

15 November 2018 – At the International Congress on Health for Peace from 14 to 16 November in Shiraz, Dr Christoph Hamelmann, WHO Representative for the Islamic Republic of Iran, highlighted the mission of WHO to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable in times of conflict and sanctions.

Referring to WHO's Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019–2023 he said that WHO's 3 strategic goals were focused on achieving universal health coverage, addressing health emergencies, and promoting healthier populations to contribute to increasing social protection and social cohesion in different countries of the Region, including the Islamic Republic of Iran.

“The International Health Regulations play an important role for health, peace and security and we encourage and support all Member States in their commitment and obligation to implement IHR requirements as signatories,” Dr Hamelmann said.

He stated, “We understand our role as advocate for the basic human right to health and a life in peace, security and protection, as one important voice of the United Nations family in a world of increasing conflict affecting, in particular, the most vulnerable populations, whether this in a context of sanctions, of armed conflict or even direct attacks on the health workforce in humanitarian settings”.

He also quoted Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, from his press release on the critical health situation in Yemen in which he urged all parties in the conflict in Yemen to respect their legal obligations under International Humanitarian Law to ensure the protection of health workers, patients, health facilities, ambulances and communities and to facilitate humanitarian access to areas where people need the greatest assistance.

He talked about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), among which SDG 16 called for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, for access to justice for all and for building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, and SDG 3 called for ensuring healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages.

The International Congress on Health for Peace was hosted by Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education brought together a large number of medical experts and representatives from foundations and practitioners active in the area of health from WHO, UNICEF, United Nations Population Fund, the International Committee of the Red Cross and various international nongovernmental organizations.

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