

*British-Palestinian surgeon
presents testimony to UK war
crimes unit after returning from
Gaza*



Doctor Ghassan Abu Sitta, a Palestinian-British plastic surgeon specializing in conflict medicine, speaks during an interview with The Associated Press at the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut, Lebanon, Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023. Abu Sitta who spent weeks in the Gaza Strip during the current Israel-Hamas war in the enclave as part of a Doctors Without Borders medical team said he has given testimony to a British war crimes investigation unit.

(Hussein Malla / Associated Press)

London, December 11 (RHC)-- British-Palestinian surgeon Ghassan Abu Sitta has given testimony to a British war crimes investigation unit after returning from a trip to the Gaza Strip, where he witnessed the harrowing ordeal of Palestinian civilians during Israel's brutal onslaught on the besieged territory.

Abu Sitta, a plastic surgeon specializing in conflict medicine, spent weeks in Gaza as part of a Doctors Without Borders medical team and witnessed Israel's atrocities during the regime's ongoing war on the besieged Palestinian territory. Abu Sitta said in an interview with The Associated Press during a visit to the Institute for Palestine Studies in the Lebanese capital of Beirut on Saturday that upon his return to the United Kingdom, he was asked by the war crimes unit at the Metropolitan Police to give evidence in a possible war crimes investigation and he "did so."

The prominent surgeon said he presented his testimony after the police had issued a call for people returning from the Palestinian territories who "have witnessed or been a victim of terrorism, war crimes or crimes against humanity" to come forward. Abu Sitta said much of his testimony was related to Israeli attacks on hospitals and health facilities across the Gaza Strip.

Abu Sitta, who worked in both al-Shifa and al-Ahli hospitals in Gaza, said the intensity of conflicts he had experienced and the war in Gaza was like "the difference between a flood and a tsunami." "The worst thing was initially the running out of morphine and proper strong analgesics and then later on running out of anesthetic medication, which meant that you would have to do painful procedures with no anesthetic," he said.

The surgeon stressed that while in Gaza, he also treated patients who had burn wounds consistent with white phosphorus shelling, which he had also seen during the 2009 war. Phosphorus shells cause a "chemical burn that ... bursts into the deep structures of the body rather than a thermal burn, which starts at the outside and (covers a) much larger surface area," he said.

The British-Palestinian surgeon said 160 doctors and nurses have lost their lives during the occupation's aggression on the Gaza Strip.

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