



**Statement on behalf of OIC Group, to be delivered by Pakistan,**  
**during the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session of Executive Board of WHO**  
**10 December 2023**

**Madam Chair,  
Director General of WHO,  
Excellencies and distinguished delegates,**

I deliver this statement on behalf of the OIC Group in Geneva.

We thank the Director General for convening this Special Session of the Executive Board, which was necessitated by the ongoing health emergency in Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The Group commends the ongoing humanitarian efforts by WHO, being carried out with support of other UN agencies and International Organizations, to provide essential medical supplies on ground, and voices full support for its work in OPT.

We also express our condolences with families of WHO and other UN staff workers which have been targeted and killed in the conflict by the occupying forces.

OIC expresses its deep concern over the escalating and constantly deteriorating health situation in Gaza. We strongly condemn the ongoing carnage which has pushed the health system in Gaza past its limitations.

The Group is alarmed by the scale of the unprecedented loss and suffering in OPT. More than 16,000 people have been killed so far, including more than 7000 children and more than 4800 women. Only about one third of the hospitals are barely functional at this stage. More than 1.9 million have been displaced.

Such is the scale of destruction that the UN Secretary General had to resort to the unprecedented step of invocation of Article 99 of the UN Charter calling for urgent action by the Security Council.

The UNSG in his letter noted the collapse of health system in Gaza and the fear of further deaths of patients awaiting treatment.

The Group supports the UNSG's call, supported by DG WHO, for a humanitarian ceasefire. Only a ceasefire can allow for safe passage of humanitarian assistance as the current conditions do not allow for safe delivery of the aid.

**Madam Chair,**

The disruptive impact of the ongoing violence on the health system of the Occupied Palestinian Territory will take months and years to recover.



The physical wounds might heal in time, but the mental trauma and stress will not wash away easily as almost half a million residents of Gaza are already suffering from mental health issues.

WHO's work will therefore continue to be important and will require adequate resources. We urge all donors and partners to help WHO and other UN agencies in scaling up their health emergency response and recovery efforts in OPT.

The Group supports the resolution submitted by six EB members of EMRO on behalf of the Observer Mission of Palestine.

We call on Israel, the Occupying Power, to immediately ceasefire and comply with its obligations under International Law and protect the right to health of the people living under its occupation.

We also call on WHO to continue its monitoring and assessment of the full situation and look forward to its report to the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of World Health Assembly.

Lastly, we reaffirm our enduring commitment to Palestinians to realize their dreams and aspirations of peace in an independent state of Palestine with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its Capital.

**Thank you.**

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