Sana'a, 10 February 2016 — Following months of blocked access to Taiz City, Yemen, and in response to mounting emergency health needs, the World Health Organization (WHO) has successfully delivered more than 20 tonnes of life-saving medicines and medical supplies. These medical supplies are critical to meet the most urgent needs in a city where more than 200 000 people continue to live under siege with limited access to humanitarian aid.

The health supplies, which had been blocked from entering the city for 8 weeks, were finally delivered to Al-Thawra, Al-Jumhoori, Al-Rawdha and Al-Ta'aon hospitals as of 31 January. The supplies include trauma kits, interagency emergency health kits, diarrhoeal disease kits and 170 oxygen cylinders, enough for around 35 000 beneficiaries. Additionally, dialysis solutions were facilitated to Al-Thawra Hospital for 30 000 dialysis sessions for one year.

“Hospital staff in Taiz City are desperate for medicines and medical supplies so that they can continue to offer the most basic medical care. The delivery of these WHO supplies is a huge step that we are hoping will pave the way for the provision of more medical support to the city,” said Dr Ahmed Shadoul, WHO Representative in Yemen.

Since April 2015, the ongoing violence and insecurity continues to limit the delivery of aid in Taiz City. 3 districts in Taiz City -- Al Mudhaffar, Al Qahirah and Salah -- still remain inaccessible and people are in urgent need of food, safe water and life-saving health services. Many hospitals have been forced to close their intensive care units due to a lack of fuel, medicines and health staff. Patients with chronic diseases such as diabetes, kidney disease and cancer are struggling to access essential medicines and dialysis centres.

Shortages in food have led to a significant increase in prices, with many people now unable to afford basic food items, resulting in increased risk of malnutrition, especially in children. The main wells providing safe drinking-water have shut down due to interruptions in power supply and a lack of fuel for generators.

“Earlier this week, an aid plane landed in Sana'a airport with an additional 40 tonnes of WHO medicines and medical supplies. These supplies will be distributed to where they are most needed across the country. It is vital that WHO and partners are given unrestricted access to all

people in need, so that they can be urgently provided with life-saving health care," said Dr Shadoul.