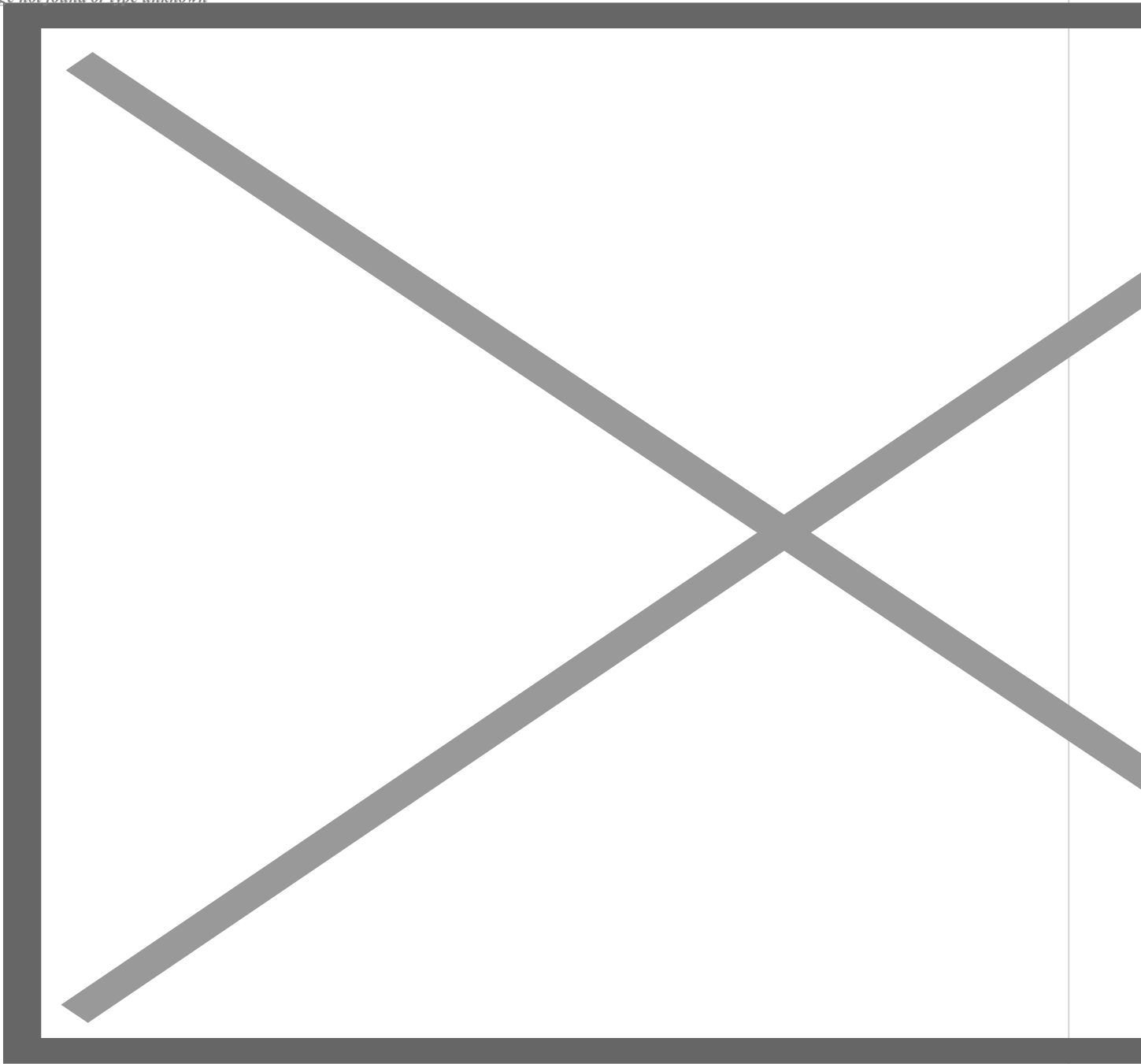


U.S. eases sanctions on Syria to allow earthquake aid

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The U.S. Treasury Department has announced a so-called "sanctions waiver" for Syria to allow certain transactions related to recovery and rescue efforts following the devastating earthquake on the border with Turkey earlier this week.

Washington, February 10 (RHC)-- The U.S. Treasury Department has announced a so-called "sanctions waiver" for Syria to allow certain transactions related to recovery and rescue efforts following the devastating earthquake on the border with Turkey earlier this week.

The move comes after four days of intense international pressure on the U.S. government to lift its illegal sanctions against Syria for humanitarian reasons.

"Today, Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued Syria General License (GL) 23, which authorizes for 180 days all transactions related to earthquake relief that would be otherwise prohibited by the Syrian Sanctions Regulations (SySR)," Treasury said in a release on Thursday.

Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo was quoted in the release stressing that U.S. sanctions in Syria "will not stand in the way of life-saving efforts for the Syrian people." Earlier this week, southeastern Turkey was hit by strong earthquakes that killed some 21,000 people and injured tens of thousands more.

The latest development comes after the U.S. was widely criticized for not earlier lifting sanctions in the immediate wake of the devastating earthquakes that killed thousands across Syria and nearby Turkiye.

Earlier on Thursday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said no sanctions should interfere with relief efforts in Syria as the country is dealing with the fallout of the devastating earthquake.

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