to Libya (wam.ae)

skis and search-and-rescue equipment, arrived in Libya's Benghazi airport.³⁵ According to media reports, as of 25 September, the UAE provided humanitarian and relief assistance to Libya via its air bridge initiative, which began on 12 September to address the impact of Storm Daniel. The total aid delivered amounted to 622 tons, transported via 28 aircraft, and it benefited 6,386 families. This assistance encompasses a variety of essential items, including food supplies, materials for shelter, health packages, and first aid supplies. Furthermore, modern machinery and equipment have been provided to search and rescue teams as part of these relief efforts.³⁶

The State of Kuwait

Diplomatic and State Responses to Natural Disasters in Morocco and Libya

The Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Moroccan King Mohammad VI, expressing sorrow over the devastating earthquake. The Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah also sent cables of condolences to the Moroccan King. The government has assigned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organize the dispatch of Kuwaiti relief supplies to Morocco in coordination with the Ministry of Finance and Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS).³⁷

The Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to Chairman of the Libyan Presidential Council, Mohammed Al-Menfi, and expressing sorrow over victims of the floods that hit the North African country.³⁸

Humanitarian Aid to Disaster-stricken Morocco and Libya

Kuwaiti charitable associations have mobilized their efforts to provide relief operations in Morocco, dispatching teams to assess the needs of survivors and offer aid, in coordination with

³⁵ UAE search-and-rescue team arrives in Libya after deadly Storm Daniel flooding (thenationalnews.com)

³⁶ UAE's Libya humanitarian air bridge delivers 622 tons in 28 flights benefiting 6,386 families stricken by Storm Daniel (libyaherald.com)

³⁷ <https://kuwaittimes.com/kuwait-stands-with-morocco/>

³⁸ <https://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=3108895&Language=en>

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs. Kuwait launched the “Fazaa for Morocco” humanitarian campaign in which 14 charitable associations participated in the initiative to supervise the distribution of relief and offer support to the victims. The Kuwaiti groups aim to rebuild houses, schools, and medical centers in the damaged areas during the second phase of the relief operation. These activities are to be coordinated with Moroccan authorities and in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government departments, as they are part of the broader framework of Kuwaiti charity work abroad.³⁹ The Kuwait Banking Association announced that Kuwaiti banks have donated \$5 million to support aid and rebuilding efforts in Morocco.⁴⁰ The donation is a significant gesture from the local banks and shows their willingness to help those in need. It is also a reminder of the important role that banks can play in society. Alshaya Group, owning Starbucks, have also committed to an initial combined donation of \$200,000 to support communities and relief efforts.⁴¹

The Kuwait Red Crescent, in coordination with Libyan Red Crescent, has sent planes to Libya carrying ten tons of relief and medical aid and an ambulance, to help those affected by the floods in the eastern region. As of 20 September, the seventh planeload of aid left Kuwait to Libya with tons of relief equipment and medical supplies onboard.⁴² The relief air bridge extended by Kuwait to Libyan people comes as directed by political leadership and instructions of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the continuous observation of Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Sabah.

The Kingdom of Bahrain

Diplomatic and State Responses to Natural Disasters in Morocco and Libya

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa sent a cable of condolences to King Mohammed VI of Morocco, over the victims of the earthquake in Morocco that killed and injured hundreds of

³⁹ <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2374816/middle-east>

⁴⁰ <https://www.kuwaitmoments.com/kuwaiti-banks-donate-5m-to-morocco-earthquake-relief-efforts-606019.html>

⁴¹ <https://www.alshaya.com/sa/en/media-centre/alshaya-news/the-starbucks-foundation-and-alshaya-group-donate-200-000-to-morocco-earthquake-relief-efforts/#>

⁴² <https://www.zawya.com/en/world/middle-east/seventh-relief-planeload-takes-off-from-kuwait-to-libya-fnct4hjk>

people.⁴³ In a statement, the Foreign Affairs Ministry expressed the Kingdom's sympathy and solidarity with the Kingdom of Morocco over the victims of the earthquake that struck a number of Moroccan regions and provinces, which led to the death and injury of hundreds of people and major destruction of buildings and property.⁴⁴

The Foreign Affairs Ministry expressed Bahrain's sympathy with Libya, and its solidarity with the government and people, following the floods that swept the country.⁴⁵ King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa issued directives to dispatch urgent humanitarian relief aid to Libya. In addition, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, sent a cable of condolences to the President of the Presidential Council of the State of Libya, Mohamed al Menfi.⁴⁶

Humanitarian Aid to Disaster- stricken Morocco and Libya

Under the direction of King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, Bahrain has dispatched urgent humanitarian relief to the Kingdom of Morocco to help alleviate their suffering in the aftermath of the earthquake. The Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) was set to dispatch the first shipment of relief aid to quake-hit Moroccans.⁴⁷ Bahrain also launched a nation-wide campaign to help provide relief for Morocco, urging people to join hands by contributing to the fund-raising efforts. The Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS) has officially launched an appeal extending an invitation to Bahraini companies, citizens and residents who wish to contribute.⁴⁸

The Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF) of Bahrain dispatched aid 40 tons of aid, worth \$1 million, to Libya, responding to the severe floods that have recently swept the North African nation.⁴⁹ The gesture followed instructions from King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the honorary

⁴³<https://www.bna.bh/en/HMKingcondoleswithMoroccanMonarch.aspx?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwlzON1%2BDki7ESyiHUbchLS9epRgrow%3D>

⁴⁴<https://www.bna.bh/en/BahrainofferscondolencestoMoroccoovereearthquakevictims.aspx?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwlzON1%2BDlim7dZ%2BleI3YadpX7kwi7Y%3D>

⁴⁵ <https://bna.bh/en/news?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwlzON1%2BDknOp6ilW6yl%2BudPxssY8UU%3D>

⁴⁶ <https://www.newsofbahrain.com/bahrain/92918.html>

⁴⁷ <https://www.zawya.com/en/special-coverage/natures-fury-libya-flood-morocco-earthquake/bahrains-first-shipment-set-to-be-dispatched-to-morocco-kkudatun>

⁴⁸ <https://www.zawya.com/en/special-coverage/natures-fury-libya-flood-morocco-earthquake/campaign-launched-in-bahrain-to-help-victims-of-morocco-quake-vc0asay8>

⁴⁹ <https://bnn.network/breaking-news/health/bahrain-extends-humanitarian-aid-to-flood-stricken-libya/>

president of RHF.⁵⁰ Bank ABC Group also donated 2 million dollars in a swift attempt to support the victims in Libya. The funds were to be distributed to national and international relief efforts to mitigate the aftermath of the severe flooding.⁵¹

The Sultanate of Oman

Diplomatic and State Responses to Natural Disasters in Morocco and Libya

As the first diplomatic response, Oman's Foreign Ministry sent condolences⁵² to the Kingdom of Morocco over the earthquake that struck Marrakesh, while the Omani embassy in Morocco announced the safety of all Omani citizens there.⁵³ According to a statement from the Omani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sultan Haitham of Oman issued a royal order to send rescue teams, urgent relief and medical aid to Morocco. The amount of the Omani aid was not specified in the statement but it highlighted "This reflects the fraternal relations between Oman and Morocco and the Sultanate's commitment to its humanitarian role to provide relief to those affected by natural disasters."⁵⁴ On 11 September 2023, Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Albusaidi, had a phone conversation with Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita, and reiterated the sultanate's solidarity with the Kingdom.⁵⁵

The Sultanate also followed a similar path of diplomatic response to the floods disaster that hit Libya, immediately sending condolences to the country over floods and the losses.⁵⁶ Sultan Haitham issued royal directives to send urgent humanitarian aid to Libya.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ [https://www.gdnonline.com/Details/1291261/Bahrain-sends-\\$1m-aid-to-flood-hit-victims-in-Libya](https://www.gdnonline.com/Details/1291261/Bahrain-sends-$1m-aid-to-flood-hit-victims-in-Libya)

⁵¹ <https://www.bank-abc.com/en/Media%20Relations/PressRelease/bank-abc-group-pledges-a-donation-of-usd-2-million-towards-flood-relief-efforts-in-libya>

⁵² Oman sends condolences to Morocco - FM.gov.om

⁵³ Omani citizens safe in Morocco: Embassy (muscatdaily.com)

⁵⁴ His Majesty issues orders for rescue teams and relief effort for Morocco - FM.gov.om

⁵⁵ Foreign Minister in phone call with Moroccan Foreign Minister - FM.gov.om

⁵⁶ Oman sends condolences to Libya over floods - FM.gov.om

⁵⁷ His Majesty orders urgent humanitarian aid to Libya - FM.gov.om

Humanitarian Aid to Disaster-stricken Morocco and Libya

The records for amount and kind of humanitarian aid from Umman to Morocco are not specified in the publicly available sources. Yet, according to news reports, Not Alone Oman MHFA, a mental health service founded by Omani Royal Sayyida Basma Al Said, extended support in the form of a messaging line, available to the people of Morocco, their family and friends who are affected by the earthquake.⁵⁸

In Libya, Oman Charitable Organization (OCO) acted in collaboration with Royal Air Force of Oman to dispatch the first batch of relief materials.⁵⁹ According to news reports, OCO delivered more than 80 tons of Omani relief and medical aid to the Red Crescent in Libya.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Morocco Earthquake: How GCC Countries Are Helping (harpersbazaararabia.com)

⁵⁹ Oman sends over 80t of aid to Libya (muscatdaily.com)

⁶⁰ Aid from Oman delivered to Libya Red Crescent - Oman Observer