



Tripoli, 27 January 2022 – Today, WHO and the National Oil Corporation (NOC), together with its international partners ENI, Repsol and TotalEnergies, signed a multi-million dollar agreement to strengthen treatment services for children with cancer in Libya.

Health outcomes of children with cancer in Libya have been jeopardized by acute shortages of paediatric cancer medicines, essential equipment and shortages of trained staff including specialist paediatric oncologists.

The funding will ensure that 722 children enrolled for cancer treatment in the main paediatric hospitals in Tripoli and Benghazi will receive specialized care over a period of 18 months.

It is sobering to note that 80% of children in high-income countries recover from cancer, while fewer than 30% of children in low- and middle-income countries such as Libya survive this deadly disease.

"We are extremely grateful to the National Oil Corporation for its support of our critical work," said Ms Elizabeth Hoff, Head of Mission and WHO Representative in Libya. Ms Hoff added that WHO's goal was to give children in Libya with cancer the best possible chance of survival and enable them to live a full and abundant life.

WHO will use this generous donation to procure medicines, supplies and equipment for seven hospitals that are treating child cancer patients. The list of medicines to be procured is based on detailed information received from each hospital regarding the types of cancers being treated.

In close cooperation with the Bambino Gesù Hospital - the largest paediatric hospital and research centre in Italy - WHO will also train Libyan health care teams in oncological treatment and palliative care. WHO will also train hospital technicians on how to use and maintain the equipment provided.



"Libyan hospitals lack sufficient capabilities to treat this deadly disease. Despite the scarcity of financial budgets that the NOC needs to operate and maintain what has been destroyed over the past years, we have taken upon ourselves the responsibility to save and treat our dear children. Today, NOC is signing this very important agreement and has allocated this amount through the Department of Sustainable Development. We will not hesitate to provide the necessary support whenever we have the opportunity to do so, and I ask Allah to heal and preserve all the children of Libya affected by this disease," said Mr Mustafa Sanalla, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NOC at the signing ceremony.

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