

# Welcome Messages

## **Sultanate of Oman Health Minister welcome Letter for EMARIS 2023 conference**

The hosting of EMARIS 2023 conference in Muscat-Sultanate of Oman this year comes after challenging years the world had faced in response to one of the worst health crises in the century, Covid-19 pandemic. We are now able to better understand more than ever the importance of establishing a strong universal prevention and response system, collaboration, health policies and other. We are back to be better.

We are here in Oman looking forward to welcoming you all at EMARIS 2023 conference, where we trust all public health experts and researchers in the region will come together, to share knowledge, experience, success stories and good practices they gained during Covid-19 pandemic.

I deeply believe that EMARIS 2023 conference is an opportunity to showcase unity against an existential threat that we can only overcome through concerted action and effective implementation.

We will spare no effort to ensure that EMARIS 2023 Conference becomes the moment where words were translated to actions, and where we all collectively embarked on a path towards a sustainable prevention and response system to address pandemic threats and use the data generated from the surveillance system to inform decision-making, policies and practices to reduce the burden of influenza and other respiratory viruses-associated illnesses in the Region.

Welcome to Muscat. Welcome to EMARIS 2023 Conference

**H.E. Dr. Hilal Bin Ali Al Sabti**  
Health Minister

Sultanate of OmanDear Colleagues,

The technical unit of Infectious Hazard Prevention and Preparedness (IHP) in WHO's Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean welcomes you to the 3rd Scientific Conference on Acute Respiratory Infections in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and the 6th Meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean Acute Respiratory Infection Surveillance (EMARIS) Network

The aim of this conference is to document progress made in the Region in the areas of strengthening surveillance and response capacities of the countries for both seasonal and pandemic influenza and other acute respiratory infections.

A wealth of information has been accumulated since the surveillance for influenza was established and strengthened in the Region; 21 of the 22 countries are currently implementing SARI and ILI surveillance with enhanced data collection and analysis attributes. As more data is now available, countries are turning their focus towards data quality for improving informed decision making in prevention, detection and control of acute respiratory infections.

Sincerely,

**Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari**

Regional Director of WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office  
On behalf of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) Influenza Division, it is a pleasure to welcome you to EMARIS 2023.

The CDC Influenza Division has a longstanding history of partnership with the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office and with many member states in the region. Through these collaborations, influenza surveillance has expanded considerably. Since early 2020, the global public health workforce has been challenged with responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This response undoubtedly burdened our healthcare systems, impacted public health infrastructure, and changed

how we lived our day-to-day lives. It has also provided an opportunity to re-evaluate and modernize surveillance, incorporate the many lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, and continue to heighten our vigilance to new and emerging threats.

Meetings like EMARIS serve as a critical platform to convene, collaborate, and continue working towards our shared mission. It is an essential forum for all of us to establish new partnerships, strengthen existing partnerships, and share progress with colleagues. It is also a place to highlight challenges and think critically about how to make national and global improvements that will increase our collective understanding of influenza prevention and control, as well as respiratory pathogen preparedness.

We are thrilled to support the EMARIS 2023 meeting and look forward to seeing you in Muscat, Oman.

Sincerely,

**Dr Vivian G. Dugan**

Director (Acting), Influenza Division



# CDC

**CENTERS FOR DISEASE <sup>TM</sup>  
CONTROL AND PREVENTION**



# PIP@10

CELEBRATING A DECADE  
OF IMPLEMENTATION



سلطنة عُمان  
وزارة الصحة  
Sultanate of Oman  
Ministry of Health

# PIVI

THE TASK  
FORCE  
FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

PARTNERSHIP FOR INFLUENZA VACCINE INTRODUCTION

