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(e-Bulletin Special Edition)

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A Word From The Editor

December 27, 2009 to January 18, 2010 marks the first anniversary of the unspeakable brutality committed by the Zionist regime of Israel against the people of Gaza. For over 22 days, Israel dropped bombs, white phosphorous, used airplanes, helicopters, navy ships, tanks, bulldozers and heavily armed soldiers against a defenseless people.

1,400 dead, 5,000 injured, 20,000 homeless, 50,000 displaced and \$1.6 billion damages was inflicted on the Gaza economy. Schools, hospitals, universities, ministries, homes, shops were razed to the ground – nothing was spared not even the UN facilities. The people of Gaza were simply bombed to death.

All around the world civil societies are marking the first anniversary of this cowardly and genocidal crime. FIMA is dedicating this special issue of our e-newsletter to this Gaza Remembrance Day to express out outrage at this neo-holocaust and our solidarity with the Palestinian people and their legitimate cause against Zionist occupation of their lands.

In collaboration with Viva Palestina Malaysia (VPM) and Palestine Centre of Excellence (PACE), we funded four fully equipped ambulances to join the Lifeline 3, Viva Palestina charity convoy which departed London on December 5, 2009. Consisting of volunteers from 25 different countries, it has since grown to 300 vehicles laden with medical and other aid desperately needed in the besieged Gaza strip. At the time of writing the convoy is camped at the Rafah borders hoping to gain entry into Gaza and break the Zionist blockade on the impoverished enclave.

The first Viva Palestina convoy made the journey in March 2009. They travelled by land to Italy, crossed the Mediterranean by ferry to Greece, drove through Turkey, Syria, Jordan and finally entered Gaza at the Rafah border crossing in Egypt. The current convoy, dubbed "Return to Gaza," is tracing this land route. The second convoy from the United States departed on July 4, 2009, flew into Cairo and also entered Gaza via the Rafah border crossing.

Apart from delivering humanitarian aid and highlighting the blockade's damaging effect, the convoy is aimed to direct the world's attention to Israeli war criminals who committed the horrendous crimes in Gaza and to inspire public opinion to demand an end to the siege in solidarity with the courageous Palestinian resistance.

Dr Ashraf, the Director of FIMA Relief has outstandingly anchored our medical and humanitarian relief from Capetown which is well elucidated in his summary document. Dr Aly Mishal, the Executive Director of FIMA, has undertaken the herculean task of rallying public opinion against the breaches of medical ethics and the torture of Palestinian prisoners by the Israeli Medical Association.

Many others from amongst the FIMA fraternity have contributed towards this noble cause and I hope these efforts will continue to be intensified until the day the Palestinians are given their true freedom and due justice and are able to return to their lands and rebuild their future – Viva Palestina!

Dr Musa Mohd. Nordin
Immediate Past President (2005-2009)

FIMA RELIEF E-BULLETIN SPECIAL EDITION CORRESPONDENCE

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Gaza Crisis: FIMA Response

The world witnessed one of its worst humanitarian crisis on December 27, 2008 when Israel bombed the helpless and innocent population of Gaza, Palestine. Israel mounted an unrelenting air, land and sea attack over the following month killing over 1,400 people many of whom were women and children. They destroyed soft targets including homes, schools, mosques, hospitals, energy supplies, communication channels and other social structures. Israel brazenly ignored the global condemnation of this invasion and continued its merciless terror attacks violating all humanitarian and human rights principles and statutes including the use of white phosphorous and depleted uranium bombs, destroying the fuel supply to emergency services including hospitals, preventing ambulance services from evacuating the injured to safety and essential care and treatment, attacking hospitals and its staff, sealing the borders and preventing all humanitarian aid from reaching its intended recipients, to name but a few.

