Statement attributable to Dr Peter Salama, Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme

19 September 2017 - Multiple reported attacks on health facilities and personnel today in Syria have killed and injured health workers and disrupted health services for thousands of people.

According to WHO local partners, several ambulances and hospitals in Idleb province were reportedly hit by airstrikes within a few hours.

All three hospitals in Kafr Nabl, *Khan Sheikhoun* and Heish sub-districts are no longer in service.

An attack on a hospital specializing in maternal and paediatric services in Heish killed one health worker and severely injured another. The hospital, which sustained significant structural damage, previously provided an average 13,150 consultations, 2,360 admissions, 1,500 major surgeries and care for 1,500 war-related trauma cases every month.

The hospitals in Kafr Nabl and *Khan Sheikhoun* previously each registered 2,300 and 800 consultations per month, along with surgeries and trauma care.

In northern rural Hama, near the town of Atshan, two paramedics were reportedly killed in an attack that destroyed two ambulances.

These attacks deprive civilians caught in the crossfire of the critical trauma care and health services they need.

Syria is among the most dangerous countries in the world to be a health worker today – it ranks highest for attacks on health facilities and personnel. WHO has documented credible reports of nearly 100 attacks on health workers and facilities this year and 207 attacks in 2016.

Every day, health workers risk their lives to care for the sick and wounded across the country. We must continue to protect and support them as they work to save lives.

WHO urgesÂ all parties to the conflict to refrain from attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure, as required byÂ InternationalÂ HumanitarianÂ Law.

Attacks on health workers and facilities are immoral and illegal, they must stop.