



Palestinian Medical Relief Society: Siege, demolition and hunger – PMRS calls on health workers worldwide to demand action, not words

26 October 2026 — **We write to you from our teams in al-Khalil (Hebron) and in Gaza.** For decades, the Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS) has called on the international community and our allies to uphold international law and protect Palestinian lives. Too often, those calls have been answered with statements of concern. **This week shows, once again, the cost of words without action.**

Since 23 October, **Israeli forces have tightened their closure of al-Khalil (Hebron) and demolished Palestinian homes, shops, factories and roads** in Ein Deir Baha, al-Jalda and the surrounding neighbourhoods. **In three days, Hebron Municipality has registered 3,368 people from 518 families displaced.** Among them are **214 infants under two, 143 pregnant or breastfeeding women, 271 people over 60 and 205 people living with chronic illness,** and 42 per cent of families have nowhere safe to go.

The demolition of these homes is collective punishment, prohibited under Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The destruction of Palestinian homes and the forcible transfer of the families who lived in them are grave breaches of the Convention. **They are war crimes.**

For the people of al-Khalil, reaching healthcare has long meant risking violence from settlers and Israeli forces. **This week, Israeli forces prevented ambulances from reaching Palestinians wounded in a settler attack west of the city.** PMRS has served al-Khalil for years through our primary health clinic, mobile clinic and outreach teams, staffed by many people from the city itself. **Throughout these events, our teams have remained on the ground, treating and supporting the most vulnerable.**

In Gaza, **Israeli strikes on 25 October hit the Islamic University twice**, killing three staff members, Ashraf Dahlan, Shadi Abu Ataya and Sami Baroud, and wounding eight students. More than 1,500 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire was signed in October 2025.

Gaza is again on the edge of famine. Gaza's Bakery Owners Association has warned that **flour stocks have run out and ten of the Strip's 17 operating bakeries have closed.** The World Food Programme has also reported that funding shortfalls have forced it to cut food aid to half a million people and halve family rations, while 1.4 million people face crisis levels of hunger or worse. Gaza's Ministry of Health has recorded **466 deaths from malnutrition since 2024, 157 of them children.** **The starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is a war crime.**

Palestinian health workers cannot carry this alone. We call on our fellow health workers, health organisations, allies and supporters around the world to stand with us, and to demand that their governments secure:

- **An end to the siege and demolitions in al-Khalil,** and the safe return of displaced families with their homes rebuilt.
- **Unhindered humanitarian access across Gaza and the West Bank,** including food, medical supplies, fuel and winterisation materials, and free movement for ambulances, health workers and patients.
- **Full compliance with international law.**

Governments with the power to stop these crimes, including the United Kingdom and the European Union, must use it. The UK has acknowledged ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in the West Bank. Those words must now be matched by deeds.

Statements of concern and condemnation do not keep Palestinians alive.