



## **Nurses in the Eastern Mediterranean region discuss turning challenges into opportunities at the ICN Congress**

*Topics included education, workforce planning, policy influence, evidence-based practice, cultural diversity and spiritual dimensions of nursing, emergency preparedness, surge planning and capacity building*

**Geneva, Switzerland, 2 November 2021** – The International Council of Nurses (ICN) Congress theme is “Nursing Around the World” and, along with the variety of international speakers, the theme is also reflected in the regional sessions which are being held each day.

Today, the voyage around the world started in the Eastern Mediterranean region with a series of videos and interviews from nurse leaders across the region.

Covering the work of frontline nurses within countries across the region, the session highlighted the challenges faced by nurses in the region and approaches to turn those challenges into opportunities.

In her opening speech, Aysha Al Mahri, ENA President and SEHA Corporate Chief Nursing Officer said:

*“Our region has passed through a lot of challenges related to healthcare. Nurses played an important role to make sure that our community, our population, our people are in safe hands...When the pandemic came, that was the clear-cut show of the importance of the nurses, our frontline heroes, how important they are to defeat whatever kind of battle.”*

Dr Arwa Oweis, Professor of Nursing at the Jordan University of Science and Technology and former regional advisor for nursing and midwifery at the WHO region of the Eastern Mediterranean, gave a brief talk about nursing in the region highlighting how it has turned challenges into opportunities.

The regional session included a video of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed forces, talking to frontline nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also a brief introduction to the history of the healthcare systems in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Oman, Bahrain, Iran, Jordan, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Kuwait.

With nurse success stories and testimonies from frontline nurses, the regional session looked at the themes of transformed education, workforce planning and impact on economic growth, policy influence and evidence-based practice, cultural diversity and spiritual dimensions of nursing, emergency preparedness, surge planning and capacity building

ICN’s 2021 Congress is taking place virtually on 2-4 November. For more information and to register go to: <https://icncongress2021.org/>

To access recordings of the Eastern Mediterranean regional session, and the rest of ICN Congress go to: <https://congress2021.icnevents.online/>.

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