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LWF ENCOURAGED BY SUSTAINED ADVOCACY TO RESOLVE FINANCIAL SITUATION AT AUGUSTA VICTORIA HOSPITAL

JERUSALEM/GENEVA, 10 April 2014 – The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is grateful to its member churches and related agencies for their sustained lobbying and advocacy in addressing the financial crisis at the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH). Since February such action has resulted in financial support that has enabled the LWF-run hospital to continue providing critical health services in East Jerusalem.

“Our churches have been actively engaging their governments to secure the delayed payments due to the AVH from the Palestinian Authority (PA). Various actions have been carried out to address the situation and there are many signs and signals that these efforts have been successful. Things are going in the right direction,” says Rev. Eberhard Hitzler, director of the LWF Department for World Service.

Hitzler adds that “Although the situation is not yet fully resolved, we are confident because the results are encouraging, and we are able to provide critical medical services in East Jerusalem. We are grateful to the various governments for their sustained support.”

The AVH financial situation originated in delayed payments of receivables of EUR 18 million by the end of January 2014. This amount represents non-payment of fees for patients referred to the hospital by the PA throughout 2013.

Ongoing advocacy with the European Union and the United States governments, as well as lobby work with the PA and various European governments, has so far secured substantial funds to bridge the liquidity gap and maintain the key services provided by the LWF-run hospital.

Located on the Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem, the AVH serves thousands of patients annually. It provides specialized medical services that are not available elsewhere or readily accessible to Palestinians, including facilities for dialysis, cancer, surgical operations, special clinics and laboratories and medical equipment. The hospital has an in-patient capacity for 118 beds and 20 out-patient beds, and employs 337 personnel. In

2013, it received the prestigious Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation for its health care quality, patient care and organizational management.

AVH's goals and objectives extend beyond health service provision. Situated in an area of constant political turmoil, the East Jerusalem hospital builds many of its program and work philosophies on practical approaches to assert human rights, justice and peace.

See also our 5 February 2014 press release: <http://www.lutheranworld.org/news/critical-financial-situation-augusta-victoria-hospital-east-jerusalem>

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