The Federation of Islamic Medical Associations (FIMA) responded immediately, condemning this terrorist attack and appealed for an immediate ceasefire and calm. It mobilised its disaster response to aid the innocent and helpless victims. The FIMA response is summarised below:



◆ Buried Alive ◆ Little Martyrs



- Doctors World Wide – (Hayat Foundation/IMA Turkey) supplied 2 trucks (43 tons) of emergency relief aid procured in Cairo and transported to the Rafah border (worth USD 230,000) when border crossing first opened. During the second week, DWW purchased 12 ambulances in Cairo worth USD 400,000 for use in Gaza. A plane load of medical equipment and other supplies was delivered to Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. A second team of 10 surgeons and support staff was dispatched to Gaza to work in Khan Younis for the next 2 weeks. DWW committed itself to medical education and establishing specialized care facilities including a burns unit.
- MERCY Malaysia – sent a USD 100,000 of medical equipment, consumables and drugs (5 trucks, 50 tons) and delivered to MOH Gaza upon border opening. Another \$100,000 consignment procured in Cairo was delivered later. A second team under the leadership of Dr Mohamed Ikram was delegated to work in Gaza.
- MER-C Indonesia – sent a medical team along with medical supplies since the start of conflict.
- IMA Sudan and other local relief agencies delivered 4 plane loads approximately 100 tons worth \$500,000 of food, medical and emergency supplies. They sent a team of 11 doctors and surgeons to the region.

- IMA North America sent 2 medical teams (22/01/09 and 25/01/09) with medical equipment, medications and consumables. They identified the following critical needs:
 - Medical equipment, monitors, surgical instruments outdated or deficient.
 - Rehabilitation hospital with training of local expertise
 - Trauma counseling of the traumatized population especially vulnerable children.
 - Continuing education of local medical professionals lacking in basic skills and disaster management due to their isolation.
- IMA Jordan in collaboration with the Jordan Medical Association sent 3 teams of over 40 doctors, many of whom were surgeons. They donated medical equipment and supplies during their stay to the local health authorities
- IMA Pakistan (PIMA) sent 2 surgeons in accompaniment of IMANA delegation as well as 3 others under leadership of Prof Iqbal Khan.
- When borders opened to medical professionals during the latter half of the conflict, Arab Medical Union (including IMA Egypt) sent 21 doctors and 40 more the following day.
- Arab Medical Union delivered 200 units of blood and 1,000 more units the following day.

The following funds were transferred to the local authorities in Gaza to assist in their crisis:

- Pertubuhan Jamaah Islah Malaysia (JIM) – USD 42,400
- FIMA / IMA South Africa / other contributions – USD 100,000
- IMA Pakistan – USD 17,500

FIMA has committed itself to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the health system in Gaza and is currently engaged in the following services:

- Prevention of blindness campaign with free cataract surgery to those affected by blindness.
- Medical education and training at all levels including undergraduate and postgraduate teaching as well as in-service training of all health personnel isolated by the sanctions imposed by the authorities.
- Supporting a maternity hospital with financial assistance, medical equipment, personnel and training.
- Assisting the health authorities in rehabilitating its primary health structures and clinics and extending its services to the entire population.

The atrocities have continued unabated despite the ceasefire and we pray for the deliverance of Gaza and the entire Palestine from Israel. FIMA pledges its support of any campaign assisting the people of Palestine and liberating Masjidul Aqsa from the sinister and subservice actions of Israel. Allahu Akbar!

Dr Ashraf Jedaar

Director, FIMA Relief
Capetown, South Africa
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Gaza Crisis: Gross Violations Of Human Rights

Findings of an independent fact-finding mission

The Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (PHR-I) and Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS) coordinated an independent investigation into alleged violations of human rights during the Gaza crisis of December 27, 2008 until January 18, 2009. They assembled experts in forensic medicine and pathology, burns, emergency medicine, human rights and health and public health. Their inquiry was commissioned to investigate the following allegations:

- Attacks on medical facilities and teams.
- Evacuation of the wounded and dead.
- Causes of injuries and deaths in relation to types of arms used.
- Impact of the attack on the health system.
- Impact of the attack on public health issues.
- Other medically related violations.

The experts interviewed witnesses, victims, survivors, hospital doctors and other medical professionals, international bodies, Ministry of Health (MoH) officials and scientists, international experts including weapons experts from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The enquiry was conducted over 5 days from January 29, 2009 until February 5, 2009.

The 22 days of invasion and onslaught left 1417 dead of whom 926 were civilians, 409 women and children, 236 fighters and 5303 injuries. An estimated 21,000 homes were destroyed and approximately 50,000 displaced from their homes.

