

October 2025

I write to you as the International President of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and as an emergency doctor who has worked in Gaza, to urge you to drastically and urgently increase the number of medical evacuations for people who cannot receive the care they need in Gaza. These evacuations should accompany a sustained effort to maintain the fragile ceasefire, which has been violated multiple times, and ensure a massive, unrestricted influx of humanitarian assistance.

Palestinians in Gaza are enduring genocide. The health system lies in ruins. Israeli forces have attacked hospitals, reducing them to rubble; killed, detained, and forcibly displaced medical staff; and systematically blocked supplies from entering the Strip.

The ceasefire alone does not mark the end of the extreme suffering. The most basic, life-sustaining necessities are urgently needed in Gaza: medical equipment, medicines, food, water, fuel, and adequate shelter for two million people, many of whom are returning to the rubble of their former homes and will face the approaching winter without a roof over their heads.

Today, a patient with complex trauma-related injuries, or life-threatening and chronic conditions such as cancer or kidney failure faces the same impossible reality as before the ceasefire. For these patients, medical evacuation is their only chance of survival. I appeal to your humanity. The ceasefire and the opening of additional border crossing points offer an urgent opportunity to save lives by drastically increasing the number of medical evacuations.

As of now, 15,600 people, one in four of whom are children, have been registered by the World Health Organization (WHO) for lifesaving medical evacuation from Gaza. These patients cannot wait for the healthcare system to be rebuilt. They need urgent care today.

We know what delay means for these patients. Between July 2024 and August 2025, at least 740 patients, including 137 children, died while waiting. These were preventable deaths – not only because of the destruction of hospitals, but due to political inaction.

While some countries – Egypt, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Türkiye and Jordan – have carried their share of the responsibility, others have accepted very few patients, or even none at all. This inaction is indefensible.

We urge you to act now:

- **Maintain pressure to ensure the ceasefire is sustained** and for the entry of a massive influx of unrestricted humanitarian assistance including medical equipment, medicines, food, water, fuel, and adequate shelter.

- **Drastically and urgently increase the number of medical evacuations from Gaza and ensure Israel does not block medical evacuations**
- **Prioritise evacuations based on medical urgency and clinical need**, including accepting adults and the elderly who make up 75 per cent of the waiting list.
- **Fast-track visa and administrative procedures** for patients and family members to reduce life-threatening delays
- **Allow patients, including children and vulnerable adults, to travel with their caregivers.**
- **Guarantee patients' right to remain abroad should they wish to, while also securing the right to a safe, dignified and voluntary return to Gaza**
- **Provide dignified living conditions for patients and their caregivers**, follow-up treatment, and rehabilitation services while abroad. Care must include much-needed mental health support for all patients and their caregivers.

At this time of a ceasefire, we also continue to grieve. Fifteen of our own colleagues have been killed, and an MSF orthopedic surgeon, Dr Mohammed Obeid, has been detained in harsh conditions since October 2024. We are urgently appealing for his release. According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, in total, 1,722 health workers have been killed in the past two years. This loss of skills and dedication to patients and communities is devastating.

Decisive action must be taken now to help end the decades-long cycle of extreme, unrelenting violence rooted in Israel's colonial occupation of Palestine.

Sincerely,

Dr M Javid Abdelmoneim
International President
Médecins Sans Frontières