

Euro-Med warns Abu Safiya's life in great danger and calls for his immediate release

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Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya (C), director of the Kamal Adwan Hospital, supervises the treatment of a

Palestinian man, injured in an Israeli strike on Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip on November 21, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

Geneva, January 5 (RHC)-- The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor has warned of the grave risk to the life of Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, the director of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza, following his detention by Israeli forces in late December, saying the occupying regime bears full responsibility for his life.

The Geneva-based organization said in a statement on Saturday that it has received information that the health condition of Dr. Abu Safiya has deteriorated since his arrest, particularly due to being subjected to torture while being held at the Sde Teyman military base that also serves as a detention center in the Negev desert in the southern part of the occupied territories.

"Euro-Med Monitor warns of the grave risk to [Safiya's] life, following patterns of deliberate killings and deaths under torture previously suffered by other doctors and medical staff," it said.

Euro-Med went on to say that it has gathered testimonies indicating that Israeli forces have physically assaulted Abu Safiya after storming the bombed-out Kamal Adwan Hospital.

The Israeli military subsequently transferred Dr. Abu Safiya to a field interrogation site in the Al-Fakhura area of Jabalia Refugee Camp where he was ordered to strip off his clothes and was subjected to severe beatings and whipped with a thick wire, the NGO said. He was later taken to an undisclosed location before being transferred to the Sde Teyman military camp.

According to the Euro-Med Monitor, recently released detainees at the Sde Teyman military camp have confirmed that Dr. Abu Safiya was subjected to severe torture, leading to a significant deterioration in his health.

The organization further expressed deep concern that Dr. Abu Safiya may face execution during his detention, similar to the fate of Dr. Adnan Al-Bursh, the head of orthopedics at al-Shifa Hospital, who was tortured to death by Israeli forces in April 2024.

Euro-Med Monitor also warned of the "severe implications of Israel's denial of Dr. Abu Safiya's detention" after the Israeli regime said it has 'no indication' of his arrest and torture, adding that this reflects a "blatant disregard for binding legal standards."

It also called for immediate international intervention to release Dr. Abu Safiya, stressing that his fundamental rights to life, physical safety, and dignity must be protected.

Separately on Saturday, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) called on the US government to "take immediate action" to secure the release of Dr. Abu Safiya.

The Muslim advocacy group also said "the Biden administration, which is a full partner in Israel's genocide," must act to end the far-right Israeli regime's systematic assault on hospitals and medical personnel in Gaza.

"Israeli attacks on medical facilities, its daily slaughter of Palestinian civilians, and its forced starvation of an entire population are clearly part of the overall genocidal campaign of ethnic cleansing in Gaza," CAIR said in a statement.

In a post on X, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the chief of the World Health Organization (WHO), also said that the world body has received "no updates on the safety and wellbeing" of Dr. Abu Safiya.

He also urged Israel to release him, reiterating that attacks on hospitals and medical staff must end.

On December 28, Israeli forces carried out airstrikes on Kamal Adwan Hospital, with the Gaza Health Ministry saying an estimated 50 people, including medical staff, were killed in the attacks and the rest were abducted by the occupation forces.

Dr. Abu Safiya, 51 years of age, was among those taken for questioning by the Israeli military over alleged links to the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas.

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