

Israeli Military Demand to Evacuate Rehabilitative Hospital in Gaza Unlawful

By [Global Research News](#)

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Dr. Basman al-'Ashi, Director of al-Wafa Hospital and two of the patients | Anne Pak, ActiveStills, 15 July 2014.

B'Tselem has discovered that the Israeli military included the al-Wafaa rehabilitative hospital in a-Shuja'iyyeh neighborhood in the demand it issued to residents of the a-Shuja'iyyeh and a-Zeitun neighborhoods to evacuate their homes by today, July 16, 2014 at 8:00 AM. Hospital Director Basman al-'Ashi told B'Tselem over the phone that the hospital received a recorded message last night at around 11:10 PM, saying that a-Shuja'iyyeh residents must leave the area and move north to the city center. Shortly thereafter, at around 11:30 PM, the hospital received another phone call from a person saying he was from the military who repeated the demand to evacuate the hospital specifically.

According to al-'Ashi, the hospital currently has 17 patients, between the ages of 14 and 95, all suffering from different degrees of paralysis. There are also some thirty staff members in the hospital at this time and a number of international activists. Al-'Ashi clarified that there is no intention to evacuate the hospital, noting that this was one of the only hospitals in Gaza to offer rehabilitative treatment for patients in these conditions.

The military's demand to evacuate the hospital is unlawful. A hospital is not a military target and the military may not target it even after it is evacuated. The information B'Tselem has indicates that the hospital was ordered to evacuate as part of the sweeping demand to evacuate the entire neighborhood, in blatant disregard for the fact that evacuating a rehabilitation institution is a complicated task which may put lives at risk. There is no other rehabilitative institute in the area where patients can be transferred. These patients require special conditions that cannot be recreated. Transferring hospital patients is complicated and dangerous at the best of times. Under the current conditions in Gaza, the danger is mortal.

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