



International Physicians
for the Prevention of Nuclear War



339 Pleasant Street, Third Floor, Maiden, MA 02148, USA

October 28, 2023

Dear Mr Secretary-General Guterres,

We are writing to you as co-presidents of our Nobel Peace Laureate organization to express our heartfelt support for your excellent speech on October 13th in the UN Security Council. It was balanced, and while stating the context, you also clearly rejected that context as justification for the “appalling attacks” of October 7th by Hamas on Israeli citizens. You said that those attacks, however, do not justify a collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

Most importantly, we wish to show solidarity with any and all people, like yourself, who stand with citizens who are suffering the terrible consequences of war, however it came about. As physicians, it is our duty, first and foremost, to do no harm. International humanitarian law, which came about through the work of a medical organisation – the Red Cross – extends this principle to all conduct in war. Citizens must not be harmed. Our work as health professionals to help citizens who are in harm's way must not be made impossible by the threat of bombs falling on our workplace, lack of fuel to run our electricity for our equipment or to pump water to keep our patients alive. As you well know, while bombs are levelling Gaza, including health care centres, schools and UN shelters, people are dying from the effects of an inhuman blockade which will kill those who are not first hit by bombs.

We cannot sit by and watch this slaughter, even though we strongly support the call for hostages to come home. Blockading and levelling Gaza is not the way to get the hostages back, nor will it prevent such attacks in the future. On the contrary, it could nurture terrorism elsewhere, so that Israel is never safe and will never live in peace. Our goal must be peace, health, and security of all people .

We therefore applaud the resolution in the UN General Assembly for a humanitarian truce in Gaza that was passed yesterday evening.

Thank you for your brave words and thank you to the United Nations and its organisations for all you are doing. We stand by your side.

Yours,

Dr. Carlos Umana, Dr. Kati Juva and David Onazi

Co-Presidents.

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