Large numbers of places of worship (mosques), educational institutions (including schools), medical institutions including hospitals, clinics and ambulances were targeted or destroyed.



◆ Norwegian team in Gaza who were highly experienced in burns management. They have been to Afghanistan, Africa and Lebanon but have never seen such unusual & extraordinary burns cases in Gaza.

The team concluded their mission with the following findings:

- **Denial of medical evacuation and attacks on medical teams**

Not only did the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) prevent access of medical teams to the wounded civilians but deliberately opened fire on ambulances and medical personnel. The Red Crescent of Palestine reported 15 deaths and 21 injuries of its personnel. Both these issues constitute grave violations of humanitarian law.

- **Attacks on medical facilities**

All parties during an armed conflict are strictly prohibited from targeting hospitals, medical facilities, medical transport vehicles and medical material. There is documented evidence of attacks on many health institutions including Al Wafa hospital, Khan Younis hospital and Union of Health Care Committees compound.

- **Types of injuries**

The types of injuries reported (maiming and disfiguring) confirm the use of unconventional weapons (anti-personnel bombs, disc bombs) and other atypical weapons (DIME, white phosphorous and depleted uranium). These weapons have left a tragic effect on human lives and the environment.

- **Attacks on civilians**

This principle of IHL was the most

violated with numerous reports of torture and terror on the civilian population including holding them captive for days without access to food, water or health services. Homes were shelled repeatedly and their occupants shot when trying to escape. Even the daily 3-hour ceasefire was violated with attacks on the civilian population emerging from their homes in search of food. The statistics further confirm the disproportionate attack on the civilian population far beyond the discretionary percentage.

- **Public health and environment**
Israel strangled the population of Gaza by preventing access to food, water, medical equipment and maintenance of hygiene and public health.

All these contraventions and violations constitute war crimes according to the 4th Geneva Convention. We, as a global organisation, should lead and support all efforts attempting to restore order, peace, human dignity and hope of a free and independent existence to the population of Gaza and rest of Occupied Palestine.

For the full report, see www.fimaweb.net. Kind acknowledgement and appreciation to the Physicians for Human Rights-Israel and Palestinian Medical Relief Society for summarising their report.



Hay es Salam, Jabilia Al Rayes, PMRS clinic half destroyed.



Gaza city, Ministry of Justice.



White Phosphorus burn



Abu Yussuf alNajjar hospital, Khan Yunis. Amputation by weapon.

An Ethical Conundrum At The World Medical Association (WMA)

The Nuremberg Code developed in October 1946, first set the standards by which to judge Nazi based human experimentations. The Code consisted of 10 rules for permissible medical experiments in humans. Post-Nuremberg, there continued to be violations of research ethics involving human subjects.

The World Medical Association (WMA) was founded in 1947, as a response to the egregious abuses by German and Japanese doctors in World War II, and their unethical participation in research on humans, and the torture of prisoners.

The Declaration of Helsinki which was developed by the WMA and adopted in June 1964 consisted of a set of ethical principles for the world medical community regarding human experimentation. It has undergone six revisions, the latest in October 2008, two clarifications and represents the cornerstone document of human research ethics.

In 1975, WMA established the Declaration of Tokyo with guidelines for the medical doctors concerning "torture" and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in relation to detention and imprisonment. Not only physicians are required not to condone "torture" of prisoners, but this Declaration demands of physician to document, oppose and denounce all cases of "torture" of which they become aware.

The Declaration has stood the test of time as the world policy statement in bioethical conduct and the WMA has become the de facto world authority in bioethical standards.

Membership of WMA is open to national medical societies all over the world, many of whom have signed and abided by its covenant.

Since its inception, WMA's general assembly, in collaboration with its ethics board, undertook elections of WMA successive presidents, from among doctors with distinguished records in adopting sound ethical standards in their respective national medical associations.

The unprecedented and extremely disturbing development, which shocked many doctors from many parts of the world, was the selection of the Israeli Dr Yoram Blacher as its new president, with his shameful record of unethical conduct in areas of human rights and the torture of prisoners.

It is noteworthy that the doctors who enthusiastically led the worldwide campaign against this unethical doctor were from among British and other western professors and medical professionals.



