
**World Health Organization
Executive Board**

25 January 2024

Israel Statement

Ambassador Meirav Eilon Shahar
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in Geneva

“After I was beaten in the car, and by the people outside, they covered my head and they took me to the hospital, I didn’t see anything, they put me on a metal bed. I was terrified, 30 people were in the room, grabbing me, showing me off as their trophy. A doctor spoke to me in Hebrew, all I could think of is this doctor knew everything, and did nothing. They knew I was kidnapped, and they did not do anything.”

This is the testimony from Moran Stela Yanai, held hostage in Gaza for 55 days.

Chair,

- Al- Rantisi hospital – Hamas’ terrorists retreated there on October 7th, bringing hostages through the front door, and held them in the basement.
- Kamal Adwan Hospital – 80 terrorists surrendered themselves to IDF soldiers, and weapons were found hidden inside incubators.
- Al Quds hospital – Hamas fired RPGs at Israeli troops from the hospital, and large quantities of weaponry and ammunition were found within.
- Al Shifa hospital – Hamas also brought hostages here on October 7, managed operations from a closed-off area in the hospital – with hundreds of meters of tunnels below.
- The Indonesian hospital – Hamas forces managed operations from the hospital, and the IDF found five murdered hostages in a tunnel dug underneath.

The list goes on.

Every single hospital that the IDF searched in Gaza, it found evidence of Hamas’ military use. Hamas has militarized the entire civilian area of the Gaza Strip, as a matter of premeditated strategy

These are undeniable facts that WHO chooses to ignore time and time again.

This is not incompetence; it is collusion.

The WHO knew hostages were held in hospitals and that terrorists operated within.

Even when presented with concrete evidence of what was happening below ground and above ground, about the weapons, the headquarters, the closed rooms, WHO chooses to turn a blind eye, jeopardizing those they are meant to protect.

Last month, this body passed a resolution on Gaza's health situation which failed to address reality or our hostages who continue to suffer the unimaginable; including rape, torture and starvation. This resolution endorsed Hamas' strategy of using medical facilities for terrorism and employing civilians as human shields.

Today only echoes that shameful and morally corrupt decision from a few weeks ago.

Chair,

Israel remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and the suffering of its people. Since the beginning of the war, Israel has facilitated 190,000 tons of aid in 10,400 trucks. This includes 122,000 tons of food, 21,000 tons of shelter equipment and 14,500 tons of medical supplies. The Karem Shalom crossing is open.

Field hospitals from Jordan, UAE, the Red Crescent, and IMC are operational. The Jordanian hospital has treated over 26,598 patients, the UAE field hospital, over 1,634. The Red Crescent hospital operates on the basis of an emergency room as an extension to the Al-Amal hospital. The IMC field hospital provides surgical care for trauma, physical rehabilitation, emergency newborn care, advanced mental health services and more, and has so far treated close to 500 patients. More field hospitals are currently being processed. Both France and Italy have additionally dispatched floating hospitals which are now also operational.

Israel does not limit the humanitarian aid that can enter; UN agencies must step up so more can be delivered.

This is a war that Israel did not initiate, one it did not want.

It began with the wholesale massacre, mutilation, rape and abduction of innocent people on October 7th. Openly displaying elation, Hamas tortured children in front of parents, and parents in front of children, burnt entire families alive, and systemically raped and mutilated scores of people. 1200 were butchered that day, 5,500 maimed, 240 abducted.

There cannot be health when Hamas embeds itself in hospitals and uses human shields.

There cannot be peace while terrorism thrives.

Israel has the right to defend itself against this worst form of evil, to fight the terrorist onslaught it continues to face, until Hamas is destroyed and all 136 hostages are brought home.

I thank you.