

France denies entry to British-Palestinian Gaza war surgeon to prevent him from testifying about Israel's genocidal war against Palestinian people

British-Palestinian surgeon Ghassan Abu Sitta denied entry to France

"I am at Charles De Gaulle airport. They are preventing me from entering France. I am supposed to speak at the French Senate today. They say the Germans put a 1-year ban on my entry to Europe."

Source: X, @GhassanAbuSitt1



Paris, May 4 (RHC)-- British-Palestinian surgeon Ghassan Abu Sittah — a witness to Israel's war crimes in the Gaza Strip — has been denied entry to France, where he was slated to address the Senate about Gaza.

The British-Palestinian doctor said Saturday he was denied access to France after he arrived at Charles De Gaulle airport north of Paris on Saturday. Abu-Sittah said he was told that Germany had enforced a Schengen-wide ban on his entry to Europe.

German authorities had last month refused his entry to Berlin, where Abu-Sittah was scheduled to address a conference to which he was invited to speak about his work in Gaza hospitals.

Germany had put a visa ban on him for a year. "They are preventing me from entering France. I am supposed to speak at the French senate today," he wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Abu-Sittah was invited by Green party parliamentarians to take part in a conference at the Sénat, the upper house, to speak about the healthcare system in the besieged Palestinian territory. The theme of the conference was: "France and its responsibility in the application of international law in Gaza."

"In an act of utter vindictiveness the French authorities are denying me access to an earlier flight and insisting on sending me on the last flight back late night to London."

"Fortress Europe silencing the witnesses to the genocide while Israel kills them in prison," the renowned British-Palestinian plastic surgeon who is also rector of the University of Glasgow added.

Abu Sittah was placed in a holding zone at the airport and will be expelled, according to French Senator Raymonde Poncet Monge, a Green party member who had invited him to speak at the Senate.

The president of the Greens' Senate group, Guillaume Gontard, called the decision to block Abu-Sittah "scandalous", and said he was negotiating with the interior and foreign ministries to reverse the move. He added, however, that the doctor would "probably" be sent back to the United Kingdom.

Posting on X later on Saturday, Poncet Monge said the seminar was able to loop Abu-Sittah in via videoconference so he could speak. "We are outraged that he cannot be present among us," she said.

Surgeon Ghassan Abu Sittah was invited to attend the Palestine Conference in Berlin on Friday.

The International Center of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP) – an independent organization of lawyers, politicians and academics — condemned Abu-Sittah's detention in Paris as an "unacceptable harassment of a globally respected medical professional."

It said, "By design, the Germans are silencing a key witness to Israel's war crimes." "This follows their action taken on 12 April to bar Dr Abu-Sittah's entry to Berlin to participate in the Palestine Congress – an event which German police later disbanded."

The surgeon had worked at Gaza's al-Shifa and al-Ahli Baptist hospitals during the months of October and November 2023. During his 43 days of volunteer work, he said he witnessed a "massacre unfold."

Abu-Sittah said he witnessed the use of white phosphorus munitions by Israel's military forces in Gaza.

The ICJP handed evidence to Scotland Yard in January about Israel's war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza under applicable UK legislation, including evidence from Abu-Sittah.

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