



Ambassador of UAE to Pakistan H.E Hammad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Alzaabi, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Mahmoud Fikri at the inauguration of UAE-PAP Photo Exhibition at RC 64 in Islamabad Islamabad, 9 October 2017 – Attending the sixty-fourth session of WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean taking place from 9 to 12 October 2017 in Islamabad, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Mahmoud Fikri inaugurated a photo exhibition by United Arab Emirates' Pakistan Assistance Programme dedicated to Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. Mrs Saira Afzal Tarar, Pakistan's Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, along with other distinguished guests, were also present at the exhibition inauguration.

Pakistan is one of only 3 countries in the world with ongoing wild poliovirus transmission, alongside Afghanistan and Nigeria. Over the past couple of years, Pakistan has achieved great progress in the polio situation. The number of wild poliovirus cases has declined from 306 in 2014 to 54 in 2015 and only 20 in 2016. Momentum is being maintained in 2017 with only 5 cases reported as of 9 October 2017.

The United Arab Emirates has played a pivotal role in supporting Pakistan's polio eradication efforts and has contributed significantly to the turnaround seen in Pakistan since 2014. In 2016, thanks to their financial support, more than 10.6 million children across Pakistan's highest risk districts were vaccinated in each of the 3 phases of the campaign supported by the United Arab Emirates' Pakistan Assistance Programme. The financial contribution made through WHO Pakistan also helped to cover incentives to polio frontline workers, in addition to the associated operational costs of the campaigns in identified districts, enabling WHO to continue strengthening capacity and outreach in the most difficult part of Pakistan. In February 2017,

WHO started the implementation of phase IV of United Arab Emirates' Pakistan Assistance Programme's funding to Pakistan's polio programme which will enable the vaccination of 12.4 million children.

The photo exhibition is being hosted at the sixty-fourth session of WHO Regional Committee taking place in Islamabad, where ministers of health and their representatives discuss important public health priorities for countries of the Region. The meeting is being attended by more than 250 public health leaders and experts, including representatives of national, regional and international organizations, and the WHO Secretariat comprising staff from headquarters and the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Friday 26th of April 2024 12:19:01 PM