



Polio workers giving polio drops to a Pakistani child. WHO/Nasir Mirza

19 December 2012 – Nine health workers have been shot dead and several more injured in Karachi, Peshawar, Charsada and Nowshera during the supplementary immunization days currently being conducted for the 17–19 December polio campaign.

Dr Ala Alwan, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, said that Wednesday, 19 December 2012 was a sad and tragic day for all polio health workers in the world, and especially in Pakistan.

In response to these events, the Regional Director held several consultations with major partners, including the Regional Director of UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia and the Government of Pakistan to discuss immediate measures related to the safety and security of WHO and UNICEF staff, as well as health workers in the field. WHO is continuously monitoring the situation and taking necessary measures according to the evolving situation.

In a joint statement, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that those killed were among thousands who work selflessly across Pakistan to eradicate polio. "Such attacks deprive Pakistan's most vulnerable populations – especially children – of basic life-saving health interventions," they said in a joint statement.

According to the joint statement by the agencies, the Government of Pakistan and the affected

provinces have temporarily suspended the vaccination campaign due to concerns over the safety of health workers.

In this regard, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and two United Nations agencies have condemned the killing of people working on a polio vaccination campaign in Pakistan in the past 24 hours

UN spokesperson, Martin Nesirky, said that Mr Ban joins WHO and UNICEF in condemning these “senseless and inexcusable” attacks on health workers.

WHO, UNICEF and all their partners in Pakistan and globally express their deepest sympathy to the families of the health workers. We remain committed to supporting the Government of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan in their efforts to rid the country of polio and other diseases.

### **Related links**

[Joint WHO/UNICEF statement](#)

[Secretary-General joins WHO and UNICEF in condemning polio workers in Pakistan](#)

Saturday 17th of May 2025 04:35:09 PM