

Israel trying to make Gaza uninhabited by targeting health facilities, says Palestine Minister of Health at WISH



Citation: Maged Abu Ramadan, the Minister of Health for Palestine speaking at WISH 2024

Ministers and world health leaders set bold policy recommendations to protect healthcare in war at Qatar Foundation's World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) 2024

14 November 2024. Doha, Qatar — Speaking at a World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) panel discussion in Doha today on protecting healthcare systems, *Maged Abu Ramadan*, the Minister of Health for Palestine said that numbers of people dead or hospitals destroyed don't tell the story: "What is important is human life, human beings, human dignity. In Gaza, the most important things to us are our country, our dignity and our children. What is very important is that they want to make Gaza uninhabited. That's why they are targeting health facilities."

Protecting healthcare in conflict is a theme being discussed throughout the two-day Summit. At the morning's plenary session, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, discussed the increase in attacks on health, especially in the past two years. "Healthcare facilities should not be a target, especially given the increased need for healthcare

during war,” said Dr. Tedros. He emphasized that two-thirds of the people dying are women and children and that stopping the war in Gaza and bringing the parties to a negotiating table is crucial.

“The key to a solution lies with Israel,” Dr Tedros said. “Israel should understand that it’s in its best interest to resolve this.”

Dr. Tedros recalled the scenes of “horror” he has witnessed in Gaza, Sudan and elsewhere. “We are sleepwalking into a nuclear war,” said Dr. Tedros.

Discussions on these topics were based around the newly published WHO/WISH report ‘[In the Line of Fire: Protecting Health in Armed Conflict](#)’, that emphasizes the need for a bold, unified response to protect health in times of conflict.

Among other actions, the report calls for a global alliance and a UN Special Rapporteur for the protection of healthcare in conflict.

Speakers at the panel session included Dr. Rick Brennan Regional Emergency Director for WHO, Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; Ms. Sigrid Kaag, UN Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza; Prof. Leonard Rubenstein, Distinguished Professor of the Practice, Center for Public Health and Human Rights; Dr Mads Gilbert, Professor of Emergency Medicine, The Arctic University of Norway; H.E. Dr. Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, Deputy Prime Minister for Human Development and the Minister of Health and Population; and H.E. Mr. Yousef Bin Ali Alkhater, Qatar Red Crescent President.

Since 2000, violence against healthcare and health workers during times of conflict has risen, according to the WHO/WISH report, despite the International Humanitarian Law protecting medical care in conflict. Vital health services have been attacked and severely disrupted, leaving civilians and vulnerable populations without essential care.

Since 2018, WHO has documented more than 7,000 incidents of attacks on health care in which more than 2,200 health workers and patients lost their lives and more than 4,600 people were injured across 21 reporting countries and territories with complex humanitarian emergencies.

This year, WISH was opened in the presence of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation and founder of WISH. The opening ceremony, held at Qatar National Convention Centre in Doha, included speeches from Her Excellency Dr. Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari, Qatar’s former Minister of Public Health; Lord Darzi of Denham, Executive Chair of WISH; and Christos Christou, President of Médecins Sans Frontières.

The theme of [WISH 2024](#) is 'Humanizing Health: Conflict, Equity and Resilience'. It aims to highlight the need for innovation in health to support everyone, leaving nobody behind and building resilience, especially among vulnerable societies and in areas of armed conflict.

Ahead of the summit, WISH entered into a strategic partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), collaborating on the development of a series of evidence-based reports and policy papers, as well as working with the United Nations' health agency to develop a post-summit implementation strategy.

The summit features more than 200 experts in health speaking about evidence-based ideas and practices in healthcare innovation to address the world's most urgent global health challenges.

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Notes for editors

About the World Innovation Summit for Health

The [World Innovation Summit for Health \(WISH\)](#) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through international summits and a range of ongoing initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research, and industry.

Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development.

QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality

education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development.

QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, please visit: www.qf.org.qa.

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