



Message from

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**WHO EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

on the occasion of

**WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY**

**14 June 2017**

This year's World Blood Donor Day campaign focuses on blood donation in emergencies.

The lives and health of millions of people in the Eastern Mediterranean Region are affected by man-made and natural disasters, creating considerable needs for emergency health care.

Blood transfusion is an essential component of emergency health care. It is vital for treating the wounded during emergencies, and supports complex medical and surgical procedures. Blood also has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and child care.

However, in many affected countries, the demand for blood exceeds the available supply. As a result, blood services face challenges in making a sufficient quantity of blood available, while also ensuring its quality and safety.

In any emergency situation, the natural human response is "What can I do? How can I help?" WHO is calling on people to help by giving blood regularly, so that sufficient blood is available before an emergency arises.

An adequate and safe supply of blood can only be assured through a well-organized blood service that is adequately prepared to meet the increase in demand during emergencies.

Every year on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day. The event serves to thank blood donors for their life-saving gift of blood and to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations throughout the year to ensure the availability of safe blood supplies for patients in need.

World Blood Donor Day is an opportunity to persuade leaders in the health sector to show their appreciation to regular voluntary blood donors and to widely increase public awareness of the need for year-round, regular voluntary unpaid blood donation, to save lives during emergencies.

WHO is also calling on all countries to include blood transfusion services in national emergency preparedness and response activities.

We thank those donors who donate blood regularly to save lives and we encourage others to begin doing so.

Give blood. Give now. Give often. Blood donation saves lives.

Thank you