News release

Turkey supports emergency needs in Gaza for fuel and medicines for health facilities

Jerusalem, 31 May 2016 – The World Health Organization and the Government of Turkey held an event today in Gaza's Shifa hospital to mark the start of implementation of a USD 1.5 million assistance package from Turkey for emergency needs in the Palestinian health sector. The project will provide Gaza's 13 hospitals and 54 Primary Health Centers with fuel sufficient for the next 6 months, and will provide the most needed medicines for patient care. The World Health Organization is coordinating the project with the Ministry of Health and UNRWA and providing logistical assistance.

Ambassador Mustafa Sarnic of the Consul General of Turkey said, "Turkey is resolute in maintaining its efforts to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian people at this time." The Turkish delegation to the event at Shifa Hospital also included Deputy Consul General Husamettin Arslan of the Turkish Consulate. The donation was made at the request and with the agreement of the State of Palestine, according to Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under its Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Administration (AFAD).

In his remarks, the World Health Organization Head of Office, Dr. Gerald Rockenschaub, thanked the Government of Turkey, and said, "WHO values this initiative as a meaningful and very timely contribution to the health of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The hospitals and clinics are constantly facing chronic shortages of basic materials and power, with medicines and fuel for electricity generators at critical levels. Turkey, along with other members of the international community, has been a reliable contributor toward maintaining health services."

At the end of April, the zero stock levels of medicines and medical disposables at the Gaza central drugstore was 29 percent and 41 percent, respectively, and fuel reserves relied on by hospitals to power generators during frequent long blackouts of power were almost exhausted.

For further information, please contact:

Gerald Rockenschaub, WHO Head of Office, West Bank and Gaza
Tel: +972 54717 9025 Email: rockenschaubg@who.int

Mahmoud Daher, WHO Head of Gaza sub-office
Tel: +972-598944650 Email: daherm@who.int

Husamettin Arsalan, Consulate General of Turkey in Jerusalem
Tel:+ 972 779853308 Email: husamettin.arslan@mfa.gov.tr