6 December 2012, Jerusalem – Two donors have responded so far to the World Health Organization's urgent appeal for US$ 10 million to provide essential medicines and medical disposables for Gaza Strip. The financial support from Norway and Mercy Relief in Singapore, channelled through the World Health Organization, total US$ 620 000. The donations will contribute towards alleviating the severe shortages of life-saving medicines and medical disposables in Gaza Strip made critical by the recent 8-day escalation of violence resulting in more than 1500 casualties.

The most recent donation, from Norway, was made on 5 December 2012 by the Minister Counsellor from the Representative Office of Norway, who signed an agreement for a donation of US$ 600 000 to WHO oPt.

The donation will be utilized to procure 13 medicines and 31 medical disposable items currently at zero stock. The charity foundation Mercy Relief, based in Singapore, donated US$ 20 000 for urgently needed laboratory supplies and essential medicines. The first items were procured and delivered to Gaza Strip in December for use in public health facilities.

WHO is working with the Ministry of Health and other health partners to ensure that the supplies are delivered to the health facilities where they are most needed.
The latest casualty figures according to the Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip.

A 40-bed Jordanian field hospital, which has operated in Gaza City since 2009, was hit by a direct hit in the late afternoon today (November 21) which penetrated the roof and damaged the in-patient wards. Four health staff were injured.

November 19 which penetrated two floors of the hospital, damaging the in-patient wards. Evacuating wounded were reported damaged by nearby airstrikes. Four health staff were injured.

As of Saturday November 19, one hospital, two ambulance centres and one ambulance stand were closed. 19 of 21 UNRWA primary health care facilities in the Gaza Strip were closed. In addition to medicines and medical disposable supplies sent by the Ministry of Health in Gaza, Mercy Relief donation to WHO stock despite all the donations which had been received by then.

The Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip requires US$ 2.5–3 million monthly for essential medicines and medical disposables for primary and secondary care facilities. On 17 November, WHO had sent a donation of medicines to Ramallah during the hostilities, donations were also sent to the Ministry of Health and other health facilities in Gaza Strip by a number of different organizations.

WHO has appealed to the international community for support in providing essential medical supplies by coordinating donations according to the specific needs of the Ministry of Health (see press release below).

Hospitals operated by the Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip are functioning but must cope with the large number of traumatic injuries with severely depleted medical supplies. WHO is working with the Ministry of Health, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to ensure that essential medicines and medical consumables are delivered to health facilities where they are most needed.

Injuries include severe burns, injuries from collapsing buildings and head injuries, with some of the injured in critical condition.

Following eight days of fighting between Israeli and the Hamas authorities in Gaza. The cumulative casuality figures reported by the Ministry of Health in Gaza are (as of 22 November, 13:00):

165 persons killed (139 males; 22 females; 4 not yet identified) of whom 42 (26%) are children; 1269 persons injured (911 males; 358 females) of whom 431 (34%) are children; 134 children are less than 5 years old.

175 persons killed (151 males; 24 females; 4 not yet identified) of whom 42 (25%) are children; 119 children less than 5 years old.

1399 persons injured, of whom 431 (31%) are children; 141 are children less than 5 years old.

Shifa hospital in Gaza city has received 80% of the injured cases.

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