

COGAT assessment: Medical responses for the Gaza Strip

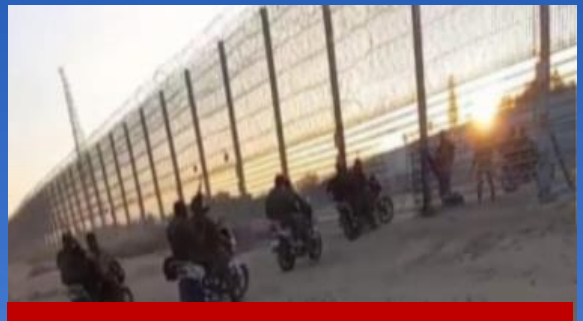
24.4.2024



Background

On October 7, 2023, Israel was rocked by a vicious terror attack from the Hamas terror organization. On that fateful day, **Hamas sadistically and brutally murdered, tortured, and raped over 1,200 Israelis. 240 Israelis were also abducted, and over 12,000 rockets were fired into Israel. Israel was forced into a war to defend its civilians and work to return those who were kidnapped.**

Despite the Israel Defense Force's (IDF) determination to fight and root out the terrorists at the core in the Gaza Strip, **a clear distinction is made between the war Israel has been waging since October 7th against terrorist organizations and their infrastructures, and its dedicated attempts to protect civilians. Israel's priority is to mitigate the suffering of civilians in Gaza, one way to do so is to coordinate and facilitate medical treatment when needed.**



Current Situation of Permanent Hospitals in the Gaza Strip

According to the available information, provided by reliable sources from the humanitarian community, there are currently **seven permanent hospitals operating throughout Gaza**.

However, in recent years **hospitals in Gaza have been turned into terror command centers by Hamas, contrary to international law**. These hospitals act not only as command-and-control centers for Hamas but are also used to hide terrorists and even hostages amongst medical staff and patients, continuing the **Hamas strategy of using civilians as human shields**. A partial list of hospitals Hamas used for terror includes Shifa Hospital, Rantisi Hospital, Al-Quds Hospital, Indonesian Hospital, Kamal Adwan Hospital, and the Nasser Hospital.

Shifa Hospital, the largest medical center in Northern Gaza, to this day, is the best example. In two weeks of surgical operation in the hospital, the IDF arrested hundreds of terrorists, and hundreds more were eliminated.



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Nevertheless, the State of Israel keeps supplying and refueling the permanent hospitals. During the specific operation in Shifa Hospital, for example, the IDF coordinated the refueling of the central generator with 24,050 liters of fuel, facilitated the movement of medical supplies (ten thousand units of medicine, hundreds of boxes of painkillers, over a hundred boxes of bandages, and infusions, and dozens of advanced monitoring devices) and food to the hospital, and evacuated patients and IDPs to the Humanitarian zone and European hospital.



Another example is the Al-Amal Hospital in Khan Yunis. Israel initiated operations against Hamas terrorists who were using the hospitals and its patients as human shields. Maintaining its policy of mitigating, as much as possible the suffering of civilians in Gaza, **the IDF liaised with the hospital directors and medical staff, on the phone and on the ground, to ensure that the hospital remained operational and accessible, even while the IDF was in battle with Hamas.** Furthermore, on the 10th of February, the IDF facilitated the delivery of over 20 oxygen tanks and additional medical equipment to the hospital, coordinated by the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) unit officers, the hospital, and international aid organizations. Due to the use of the hospital by terrorists as an operational hideout, this intricate coordination was carried out with an international aid organization and local officials.

Establishment of Field Hospitals



Israel also looked for **alternative solutions to enable adequate medical care for the civilian population while maintaining international standards. One of the main humanitarian responses, led by COGAT was – and still to this day - to establish field hospitals.** As part of this effort, Israel facilitates connections between international actors ranging from countries like France, Jordan, and the UAE, NGOs like the International Medical Corps (IMC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and relevant entities on the ground, **maps out manpower and equipment needs, and assists in operational planning and other necessary logistical arrangements.**

Since the beginning of the war, COGAT has facilitated and coordinated the creation of **seven field hospitals (with three more on the way) in the Gaza Strip, and three military floating hospitals were docked off the coast.** The field hospitals treated over 50,000 patients and counting, while the floating hospital treated over 2,000 patients.

Additional Medical Aid

At the same time, since the start of the war, COGAT has coordinated the entrance of more **than 21,500 tons of medical supplies into Gaza**, by trucks, through land crossings, boats via a navy pier, and with airdrops, to support the medical response for civilians.

As part of the process, the IDF, in collaboration with international organizations and NGOs, created a list of medical needs of the civilians in Gaza, to enable and facilitate the supply and resupply of aid.

So far, the aid provided included, inter alia, anesthetics, chemotherapy medications, insulin, sanitary tools, wheelchairs, medical mattresses, hospital beds, syringes, drugs, medical tools, cleaning and disinfectant products, medical oil, ancillary equipment, dialysis, intravenous insulin, incubators, medical scrubs, casts/plaster and instruments as well as vaccinations kits. These supplies were distributed to various hospitals and clinics including in northern Gaza.

Additionally, 416 medical staff and doctors entered the Gaza Strip to assist with medical care.



It should be noted, that there are no limits on the supply of medical aid, the situation simply requires that it should be requested through the correct channels.

Additional efforts to allow civilians to access medical care:

Vaccinations

Over 2.5 million doses of vaccines for Diphtheria, Tetanus, whooping cough, and Hepatitis B have been distributed to Gaza.



Ambulances Donations

127 ambulances donated by 10 countries providing vital services are currently in the strip, and another 50 are going to be transferred in the coming weeks.



Patients exit Gaza for Medical Care

3,259 ill and wounded civilians along with 737 escorts have exited the Gaza Strip for medical treatment to date.

