



3 March 2021 - "Dr Rockenschaub and the WHO organization and what they represent were not only our partners, but they worked together with high professionalism. His support and efforts to Palestine's performance facing COVID-19 outbreak showing the highest levels of responsibility," Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority Dr Mohammad Shtayyeh has recognized the efforts of WHO's Head of Office, Dr Gerald Rockenschaub, after almost seven years in the position.

Dr Shtayyeh joined WHO and UN staff, partners and supporters in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to bid farewell to Dr Rockenschaub in ceremonies in the past weeks before he moved to WHO Albania to take up a similar position.

Dr Walid Nammour, secretary-general of the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network also said, *"Dr Gerald has greatly contributed to supporting East Jerusalem Hospitals, especially his support to COVID-19 preparedness and his role in consolidating the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health, in their efforts to build a more resilient health system and to strengthen data collection, and the utilization of evidence and best practice by the Ministry of Health. Gerald had a mission in oPt to achieve and not just a job to follow."*



WHO Health Emergencies Team Lead, Dr Ayadil Saparbekov, reflected on his integrity, dedication and legacy, *"under his leadership WHO has made a significant contribution to improving the health of Palestinians. WHO supported the Ministry of Health in the COVID-19*

*response including considerably scaling up the testing capacity of the central drug laboratory in Gaza and being one of the first countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region to mobilize the COVID-19 vaccine through the COVAX AMC Facility.”*



Following the Great March of Return demonstrations in Gaza in 2020, Dr Rockenschaub supported the establishment of a Limb Reconstruction Centre to provide permanent health services to those with gunshot wounds who needed specialized and complex limb surgeries to prevent disabilities and amputations.

“I will continue to be an advocate for a better health for all Palestinians, who experience challenging experiences and difficult situations,” reflected Dr Rockenschaub at a farewell event before his departure.

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