

During his visit to De Martino Hospital in Mogadishu United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative to Somalia Mr James Swan with WHO Representative Dr Sk. Md Mamunur Rahman Malik stands with health care workers and praises their tireless efforts in the fight against COVID-19

2 July 2020, Mogadishu – On a visit to the major tertiary hospital in Mogadishu, which plays a critical role in the management of COVID-19 patients' care, on 21 June, the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative to Somalia Mr James Swan called for continuing international support to the Government's response to COVID-19 and praised the efforts of frontline health care workers.

"Since the start of the pandemic, the United Nations family has supported the Somali Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in a range of integrated ways. The De Martino Hospital has been central to testing, case detection and critical care support in Somalia," said the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative. "I am glad to have had the chance to see firsthand the work being carried out by Somali health workers in responding to the need for patient care and critical care support. It has been a welcome opportunity to express the UN's solidarity with these courageous individuals who are on the frontline of Somalia's efforts in combating the outbreak," he added. "I commend health workers and the Government on their tireless efforts."



The UN envoy was accompanied by the Federal Minister of Health Fouzia Abikar Nur (second to right) and WHO Representative Dr Sk. Md Mamunur Rahman Malik (first left) during his visit to the hospital.

Located in the capital city of Mogadishu, the hospital is the major and only tertiary hospital in the public sector with an intensive care facility for critical care. The hospital has been recently upgraded with 71 dedicated isolation beds for the treatment of COVID-19 patients. 16 of these beds are fitted with ventilators donated by WHO and the United Nations International Organization for Migration.

Along with other partners of the UN system in Somalia, WHO continues to provide technical, logistical and operational support to this hospital for patient management and care. Recently, WHO has donated ventilators, oxygen concentrators and other essential medical and hospital supplies for patient care. WHO is also supporting budget support to the Ministry of Health to cover salaries of additional health care workers who have been hired to respond to the surge in patient numbers and provide patient care at this hospital. Recently, WHO has also helped in managing patient data with an electronic information management system for the hospital.

While commenting on the visit, the WHO Representative stated, "We have come here to thank the health care workers of this hospital where the majority of patients with COVID-19 have been treated since the first case was officially confirmed on 16 March 2020. Since that period, health care workers have been providing dedicated services by sacrificing their own comfort. Many lives have been saved in this hospital owing to the early intervention of the health care workers. This hospital has treated over 200 patients in the last few months which is testimony to its paramount role in responding to this epidemic. We express our solidarity with them and assure them of our continued support in the days ahead".

The United Nations family's support for Somalia's COVID-19 response has included planning, coordinating and supporting policy development; building the capacity of health professionals working in hospitals; establishing and supporting operation of intensive care beds, making available medical oxygen, supplying personal protective equipment, ventilators and other equipment for the hospital and providing operational support to run and manage the intensive care unit in the hospital.

According to the Federal Ministry of Health and WHO, as of 2 July, 2020, there have been more than 2900 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Somalia, including another 90 associated deaths. These cases include 93 health care professionals, with one reported death among them.



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