The UAE: Humanitarian Assistance During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**UAE Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Humanitarian Assistance**

Even as it takes aggressive action at home to fight the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the UAE is helping other countries respond to the pandemic. The UAE has delivered critical medical supplies, made UAE-owned facilities located abroad available to local governments, supplied donations to local initiatives, and assisted in the repatriation of foreign nationals.

To date, the UAE has responded to the COVID-19 crisis by providing over 556 metric tons of aid to more than 49 countries in need, supporting nearly 556,000 medical professionals in the process.

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The UAE business community is supporting these urgent efforts. For example, both Etihad Airways and Emirates are bolstering their fleets of freighters to keep critical commercial goods like pharmaceuticals and medical devices moving and to assist in the delivery of international humanitarian relief assistance overseas.

**United States**

On April 23, the White House announced that the UAE will donate coronavirus test kits to the US. “The President and the Crown Prince discussed cooperation in the fight against the coronavirus, including the donation of coronavirus test kits from the United Arab Emirates to the United States,” said the readout of a call between President Trump and Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed.

The UAE government and national airlines have worked with the US Mission to the UAE to repatriate a total of 733 American citizens back to the US. Additionally, Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE Ambassador to the US, met with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and conveyed a message of support and solidarity from UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah. The Nevada COVID-19 taskforce has established a partnership with the UAE to roll out high-volume testing throughout the state.

Ambassador Al Otaiba and his wife Abeer were initial donors to Children’s National Hospital, which launched DC’s first drive-up/walk-up COVID-19 testing location for children and young patients. The Ambassador and his wife provided charitable support to Chef Jose Andres’ World Central Kitchen, which is distributing 50,000 packaged fresh meals to communities in need. Ambassador Al Otaiba is also supporting Feed the Fight, an organization distributing meals to health care workers and first responders, and Good Food Markets, which is providing groceries to Washington, DC residents in need.
World Health Organization (WHO)
The UAE is working with WHO to combat the virus and support countries in need. The Dubai International Humanitarian City (IHC) houses the WHO Operations Supply and Logistics Hub, a facility that is instrumental in supplying countries with required medical supplies and protective equipment.

The IHC has facilitated the distribution of over 85% of the World Health Organization’s ‘Global Medical Response in the Fight Against COVID-19,’ including much needed medical supplies, such as masks, gloves and surgical gowns. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO, has publicly expressed his appreciation for the UAE’s international humanitarian response to the pandemic.

World Food Program (WFP)
The UAE, in partnership with the WFP, launched an international ‘air bridge’ operation that will provide a lifeline of essential health and humanitarian supplies to nations around the world grappling with the impact of COVID-19. The UAE will dedicate a fleet of three aircraft to enable the movement of life-saving cargo and personnel where they are needed most until the end of the year.

“WFP has been working tirelessly to set up the logistics backbone for the global COVID-19 effort,” said David Beasley, Executive Director of the UN World Food Program. “This partnership with the UAE will expand our capacity and support health and humanitarian organizations as we rally together to limit the spread of the virus and its devastating effects.”

On April 26, Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed spoke with David Beasley to discuss ways of accelerating coordination in getting assistance to those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sheikh Mohamed assured Beasley of the UAE's readiness to support WFP's efforts and help implement its initiatives. Beasley thanked the UAE for its support.

Lesotho
Marking Zayed Humanitarian Day on the 19th of Ramadan each year, the UAE Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa provided humanitarian aid to cities in the Kingdom of Lesotho in the presence of senior officials in the Kingdom.

Albania
To help bolster the country’s efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19, the UAE sent seven tons of medical supplies to Albania on May 15, assisting approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

Romania
The United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane containing seven metric tons of medical supplies to Romania on May 14 in support of the country’s efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. The aid will assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

Montenegro
On May 13, the United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane carrying seven tons of medical supplies to Montenegro. The aid will assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals.
Belarus
The UAE delivered seven tons of medical supplies to Belarus on May 12 to assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

Sierra Leone
The UAE sent an aid plane containing seven metric tons of medical supplies to Sierra Leone to bolster the country's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. The aid will assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

Niger
On May 10, the UAE delivered six metric tons of medical supplies to Niger. The aid will assist approximately 6,000 medical professionals.

