

International Council of Nurses Call for Humanitarian Law in Gaza

GENEVA, Switzerland, 20 January 2009... ICN is greatly concerned about the serious degradation of health services and health supplies in Gaza amid the ongoing military action and the resulting impact on civilians, including unacceptably high mortality rates, injuries resulting in devastating disability and long term physical and psychological morbidity, outbreaks of communicable diseases and increasing maternal and new born fatality.

ICN is calling for:

- Immediate enforcement of International Humanitarian Law requiring all health personnel and facilities be protected at all times, even during armed conflict. Attacks on them are grave violations of International Humanitarian and Human Rights laws.
- Immediate increased access to Gaza, overland and through ports, for the importation of essential medicines and health care supplies and facilitation for the distribution of these supplies.
- Increased periods of cease fire to allow for movement of patients, emergency services health personal, medical supplies and delivery of health services.
- Replacement health personnel, including trauma care teams, to sustain the provision of life-saving services and relieve exhausted health personnel now working up to 24 hours a day.
- Evacuation outside of Gaza of the critically injured and those suffering chronic condition that require extended care (e.g. cancer, cardiac, neo-natal).

The **International Council of Nurses (ICN)** is a federation of 133 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally. For further information contact Linda Carrier-Walker
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