

10 June 2016 – The World Health Organization condemns the attacks on 2 hospitals in Aleppo, Syria, on 8 June. The al-Bayan and al-Hakeem hospitals, located in the eastern part of Aleppo city, were together providing close to 9200 consultations and performing 173 major surgeries per month. The al-Hakeem hospital, a UNICEF-supported facility, is one of the few remaining health facilities that still provide paediatric services in Eastern Aleppo city. Health workers and patients, including babies and children, were in the hospital at the time of the attacks.

Due to damages as a result of the attacks, the al-Bayan was forced to close down, with patients transferred to neighbouring hospitals. The al-Hakeem hospital partially reduced its services, affecting the full-time availability of incubators for 9 newborns.

It is estimated that more than two thirds of hospitals in Aleppo are no longer functioning, and almost 95% of doctors have either fled or been detained or killed. Since the beginning of the year, there have been reports of at least 18 attacks on health care facilities across the country, and nearly 60% of public hospitals have closed or are only partially functional. This latest incident represents a serious setback for the affected community and an additional challenge to humanitarian work in Syria.

These attacks violate international humanitarian law. It is unacceptable that such attacks on health are increasing in both frequency and scale. WHO once again urges all parties in the conflict to respect the safety and neutrality of health workers and health facilities. Tragedies like this can and should be avoided, by warring parties consistently observing international humanitarian law and taking all necessary precautionary measures.

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