Mali
The United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane containing six metric tons of medical supplies and testing kits to Mali on May 10 to assist approximately 6,000 medical professionals as they work to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Zimbabwe
On May 6, the UAE sent an aid plane containing 7.7 tons of medical supplies to Zimbabwe to bolster the country's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. The aid will assist more than 7,700 medical professionals as they work to combat the virus.

Uzbekistan
The UAE sent an aid plane containing five metric tons of medical supplies to Uzbekistan on May 5 to support approximately 5,000 medical professionals.

Previously on March 28, the UAE sent an aid plane containing eight metric tons of medical supplies to Uzbekistan, benefiting approximately 8,000 medical professionals.

Kenya
On May 5, the United Arab Emirates delivered medical supplies to Kenya to bolster the country's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Guinea
The UAE delivered seven metric tons of medical supplies to Guinea to bolster the country's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19 on May 5. The aid will assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

Botswana
On May 4, the United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane containing five metric tons of medical supplies to Botswana to bolster the country's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. The aid will assist approximately 5,000 medical professionals.

India
The UAE sent an aid plane containing seven metric tons of medical supplies to India on May 2 to help contain the spread of COVID-19 by assisting approximately 7,000 medical professionals.
**Bangladesh**
A United Arab Emirates aid plane delivered seven tons of medical supplies to Bangladesh on April 30 to assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

**Nepal**
The UAE sent an aid plane containing seven tons of medical supplies to Nepal on April 29 to support approximately 7,000 medical professionals as they work to contain the spread of COVID-19.

**Philippines**
On April 29, a UAE aid plane delivered seven tons of medical supplies to the Philippines, assisting approximately 7,000 medical professionals as they work to contain the virus.

**Germany**
The UAE Embassy in Berlin has pledged funds earmarked for 8,000 COVID-19 masks to protect some of the German capital’s most vulnerable children. The Embassy will donate funds to Laughing Hearts, a charity that supports 22 homes for socially disadvantaged youngsters in Berlin and the surrounding area.

**Armenia**
The United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane on April 27 to Armenia containing seven tons of medical supplies to assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals who are working to contain the spread of COVID-19.

**Indonesia**
A UAE aid plane delivered 20 tons of medical supplies to Indonesia on April 27 to bolster the country’s efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. The aid will assist approximately 20,000 medical professionals.

**Lebanon**
On April 24, the Grand Mufti of the Republic of Lebanon, Sheikh Abdel Latif Derian, thanked the United Arab Emirates for its "confidence in Dar al-Fatwa to distribute the aid it received through its UAE Embassy in Lebanon to those who are most in need and deserving of assistance."

**Yemen**
The UAE, through its humanitarian arm, the Emirates Red Crescent (ERC), provided 2,000 food parcels, weighing 85.6 tons to over 10,000 vulnerable families in the Al Shihr district in the Yemeni Governorate of Hadramaut on the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan. This is the second package of Ramadan Mir to the district. On May 1, the ERC provided 4,000 food parcels weighing 171 tons to the residents of Al Shihr district. Mohammed Ahmed Al Amoudi, Acting Under-secretary of Hadramaut Governorate, thanked the UAE for the humanitarian efforts.

**Kyrgyzstan**
The UAE sent a plane containing seven tons of medical supplies to Kyrgyzstan on April 23 to support approximately 7,000 medical professionals as they work to combat COVID-19.
Sudan
On May 4, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) announced the delivery of AED75 million (US$20 million) worth of pharmaceutical and medical supplies to the Government of Sudan to support the country’s healthcare sector. The shipment included the first and second batches of 135 tons of medical and pharmaceutical supplies valued at AED10 million (US$2.7 million). The remainder will be dispatched at a later time this year. This shipment is part of the US$1.5 billion aid package approved by the UAE in April 2019 to support Sudan’s economic and financial stability.

On April 22, the UAE sent an airplane carrying seven tons of medical supplies to Sudan to support the country’s efforts in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. The shipment, which includes test kit supplies, will reach more than 7,000 healthcare professionals in the country.

