

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***** MEDIA ADVISORY *****

**OPERATION SMILE MEDICAL MISSION TO TAKE PLACE IN OUJDA, MOROCCO,
FROM MARCH 22-30, 2007**

*Mission To Repair Children's Cleft Lips and Cleft Palates Takes Place
During Operation Smile's 25th Anniversary Year*

NORFOLK, VA – An Operation Smile Medical Mission team will arrive in **Oujda, Morocco for an international medical mission taking place March 22-30, 2007** to assist children born with facial deformities. The team consists of more than 40 medical and non-medical volunteers from Canada, England, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, the Philippines, Russia, South Africa and the United States. Founded in 1982, Operation Smile is a worldwide children's medical charity dedicated to helping improve the health and lives of children and young adults.

Who: An Operation Smile International Mission Team comprised of 35-40 credentialed medical professionals from 10 countries.
Fouzia Mahmoudi, Operation Smile Morocco Vice President
Abdou Jbara, Operation Smile Morocco Executive Director
Dr. Arash Babaooff, pediatrician from Ohio
Kathy Miller, medical records specialist from Virginia

When: March 22-30, 2007

Where: Al Farabi Hospital
Oujda, Morocco

Prior to this mission, Operation Smile held basic and advanced life support training courses in Casablanca for nursing, pediatric and anesthesia volunteers in Morocco. From March 5-7, twenty-one medical professionals completed a Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) training course. An Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) course trained 21 medical professionals from March 7-9. On March 11, seven medical professionals completed a Basic Life Support (BLS) course and two participants were certified to serve as BLS instructors. These training courses satisfy Operation Smile's credentialing requirements for Moroccan medical volunteers. Other Operation Smile education initiatives in Morocco include the Morocco-Gaza Joint Advanced Burn Care Training Program, taking place March 12-April 7 in the burn unit at the Ibn Rochd University Hospital (Casablanca University), to train two surgeons and two nurses from Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

During the mission in Oujda, two Moroccan volunteers and one Egyptian volunteer will complete a biomedical training program conducted by an Operation Smile biomedical technician volunteer from the Philippines. The program will train the volunteers techniques in setting up, testing and maintaining the

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state-of-the-art equipment that Operation Smile is supplying each of its partner countries. This is a major step toward reaching Operation Smile's goal of having one person trained in biomedical technology in each of its partner countries.

This is Operation Smile's first international medical mission to Oujda, however Operation Smile Morocco has conducted four in-country local missions in this city. Previous international and in-country local missions have taken place in Agadir, Casablanca, Rabat, Tangier, Settat, Fes, Meknes, Laayoune, Tetouan, Tiznit, Ouarzazate, Kénitra, Taounat, and Marrakech. The last international medical mission took place in June of 2006 when nearly 50 Operation Smile medical and non-medical volunteers from Canada, Ireland, Italy, the Philippines, South Africa and the United States worked with Moroccan medical volunteers at Hospital Provincial de Settat in Settat to treat children and young adults suffering with facial deformities. The team of international volunteers worked together to provide free medical evaluations to 376 children and young adults and 158 received free reconstructive surgery. In 2006, Operation Smile Morocco established a dental program that provides basic follow up care for its cleft lip and cleft palate patients as well as other Moroccans who need dental care in the Casablanca area. The dental program treats more than 3,000 patients annually. In December 2006, an Operation Smile World Care patient from Settat, Morocco, was treated by Operation Smile Ireland. Morocco has been an Operation Smile partner country since 1998.

Morocco will be one of the partner countries participating during Operation Smile's 25th anniversary year. Operation Smile will commemorate its 25th Anniversary with a year-long, multi-faceted series of initiatives to include the following:

- **Global Standards of Care** – The Global Standards of Care include a rigorous credentialing process and a standardization of medical supplies and equipment that will be based on the model of care that Operation Smile has perfected in 25 years of performing cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries. State-of-the-art equipment valued at \$3.6 million will be provided to partner countries to ensure that every patient treated by Operation Smile will benefit from the same sophisticated equipment, procedures, and highly trained and credentialed medical staff, no matter where they receive care around the world. Additionally, Operation Smile is providing emergency supplies in accordance with American Heart Association guidelines for pediatric and advanced cardiac life support.
- **Comprehensive Care Centers** – Following the opening in Hue, Vietnam, Operation Smile will open additional Comprehensive Care Centers in Colombia, Honduras, Morocco, China, India, and the Philippines. Each Center will provide surgical treatment and post-operative follow-up for thousands of additional patients, especially those in remote areas. The Centers will also help train medical volunteers, strengthen local development and fundraising activities and provide on-going administrative support for in-country activities.
- **International Forums on Medical Diplomacy** – As part of its ongoing effort to create a global humanitarian network to bring healing to the world's children, Operation Smile will host international forums on medical diplomacy.
- **World Journey of Smiles** – The year-long anniversary celebration will culminate in November 2007, with the *World Journey of Smiles*, 43 simultaneous missions in 25 countries. With a goal of treating an estimated 5,000 children living with facial deformities, *World Journey of Smiles* will take place from November 8-16, 2007. To prepare for that initiative, plastic surgeons and anesthesiologists from 22 of those countries recently met at Operation Smile's world headquarters in Norfolk, Va., to set global standards of care.

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About Operation Smile (www.operationsmile.org)

Founded in 1982, Operation Smile, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, is a worldwide children's medical charity dedicated to helping improve the health and lives of children and young adults. Since its founding, Operation Smile has treated more than 100,000 children with facial deformities and provided education and training to physicians and other healthcare professionals around the world. In addition to contributing free medical treatment for children born with facial deformities, Operation Smile trains local medical professionals in its 25 partner countries and leaves behind crucial equipment to lay the groundwork for long-term self-sufficiency. Partners include: Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gaza Strip/West Bank, Honduras, India, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Thailand, Venezuela, and Vietnam. Operation Smile has been distinguished by many prestigious awards, including the first \$1 million *Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize* to recognize outstanding contributions made to alleviate human suffering

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