The attached documents represents a significant account of these worldwide efforts to condemn the selection of the president of the Israeli Medical Association, Dr Yoram Blacher, and to strongly demand his dismissal, to safeguard the distinguished reputation of WMA as a bastion for the promotion of the highest possible standards of medical ethics.

Aly A Misha'I MD, FACP.

Musa Mohd Nordin FRCP, FAMM.



Doctors Demand Yoram Blachar Resign As Ethics Chief For Ignoring Israeli Torture

More than 700 doctors from 43 countries have written a letter of protest to their governing ethical body, the World Medical Association, alleging that its recently appointed Israeli president has turned a blind eye to the involvement of medical staff in torture, and calling for his removal.

Dr Yoram Blachar, leader of the Israeli Medical Association since 1995, assumed the helm of the WMA in November. The signatories to the letter, who include senior doctors and professors from the UK, Europe and the US, claim he has failed to answer charges that some Israeli doctors condone or collaborate with a regime that uses torture against Palestinian prisoners.

As long ago as 1996, the letter says, Amnesty International concluded that doctors in Israel working with the security services "formed part of a system in which detainees are tortured, ill-treated and humiliated in ways that place prison medical practice in conflict with medical ethics".

The letter, whose lead signatory is the paediatrician Alan Meyers from the Boston University school of medicine, says Blachar's presidency "makes a mockery of the principles on which the WMA was founded in 1947, which was as a response to egregious abuses by German and Japanese doctors" in the second world war.

The doctors say inaction is not an option. The WMA's 1975 Declaration of Tokyo said "physicians shall not countenance, condone or participate in the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures, and in all situations, including armed conflict and civil conflict". Two years ago, its annual general assembly explicitly obliged doctors to document cases of torture of which they become aware. "The absence of documenting and denouncing such acts might be

considered as a form of tolerance and of non-assistance to the victims," it ruled.

In an email to the Guardian promising a response to the charges, Blachar called them "imaginary allegations which have no grounds whatsoever". He claimed that most who signed the appeal "did not bother to verify the content". No detailed rebuttal was forthcoming, however.

Meyers said Blachar had in effect defended the participation of Israeli physicians in the torture of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. In a letter to the Lancet medical journal in 1997, Blachar wrote: "The guidelines on interrogation recommend that only 'moderate physical pressure' (in accordance with international law, and not unknown in other democratic countries) be sanctioned."

"As you may know," Meyers said, "'moderate physical pressure' – the same formulation employed by the Bush administration in its prisons at Guantánamo Bay and CIA 'black sites' in other countries (and now a subject of heated debate in the US) – includes confining prisoners in stress positions, beatings, isolation, sleep deprivation, extremes of heat and cold, humiliation and other forms of physical and psychological abuse.

"Physician collaboration in such maltreatment is unacceptable, and the defence of such physician participation should disqualify Dr Blachar from any position of leadership within the international physician community."

Meyers, who is Jewish, has campaigned for health and human rights in Israel for a decade, but said any physician in any country who was involved with interrogation techniques of this kind should not be practising medicine. "If they did it in the US, I'd join with anyone else in seeking to have those physicians brought to

account," he said.

Further allegations of Israeli doctors' involvement in torture came in a report two years ago from the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, which gave detailed testimony from nine Palestinian men interrogated between 2004 and 2006. Blachar's critics accuse him of failing to respond to either this report or Amnesty's evidence.

Sir Iain Chalmers, a senior British doctor, editor of the James Lind Library and a co-founder of the Cochrane Collaboration, is one of the signatories to the letter. "Previous appeals to Yoram Blachar himself, in a number of places and from a number of people, to answer factually based allegations of medical complicity in torture have not resulted in any adequate response," he said.

"The issue now is: does the WMA have any credibility as long as it continues to ignore people who are complaining about its acquiescence and support of Dr Blachar and the Israeli Medical Association?"

"There have been no satisfactory responses from the IMA to allegations both by Israeli organisations and Amnesty International over the years."