South Africa
The United Arab Emirates sent an aid plane containing seven tons of medical supplies to South Africa on April 20. The aid will assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals as they work to contain the virus.

Mauritania
On April 19, the UAE sent a plane carrying 18 tons of medical and food aid to Mauritania as a gesture of solidarity in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The shipment, which contained testing kits, medical devices, and food supplies, will assist approximately 10,000 healthcare workers.

Somalia
At the request of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, the Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, a shipment of 35 tons of medical supplies was sent to Somalia to support flood victims and COVID-19 patients.

The United Arab Emirates, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), dispatched an aid plane carrying approximately 27 tons of medical supplies to Somalia on April 14. The aid, which consisted of seven tons from the UAE and 20 tons from WHO, will help approximately 27,000 healthcare workers.

Cyprus
On April 14, the UAE sent an aid plane carrying eight tons of medical supplies to Cyprus, benefitting nearly 10,000 healthcare professionals in the country.

Ethiopia
On May 6, the UAE sent a second aid plane carrying medical supplies for healthcare professionals in Ethiopia.

The UAE dispatched the first plane carrying medical supplies to Ethiopia on April 13 to assist approximately 33,000 healthcare professionals. The aid plane transported 15 tons of aid provided by the UAE to Ethiopia, as well as three tons provided by the UAE to the African Union and 15 tons of aid provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) to help Ethiopia and other African countries combat the COVID-19 pandemic.
“Thanks to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for its generous support of this operation, WHO’s regional logistics hub in Dubai has played a key role in making sure these supplies are prepared and shipped to where they are most needed. This is by far the largest single shipment of supplies since the start of the pandemic, and will ensure that people living in countries with some of the weakest health systems are able to get test and treated, while ensuring that health workers on the frontlines are properly protected,” said Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Bulgaria
On April 12, Bulgarian Minister of Economy HE Emil Karanikolov met with UAE Minister of State HE Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh in Abu Dhabi to discuss further cooperation between both countries.

Ukraine
On April 10, the UAE dispatched an aid plane to Ukraine carrying 11 tons of medical supplies. Salem Ahmed Al Kaabi, UAE Ambassador to Ukraine, also noted that the aid plane repatriated 113 Ukrainian citizens from the UAE as a result of coordination between Emirati and Ukrainian authorities.

Colombia
On April 27, diplomats and local staff at the UAE Embassy in Bogota donated food parcels containing nearly 15,000 meals to some 2,000 Colombian citizens. Salem Rashid Al Owais, UAE Ambassador to Colombia, oversaw the initiative, named 'The UAE is With You', which encouraged embassy employees to donate a portion of their salary to citizens residing in Colombian regions in need. Maria Juliana Ruiz, Colombia’s First Lady, thanked the UAE Government and people for their generous aid.

A UAE aid plane carrying 10 tons of medical supplies was dispatched to Colombia on April 8. UAE Ambassador to Colombia Salem Rashid Al Owais also noted that the aid plane succeeded in repatriating 63 Colombian citizens from the UAE as a result of coordination between Emirati and Colombian authorities to ensure their safe return.

Kazakhstan
On April 8, the UAE delivered approximately 13 tons of medical supplies to Kazakhstan to assist the country in combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

Italy
An aid plane from the UAE carrying approximately 10 tons of medical supplies was dispatched to Italy on April 6. The medical supplies benefitted over 10,000 healthcare professionals.

“We are currently experiencing a phase that can only be described as war against an invisible enemy waged by our medical personnel, and the personal protective equipment provided by the UAE to Italy is our weapon in this battle. We consider this gesture to embody solidarity in practice and on-ground assistance. Italy will never forget the countries that supported it during this difficult period, which is not only a health crisis but an economic and community one as well.” – Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio.
Pakistan
On April 28, the United Arab Emirates sent a third aid plane containing 14 tons of medical and food supplies to Pakistan. The aid will assist approximately 7,000 medical professionals as they work to contain the virus.

