



In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Message from

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to the

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR THE PATIENT SAFETY FRIENDLY HOSPITAL
INITIATIVE: CONSOLIDATION AND REGIONAL EXPANSION**

Amman, Jordan, 11–14 April 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I address this gathering in the beautiful city of Amman. We have become accustomed to holding meetings relating to quality and safety of health care in Jordan. This is testament to the relentless commitment of the leadership to health care quality and the progress the country has witnessed in this area over the past few years. It is a pleasure to see colleagues and experts from countries in which patient safety activities have been implemented. It is also a pleasure to meet new faces and to welcome on board some countries in which patient safety has not previously been addressed.

This workshop will revolve around the Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative and an endeavour was initiated by the Regional Office that has been commended by many organizations engaged in quality and safety of health care around the world. This initiative aims at setting standards that ensure that patients, their families and health care workers are safe in health care facilities. This is in keeping with the aims and goals of WHO. Indeed, the WHO patient safety programme aims to coordinate, disseminate and accelerate improvements in patient safety worldwide. The Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative was developed by WHO, with the ultimate goal of improving the safety and quality of care delivered to patients.

Safety is a fundamental principle of patient care and a critical component of quality management. Its improvement demands a system-wide effort, involving a wide range of actions in performance improvement, environmental safety and risk management, infection control, safe use of medicines, equipment safety and safe clinical practice. It embraces nearly

all health care disciplines and actors, and thus requires a comprehensive multifaceted approach to identifying and managing actual and potential risks to patient safety and finding broad long-term solutions for the system as a whole. Thinking in terms of systems offers the greatest promise of definitive risk-reduction solutions, which place the appropriate emphasis on every component of patient safety. The Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative addresses these issues in a comprehensive manner and sets standards that embrace many aspects of health care delivery. The initiative brings about concerted efforts, involving all elements and sectors of the health care delivery process towards the ultimate goal of improving safety in health care facilities.

To address the issue of patient safety, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean joined the World Alliance for Patient Safety in its worldwide endeavour to bring together all stakeholders, including health policy-makers, WHO, patient groups and organizations working in this field, and to advance the fundamental goal of reducing the harm inflicted on patients. In its fifty-second session, the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean urged Member States in resolution EM/RC52/R.4 to: develop national standards for patient safety, making use of WHO guidelines; formulate national patient safety programmes in collaboration with the Regional Office and the World Alliance for Patient Safety; and establish mechanisms to promote partnership between regional patient safety institutions and national health care delivery systems.

WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean has developed the tools for the Patient Safety Friendly Hospital Initiative and has secured some resources for its implementation. We started in seven countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen), each of which nominated one pilot hospital to test the feasibility of application of the patient safety assessment. The results of the pilot testing phase will be shared during this workshop. Ever since its launch in 2008, the impact of the initiative on improving safety of health care services has been gathering momentum. Many countries have expressed their interest in pursuing patient safety and requested technical support. Some countries have been facing challenges in implementation. This workshop will address these challenges, respond to your needs and assist you to move further.

We take great pride in having this workshop focused on countries in conflict, such as Afghanistan, Iraq and the Occupied Palestinian territory. This is in line with our commitment at the Regional Office to support those who are most in need.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are determined to implement patient safety in the Region by establishing research, building national capacities, conducting training on patient safety, raising awareness of health care professionals and the public, and applying evidence-based solutions.

Today, we are joined by colleagues representing WHO country offices, and from WHO headquarters, a sign of collaboration and solidarity within WHO. Our unified vision, our adamant persistence and continuous collaboration will ensure that we will reach the goals of WHO and will move one step further towards the positioning of patient safety as a top and indispensable priority.

Before concluding, I would like to thank our experts and participants, whose efforts and commitment are highly appreciated. I would also like to thank our regional consultants, most of whom are here today. Without their support, this progress would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to thank the International Islamic Relief Organization, Jeddah for their support for patient safety in the Region. I hope the outcomes of this meeting will complement the multitude of efforts invested in several directions towards achievement of safe health care systems.

Thank you.