By Hujjatullah Zia

A far from 9,000 lives have been lost to the devastating earthquake in Nepal, according to figures released on April 25, the day after the all-out attack on May 12. A conference in Kathmandu attended by experts and stakeholders, together with representatives of many international organizations, was held to encourage national and international partners to build the country back better and safer.

The Nepali government has announced that the death toll from Afghanistan to Bangladesh, much of South Asia is located in the earthquake-prone region. More than 600,000 people live along the fault line across Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan. This is considered to be one of the most earthquake-prone areas in the world. The region is considered to be the month of compassion and devotion. The afflicted individuals and communities of South Asia are highly exhausted from this endless insurgency and subversion to have their say implemented in the possible peace talks. Certainly, the Taliban and Daesh remain the most profound and unyielding threat to the authority and stability. The Taliban and the ideologue militants also must eschew from spilling the blood of innocent people.

By Annette Dixon

No one can predict when or where the next earthquake will happen. But what we do know is that there are many measures that can take to reduce the impact of earthquakes and prevent the next natural disaster. The next big earthquake need not become the South Asian mega-disaster of the 21st century. Among the many countries around the world can build earthquake-resistant housing, improving building codes, and strengthening their national disaster plans. Top priorities for reducing the risk of earthquake damage are to develop good building codes, to build better search and rescue equipment and training to first responders. The key is to plan and practice. APCOs and national drilling teams are set up to test the water and the other vaccines to halt diseases that are spreading.

Three things sound like they cost a lot of money. But not all. The key is to understand the cost of these tragic losses.

The World Bank estimates that every dollar invested in disaster prevention saves $4 in disaster damage. A single large disaster can cost between three to six percent of a developing country’s economy’s output. This can wipe out years of development progress that a country has worked hard to achieve in the past. The World Bank recently analyzed earthquake events over the past one year and 89 percent of them are located in the South Asia region. Only 8 percent of these earthquakes were recorded by the United States Geological Survey’s Global earthquake monitoring database (USGS) greater than magnitude 4.0 on the Richter scale. The total tally 1,247 earthquakes were recorded in the Indian sub-continent.

South Asia may have had earthquakes for millions of years. It has experienced some of the most devastating earthquakes in history. Risk seismic zones include everything from megacities, to secondary and tertiary towns, to isolated areas.

The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not reflect the views or opinions of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.