On Saturday 16 October 2010, Dr Hussein A. Gezairy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, received a medal of recognition from His Excellency Mr Ali Abdullah Saleh, the President of Yemen. The gold medal of honour, one of the most prominent awards in Yemen, was given to the Regional Director in appreciation and recognition of his long years of international humanitarian service, particularly the support he had extended to Yemen in the field of public health.

During the event attended by H.E. the Minister of Health Dr Abdulkarim Yehia Rasae and WHO Representative to Yemen Ghulum Popal, the President paid recognition to Dr Gezairy's efforts and leadership during his years of service as WHO Regional Director and noted WHO's continuous support to Yemen in the prevention and eradication of diseases and cooperation in other humanitarian fields.

The Regional Director extended his gratitude for this honorable recognition. In his thanking note, he expressed his great appreciation of the many improvements he had witnessed in Yemen's health sector. He particularly praised Yemen's national immunization campaigns to reduce child mortality and also the country's tireless fight against polio, malaria, tetanus, measles and schistosomiasis. He said that it was a source of pride that the country had stopped polio virus circulation and measles was on its way towards being eliminated. He also noted Yemen's exemplary achievements in reducing the prevalence of malaria and also the considerable progress that had been made in eradicating schistosomiasis. The Regional Director added that the partnership between WHO and the Ministry of Health had resulted in many achievements in primary health care and basic development needs, all of which were in line with Yemen's national strategies and needs.

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