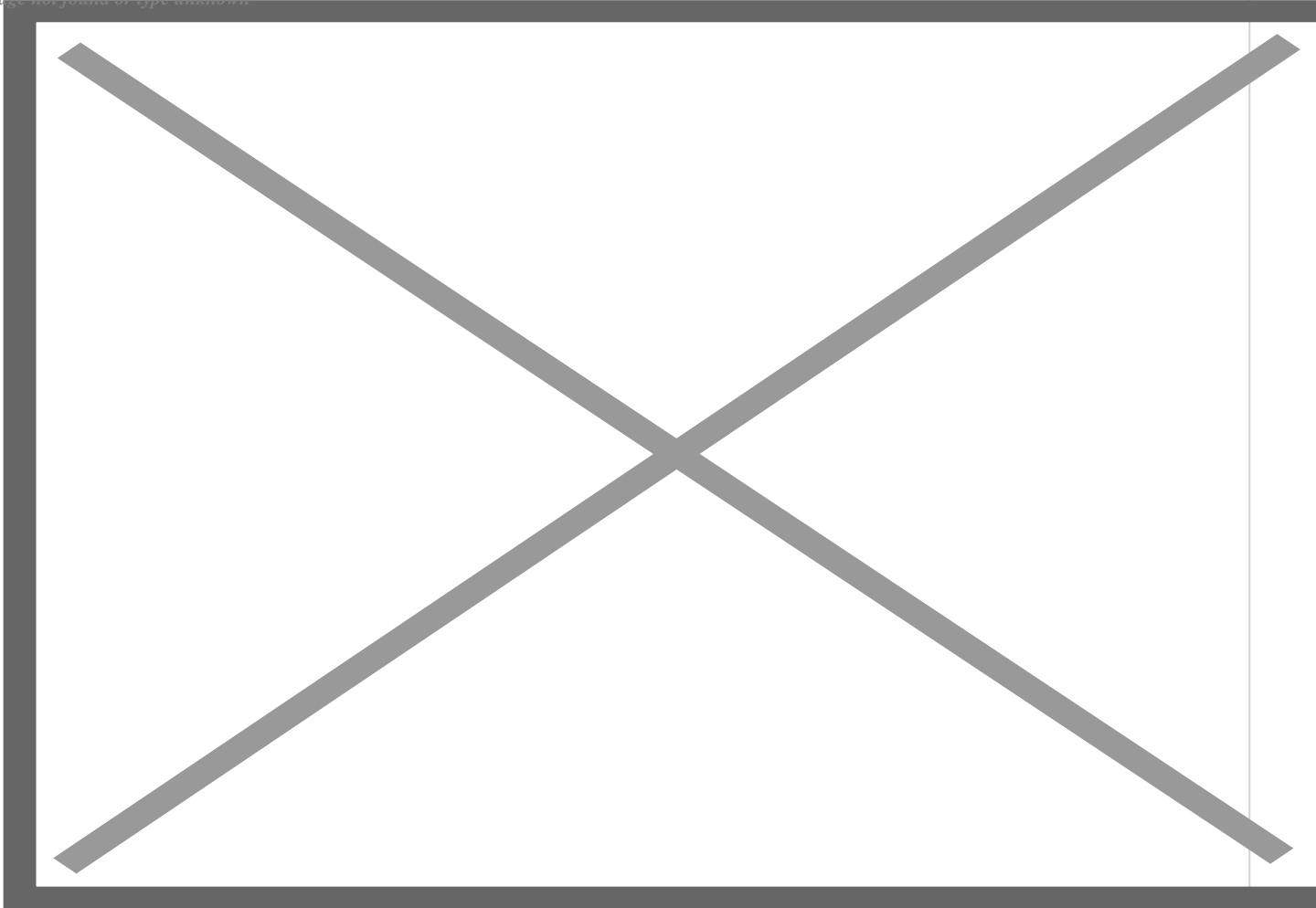


Doctors in Gaza won't give in to Israel's evacuation demand

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**Mourners pray over the shrouded bodies of members of the Agha family, on October 14, 2023
[Mahmud Hams/AFP]**

Gaza City, October 14 (RHC)-- Dr Nisreen al-Shorafa has gotten barely 10 hours of sleep over the past seven days. The 30-year-old surgeon runs the emergency room at Al Awda Hospital in Tal al-Zaatar, between Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun, and she cannot recall a time when she has worked harder.

Dedicated completely to helping save the people who survived the relentless Israeli bombing, she has pushed herself beyond what she thought she could do.

On Saturday, the hospital started receiving warning calls from the Israeli military. The message was stark and ominous: The hospital had to be evacuated because it would be bombed. “I’ll bet they [Israeli army] are proud of themselves, threatening to bomb the hospital,” said resident nurse Asala al-Batsh.

“They insisted that everyone and everything move. All hospital personnel, all the patients, including those in the ICU, and the bodies in the morgue.”

After trying to explain to the Israeli army on the phone the inhumanity and impossibility of moving everyone out of the hospital and southward, the team gave up.

“We decided not to leave,” al-Shorafa said.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health has urged the international community to intervene several times, but no response or assistance has come.

“We’re doing as much as we can, but there are major shortages, especially in the emergency room, which is our first line of response to people coming in. We’re the line between life and death sometimes,” al-Shorafa said.

“We work so hard,” she said, her voice breaking. “We do absolutely everything we can, but then sometimes a patient will die ... it feels like so many people die every single day since the beginning of this war.

“It’s so hard, we feel utterly helpless,” she said as a tear made its slow way down her exhausted cheek.

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