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## PRCS's Al-Amal Hospital is Out of Service



(Al-Bireh - Gaza: 3/26/2024): The Palestine Red Crescent Society announces that the Society's Al-Amal Hospital in the city of Khan Yunis has been taken out of service and has stopped working completely after the Occupation forces forced the hospital's crews and the wounded to evacuate it and closed its entrances with dirt barriers.

The Occupation forces had resumed their siege of the hospital amid violent bombardment and the firing of smoke bombs and fire towards the hospital, which led to the killing of two people, including our colleague Ameer Abu Aisha, a member of the emergency operations room team in Gaza, in addition to a patient who was being treated in the hospital, and the injury of 3 others. Then, the Occupation forces fired smoke bombs at the hospital to force the staff, patients and displaced persons out of it. All those in the hospital were evacuated in two stages, the first included the displaced and some patients, and the second stage included the hospital staff and the rest of the patients and wounded.

PRCS expresses its disappointment that Al-Amal Hospital was taken out of service after the international community failed to provide the necessary protection for its staff, patients, and

displaced persons. The hospital was besieged for more than 40 days and shelled several times before the Occupation forces resumed its siege again and forced everyone in it to leave, leaving the hospital destroyed. The same fate befell PRCS' Al-Quds Hospital in Gaza City, which was taken out of service several months ago. Accordingly, PRCS holds the international community and all State Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention responsible for the complete collapse of the health system, and the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the sector.

This direct targeting of PRCS' Al-Amal Hospital and its crews is added to the Israeli Occupation's record of continuous violations against medical personnel in general, and against PRCS medical personnel in particular since the start of the aggression against the Strip on October 7<sup>th</sup> of last year. The number of PRCS martyrs that were targeted by the Occupation forces while performing their humanitarian duties has reached 15, while the Occupation continues to unlawfully arrest 13 PRCS crews whose whereabouts and fates remain unknown.

According to international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions, the direct targeting of the hospital and the deliberate killing of the Society's staff and volunteers are war crimes. The State Parties to the Geneva Conventions are obligated to enforce respect for international humanitarian law and they must take the necessary measures to suppress, rebuke and punish the perpetrators of these crimes committed against the Society and its crews.

PRCS renews its calls to the international community to guarantee the protection of its crews and facilities as well as all medical missions operating in the Gaza Strip from the systematic and ongoing targeting by the Israeli Occupation, in addition to the provision of a necessary safe humanitarian space to keep the Palestinians in Gaza alive. The PRCS calls for the necessity of enforcing respect for the protected Red Crescent emblem in accordance with the provisions of international law, respecting and protecting the legal personality of the Society and facilitating its humanitarian mission.

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