

## **The Financial and Economic crisis in Western Asia: Impact on Socio-economic Development and Public Health**

Presentation of Mr. Bader Omar AlDafa, Executive Secretary, UNESCWA

The presentation will provide a brief overview of the socio-economic and demographic profile of the UNESCWA region relating to health implications for different sectors of the population, while highlighting regional health trends and priorities concerning the MDGs, as well as non-MDG regional health concerns, such as non-communicable diseases and injuries related to traffic accidents, wars and conflicts. The impact of the financial crisis on the economy, unemployment, poverty, remittance flows and, particularly, crisis-related health concerns and the public health of vulnerable people will also be discussed. The presentation will underline that the crisis is also presenting opportunities for reform of the institutional health care systems in the region and for the improvement of social safety nets. The UNESCWA role in promoting regional initiatives having a direct impact on public health will be explained, as well as its role in promoting regional integration for coherence in addressing the impact of the crisis, encouraging South-South Cooperation and promoting public-private partnerships and linkages with civil society and academia.