



International investigation must be opened into Israel's absurd narrative about Al- Shifa Medical Complex



📅 17 Nov 2023

📍 Israel-Palestinian Territory

🔗 Share On [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [✉](#) [📄](#)

AR

Geneva – In a new statement released today, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor called for an independent international investigation into Israel's absurd claims that Palestinian groups were using Al-Shifa Medical Complex and other hospitals in the Gaza Strip for military purposes.

The absence of any neutral international party's involvement in the Israeli military raids and searches of Al-Shifa Medical Complex and other hospitals in the Strip raises widespread doubts about the Israeli narrative. According to Euro-Med Monitor, Israel needs to offer the outside world more than a few rifles and other armaments to justify its attacks on Gaza's hospitals and ill and injured civilians.

The Geneva-based rights group emphasised that there is no excuse for Israel to target hospitals and interrupt their operations, putting the lives of hundreds of civilians in need of urgent medical care at risk. It emphasised that no one should ever be denied access to healthcare, particularly during emergencies and times of war. Targeting hospitals and other medical facilities may constitute a war crime and a violation of the Geneva Conventions, as these spaces are classified as civilian objects.

After launching an intensive incitement campaign against Gaza's hospitals and publishing three-dimensional maps of massive headquarters inside and beneath Al-Shifa Medical Complex amid direct air and artillery attacks along with military raids, the Israeli army has been unable to produce any solid

evidence to support its claims, said Euro-Med Monitor. It stressed that Israeli claims cannot rob hospitals, ambulances, or medical and relief teams of their protected status under international humanitarian law.

The rights group reiterated that hospitals and medical staff have certain special protections that are legally enforceable against all parties to the conflict, who are supposed to take all reasonable precautions, including issuing effective warnings that consider if and how patients, medical personnel, and other civilians can evacuate safely.

More than 245 attacks on Palestinian medical facilities have been documented by Euro-Med Monitor since Israel began its brutal war on the Gaza Strip on 7 October. These attacks have resulted in the deaths of over 600 people, including dozens of health workers who died while performing their duties.

The administrations of both Al-Shifa Medical Complex and the Palestinian Ministry of Health refuted the Israeli army's claims that Palestinian groups were operating a military compound inside and beneath the Complex, demanding an independent investigation that includes a United Nations inspection.

Ahead of the Israeli military incursion into Al-Shifa Complex, which began at dawn on Wednesday 15 November, numerous shelling attacks targeted

portions of the Complex, seriously damaging important structures such as the cardiac care department, the specialised surgical department, and a pharmaceutical warehouse. Since then, the medical facility has continued to be besieged by patients with chronic diseases, injuries, newborns, employees, and displaced people.

Taking over multiple sections of Al-Shifa complex, Israeli forces conducted a violent interrogation campaign, questioning medical personnel as well as displaced individuals. In addition, several people were arrested after being stripped of their clothes and blindfolded. Israeli soldiers searched basements as well as surgical, cardiovascular, and renal departments, among other areas. Late at night, the army released a video purportedly showing weapons that they claimed had been discovered inside the Complex and belonged to Palestinian groups.

The Euro-Med Monitor said that the Israeli narrative, which is the sole story about the raid being promoted by Israel's government, was made public only after long hours of searches and fruitless inspections. This raises a lot of questions, especially since no gunman has been arrested and no evidence has been found to back the previous claims about the presence of tunnels beneath the hospital.

In light of the ongoing Israeli raid on Al-Shifa Medical Complex buildings, which has included tanks and military vehicles, Euro-Med emphasised the urgent need for an independent international investigation

to end the attacks on Gazan hospitals that Israel allege contain armed elements.

The Israeli army's insistence on barring the media, international organisations, health officials, and non-governmental organisations' presence in hospitals during the raids should raise great concern, said Euro-Med Monitor, and casts doubt on any army narrative.

Hospitals are not battlegrounds, said the rights group, and should not be used as such. Israel is required like any other state to abide by international law, particularly the Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilians and Medical and Civilian Facilities in Time of War, Euro-Med Monitor added.

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor holds Israel and the international community parties, including the relevant United Nations agencies, fully responsible for the horrific condition of the health sector in the Gaza Strip, in light of the comprehensive Israeli siege, frequent bombings, and unjustified military raids.



**EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
HUMAN RIGHTS MONITOR**

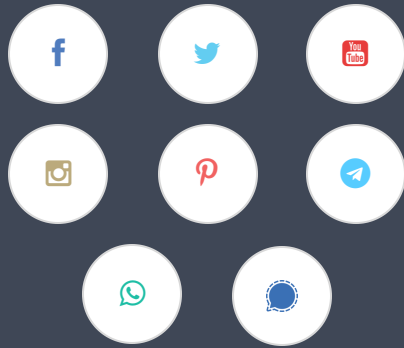
Defending freedom Throughout
the MENA Region and Europe

FOCUS AREAS

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor is a Geneva-based independent organization with regional offices across the MENA region and Europe



CONNECT WITH US



NEWSLETTER

Get News & Action Alerts in Your Email.

Subscribe

Subscribe

[Privacy Policy](#)