Ahmad, 2, is one of 1,500 children with cancer in the Syrian Arab Republic who will receive treatment as a result of the Kuwaiti donation.

31 December 2017 – Eight months ago, Umm Ahmad’s life was shattered when her husband and eldest son were killed after they stepped on a landmine as they were fleeing fighting in rural Raqqa. She was left alone to care for her surviving son, who is 2 years old and suffers from cancer.

“More than 6 months ago, we were forced to sell most of our properties to get medicine for my son,” Umm Ahmad explained. “We came here to Damascus to try to find proper treatment for him. With the support of a nongovernmental organization, we were able to provide him with the necessary medicine, but only for 2 months. All of our financial resources have been depleted, but I need to protect my son. He is my only hope.”

Finally, this family that has suffered so much will now have some relief. Ahmad is one of 1,500 children suffering from cancer in the Syrian Arab Republic who will receive the medicine they need as a result of a US$ 1 million donation from the State of Kuwait.

With this generous donation, the World Health Organization (WHO) will be able to provide medical treatment for children with cancer who come from every governorate in the country to the only children’s referral hospital in Damascus. This donation will bring renewed hope to these children and their families.
“This new Kuwaiti donation has come at a critical time. It will help WHO provide cancer medicines for children who’ve lived in fear of cancer and whose families cannot afford the high cost of treatment, especially under the adverse circumstances Syria is currently experiencing,” said Elizabeth Hoff, WHO representative in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Director of the Children’s Hospital, Dr Maher Haddad, said, “Right now, 1 500 children with cancer are being treated in this hospital. Every month the hospital receives 60 to 70 new children who need cancer treatments, most of whom come from the eastern and northeastern governorates of Syria. These WHO-supported medicines, when received, will be sufficient to cover their medical treatment for about 7 months.”

“WHO deeply appreciates this new donation from Kuwait, which will save the lives of innocent children and provide much-needed relief for their parents,” Ms Hoff added. “WHO is committed to reaching all children in need of medical assistance and will spare no efforts in reviving hope for people whose situation is so deplorable.”

According to the Syrian National Cancer Registry, about 25 000 new cancer patients are in need of treatment every year, including 2 500 children under 15 years old. About half of these children suffer from leukemia and lymphoma. Other types of cancers reported include cancer of the central nervous system, kidneys, bone, and soft tissues, and retinoblastoma.