

	<b>Minutes of the Urgent National Health Cluster Meeting</b>	<b>Convened by: Health Cluster Coordinator</b>	<b>Meeting Notes by: Health Cluster Coordinator</b>
<b><u>AGENDA</u></b> Opening remarks Overview of the current situation Operational needs, priorities, and gaps with ongoing conflict in focus Action points and closing		<b>Date: 18 May 2021</b> <b>Time: 1100-1300hrs</b>	<b>Venue: Virtual Microsoft Teams</b>
<b>Key issues Raised</b>		<b>Participants: 160 participants from 60 organizations</b> Minister of Health and various MoH departments, AFD, AIDA, Ahli Arab Hospital, AVH, Ambassador Order of Malta, Belgian Consulate General, Care, CISP, CRS, ECHO, Embrace the Middle East, Hayfa Charity Hospital, HI, ICRC, IFRC, Igatha48, Italian Cooperation Agency, IMC, Italian Cooperation Agency, LWF, MAP, MdM-Suisse, MdM-Spain, MDM-France, Medico International, MedGlobal, MSF Belgium, MSF-France, MSF Spain, Mennonite Central Committee, OCHA, Patient’s Friends Hospital, PCPM, PCRF, PFBS, PFPPA, PHR, PMRS, PRCS, PUI, PWJ, QRC, Representative Office of Canada, Representative Office of India, Representative Office of Mexico, Representative Office of Norway, Sahaba Medical Complex, Save the Children, Swiss Development and Cooperation, Taawon, UHCC, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNRWA, USAID, WW-GVC, WHO, WVI	
<p>The Minister of Health, Dr Mai Akaila opened the meeting, made some opening remarks, and requested a moment of silence to remember all those who have lost their lives during the ongoing crisis. The Head of the Cluster Lead Agency (WHO), Dr Rik Peeperkorn, also made some opening remarks. They both expressed great concern over the ongoing situation across oPt and especially in Gaza.</p> <p><b>Overview of the current situation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of 18 May 2021, in Gaza there have been 212 people killed including 61 children and 36 women, and 1,400 people injured while in the West Bank, 23 people including 2 children have been killed, and 3825 injured.</li> <li>• Distribution of injuries that were transferred to treatment centres in the West Bank according to the cause of injury: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Live Bullets: 446</li> <li>○ Rubber-coated metal lead: 175</li> <li>○ Asphyxia due to tear gas inhalation: 94</li> <li>○ Injuries due to hitting and falling: 24</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 6 hospitals and 11 PHC clinics were damaged, 10 hospitals and 44 primary health clinics were closed, 22 ambulances were damaged, and 83 health personnel injured, 2 health personnel died after Israeli airstrikes hit sites in their immediate vicinity.</li> <li>• Over 40,000 people in Gaza internally displaced and need various basic services including food, water, health, shelter, etc. Concerns to ensure that they do not become hotspots for COVID-19 transmission</li> <li>• Concerned about the COVID-19 response which had been underway when the ongoing crisis started and has been heavily impacted resulting in reduced testing and detection of patients.</li> <li>• The central laboratory is temporarily not functioning and currently depending on rapid antigen tests.</li> </ul>			

- Damage to road infrastructure is making it difficult for medical evacuation of patients and rendering health facilities less accessible to those in need of emergency services.
- The Gaza market supplies are very limited now and there is desperate need to reopen borders with Israel to enable supplies to come in.
- Electricity cuts have increased (up to 16 hrs) posing major challenges to operations of hospitals and increasing demand for fuel.
- Emergency medical services responders reported harassment and prevention from accessing injured or transporting the injured to health facilities.

**Operational needs and gaps with ongoing conflict in focus**

- There is a lack of drugs, consumables, and medical equipment for trauma response
- Urgent need of emergency specialist medical teams
- Need to maintain COVID-19 response and still in need of the previously shared priority items to support response.
- Ensure continuation of essential services delivery including primary health care, SRH, maternal and child health and cancer patients.
- Due to the level of trauma from the ongoing armed conflict in Gaza and civil unrest in West Bank including East Jerusalem, there is need for mental health and psychosocial support.
- Inadequate number of human resources (partly due to lack of payment of salaries) and specialists to respond to the health demands of the crisis.
- Need for rehabilitation services for the injured

**Actions taken to date**

- Humanitarian agencies are advocating for the cessation of attacks and reopening of borders with Israel to enable humanitarian access and enable patients requiring emergency care outside Gaza can be referred.
- The Emergency Operation Room has been set up and is responsible for following up on the health situation in Gaza and West Bank and has been established in the Palestinian Ministry of Health (representation from West Bank and Gaza) in collaboration with WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNRWA and other international and local partners to improve coordination of response.
- Partners have mobilized assistance amounting to almost USD2 million that has been provided to Gaza and West Bank including East Jerusalem. Efforts are ongoing to mobilize more resources to respond to the urgent needs raised by the MoH.
- The fuel needs for health facilities in Gaza have been consolidated and efforts are ongoing to mobilize the required quantities.
- Humanitarian organizations have put together supplies and human resources for movement into Gaza and currently negotiating with the Israeli authorities for humanitarian corridor to enable the supplies to enter Gaza.
- MoH held a blood donation drive and shipped 250 units of blood and 2,000 blood bags as well as 10,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine.
- Partners providing remote mental health and psychosocial support to affected populations across oPt via the MHPSS hotline

Action Points	Progress
The Ministry of Health to share an updated list of needed items with partners	To be done ASAP

Partners to mobilize support in the form of drugs, consumables, and equipment to enable effective response to the ongoing crisis	Ongoing
Partners to inform Operations Room <a href="mailto:palopsroom21@gmail.com">palopsroom21@gmail.com</a> and the Health Cluster <a href="mailto:ctakawira@who.int">ctakawira@who.int</a> on support that they are providing to enable better tracking of needs and gaps	To be done ASAP, and continuously
Minister of Health requested the international community to advocate with Israel to stop the cessation of attacks on Palestine	Ongoing
Specialist medical teams on standby to be deployed as soon as they have been provided with permission	Ongoing
MoH and WHO to provide COVID-19 testing kits to UNRWA to enable them to test IDPs	To be done
UNRWA to establish COVID-19 triaging system in the shelters and provide hygiene kits	To be done