

12 October 2023

To the attention of:

- Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng - UN Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health
- Ms. Francesca Albanese - Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967,
- The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel

Concerns about Targeting of Ambulances and Health Sector in the Gaza Strip

Dear Esteemed Rapourteurs and Experts,

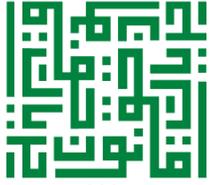
I am writing on behalf of Palestine Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) to express our deep concern regarding recent incidents in the Gaza Strip. Israeli occupation forces have deliberately targeted Palestinian civilians, medical teams, health institutions, and ambulances, weakening their capabilities during the escalating aggression in Gaza since October 7, 2023.

Targeting densely populated areas in Gaza, recklessly endangering innocent civilians, and demolishing their homes without prior warning have resulted in the killing of 1,354 people and injuries to 6,049 people to date. These actions blatantly violate international humanitarian and human rights laws.

The health situation in Gaza is dire. Medical teams are working in dangerous and unsafe conditions. On 11/10/2023, deliberate attacks on ambulances and health facilities resulted in the loss of 4 innocent lives of medical personnel as they attempted to transport the wounded. These actions violate international conventions, including the Geneva Conventions, which protect civilians, medical personnel, and facilities during armed conflict. Urgent international attention and intervention are required.

Additionally, Gaza's health services are at a critical stage with a shortage of medicines, medical supplies, and fuel. Hospitals are at full capacity, with wounded and sick individuals lying on the ground due to the intensifying Israeli aggression. Gaza's health system has been exhausted, with limited access to essential resources. The Israeli occupation's actions, including cutting off electricity, water, and fuel, exacerbate the humanitarian crisis. The protection of the health sector and the unhindered access to medical care for the civilian population are principles that must be upheld without exception.

ICHR holds the Israeli occupation fully responsible for exhausting the health system and weakening its capabilities during the 16-year siege on Gaza. We call on you, to pressure the occupying state to protect medical staff, health institutions, and ambulances. Please take urgent action to provide safe passage for medicine and medical supplies to Gaza, and facilitate the transfer of wounded and sick people.



INDEPENDENT
COMMISSION
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We urge you to conduct a thorough and independent investigation and to raise this matter with the United Nations for an impartial inquiry into these violations.

We implore you to use your influence to shed light on these grave violations, especially in the health sector. Through your intervention, we hope the international community can work toward a resolution that upholds justice, accountability, and the protection of innocent lives.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response and actions taken in response to these concerns.

Sincerely,
Issam Aruri
Commissioner General

