

5 August 2020, Beirut, Lebanon – A plane carrying 20 tonnes of WHO health supplies has landed in Beirut, Lebanon, to support the treatment of patients injured by the massive blast that occurred in the city on 4 August. The supplies will cover 1000 trauma interventions and 1000 surgical interventions for people suffering from injuries and burns resulting from the blast.

The shipment was airlifted from WHO's logistics hub in Dubai earlier this afternoon using a plane donated by the Government of the United Arab Emirates, a key WHO partner in health emergency response.

"Our hearts and prayers are with all those affected by this tragic event as we continue our mission to serve all people in Lebanon with life-saving and essential health care services. We are working closely with national health authorities, health partners and hospitals treating the wounded to identify additional needs and ensure immediate support," said WHO Representative in Lebanon Dr Iman Shankiti.

As a result of the blast, 3 hospitals in Beirut are now non-functional and 2 hospitals are partially damaged, leaving a critical gap in hospital bed capacity. Injured patients are being transferred to hospitals across the country, as far as south Saida and north Tripoli, and many facilities are overwhelmed. WHO will distribute the supplies to priority hospitals across Lebanon receiving and treating injured patients.

This latest emergency comes in the context of recent civil unrest, a major economic crisis, COVID-19 outbreak and heavy refugee burden. The legendary resilience of the Lebanese people has rarely been so severely tested. Ensuring that there is continuity of the response to COVID-19 – including targeting the most vulnerable for assistance – is a priority for both the Ministry of Public Health and WHO.

"With the emergence of new challenges due to the latest devastating event, the United Nations in Lebanon and partners have been mobilized to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people in support of the Government's response to this tragedy. We are in this together, and we are committed to supporting Lebanon in this very difficult time," said Dr Najat Rochdi, UN Resident Coordinator in Lebanon.



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