




The War of Gaza and International Laws

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A recent report from the World Health Organization (WHO) indicates the treatment of hundreds of injured people on the floor of the bloodbath emergency department of Al-Shifa Hospital, one of the few working hospitals in Gaza without access to anesthetics and sterile equipment (1).

The death toll in Gaza since October 7 is now more than 19,000 civilians, many of them children, women, and the elderly (2, 3). Over 300 healthcare workers, 86 journalists, and 135 UNRWA staff are among the victims (2). The hospitals in Gaza have been the target of bombardment deliberately. Many ambulances were damaged. Access to drugs and food has become a dream for many residents of Gaza. As said by WHO team members, people are trapped in a circle of death, destruction, hunger, and disease (1, 4). According to the report of the Health Ministry of Palestine, there are now 360,000 documented cases of infectious diseases in shelters, but the numbers are much higher (2, 5). These include diarrheal diseases as well as other infectious diseases affecting children and the elderly.

A recent report by the Aljazeera news network indicates Israeli forces have crushed wounded Palestinians in tents in the yard of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza using bulldozers (6).

These unbelievable events are occurring in front of cameras and news agencies and are broadcast globally, but unfortunately, no effective measures are seen to stop these brutal events.

Almost all international laws focusing on human rights and civilian rights during the war were dismissed during this war. The Geneva Conventions have stressed special protection for health facilities, ambulances, and health workers, even in military facilities and occupied

territories (7).

If there were no castigation for those who violated these laws, these collective efforts for human rights would be meaningless.

As was proposed before, international bodies, including the UN Security Council and the International Criminal Court (ICC), should be proactive in contending these attacks on health facilities and wounded civilians as war crimes and crimes against humanity (8).

This is a special moment in human history. As we are approaching the New Year, this is a sensible time to watch and ward on whether current world governance is capable of reinforcing international law or the tendentious aims that would slaughter humanity.

Footnote

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