

## A School for Syrian Children in Istanbul Becomes Official

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

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On November 26, 2018, a school for Syrian refugees set up by the government of Sultangazi, Syrian teachers, and the Tzu Chi Foundation and in Istanbul became an official institution approved by an American educational institute. A nameplate unveiling ceremony was held that day – OZEL EL MENAHEL MILLETLERARASI ORTAOKULU, SULTANGAZI, ISTANBUL. Attending the event at the Menahel International School were the Deputy Governor of Kayseri Province Mr. Ali Uslanmaz: Health Director of Sultangazi City, Mr. Emrah Eray: Syrian Professor Mr. Cuma: a team of Tzu Chi volunteers: 1,600 students and teachers. The day also marked the start of a new semester. With this new status, the students will receive an official diploma after they graduate.

The Menahil school was established in 2015 to give Syrian refugee children an opportunity to learn and to live a life of dignity, Tzu Chi volunteers in Turkey worked with Syrian professors and the government of the Sultangazi district of Istanbul to set up the institution. It has since provided education for over 3,000 students. The Tzu Chi Foundation not only gives hope to underprivileged children in Taiwan, it also extended its love to the Syrian refugee children in Turkey.

In order for them to receive an official diploma, Tzu Chi volunteers Faisal Hu, Ru-Yi Chou, and David Yu worked to obtain approval for the school from an American educational institution.



“Tzu Chi is the only international NGO that provide assistance for education of Syrian children in Turkey which is acknowledged by the government.” Faisal Hu said. Due to the increasing numbers of students, the international school was established, with the support of the local government. The brand new school building has 50 classrooms, which can accept up to 3,000 students. The school was established not only to provide education, but also to give hope for the future. It gives a chance for children to adapt to life in Turkey and maintain their Syrian roots. Hu sought for the help from an old classmate from Libya, who was a government official in Yemen. This old friend referred the volunteers to an American educational institution. During the process, the three Tzu Chi volunteers went through many obstacles; but they were determined to give the children an opportunity for a brighter future.



Mr. Ali Uslanmaz once traveled to Hualian in Taiwan to meet Master Cheng Yen and share his

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gratitude toward Tzu Chi. He said that Master Cheng Yen was like a saint, helping Syrian people in their hour of need. Mr. Emrah Eray praised Tzu Chi for also setting up a medical clinic, which promotes good health and offers medical services and vaccinations.

On behalf of Master Cheng Yen, the deputy CEO of Tzu Chi Mission of Charity, Mr. Scott Liu, brought blessings from Taiwan. He said it is “trust” that brings us together. “Syria’s hope is the hope for the world.” Menahil International School needs everyone’s love, so the seeds of love and hope can grow into a big tree. Liu also encouraged the students and teachers: “if you return to Syria, please bring the love of Tzu Chi to your fellow countrymen.” Tzu Chi volunteer Mr. Pan Chi-li represented all the Tzu Chi volunteers around the global to wish the best to the school.

Faisal Hu said: “For Syrians, the Menahil International School is not only an educational institution, it is also a place to learn forgiveness and love. It is a school for teachers to teach children their Syrian roots and culture. It is for these children to continue their education, and to keep their smiles and their innocence.”