

# Qatar Foundation's WISH 2024 Summit Begins with Focus on Global Health Challenges in Times of Conflict

*International leaders in health discuss some of the world's most pressing health issues at the World Innovation Summit for Health's global conference in Qatar.*

DOHA, QATAR, November 13, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- WISH 2024 – the seventh edition of a biennial global gathering of healthcare expertise hosted by Qatar Foundation's [World Innovation Summit for Health \(WISH\)](#) – opened today, emphasizing the importance of innovative solutions to ensure equitable health access for all.



Lord Darzi Speaking at WISH Opening Ceremony

Speakers at the opening ceremony, held at Qatar National Convention Centre in Doha, included Her Excellency Dr. Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari, Qatar's former Minister of Public Health; Lord Darzi of Denham, Executive Chair of WISH; and Dr. Christos Christou, President of Médecins Sans Frontières.

In her opening remarks, Her Excellency Dr. Al Kuwari said: "Under the visionary leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, WISH continues to expand as a global community committed to making healthcare accessible and humane.

"At WISH, we strive to present the world's most cutting-edge ideas and scientific advancements. But we also focus on confronting the urgent challenges before us..

"This year's theme, 'Humanizing Health: Conflict, Equity, and Resilience', reflects our commitment to addressing the profound health challenges people face worldwide, especially those who have, and continue to endure unimaginable hardship.... The toll of war and displacement has tested humanity's resilience and underscored the urgent need for peace, health and protection."

Lord Darzi of Denham, Executive Chair of WISH, spoke of challenges faced by those working to

provide care during armed conflict: “War is a healthcare catastrophe. There can never be any justification for targeting healthcare personnel or infrastructure – it is purely and simply wrong. We must stand together to condemn such actions and honor those who courageously continue to provide care in the most appalling conditions.”

Reflecting on the summit theme of conflict, equity, and resilience, Dr. Christou said he was gravely concerned that attacks on healthcare facilities and workers have become the “new norm”.

“We need to know that there is a place that is respected, and that place is a hospital. We are scrambling without basic medicines, anesthetics or antibiotics. There are many doctors in Gaza who are amputating on children without anesthetic, for example,” Dr. Christou said.

When asked about the neutrality of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), he reiterated that the values of the organisation remain consistent, and they treat all in need, but doctors “have a mandate to bear witness, to be a voice of the voiceless.... Neutrality means many things, but it does not mean silence.”

A film shown during the opening ceremony told the story of 11-year-old Dareen Al Bayaa, a Palestinian girl who lost 47 members of her extended family on 22 October 2023 as a result of a devastating attack on her home in Gaza, with only Dareen and her five-year-old brother surviving and being taken to Doha for medical treatment. “Why is it ok for me to suffer? Is this fair?” asked Dareen in the film.

Ahead of the summit, WISH entered into a strategic partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), collaborating on the development of a series of evidence-based reports and policy papers, as well as working with the United Nations’ health agency to develop a post-summit implementation strategy.□

Day one of the summit hosted discussion forums based on reports published by WISH and the WHO, alongside roundtable discussions and open sessions.

The first main discussion of the day was based on the joint WISH and WHO 2024 report titled ‘In the line of fire: Protecting health in armed conflict’, chaired by Richard Brennan, the Regional Emergency Director of the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office of the WHO. He was joined by expert speakers including His Excellency Yousuf Al Khater, President of Qatar Red Crescent Society; and Sigrid Kaag, the United Nations’ Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza.

This forum was followed by a discussion on antimicrobial resistance, based on the report ‘Tackling antimicrobial resistance (AMR): How to keep antibiotics working for the next century’, chaired by the report’s co-author Professor Dame Sally Davies, UK Special Envoy for AMR. She was joined by Her Excellency Dr. Karin Tegmark Wisell, Sweden’s Ambassador for Global Health;

Dr. Hanan Balkhy, the Regional Director of the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office of the WHO; Dr. Christos Christou; and Dr. Nour Shamas, a member of the AMR Narrative.

The final main discussion of the summit's first day was based on the report 'AI and Healthcare Ethics in the Gulf Region: An Islamic Perspective on Medical Accountability', and discussed the ethics of Artificial Intelligence in healthcare. This session featured the report's lead author Dr. Mohammed Ghaly, Professor of Islam and Bioethics at the Centre for Islamic Legislation and Ethics at Qatar Foundation's Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), and an expert panel including Dr. Barry Solaiman, Assistant Professor of Law at HBKU.

Alongside discussions based on WISH reports, additional sessions focused on topics such as women's cancer, palliative care, and Sudan's 'forgotten' war.

The summit has brought together more than 200 experts in health to discuss evidence-based ideas and practices in healthcare innovation to address the world's most urgent global health challenges.□

-ENDS-

Notes for editors

About the World Innovation Summit for Health

The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through international summits and a range of ongoing initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research, and industry. Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

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