

Israeli strike on Gaza ambulance convoy draws international condemnation

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United Nations, November 4 (RHC)-- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the head of World Health Organization (WHO) have vehemently condemned the recent Israeli attack on a convoy of

ambulances outside al-Shifa Hospital in the besieged Gaza Strip that left 15 Palestinian civilians dead and dozens of others injured.

The casualties occurred when a convoy of ambulances transporting critically injured patients from Gaza's largest hospital to the Rafah border crossing with Egypt was targeted by Israeli warplanes on Friday.

Local media as well as health officials in Gaza said the attack resulted in the death of 15 civilians and injury of 60 other people.

"I am horrified by the reported attack in Gaza on an ambulance convoy outside al-Shifa hospital," Guterres said in a statement published in the hours after the attack, adding that the conflict "must stop."

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also said in a post on his X social media account that he was "utterly shocked by reports of attacks on ambulances evacuating patients close to al-Shifa hospital in Gaza, leading to deaths, injuries and damage." "We reiterate: patients, health workers, facilities and ambulances must be protected at all times. Always," he wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Later in the day, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) confirmed in a statement that one of its ambulances was struck "by a missile fired by the Israeli forces" about two meters from the entrance to the al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City.

Another ambulance, belonging to the Health Ministry in Gaza, was "directly targeted" by a missile around one kilometer from the hospital, causing injuries and damage, the PRCS said. The organization added that deliberately targeting medical teams constituted "a grave violation of the Geneva Conventions, a war crime."

The latest Israeli crime comes as some 16 hospitals across Gaza, as the health ministry says, are no longer functioning due to the lack of fuel and the damage from the occupying regime's days-long aggression on the blockaded area.

The World Health Organization warned on Wednesday that the fuel shortage "immediately risks the lives" of the wounded and other patients in al-Shifa Hospital, which has a bed occupancy rate of 164 percent.

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