



24 January 2017 | Geneva – The World Health Organization’s Executive Board, currently holding its 140th session in Geneva, has appointed Dr Mahmoud Fikri as WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, following his nomination by the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in October last year. Dr Fikri will take up his appointment for a 5-year term starting on 1 February 2017.

Currently, Dr Fikri is adviser to the Minister of Health of United Arab Emirates, and was previously the Assistant-Undersecretary for Preventive Medicine and Health Policies Affairs in the Ministry (1995–2013). He served as a Member of the Board of Directors of the WHO Centre for Health Development, “WHO Kobe Centre”, Japan, and a Member of the Advisory Board of the Gulf Health Council for Cooperation Council States (1996–2005). He was also a member of WHO’s Executive Board from 1997 to 2000.

For the last 19 years, Dr Fikri has been either a member or the head of the United Arab Emirate’s Ministry of Health delegation to WHO’s Health Assembly and the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Dr Fikri was a Member of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Advisory Group during the period (2008–2011) when the open-ended working group of Member States worked to finalize the PIP Framework for sharing influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits.

He was responsible for upgrading and adapting the national immunization programme of the United Arab Emirates in line with the Expanded Programme on Immunization of WHO. Due to these efforts, the United Arab Emirates has achieved polio- and malaria-free status.

Dr Fikri is a Member of the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs Standing Committee entrusted with the follow up of the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights report (2009–2013) and a member of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (2007–2013).

He was head of the United Arab Emirate's Ministry of Health delegation to the United Nations High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (2011).

Dr Fikri graduated in medicine and surgery from the University of Ain Shams, Egypt in 1979. He obtained a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, in the United Kingdom, in 1984. He was a member of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians in the UK, in 2000, and holder of a PHD in Medicine from the University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Carol Devila, Romania.

The Eastern Mediterranean comprises the following Member States: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

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