



Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu
Prime Minister of Israel
Prime Minister's Office
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9 July 2026

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you on behalf of the World Medical Association (WMA), the global federation of National Medical Associations representing millions of physicians worldwide. Acting on behalf of patients and physicians, the WMA endeavours to achieve the highest possible standards of medical care, ethics, education and health-related human rights for all people.

We write further to our letters of November 2025 and 15 January 2026, in which we urged your Government to guarantee due process and fair trial to detained health professionals or, failing that, to release them unconditionally; to ensure their humane treatment and access to healthcare; and to comply fully with its obligations under international humanitarian law. To date, we have received no response to these appeals, and the situation that prompted them has not improved.

The WMA remains gravely concerned by the continued detention of at least fourteen Palestinian physicians from Gaza, among them hospital directors, heads of surgery and senior specialists, most of whom are held without formal charge under the Unlawful Combatants Law, in some cases for more than two years. Their names are set out in the Annex to this letter.

We are particularly alarmed by recent reports concerning Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, Director of Kamal Adwan Hospital, who has been detained since 27 December 2024 without any formal charge having been brought against him. According to information received, Dr. Abu Safiya was placed in solitary confinement on 3 June 2026. Following a visit by his lawyer on 2 July 2026, it was reported that his health had deteriorated severely: he was too exhausted to speak, suffered intermittent loss of consciousness, and exhibited injuries around his eyes, ears, neck and head. Earlier reports indicated dramatic weight loss and cardiac arrhythmia. These accounts raise the most serious concerns for his life.

We understand that the Israel Medical Association has also been writing to the Israeli authorities regarding this case.

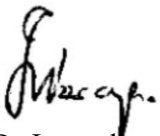
If confirmed, the treatment and conditions of detention described above would constitute grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Health professionals must never be arrested, detained or punished in connection with the provision of medical care in accordance with their ethical duty.

The WMA therefore urgently calls on Your Excellency's Government to:

1. guarantee all detained health professionals, including the fourteen physicians named in the Annex, immediate access to urgent and independent medical care and, where torture or ill-treatment is alleged, ensure a medical evaluation conducted in accordance with the Istanbul Protocol;
2. afford all detained health professionals due process and fair trial guarantees or, in the absence of formal charges, release them immediately and unconditionally;
3. ensure humane conditions of detention for all detained health professionals, including an immediate end to solitary confinement and regular access to legal counsel and family contact;
4. uphold the protection owed to healthcare personnel and facilities under international humanitarian law and the principle of medical neutrality.

The WMA will continue to follow this matter closely, in coordination with its Constituent Members, and stands ready to engage in constructive dialogue with your Government.

I thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.



Dr Jacqueline Kitulu
WMA President

Copy: H.E. Ambassador Daniel Meron, Permanent Representative of Israel to the UN in Geneva,
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Annex**Palestinian physicians from Gaza currently in detention**

1. Dr. Musab Samaan – General physician, Al-Aqsa Hospital; detained 16 February 2024
2. Dr. Omar Amar – Obstetrician/gynaecologist; detained 3 March 2024
3. Dr. Ahmad Musa – Surgeon, Nasser Hospital; detained 16 February 2024
4. Dr. Nahad Abu Taima – Head of Surgery, Nasser Hospital; detained 16 February 2024
5. Dr. Medhat Abu Tabng'a – Head of Surgery, Indonesian Hospital; detained 3 March 2024
6. Dr. Husam Abu Safiya – Director, Kamal Adwan Hospital; detained 27 December 2024
7. Dr. Murad Alkuka – Orthopaedic specialist, Al-Shifa Hospital; detained 18 March 2024
8. Dr. Mahmud Hallak – Intensive care physician, Nasser Hospital; detained 16 February 2024
9. Dr. Hamza Abu Sabha – Orthopaedic physician, Nasser Hospital; detained 16 February 2024
10. Dr. Ahmad Shahada – Cardiologist, Nasser Hospital; detained 16 February 2024
11. Dr. Hassan Almukayed – Vascular surgeon, Kamal Adwan Hospital; detained 25 October 2024
12. Dr. Raed Mahdi – Paediatrician, Al-Dorra Hospital; detained 7 December 2023
13. Dr. Akram Abu Odeh – Head of Orthopaedics, Indonesian Hospital; detained 22 November 2023
14. Dr. Muhammad Ubaid – Surgeon, Kamal Adwan and Al-Awda Hospitals; detained October 2024