

UN regional directors call for immediate international action to halt Israel's attacks on Gaza hospitals



United Nations, November 13 (RHC)-- The regional directors of several UN agencies have called for urgent international action to end Israel's ongoing attacks on hospitals in the besieged Gaza Strip, which the regime has brought under an unrelenting genocidal war.

The regional directors of the United Nations Children's Agency (UNICEF), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) made the appeal in a joint statement. They said they were appalled by the regime's attacks targeting either the main buildings or the periphery of hospitals located in the Gaza City, including al-Rantisi Pediatric Hospital, al-Shifa and al-Quds hospitals, and other hospitals located in the north of the blockaded territory.

The occupying regime started its war of genocide against Gaza on October 7 after Operation al-Aqsa Storm was carried out by the territory's resistance groups. More than 11,000 Palestinians, including 4,506 children, have been killed, and 27,490 others sustained injuries in the regime's military onslaught so far.

Israel has also cut off the flow of basic supplies, such as water, electricity, medicines, and fuel to one of the world's most densely-populated territories that houses over two million Palestinians.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry, 21 out of 35 hospitals with inpatient facilities have stopped functioning either due to damage from Israeli shelling and airstrikes or lack of fuel.

"Over the past 36 days, the WHO has recorded at least 137 Israeli attacks on healthcare [facilities] in Gaza, resulting in the killing of 521 people and the injury of 686 others, including the killing of 16 members of the health staff and the wounding of 38 others," the UN officials said in their statement.

They added that those Gazan hospitals, which are still functioning, are under massive strain and can only provide very limited emergency services, lifesaving surgeries, and intensive care services.

Describing Israel's attacks on medical facilities and civilians as "unacceptable and a violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law," the statement added, "They cannot be condoned. The right to seek medical assistance, especially in times of crisis, should never be denied."

"The world cannot stand silent while hospitals, which should be safe havens, are transformed into scenes of death, devastation, and despair. Decisive international action is needed now to secure an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, prevent further loss of life, and preserve what's left of the healthcare system in Gaza," the statement said. "Unimpeded, safe, and sustained access is needed now to provide fuel, medical supplies, and water for these lifesaving services," it added.

Earlier on Sunday, the deputy health minister in the Gaza Strip said an Israeli aerial assault had destroyed the cardiac department of al-Shifa Hospital, the largest medical complex in the besieged enclave.

Youssef Abu Rish said the facility had been flattened as fighting raged on around it. "The occupier (Israel) completely destroyed the cardiac ward of al-Shifa Hospital... The two-story building has been completely destroyed in an airstrike," he told AFP on Sunday.

The hospital, which is situated in northern Gaza, is currently surrounded by Israeli tanks and faces a blackout as its last generator is running out of fuel.

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