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**Statement: CMEP Calls for Release of Unlawfully
Detained Palestinian Medical Personnel**

July 1, 2025, Washington D.C.- Churches for Middle
East Peace (CMEP) joins twenty four other civil

society organizations in calling for the release of the unlawfully detained Palestinian medical workers in Gaza and the West Bank. This includes doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals working for international humanitarian organizations such as MedGlobal and Children Not Numbers.

Under International Humanitarian Law, healthcare workers are protected as civilians. As the letter states, “Civilians are not lawful targets in war—whether in the attacks and hostage-taking by Hamas on October 7 or in Israel’s unlawful detention and targeting of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank. International humanitarian law protects all civilians, including explicit protections for medical personnel, during conflict.” However, many healthcare workers are being forcibly removed from hospitals and detained under dubious conditions.

Gaza’s healthcare system has collapsed since October 7, 2023 due to repeated attacks on medical facilities and the unjust detention of doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel. These actions are not

only illegal by international law but obstruct humanitarian efforts to respond to this crisis.

CMEP affirms the call to end arbitrary detentions and attacks on medical facilities, such as the repeated bombings on the Al-Ahli Hospital, as well as the release of those who are being unjustly detained. Healthcare workers belong in hospitals, not prisons.

The full statement can be read below.

**Release the Doctors: NGOs
Call for the Release of
Unlawfully Detained Health
Workers in Gaza and the
West Bank**

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, demand an end to Israel's arbitrary detention of

Palestinian health workers in Gaza and the West Bank. Among them are doctors, nurses, and other health professionals working with humanitarian organizations, including staff of MedGlobal and Children Not Numbers.

Healthcare workers are essential personnel. Throughout this conflict, they have risked their lives to care for hundreds of thousands of injured, malnourished and sick civilians. They themselves are civilians and explicitly protected in conflict situations under International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Yet instead of protection, hundreds of health workers have been forcibly removed from hospital wards and patient bedsides and subjected to prolonged detention in Israeli prisons and military camps. At least 185 healthcare workers from Gaza

and the West Bank were estimated to be in Israeli detention as of February 2025. The conditions of many of those still detained remain unknown. Many of those released have reported severe abuse, while some have died in custody.

These detentions are part of a wider assault on Gaza's health system. Since October 2023, there have been around 700 attacks on health, including aerial bombardments of hospitals, health clinics and ambulances. Over 1,500 health workers and 460 aid workers have been killed.

Israeli authorities have repeatedly and blatantly violated international humanitarian law in repeated detentions of and attacks on health care workers. Such actions are also an affront to UN

Security Council Resolution 2286—endorsed by over 80 states—which unequivocally condemns attacks on healthcare workers and health sites and demands their protection. Health workers must be free to do their lifesaving work without fear of violence, arrest, or intimidation. If health workers can be detained and attacked in one of the world’s most closely watched conflicts with impunity, it sets a dangerous precedent for the treatment of health workers around the world.

Civilians are not lawful targets in war—whether in the attacks and hostage-taking by Hamas on October 7 or in Israel’s unlawful detention and targeting of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank. International humanitarian law protects all civilians, including

explicit protections for medical personnel, during conflict.

We call for Israel's immediate, unconditional release of unlawfully detained medical personnel and an end to these arbitrary detentions and wider unlawful attacks on health. We urge the international community to echo our call to uphold the fundamental legal and moral protection of medical personnel whose sole job is to heal.

Signatories:

1. Amnesty International USA
2. A New Policy
3. Al Awda Health and Community Association
4. Arab Educational Institute - Pax Christi - Bethlehem / Palestine
5. Children Not Numbers

6. Churches for Middle East Peace
7. Eyewitness Gaza
8. Friends Committee on National Legislation
9. Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA)
10. Glia Equal Care
11. HelpAge International
12. Human Rights Watch
13. Humanity &Inclusion - Handicap International
14. International Centre of Justicefor Palestinians
15. KinderUSA
16. Médecins du Monde International Network
17. MedGlobal
18. Palestine Children's Relief Fund
19. Pax Christi International

20. Physicians for Human Rights
21. Première Urgence Internationale
22. United Against Inhumanity (UAI)
23. United Methodists for Kairos
Response (UMKR)
24. WESPAC Foundation, Inc.

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Formed in 1984, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national church communions and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions that works to encourage US policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. CMEP works to mobilize US Christians to embrace a holistic perspective

and to be advocates of equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East.

Recent CMEP Statements and Press Releases:

June 24, 2025: CMEP Welcomes Iran-Israel Ceasefire and Urges U.S. to Prevent Further Escalation; Calls for Immediate Focus on Ending the War in Gaza

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) welcomes the ceasefire between Iran and Israel and urges all parties, including the U.S., to ensure it holds and leads to long-term de-escalation. The U.S. attack on Iranian nuclear facilities was unlawful and reckless, bringing the region dangerously close to another devastating war. As we step back from the brink, the U.S. must now prioritize a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and renewed focus on ending the ongoing atrocities against the Palestinian people.

June 23, 2025: CMEP Calls for Protection of Syria's Christian Communities following a suicide attack on the Church of the Prophet Elias in Damascus in Damascus

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) mourns the devastating suicide bombing that took place at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Prophet Elias in Damascus, Syria, on June 23, 2025. CMEP stands in deep solidarity with Syria's Christian community and calls for the international community and the Syrian government to safeguard the rights and protections of all minorities in Syria.

Jun 13, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Condemns Israeli Strikes Against Iran and Urges De-escalation of Regional Aggression

CMEP condemns in the strongest possible terms Israel's recent attacks on Iran, including reported strikes near nuclear facilities and within civilian areas. These reckless and unlawful actions risk the lives of hundreds of millions of people across the Middle East and escalate the threat of a catastrophic

regional war. We also call on Iran to cease its counterattacks against Israel. Military solutions are not the answer and will only cause more death, destruction, and harm. Such escalations not only cause civilian deaths but further destabilize the entire peace and security of the region.

Jun 5, 2025: CMEP Condemns and Abhors the Attack on Al-Ahli Hospital and Calls for Accountability and Peace

CMEP stands in solidarity with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and elevates its powerful statement condemning the Israeli military's attack on Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City on June 5th, 2025. This egregious assault, resulting in the deaths of five individuals, including three journalists and a father escorting his injured child, and injuring dozens more, underscores the urgent need for the international community to uphold the protections afforded to medical facilities, journalists, and civilians under international humanitarian law.

Jun 4, 2025: CMEP Elevates the Statement of Archbishop Elpidophoros on the Threat to the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine in Egypt

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) joins with His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, in expressing deep concern and sorrow over the recent judicial decision by Egyptian authorities that threatens the property and spiritual mission of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. Elevates the Statement of Archbishop Elpidophoros press release.

See all of our **[public statements](#)** and **[press releases](#)**.

Contact Us

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