

MAP calls for the immediate protection of healthcare workers facing detention

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Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) calls for the immediate protection of healthcare workers in Gaza amid widespread attacks on healthcare.

Since 7 October 2023, at least [340 healthcare workers](#) have been killed during Israel's indiscriminate bombardment and siege, and more than 160 others have been detained, according to the Ministry of Health.

With reports of detainees being held in secrecy, without access to their families and lawyers, and [subject to ill-treatment](#) by the Israeli army, including being [tortured, stripped of their clothes, and beaten](#), MAP is deeply concerned for the wellbeing of those detained and calls for their immediate protection.

The situation at Nasser Hospital, the largest healthcare facility in the south of Gaza, remains critical. Following the Israeli military's [week-long siege](#) and [raid on the hospital last week](#), it is [no longer functional](#) and has been left without electricity, water, food, or oxygen. Many of the medical staff have also been interrogated, and more than 70 healthcare workers were reportedly detained by Israeli forces.

On Sunday 18 February, a General Surgeon at Nasser Hospital, said: "I have lived three days of hell, along with my patients. Fortunately, I have not been arrested, but many of my colleagues have. What happened to doctors, patients and internally displaced people here is unbelievable, even in your worst nightmares."

The arrest of healthcare workers at Nasser Hospital follows the detention of senior staff at [Al Awda](#), [Kamal Adwan](#), and [Shifa hospitals](#). Under international law, medical personnel conducting their lifesaving duties must be protected in all circumstances.

The World Health Organisation reports that [325 people, including 140 patients remain inside the hospital](#) awaiting evacuation, without access to the resources or medical care they need. Israeli forces have cut the electricity and oxygen supplies, which has already caused [the death of eight patients](#), according to the Ministry of Health.

Attacks on healthcare are exacerbating the worst humanitarian crisis ever seen in Gaza and are part of an alarming pattern of Israel's systematic dismantling of Gaza's health system from the north to the south.

If the status quo continues, an estimated [13,270 are projected to die](#) from the challenges of maternal and neonatal health, and from infectious and non-communicable diseases amid lack of access to quality healthcare, water, sanitation and nutrition.

Without urgent action, the lives of dedicated medical staff and the thousands of patients who depend on them will continue to be at risk. MAP reiterates the urgent call for the protection of all healthcare workers in Gaza.

The international community must demand an end to Israel's war on Gaza's hospitals and ensure that violations of international law are met with meaningful accountability.

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