25 April 2020 – Dr Palitha Mahipala, WHO Representative in Pakistan, handed over PCOT and PCR kits to Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal, Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority, in the presence of Major General Professor Dr Aamer Ikram, Executive Director of the National Institute of Health, in a ceremony at the WHO country office today.

Dr Palitha handed over 15 units of POCKIT central nucleic acid analyzer, 15 000 pieces of specimen collection and transport swab with sample storage solution and 1000 machines of SARS-CoV2 tests which can conduct 15 000 tests.

Dr Palitha said, “Since the infection began here, WHO has been working hard, hand in hand with the Government of Pakistan, National Disaster Management Authority and the National Institute of Health and federal and provincial health authorities to see how best WHO can support a comprehensive response to COVID-19. We have observed an incredibly effective response when led by the National Disaster Management Authority. I truly appreciate the
leadership of the Government, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination and the Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority for their response to COVID-19 which has been effective, comprehensive and robust.

Major General Professor Dr Aamer Ikram, Executive Director of the National Institute of Health, said that Pakistan gratefully acknowledged receipt of this state-of-the-art-equipment.

Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal thanked WHO for their support and for their technical guidance in responding to the COVID-10 epidemic. He noted that there was no lack of personal protective equipment which was of good quality and had been provided to frontline doctors, nurses and other health workers. “We are now ready to supply 100 000 PPEs to all hospitals weekly and, if required, we will be able to supply more. Today, we have the capacity to conduct 52 000 tests daily although we are currently testing a fraction of this number,” he said.

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