

**Rt Hon David Lammy MP**

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs  
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

*Sent via email*

23 January 2025

Dear Foreign Secretary,

**Re. The arbitrary detention and alleged mistreatment of Gazan healthcare professionals by Israel**

On behalf of the British Medical Association (BMA) we would like to express our concern regarding the reports of arbitrary detention and mistreatment of doctors from Gaza by Israeli forces. While the news of the ceasefire agreement is, of course, welcome, we are nevertheless extremely alarmed by the mounting evidence of human rights violations against our Palestinian colleagues. We urge you to encourage an investigation into these reports and take appropriate action to raise these concerns with your Israeli counterparts.

The [United Nations](#) (UN) and [Human Rights Watch](#) (HRW), amongst other notable organisations, have verified that hundreds of medical staff have been detained in Israeli detention centres. Palestinian healthcare workers who have been released from detention and interviewed by these organisations have reported that they were not informed why they were detained nor charged with any offence and say that they were mistreated.

In [interviews with HRW](#), healthcare workers testified to being stripped, beaten, blindfolded, and handcuffed for prolonged periods. Moreover, those interviewed reported that threats of indefinite detention, rape, and the killing of family members were used to pressure detainees into stating they were members of Hamas. Further acts of mistreatment such as electroshocks or drugged interrogations have been claimed, as well as the denial of medical care for the resulting injuries. Additionally, we note that several doctors have [died](#) in Israeli custody. Concerns are amplified by the fact that the [International Committee of the Red Cross](#) (ICRC) [has been prevented](#) from carrying out humanitarian visits to the detention facilities.

We are deeply concerned by reports of any violation of the rights of medical personnel in conflict zones who are afforded special protections under international humanitarian law. The BMA calls

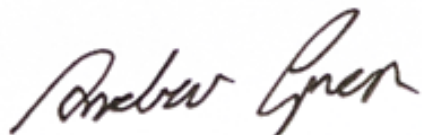
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on the UK government to push for an independent investigation into these allegations and for the suspension of access to detention centres for the ICRC to be lifted.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Andrew Green**  
BMA Medical Ethics Committee Chair



**Dr Kitty Mohan**  
BMA International Committee Chair