Dr Derek Summerfield, of the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College London, who was the co-ordinator of the letter, said: "The appointment of the long-standing president of the IMA to lead the WMA, which is the world body overseeing medical ethics, which arose out of the abuses of the second world war, just seems to make a mockery of the whole idea that there is an ethical framework for what doctors do and what they don't do."

by Sarah Boseley
Health Editor, Guardian UK

*Article courtesy of Guardian News & Media Ltd 2009
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22.09 BST on Sunday, June 21, 2009)*



Letter Sent to World Medical Association, to Demand Expulsion of Dr Yoram Blachar from the Presidency of WMA (2008-2009) and Presently Immediate Past President in WMA Council (2009-2010)

Dear WMA Council Chair Dr Edward Hill and the Council,

We the undersigned physicians from 43 countries wish to publicly protest and appeal against the recent appointment of Dr Yoram Blachar, longstanding President of the Israeli Medical Association, as President of the World Medical Association. We believe that his Presidency makes a mockery of the principles on which the WMA was founded in 1947, which was as a response to egregious abuses by German and Japanese doctors in World War Two.

The WMA's own Declaration of Tokyo (1975) specifies that "physicians shall not countenance, condone or participate in the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedures, and in all situations, including armed conflict and civil conflict". The WMA Annual General Assembly of 2007 made it clear that inaction was not an option, stating that "this is the first time the WMA has explicitly obliged doctors to document cases of torture of which they become aware. The absence of documenting and denouncing such acts might be considered as a form of tolerance and of non-assistance to the victims".⁽¹⁾ There are still more recent calls from authoritative academic sources for the international medical community to go much further in actively allying itself with efforts to suppress mistreatment of prisoners.⁽²⁾

Amnesty International concluded as long ago as 1996 that Israeli doctors working with the security services "formed part of a system in which detainees are tortured, ill treated and humiliated in ways that place prison medical practice in conflict with medical ethics".⁽³⁾ Dr Blachar, already IMA President, took no action. Amnesty's briefing to the UN Committee against Torture in September 2008 "focuses on Amnesty International's (continuing) concerns about Israel's failure to implement the Convention against Torture in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the intensification of measures amounting to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment".⁽⁴⁾

A well publicised report in 2007 by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI), based on the detailed

testimony of 9 Palestinian men tortured between 2004 and 2006, gives a graphic demonstration of the extent to which Israeli doctors continue to form an integral and everyday part of the running of interrogation suites whose output is torture.⁽⁵⁾ The IMA have conceded that they were aware of this report, but did nothing. More recently, at a meeting on December 10 2008 in Tel Aviv, with Dr Blachar presiding only weeks after his inauguration as WMA President, Physicians for Human Rights Israel again sought to confront the IMA about this and similar evidence in the public domain.

In its 2008 annual report to the UN Committee Against Torture, the UAT Coalition, a coalition of 14 Israeli and Palestinian human rights organisations, concluded that "since the Committee last reviewed Israel, the practice of torture and ill treatment has continued unabated. The UAT Coalition wishes to inform the Committee that in its opinion the use of torture and ill treatment by Israeli authorities against Palestinians is both widespread and systematic. The UAT Coalition has recorded evidence of acts, omissions and complicity by agents of the State at all levels....until this culture of impunity is addressed this situation is unlikely to improve".⁽⁶⁾

In November 2008, PCATI filed a contempt of court motion to the High Court of Justice against the government of Israel and the General Security Service for their responsibility for a policy that grants a-priori permits to use torture in interrogations. The IMA have never challenged torture as state policy in Israel.

Dr Blachar went as far as to justify the use in Israel of "moderate physical pressure" (condemned as torture by the UN Committee Against Torture) in the fourth paragraph of a letter published in the international medical journal *The Lancet* in 1997⁽⁷⁾ This surely unprecedented action by the president of a national medical association has not been disowned, and renders him unfit for the office of WMA President. In the age of evidence-based medicine his rejection of the documentary record has been unprofessional and frequently contemptuous, as when on the British Medical Journal website he labelled as "the lies and filth he spews" and "anti-semitic" a BMJ publication which cited Amnesty, Johns Hopkins University,

the International Court of Justice, a UN Rapporteur and Physicians for Human Rights Israel.⁽⁸⁾ IMA membership of WMA appears to have been a figleaf: The IMA website pays lip service to medical ethics but Dr Blachar has overseen a studied failure to take the actions mandated by the Declaration of Tokyo.