On April 6, the UAE delivered 11 tons of medical supplies to Islamabad International Airport. The delivery included 20,000 Covid-19 test kits, 500,000 gloves, 30,000 protective gowns and facemasks and 10,000 sanitizers. Ambassador Alzaabi tweeted: “We renew commitment to stand by world against the exceptional circumstances and challenges.”

The first batch of crucial medical supplies was delivered to Pakistan on April 2. UAE Ambassador to Pakistan Hamad Alzaabi tweeted: “Our commitment for humanitarian approaches and principles to help people in delicate situation has no limits.”

Brazil
On April 1, UAE airline Emirates flew 500,000 COVID-19 test kits from China to Sao Paulo. It is the first of two special Emirates SkyCargo charters carrying medical supplies to Brazil.

Malaysia
The UAE sent medical equipment and supplies to Kuala Lumpur on March 29. Malaysian Foreign Minister Hishammuddin Hussein and UAE Ambassador to Malaysia Khalid Al Ghaith came together to share best practices in addressing the pandemic.

Serbia
The UAE donated a total of 10 tons of equipment to Belgrade on March 29. The first part of the donation from the UAE included 13,750 protective suits, 15,000 hospital suits, 500,000 gloves, 30,000 shoe protectors, 20,000 masks and 6,000 sanitizers. Ventilators will arrive in the next delivery. The shipment was received by Serbian Minister of Defense Aleksndar Vulin, Minister of Health Zlatibor Loncar and UAE Ambassador to Serbia Mubarak Said El Dhaheri.

United Kingdom
Under the directive of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the first aircraft carrying urgent aid for the United Kingdom’s healthcare sector arrived in London from China on April 30. The aid, which includes 60 tons of personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical equipment, aims to support the UK’s National Health Service (NHS) in combating COVID-19.

James Cleverly, British Minister of State for the Mena region, thanked UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr Anwar Gargash, for the UAE’s help and praised the continuing “teamwork” between his country and the UAE.

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has been working with the British government to repatriate UK nationals. On April 5, a chartered Emirates plane flew 345 British citizens from the UAE back to the UK. On April 8 and April 10, more than 200 Britons in Nepal were flown home through the UAE.

ExCel London, a convention center owned by Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC), was provided by the Abu Dhabi government to the National Health Service (NHS) and turned into an emergency field hospital for the treatment of patients infected with COVID-19. Named the NHS
Nightingale Hospital, the new facility will have a capacity of 4,000 beds and will be able to provide a comprehensive range of medical support facilities.

**Seychelles**

The UAE donated 11 tons of medical supplies to the Seychelles government to assist their fight against COVID-19. The humanitarian aid included coveralls, isolation gowns, gloves, masks, and other medical items. The shipment from the UAE arrived on March 25.

**Croatia**

The UAE donated 13 tons of medical equipment, including masks, to Croatia following a recent devastating earthquake on March 22 that has been described as the strongest to strike the country in 140 years.

**South Korea**

On March 19, the UAE facilitated the evacuation of 80 individuals from Iran in response to a request by the South Korean Government. Among the evacuated individuals were 74 South Korean nationals residing there, in addition to 6 Iranian family members. The individuals were flown to the UAE and then traveled onward to Incheon International Airport in South Korea.

**Iran**

In the second supply of medical equipment to Iran on March 17, the UAE sent over 32 metric tons of critical medical supplies, including gloves and surgical masks, as well as other protective equipment. Aid to Iran was delivered with the aim of helping 15,000 healthcare workers and 100,000 people.

Commenting on the aid dispatched, Reem bint Ibrahim Al Hashemy, Minister of State for International Cooperation, said: “The UAE’s efforts in carrying out a second medical aid flight to Iran are consistent with our country’s founding humanitarian principles, which guide our belief that providing life-saving assistance to those experiencing distress is essential to serving the common good.”

In collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the UAE sent an aircraft carrying 7.5 metric tons of medical supplies, as well as five WHO experts, to Iran on March 3. In a March 15 call with Iran’s Foreign Minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, Foreign Minister H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed affirmed the UAE's support to the Iranian people as they manage this crisis.

**Afghanistan**

The UAE dispatched an urgent medical aid shipment to Afghanistan containing 20,000 testing units and equipment to examine thousands of people.

