
**World Health Organization
Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO)**

WHO EMRO | Five years of blockade: a political determinant of health in Gaza Strip

The blockade on the Gaza Strip, imposed in June 2007, has affected the functioning and development of the Palestinian health care system in a number of ways: restrictions on importation of medical supplies, equipment and spare parts; limitations on movement of patients and health staff; interruptions of power supply and impurities of water supply; insecurity; and the permit regime limiting access of Palestinians to health services, as well as of the professional development of staff.

The Palestinian health care system is an integrated whole, covering West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority, based in Ramallah, supplies medicines and disposables for Gaza Strip and pays salaries of most of the staff. East Jerusalem hospitals are the main specialized centres for patients from the West Bank and Strip Gaza. Health staff need to travel between the West Bank and Gaza Strip for training and to provide care. The health system cannot function effectively when the Gaza Strip is subject to a blockade and cut off from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

WHO has joined 50 international organizations in issuing the following statement.

For over five years in the Gaza Strip, more than 1.6 million people have been under blockade in violation of international law. More than half of these people are children. We the undersigned say with one voice " **End the blockade now** ".

The international aid and development signatories include:

1. Action Contre la Faim (ACH)
2. Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (Acted)
3. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
4. Amnesty International
5. Broederlijk Delen
6. CARE International
7. CCFD-Terre Solidaire
8. Christian Aid
9. Christian Peacemaker Team
10. Cordaid
11. Danchurchaid
12. Diakonia
13. A Different Jewish Voice (Een Ander Joods Geluid)
14. Emergency Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (EWASH)
15. Gruppo di Volontariato Civile (GVC)
16. Handicap International
17. Help Age International
18. International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)
19. IKV Pax Christi
20. International Learning Center
21. Life for Relief and Development
22. Medicos del Mundo - España (MDM Spain)
23. Médecins du Monde France (MdM France)
24. Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)
25. Medico International
26. Movement for Peace (MPDL)
27. Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
28. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
29. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
30. Oxfam

31. Palestine Solidarity Association of Sweden
32. Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH)
33. Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale
34. Save the Children
35. Secours Islamique France
36. Swedish Organization for Individual Relief
37. Terre des Hommes Italy (TdH Italy)
38. Terre des Hommes Lausanne (TdH Suisse)
39. Terre des Homme
40. Trócaire
41. The Carter Center
42. United Nations Association International Service (UNAIS)
43. War Child

The United Nations signatories include:

44. Humanitarian Coordination/Resident Coordinator, occupied Palestinian territory
45. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
46. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
47. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
48. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
49. United Nations Women
50. World Health Organization (WHO)

List of signatories obtained from Oxfam press release: <http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2012-06-14/international-pressure-mounts-over-gaza-blockade>