

07.08.2025

Dear Taoiseach,

As Public Health Doctors in Ireland, we are writing to you once again to ask you to do more for the people of Gaza as a matter of grave urgency.

Over the last 22 months, we have watched helplessly as this catastrophic, man-made public health emergency has unfolded. The civilian population in Gaza has been subject to military assault, bombings, repeated forced displacement, the destruction of housing, food and water supplies, and the relentless/repeated dismantling of healthcare services and infrastructure. Despite all the warnings based on evidence, pictures and accounts of the ongoing massacre and starvation, the International community, including Ireland, has taken no effective action to end this genocide. What will it take to spark significant and impactful action to end this attack on the people of Gaza? When will enough be enough?

On the 29th July the UN-backed integrated Food Security Phase Classification issued a stark alert: “The worst case scenario of famine is currently playing out in the Gaza Strip.” There is considerable well documented evidence of severe food insecurity, and alarming levels of malnutrition-related deaths^{1,2} due to the prolonged, systematic blockade of food and other essential humanitarian aid to the civilians of Gaza. There is evidence that starvation is being used systematically as a weapon of war³ and we know that Palestinian children have been disproportionately affected by this humanitarian catastrophe⁴. The life-long public health impact of physical and psychological trauma, along with starvation particularly for the children who survive cannot be underestimated.^{5,6}

We cannot undo all that has been done but we must act now to stop this genocide and care for the hundreds of thousands of children who will bear the consequences of this conflict for the rest of their lives. We must do more.

The WHO has recorded 697 attacks on health care between October 2023 and May 2025. Many of our healthcare colleagues in Gaza have been killed or injured in this conflict with the WHO reporting that 917 had been killed in attacks as of May 2025, with 1406 injured.⁷ Those who survive and

¹ WHO **Malnutrition rates reach alarming levels in Gaza, WHO warns. WHO News Release**

<https://www.who.int/news/item/27-07-2025-malnutrition-rates-reach-alarming-levels-in-gaza--who-warns>

Date: July 27, 2025

² <https://www.msf.org/msf-finds-1-4-young-children-and-pregnant-women-malnourished-gaza-facilities>

MSF Press Release July 25, 2025

³ Ashour, Y · Abu-Jlambo, A · Abuzerr, S. **Starvation as a weapon of war in Gaza: violation of international law** *Lancet*. 2025; **405**, 2044

⁴ Bhutta, ZA · Dominguez, GB · Wise, PH. **When is enough, enough? Humanitarian rights and protection for children in conflict settings must be revisited** *BMJ*. 2024; **386**, e081515

⁵ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20679167/>

⁶ <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-025-21345-y>

⁷ https://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/Sitrep_59.pdf?ua=1



continue to work to care for the people of Gaza do so under unimaginable conditions of constant threat, hunger, exhaustion and untold trauma. Hospitals must never be militarized or targeted.

Healthcare must be actively protected at all times. We stand in deepest solidarity with our healthcare colleagues in Gaza and recognise their bravery and commitment to humanity.

A growing number of human rights organisations, UN agencies, UN Special Rapporteurs and genocide scholars have recognised that a genocide is occurring in Gaza.^{8,9} In July three major public health organisations – the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), the European Public Health Association (EUPHA), and the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) came together to issue a statement recognising “the overwhelming evidence of systematic destruction in Gaza, widely characterised as meeting the threshold for genocide”.¹⁰

It is our collective moral and ethical imperative to condemn once again the systematic targeting of civilians, health workers and infrastructure.

We call on you, as our elected representative, to ensure that the Irish Government:

- Continues to use all diplomatic and political channels available to push for a permanent ceasefire and for unimpeded, large-scale, life-saving humanitarian responses through well tested humanitarian aid channels. This is the only path to stopping further deaths and catastrophic human suffering.
- Advocates for large scale EU economic sanctions on the state of Israel.
- Abandons the recently adopted IHRA definition of anti-Semitism. Although the fight against anti-Semitism is necessary and important, the current IHRA definition puts healthcare professionals advocating for the preservation and dignity of human life and health care systems in Gaza at risk.
- Ceases immediately to issue licenses for the export of dual use goods to Israel.
- Ensures that procurement policies across all government departments are aligned with human rights/ International Court of Justice ruling perspectives.
- Ensures no arms pass through or over our sovereign territory.
- Commits financial support to the rebuilding of the health, water and sanitation infrastructure of Gaza.

Dr Kenneth Beatty,
Chair

The Irish Society of Specialists in Public Health Medicine

⁸ **Amnesty International investigation concludes Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza** <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-concludes-israel-is-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza/> Date: Dec 5, 2024

⁹ Asem, S. **Top genocide scholars unanimous that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza: Dutch investigation.** **Middle East Eye** <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/top-genocide-scholars-unanimous-israel-committing-genocide-gaza-investigation-finds>

¹⁰ <https://epha.org/joint-public-health-statement-on-gaza/>