27 March 2017 – The World Health Organization expresses grave concernÂ by the deteriorating health situation in East Ghouta, Rural Damascus, where more than 300 000 people are besieged, and calls for immediate access to deliver lifesaving assistance.

All 3 public hospitals and 17 public health care centres in East Ghouta are nonfunctioning and inaccessible to the population. The number of children suffering from trauma injuries is alarmingly high: 30% of all patients with war-related injuries are children under 15 years of age. Patients with chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular conditions and diabetes, are also of major concern due to shortages in treatment. A measles outbreak is reported in the area, and the tuberculosis situation is deteriorating due to lack of medicines. On 9 March, WHO and local health authorities delivered a shipment of vaccines and tuberculosis medicines to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Without sustained humanitarian assistance, existing supplies of medicines, vaccines, medical consumables and medical equipment in East Ghouta will be rapidly depleted.

“Time is running out for the people of East Ghouta. As health needs increase, available resources are being depleted day by day. Our main goal now is to provide access to lifesaving care for thousands of vulnerable men, women and children immediately,” said Elizabeth Hoff, WHO Representative in Syria. “WHO and health partners have prepositioned additional supplies and are ready to deliver them as soon as access is granted.”

As the situation in East Ghouta evolves, WHO demands that all parties to the conflict comply with their legal obligations to protect health workers and health facilities, and facilitate safe and uninterrupted humanitarian access to live-saving assistance.

http://www.emro.who.int/syr/syria-news/who-concerned-at-deteriorating-health-situation-in-east-ghouta-syria-calls-for-immediate-and-unimpeded-access.html