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19 November 2023

CONDEMNATION OF AL SHIFA HOSPITAL INVASION IN GAZA

Hospitals and healthcare professionals are protected under the Geneva Convention and International Humanitarian Law.

Since the start of the war on Gaza on October 2023, 120 health institutions have been targeted with 19 hospitals and 33 health facilities either destroyed or totally shutdown.

200 health professionals have been killed by the Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF) and 40 ambulances destroyed in the continuous bombardment.

We have all witnessed with alarm the effects of the bombing on the health services, health professionals and patients in the Gaza strip but nothing could have prepared us for the invasion of the Al Shifa Hospital complex.

The hospital was systematically strangled of all functions as a result of the blockade of medicines, water, food and fuel, shutting down all equipment including ventilators and incubators resulting in a catastrophic loss of lives.

The final invasion of the hospital complex with the immediate evacuation of the multiple severely injured patients and their healthcare providers transforming it into a military camp is another heinous violation of international law. The graphic images of the destructive aftermath of this invasion will forever remain embedded in our consciousness.

We unconditionally condemn the targeting and destruction of the healthcare system represented by the callous destruction of its flagship, the Al Shifa hospital complex and its services, with catastrophic consequences for the healthcare system

The Federation of Islamic Medical Associations (FIMA) call on the international community to support the demand for the following urgent interventions to secure what remains of Gaza and its health sector:

1. An immediate ceasefire and an end to all hostilities.
2. All parties must respect and adhere to international laws which protects the rights of persons in war zones under the Geneva Convention.

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3. The urgent transfer of all humanitarian needs i.e. medicines and medical supplies, fuel sufficient to generate all emergency services, food supplies and clean drinking water.
4. The safe transfer of all severely injured patients to participating countries e.g. Jordan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar
5. The re-equipping of all operational hospitals with essential equipment to facilitate the return of healthcare services to near normal.
6. The unimpeded access of humanitarian organisations and medico-surgical professionals to assist in the management of critically injured patients and relieving the exhausted health professionals in Gaza.
7. To urgently rehabilitate the traumatized survivors with informed and cutting-edge mental health technology and services.
8. The re-establishment of essential services to support the people of Gaza during its reconstruction i.e. waste and sanitation, water purification, food supply management, restoration of health services, clothing and shelter.

We urge immediate action from all.

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