We conclude that under Dr Blachar's leadership the IMA made a decision on political grounds years ago to turn a blind eye to torture in Israel and the institutionalised involvement of doctors. On an issue that goes to the heart of the moral authority of the profession, Dr Blachar has offered shameful ethical leadership to doctors in Israel and worldwide.

It could scarcely be more scandalous that he now assumes the Presidency of the official international body overseeing medical ethics. This appointment will seriously damage the public reputation of the WMA and its work, and indeed risks making it a laughing stock. We call upon the WMA Council to oblige Dr Blachar to step down as a matter of priority. Since the WMA is mandated to ensure that its member associations conform to its codes, we also request an investigation into the IMA record highlighted above.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Alan Meyers

(afmeyers@bu.edu) and 724 other physicians from: United Kingdom, Canada, USA, Lebanon, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Italy, South Africa, Norway, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Malaysia, Switzerland, Algeria, Iraq, Eire, Spain, Australia, India, New Zealand, Germany, France, Sweden, Pakistan, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Greece, Libya, Turkey, Bahrain, Belgium, Peru, Syria, Qatar, Nigeria, Czech Republic, France, Zambia, Denmark, Dubai, Kuwait, Argentina.

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Article courtesy of :
<http://frontierpsychiatrist.co.uk/on-behalf-of-derek-summerfield-open-letter-of-protest/>

The Truth About Israeli Medical Ethics

as submitted by Dr Yoram Blachar and published by The Lancet (Vol 350, October 25, 1997)

SIR,

Once again, the Israel Medical Association (IMA) is under virulent and unwarranted attack. Derek Summerfield (July 5, p 63)¹ presents an inaccurate picture in which incorrect "facts" and unfounded allegations are portrayed as truth.

The IMA has frequently and unequivocally denounced the use of torture.^{2,3} Our members are instructed not to take part in any action that can be regarded as torture. We require strict adherence to the Tokyo Declaration and the tenets of the UN Convention against torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Moreover, we repeatedly urge anyone with knowledge of physicians who participate in torture to inform us so that we can take action. Unfortunately, we hear general accusations but no specific events or names. The one exception is the case cited by Summerfield regarding Ruchoma Marton's allegations against several Israeli psychologists, which were later established to be unfounded. Such misleading reporting undermines Summerfield's credibility.

We are also involved in ethical matters unrelated to torture. When we learn of people prohibited, for security reasons, from entering Israel for medical treatment, we demand that such entry be permitted. It is ironic that 2 years ago, after our efforts in this regard, two terrorists entered Israel in the guise of patients and blew themselves up at Beit Lydd, killing and injuring soldiers and civilians. Furthermore, when a law was enacted recently to allow prisoners to be stripped and searched, we insisted on a clause stipulating that no physician would actively take part. We feel that our mandate covers physicians and medical care, an area in which we can impose our standpoint and decisions.

The State of Israel upholds the fundamental rights of all people, irrespective of crimes alleged or committed. At the same time, Israel recognises its responsibility to protect both Jews and Arabs from harm by terrorists. The guidelines on interrogation recommend that only "moderate physical pressure" (in accordance with international law, and not unknown in other democratic countries) be sanctioned. Even this is restricted to cases defined in terms of a "ticking bomb", where the degree of anticipated danger poses a grave threat to citizens. Furthermore, the European Human Rights Court has previously ruled with regard to interrogations in Northern Ireland that ill treatment must reach a certain severe level to be deemed torture.

Israel prides itself on its democratic legal system, which is subject to public scrutiny. As a result, any allegation of maltreatment is thoroughly investigated by Israeli authorities and, where requested, by the International Committee of the Red Cross. However, it should be noted that individuals have personal and political motives for fabricating claims of maltreatment, including the desire to have a confession ruled inadmissible at trial, to present oneself as a martyr, or to spread anti-Israel propaganda.

We repeat our demand that Summerfield, or any other individual who maligns the IMA in connection with human rights, provide proof, names, or both of Israeli physicians involved in torture. At the same time, we demand the immediate cessation of the spreading of false and unfounded allegations, amounting to harassment and slander of the medical community in Israel.

