# UNITED NATIONS

**OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR**

**AND HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR FOR YEMEN**

### The Ministry of Health in Aden confirms the first case of COVID-19 in Yemen

*10 April 2020, Yemen* – Today, the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) in Aden announced the first laboratory confirmed case of the coronavirus in Yemen. The individual who has tested positive has been isolated and is being treated in a local hospital where he is currently in a stable condition. Specially trained Rapid Response Teams are tracing, and where appropriate, isolating everyone who has come into contact with him.

"For weeks we have feared this, and now it's happened. COVID-19 is in Yemen," said Lise Grande, the Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen.

"After five years of war, people across the country have some of the lowest levels of immunity and highest levels of acute vulnerability in the world," said Ms. Grande. "What's facing Yemen is frightening. More people who become infected are likely to become severely ill than anywhere else."

"Only half of all health facilities are currently functioning," said Ms. Grande. "Fighting the virus is going to be hard, but it's our highest priority."

"We're doing everything we can to prevent further spread of the virus and to help authorities be ready to treat people if they contract it," said Altaf Musani, the WHO Representative for Yemen.

"Our aim is to bend the epi-curve. This is why we are calling on communities to practise social distancing and to stay at home and practise protective behaviours," said Mr. Musani.

WHO is providing medical supplies, testing kits, ventilators and training and is helping to accelerate information campaigns and strengthen surveillance capacities. "We need the support of authorities to get in supplies and allow us to make sure they reach the right facilities at the right time," said Ms. Grande.

"This is one of the biggest threats in the past 100 years to face Yemen," said Ms. Grande.  "It's time for the parties to stop fighting each other and start fighting COVID together."

Yemen remains the world's worst humanitarian disaster. Nearly 80 per cent of the population requires some form of humanitarian assistance and protection. Ten million people are a step away from famine and 7 million people are malnourished. Of the UN's 41 major humanitarian programmes, 31 will either reduce or shut during April unless funding is urgently received.

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