

We, the undersigned, are shocked and outraged by the narrative MSF has used in the press release made publicly available on Oct 12th, 2023 entitled “**Indiscriminate violence and the collective punishment of Gaza must cease**” found on the following link <https://www.msf.org/indiscriminate-violence-and-collective-punishment-gaza-must-cease>.

We call on the MSF directors to:

1. Immediately withdraw the above-mentioned press release. We would be amenable to accept a much more balanced press release if not a public apology
2. Instantly stop the Israeli media narrative adopted by the west framing Israelis as victims
3. Discontinue the statements insinuating that Hamas is behind the ongoing war by using terms such as “collective punishment”
4. Responsibly recognize in MSF communications the weight of the history and immediate root cause of the ongoing war against Palestinians particularly people in Gaza: Palestinians have been under colonization for decades
5. Show the minimum respect and sensitivity to the strife of our more than 300 Palestinians colleagues in Gaza

In addition to be above, we urge MSF to re-visit the MSF glossary shared for the terms to be used in public communications, engaging the community in question as the glossary as is does not represent us

Once more, MSF is choosing to stand behind the “White” face of the organization accommodating the opinion of their international community at HQ level and colleagues of the global North, totally disregarding the opinion of the field who are/should always be at the center of MSF’s attention

We reject this MSF communication for the following reasons:

- ➔ This narrative does not represent MSF. It jeopardizes two of the principles MSF stands behind:
 - the *impartiality*: it does not treat humans equally, talking about Israeli **killings**, not mentioning Gazans killings rather talking about “attacks” on Gaza and **deaths** (passive wording) while more than 1500 Gazan have been already killed, 30% of whom are children.
 - The *neutrality*: obviously taking side with Israelis condemning Hamas for the killings (“mass killings of civilians perpetrated by Hamas”)
- ➔ It does not represent MSF mandate about bearing witness to crises and speaking out about the human suffering when we have our staff in Gaza witnessing the horrific consequences of the non-stop bombing and the siege by Israel. Are we not supposed to be the voice of the vulnerable during wars? MSF is turning a blind eye on the killings, sufferings, lack of access to urgent medical needs, huge shortage of medical supplies, and deaths of medics in Gaza.
- ➔ If MSF does not back off this kind of statements and persists in using similar ones, it will significantly impact and heavily shake the commitment of our MSF staff in Gaza and the Middle East and break their trust and confidence in MSF loyalty towards them. Our MSF colleagues in Gaza are losing their loved ones, homes, lands, and lives and are facing threats of starvation while not having anywhere to go for shelter. We are, in this type of statements, destroying the MSF perception not only in Palestine but in the whole Middle East
- ➔ What we are witnessing in Gaza today echoes what motivated the establishment of MSF more than 50 years ago in response to the suffering seen in Biafra. Presently Gaza, much like Biafra back then, is enduring a relentless siege and continuous bombardment and a heavily biased

media. Those are news we are directly getting from our colleagues living the nightmare of Gaza war today. Although our MSF colleagues are on the ground, facing their own hardships, there is a stark difference compared to our stand during Biafra: we are taking side with the oppressors and clearly calling Palestinians, “perpetrators”

- The MSF we stand behind is the MSF that takes firm positions such as the one taken in 2017 against the EU-Turkey deal framing it as “Europe's failure to prioritise the root cause of refugee crisis” and refused funding over the migration deal not the MSF we are reading in the press release. **The MSF we are reading today does not represent us in any way.**

As MSF staff, this narrative puts in question our core reason of working with MSF.

This petition has been read and signed by a sample from international and national staff in the coordination and the projects from different profiles in Lebanon.

Those are just few signatures, we are in the process of circulating it to gather more signatures from other people from within Lebanon and other concerned offices in the Middle East as a first step. We will consider as a second step and based on the response we get, going with this publicly

Signatures

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