Yoram Blachar

Israel Medical Association, 2 Twin Towers,
35 Jabotinsky St, POB 3566 Ramat-Gan 52136, Israel

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Derek Summerfield (Editor's Reply)

SIR,

It is surely unprecedented for a national medical association to use the pages of a medical journal to condone actions that satisfy international definitions of torture. The Israeli Medical Association (IMA) ignores the reports I referenced in my paper. Are the conclusions of the most authoritative human rights organisations in the world, based on the sober accumulation of material over many years, to be simply dismissed by rhetoric about slander and incorrect "facts"? How does the IMA reconcile their own government's claim that all detainees are "under constant medical supervision" with what Amnesty International concludes is the integral role of doctors in units where torture is routine? The IMA calls for names but this issue is not about isolated malpractice, rather the way doctors are drawn in to what Human Rights Watch calls the "bureaucratisation" of torture in Israel – the process by which it becomes embedded in official practice. These reports contain sample cases with named Palestinian victims. Why does the IMA admit no proactive role here, no duty to provide ethical leadership? Moreover, it is untrue that the allegations by Dr Marton, chairperson of Physicians for Human Rights Israel, were groundless. Her calls for an inquiry into the abuse of psychiatry in Israeli prisons remain unanswered by the IMA.

I appeal to the IMA to reconsider. They could start by implementing the recommendations made to them last year by Amnesty: to establish a commission to investigate the situation of doctors working in places of detention, the level of clinical independence and opportunities for ethical advice available to physicians, and the means by which they can communicate professional concern about the treatment of prisoners.

Derek Summerfield

Medical Foundation for Care of Victims of
Torture, London NW5 3EG, UK

Article courtesy of The Lancet.

NEWS

September 18, 2009.

Muhammad Moussa, a 15-year old active Palestinian youth, received RM32,800 from Palestine Centre of Excellence th (PACE) rough COMPLETE (now

Viva Palestina Malaysia) for the cost of operation on his two limbs that were lost during the war in Lebanon in 2006. His limbs were bombed with a cluster bomb by the Israelis army while he and his father rode a motorcycle. He can now walk with prosthesis (artificial legs).

In his speech, Muhammad thanked all Malaysians for their generosity. His ambition is to become an ustadz teaching quranic lesson. Please make dua for his success.



Israel Admits Stealing Palestinian Organs

December 21, 2009

OCUPIED JERUSALEM – For the first time, Israel has tacitly admitted stealing Palestinian body parts for transplant in Jewish patients, vindicating accusations leveled by Palestinians and rights groups over the past years. “We started to harvest corneas...whatever was done was highly informal. No permission was asked from the family,” pathologist Yehuda Hiss, the former head of the Abu Akbar Center, also known as the L. Greenberg Institute for Forensic Medicine, told Nancy Sheppard-Hughes, now a professor of Anthropology at the University of California-Berkeley, in a documentary aired by the Israeli Channel Two.

The documentary revealed that in the 1990s, forensic specialists harvested corneas, heart valves and bones from the bodies of Israeli soldiers, Israeli citizens, Palestinians and foreign workers, often without permission from relatives.

Earlier this year, relatives of several Palestinians killed by the Israeli army during Al-Aqsa uprising told IOL that their beloved ones were returned to them shortly after they were killed without their vital organs and with a huge cut from the stomach to the neck stitched up.

By Khalid Amayreh

IOL Correspondent.

http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&cid=1260258201494&pageName=Zone-English-News/NWELayout

Gaza Remembrance Day



December 27, 2009, Viva Palestina Malaysia (VPM) organised a Gaza Remembrance Day at Mid Valley Shopping Mall. A one minute silence was observed at 12pm to remember and pray for all those that were killed, injured or maimed. Many came in Palestinian colours, scarves, headbands, face painted with the Palestinian flag and T-shirts portraying a boycott on Israel and end the occupation. The protest is one of many planned around the world by civil societies.

New Yorkers held a massive demonstration in Times Square to commemorate the anniversary of the deadly Israeli assault against the Palestinians of Gaza. A reminder that one-year after the bombing and invasion, the people of Gaza are still living under siege, denied food, medicine and the right to travel by an inhumane Israeli blockade.



