



Mogadishu, 31 August 2021 – The Ministry of Health of the Federal Republic of Germany has made in-kind donations of surgical and medical masks to the World Health Organization (WHO) over the past months. As part of this donation, the WHO country office in Somalia, received today 1 386 000 surgical and medical face masks for its work in Somalia as part of its coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response. H.E. Annett Günther, the German Ambassador to Somalia, handed over the masks to Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, the WHO Representative to Somalia, in the presence of Mr Omar Hussein Ali, Chargé d’Affaires at the Somali Embassy to Kenya, during a small event held on 31 August at the Ambassador’s residence.

This support comes at a time when Somalia is facing a new wave of COVID-19 infections. Since the outbreak began on March 2020, Somalia has reported 16 831 laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 913 deaths, as of 21 August 2021.

In a statement made at the handover event, Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik stated, “The surgical face masks we have received are an immensely valuable public health resource for Somalia, as they will indeed offer a shield of protection for many frontline workers, including health workers, vulnerable populations, and other community members, not only from COVID-19 but also from other infectious respiratory diseases. As every country is facing a rise in case counts, possibly due to new variants which are spreading fast across the world, it is imperative for all Somalis to keep wearing the face masks to keep safe and protected. Wearing masks in public places, especially in mass gatherings, not only reduces the risk of transmission but may also reduce the possibility of new variants of COVID-19 emerging”.

“We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of Germany for partnering with WHO and the Government of Somalia to prevent the spread of COVID-19,” added Dr Malik. In addition to the masks, Germany has also provided support in the form of US \$1 million through a global contribution in support of the WHO country office’s response to COVID-19 in Somalia.

German Ambassador Annett Günther underlines that “Germany stands with Somalia in the fight against the global pandemic. In midst of a resurgence of cases in Somalia Germany complements its financial contributions of €2.2 billion to the multilateral ACT-A initiative with in-kind support in form of 1.3 million surgical masks to Somalia. Even with vaccination programmes rolling out it is important to work together and protect each other by complying with hygiene and distance measures. We are confident that both the masks, as well as the deliveries of vaccines via the COVAX Facility in the past weeks will benefit Somalia’s population greatly and help get through this precarious time.”

The face masks will be distributed to the Federal Government and Federal Member States of Somalia as part of COVID-19 response activities, to be used by the general population, as well as frontline workers involved in managing public services amid the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak in the country.

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