21 February, Dubai, United Arab Emirates – Amid a worsening health emergency, the World Health Organization (WHO) logistics hub in Dubai, in partnership with Dubai's International Humanitarian City, will be delivering critical health supplies worth over US$ 1.7 million to the Gaza Strip.

In total, 80 metric tonnes of life-saving medicines, including insulin, are being delivered through a temporary air bridge between the United Arab Emirates and Egypt. Several air rotations are anticipated to deliver the supplies, which will support about 2 million people in the Gaza Strip.

"WHO's logistics hub in Dubai provides a lifeline to countries affected by health emergencies across the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region and beyond. As the health crisis in the Gaza Strip unfolds and as hostilities in Rafah escalate, these medicines are critical for people whose access to medical care has been severely restricted owing to shortages facing the health system as a whole," said Dr Hanan Balkhy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean.

"WHO is grateful for the support of Dubai's International Humanitarian City, the Government of Dubai and the Government of the United Arab Emirates to deliver life-saving supplies to the world's most vulnerable populations in their greatest time of need," Dr Balkhy added.

Rafah's population has increased five-fold to 1.5 million as it now houses half of Gaza's displaced people. Still more families continue to arrive in Rafah as violence intensifies in the southern Gaza Strip.

“Since 2018, the logistics hub at Dubai’s IHC has been at the forefront of WHO’s humanitarian response, reaching over 100 million people with humanitarian health supplies. Our coordination for the response to the humanitarian emergency in Gaza began in October. Today, we continue to closely coordinate with WHO and all our partners to address the pressing needs for humanitarian health assistance in Gaza, with the ongoing airbridge and at least four additional airlifts,” Giuseppe Saba, CEO of Dubai’s International Humanitarian City said.

Through its logistics hub in Dubai, WHO has delivered enough medicines to reach over 1 million people in Gaza since October 2023. Yet the needs continue to grow, and the delivery of supplies continues to be impeded by denials of access for humanitarian aid.

WHO has persevered to deliver vital medical supplies and to support health services in Gaza, navigating complex logistical and security obstacles to do so. The needs, however, far exceed the aid, and the sustained delivery of health supplies from Egypt into the southern Gaza Strip is vital to WHO’s ongoing operations to address severe medicine shortages and to bolster an ailing health system.

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