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For Immediate Release



PRESS RELEASE
ISLAMIC RELIEF MALAYSIA

ISLAMIC RELIEF PLEDGES \$10 MILLION TO GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

Bangi – As of 7 April 2020, more than 1.3 million have tested positive Covid-19 in 182 countries worldwide. In economic and social sector, a spike in the number of depression and domestic violence as well as job losses have impacted millions of people. Initiative such as economic stimulus package was unveiled by Malaysia government that will benefit all Malaysians to ease their financial constraints. NGOs including Islamic Relief Malaysia have come forward to provide aid to the affected people.

Since mid-March, Islamic Relief Malaysia has distributed aid specifically face masks, PPE sets, ventilator machine, medical supplies, food and cash assistance. The aid was given to agencies and certified organizations, government hospitals, and vulnerable families.

Millions of dollars' worth of emergency assistance to more than 20 at-risk countries has been released by Islamic Relief in a bid to stem the spread of the deadly coronavirus, help those infected and support vulnerable communities that have been the hardest hit.

Thousands of hygiene kits containing essentials such as hand sanitizer, surgical masks and thermometers have already been delivered to high-risk communities in places like Syria and Afghanistan where vital health infrastructure has crumbled due to conflict.

In the coming week, more critical assistance such as ventilators, lab kits and portable x-ray machines will also be delivered to countries like Pakistan where many lack access to decent medical care. For those who have lost their jobs and sources of income in low and middle-income

countries with no social safety nets, cash support will likewise be provided to allow them to purchase basics like food and medicine.

A Global Awareness Campaign with Religious Guidance

At the same time, large awareness-raising campaigns will be launched to inform people about how the virus is spread and how to protect themselves by adopting good hygiene practices and suitable social distancing measures when possible.

These will be supported by our information materials on safe religious practice which have been specially designed by our staff with guidance from key religious scholars. Guided by our experience of the Ebola response, the information for Muslim communities focuses on dispelling dangerous misinformation and outlining the religious imperative of stopping the spread of the disease by taking steps like suspending communal worship in high-risk areas.

The guidance also looks at adapting behaviors such as burial rites by ensuring these can be done respectfully and in line with Islamic custom, while also protecting those on the front lines of the crisis.

Now Is the Time for Generosity

“The world has not faced a threat like this in our lifetime and it is imperative that we take swift action on multiple fronts to stop the spread of the disease and lessen the impact of the most vulnerable communities that risk being completely devastated by this,” said Naser Haghamed, the CEO of Islamic Relief Worldwide, the world’s largest Muslim-faith inspired aid agency working in more than 40 countries around the globe.

“Through the generosity of our partners and supporters, I am proud to say that the Islamic Relief family has already released over \$5 million USD in emergency funding for vulnerable communities, which often have no defences against the disease.”

The funding is part of a wider pledge to deliver up to \$10 million USD in support in the upcoming period, earmarked for tackling various aspects of the corona crisis.

“We are usually conservative about the amounts we pledge for such crises, but I am confident and

thanks to the generosity of our donors, the global Islamic Relief family will soon secure multiple folds of this amount from our individual supporters – allowing us to scale up and expand our support around the world,” added Haghamed.

Now Is the Time to Work Together

Along with its own response to this emergency, Islamic Relief is seeking to integrate it within a multi-lateral approach and is working at global and local level with UN agencies including WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP as well as local governments to support their health responses.

With the virus impacting rich and poor countries alike, Islamic Relief’s support will be split between poorer countries that are not equipped to cope and those where for now the coronavirus has claimed the most lives and infected the most people.

“The coronavirus is a truly global challenge, requiring a truly global solution – and the consequences of not acting in a unified way will be absolutely dire,” said Haghamed.

“From equipping isolation wards in Yemen, to providing hygiene kits to homeless shelters in Canada, we’re doing what we can to support the many at-risk communities with which we work.”

A Call for Peace and Funding Commitments

“The scale of the crisis, however, is truly unprecedented and much more will need to be done if we are to overcome and endure. To fight this virus, the world needs to deploy all the tools in its arsenal,” said Haghamed.

“On the diplomatic front, we urgently need a global ceasefire endorsed by the UN Secretary General, so that bombs and bullets in places like Syria do not prevent us from stopping the spread of the disease there.

“On the funding front, we also need governments and the UN to step up and ensure that the UN’s \$2bn global fund for the fight against corona is met. The UN must also allot 30 percent of these funds to international and local charities that are all too often on the front lines of this crisis, but to date have only been awarded five percent of UN appeal funds.

“As the launch of our pledges and funding appeals show, Islamic Relief is committed to doing what we can. Even as it feels like the walls are crashing down on us, we need to remember those less fortunate who risk losing not just their livelihoods, but their lives.”

About Islamic Relief

Islamic Relief is an independent international humanitarian aid and development organization. Islamic Relief is headquartered in the United Kingdom and was founded in 1984. Islamic Relief serves in more than 45 countries, assisting more than 120 million people. The scope of Islamic Relief assistance covers emergency assistance, integrated sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and advocacy.

About Islamic Relief Malaysia

YABhg. Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad officiated the establishment of Islamic Relief Malaysia in 2005, which aspires to continue Islamic Relief humanitarian assistance in the Asia-Pacific region. Currently, Islamic Relief Malaysia serves as a fundraising and project implementer for international and local projects.

For more information on Islamic Relief Malaysia humanitarian programs, please visit our official website or contact 03-8926 3434.

Your donation can be channeled to the following bank accounts under the name of Islamic Relief Malaysia:

MAYBANK ISLAMIC | 5621 4270 8704

MBSB BANK | 1005 0251 0000 0166

CIMB ISLAMIC | 860 2073818

BANK ISLAM | 12 029 01 006564 3

AFFIN ISLAMIC | 10 671 000278 4

BANK RAKYAT | 11080 10000 35

or:

CHARITY SHOPPE | CASH / CREDIT CARD

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