Viva Palestina Convoy



Adelaide, Australia, 31 December 2009. (Gaza Freedom March)



Bern, Switzerland, 27 December (Gaza Freedom March)



Convoy map to Gaza



Shipping to Araish



Convoy ambulance in Syria

The convoy



LETTERS

December 12, 2009

Dear Sir,

Assalamualaikum. It's a great pleasure for me to send you this message from Gaza, to thank you for your grateful help to the Palestinian people.

I'm Loai Nabil Barqouni, 5th year medical student at al Quds University – Al Azhar Branch in Gaza – Palestine, I'm very interested in your organization and its activities to enhance and develop medical education and to strengthen the brotherhood between medical students in the Muslim world.

I'd like to inform you that despite the killings and war on Gaza in December 2008, Palestinian medical students have the deep belief in Allah and the enthusiasm to compete with other medical student in the world. I have participated the Trauma Conference 09, held in Imperial College – London, 6 – 8 November, 2009. I submitted an abstract about the burns caused by white phosphorus during the 2008 war. I was shortlisted, and invited to submit a poster presentation about "White Phosphorus Burn, Case report". I was the only Muslim medical student in the competition, besides 7 other European medical students. Unfortunately, I couldn't go there to present my work as the border was closed and the siege prevented my travel.

So I designed a poster, recorded a video tape of my case report and emailed it to the conference organisers. I was awarded the second international prize for my abstract. The siege and closed borders did not prevent me from participating and exposing the criminal acts of the Israeli soldiers.

Finally, I would like to join your great federation FIMA, and to encourage my colleagues to become members of your association, to build a generation of Muslim medical student committed to the universal values of Islam. I would like to send salam from here the holy land of Palestine. Inshallah, one day we will pray together in Masjid Al Aqsa.

Thanking you in advance. I've attached my abstract for your perusal.

Regards

Loai N. Barqouni
5th year Medical Student
Palestine - Gaza

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

December 13, 2009

Salams,

Congratulations on your achievements. May Allah bless your courageous efforts.

As the immediate past president of FIMA, we welcome your presence in our fraternity of Islamic Medical Associations (IMAs) and Muslim health professionals. We have a large investment in programs dedicated to medical students. Kindly log onto www.fimaweb.net for more information on FIMA student activities.

I have cc-ed your letter to Dr Amin, President of the Scientific Medical Association of Palestine, for his immediate attention and action.

On another note, FIMA has been actively involved with the medical rehabilitation of Palestine since the First Intifada. Most recently, in collaboration with Viva Palestina Malaysia (VPM) and PACE (Palestine Centre of Excellence), we helped fund 4 ambulances which are currently on the > 250 truck Viva Palestina convoy to Gaza, due to arrive in Gaza on the 1st anniversary of the invasion of Gaza. Viva Palestina Malaysia is part of the global Long Live Palestine network, VP United Kingdom & VP USA.

You can facebook VP Malaysia at <http://completemalaysia.com/wp/vpm-facebook-page/> and you can follow the convoy online at <http://readingpsc.org.uk/vp3/>.

They are almost at Greece, "The Superfast ferry will enter Igoumenitsa harbour at 5.30am," and they seem to be pretty excited as there is talk that "60 more vehicles may join us at Istanbul, Turkish support added to what we expect from the USA."

Dr. Musa Mohd. Nordin

June 25, 2009

Dato' Dr. Khoo Kah Lin
President
Malaysian Medical Association

Dear Dato' Dr. Khoo,

Greetings and peace.

May I kindly draw your attention to this recent article in the Guardian, UK, appended below. It is related to the implicit involvement of the current president of the World Medical Association (WMA) in the torture of Palestinian prisoners.

I hope the MMA as an affiliate of the World Medical Association would investigate this matter and if true as alleged, to join the international chorus of protest from medical associations and physicians around the world for his immediate removal from this high office.

I sincerely hope this matter would receive your immediate attention. I thank you in anticipation

Yours sincerely,

Dato' Dr. Musa Mohd. Nordin
Life Member MMA
Past-President, Islamic Medical Association
Malaysia (IMAM)
President, Federation of Islamic Medical
Associations (FIMA)