**China**

On March 4, as part of the UAE’s Homeland of Humanity Initiative, the UAE evacuated 215 people of different nationalities from China’s Hubei Province to the Emirates Humanitarian City in Abu Dhabi, where they received necessary medical evaluation and care.

Following the initial Covid-19 outbreak in Wuhan, the UAE provided medical supplies, including facemasks and gloves, to China. On January 26, H.H Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, tweeted: "We’re closely following the Chinese government’s efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus.  

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We're confident in their ability to overcome this crisis. The UAE is ready to provide all support to China and cooperate with the international community to tackle this virus.”

Greece
The UAE donated 11 tons of medical supplies to Greece on March 26, consisting mostly of special coveralls for medical protection, medical gloves, and sanitizers. In a statement, the Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis remarked: “The friendship and trust we share with the United Arab Emirates are dear, and especially during these difficult times the solidarity of our allies is evident—also shown through the delivery of valuable medical supplies today.”

Key Reactions
David Beasley, Executive Director, World Food Program | May 8 | ☢️
Thanks to my good friend @MohamedBinZayed. The UAE continues to break ground in the fight against #COVID19 & hunger around the world. Our new air bridge is a great example of coming together when we need it most. When @WFP & the UAE join forces, we save lives. @MoFAICUAE @WFP_AR

Dominic Raab, British Foreign Secretary | May 7 | ☢️
I would like to thank Dubai and the UAE Flag of United Arab Emirates for their generous donation of PPE for the fight against COVID-19.

The UAE are true friends and valued partners, and we will continue to work together to tackle this global pandemic.

David Beasley, Executive Director, World Food Program | May 4 | ☢️
The UAE continues to be a leading first responder to global crises, especially now with #COVID19. This new Dubai air bridge will help speed up the international community's response & surely help us to save lives. Thanks to the UAE for their critical partnership! @UAEMissionToUN

David Beasley, Executive Director, World Food Program | Apr 26 | ☢️
Always great to speak with my dear friend, @MohamedBinZayed. Thank you for your partnership, as @WFP and the UAE work together to provide critical food assistance for the most vulnerable people. We are so appreciative of your support. #COVID19

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization | Apr 14 | ☢️
I thank the @_AfricanUnion Commission Chairperson @AUC_MoussaFaki the government of #UAE, #Ethiopia PM @AbiyAhmedAli, the @foundation_ma and all our partners for their solidarity with African countries at this critical moment in history. https://bit.ly/2V5iyCP

Luigi Di Maio, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs | Apr 6 | ☢️
Volo con aiuti sanitari donati dagli Emirati Arabi all’Italia atterrato a Fiumicino. Grazie al collega @ABZayed per l’amicizia e la solidarietà dimostrata. Un gesto che non dimenticheremo.

Translation: Flight with medical aid donated by the United Arab Emirates to Italy landed in Fiumicino. Thanks to the colleague @ABZayed for friendship and solidarity shown. A gesture that we will not forget.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization | Mar 17 | ☢️
Thanks #UAE and @MohamedBinZayed for your continuing support to the #COVID19 response. Solidarity among international communities is of the utmost necessity.
Randa Slim, Senior Fellow, MEI | Mar 17 | Twitter
#Kuwait #UAE sending supplies expressing solidarity with #Iran. Wish more #GCC emulate them. Such behaviors help create goodwill & more importantly reinforce perception this is one neighborhood that must be shared by all.

Tamara Qiblawi, Senior Digital Mideast Producer, CNN International | Mar 16 | Twitter
For a 2nd time in a week, the #UAE sends medical aid to #Iran. On the weekend, FM Abdullah bin Zayed and FM Zarif spoke on the phone to discuss Iran's coronavirus outbreak. A significant, and dare I say, quite touching development.

Media clips

BBC News 24
30 April 2020

United Arab Emirates donates medical supplies to Greece (VIDEO)
27 March 2020

Connect the World with Becky Anderson
17 March 2020

BBC World Service Radio
17 March 2020

In pictures: UAE sends second batch of medical aid to Iran
17 March 2020