Dr Ala Alwan

WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean

Dr Ala Alwan is the WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean from 1 February 2012. He was Assistant Director-General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health from February 2008 to February 2012. Dr Alwan graduated in Medicine from the University of Alexandria. He practiced medicine in Scotland and obtained his postgraduate training and qualifications in the United Kingdom. Following his return to Iraq, his home country, he held several positions in clinical and academic medicine and public health. He was Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Mustansiriya University, Baghdad.

In 1992, he joined WHO as Regional Adviser for Noncommunicable Diseases in the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. He then served as WHO Representative in Oman, and Director, Division of Health Systems Development in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. In 1998, Dr Alwan was reassigned to WHO headquarters as Director for Noncommunicable Diseases Prevention and then Director of the Department of Noncommunicable Diseases Management. In 2001, he became WHO Representative in Jordan. From 2003 to 2005, he was Minister of Education and Minister of Health in the Government of Iraq. From 2005 to January 2008, he was Representative of the Director-General and Assistant Director-General for Health Action in Crises.