

## Gaza War - Perspective from the West Bank

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Dear Editor,

The situation has changed here after the 7th October, and amongst the most significant changes has been to the healthcare system in the West Bank, especially in Jerusalem. The main hospitals that have been affected in Jerusalem are Maqasid Hospital, the French Hospital and Matla Hospital (Augusta Victoria which is run by UNRWA). These hospitals have patients referred to them from both the West Bank and Gaza.

After the 7th October war, and the subsequent siege of cities in the West Bank and the increase in military checkpoints, these referrals have become extremely difficult and patients with chronic illnesses are not being treated. Security clearance is needed for Palestinians to pass these checkpoints and they are no longer being given.

In addition to this, the roads are more dangerous due to the recent violent events in the West Bank (especially Jenin, Nablus and Tol Karam). Hospitals in Jerusalem are under more pressure at the moment due to the increased numbers of wounded too. A number of hospitals and healthcare centres, and even ambulances have been recently targeted.

A field hospital in Nablus established by Jordan to take the pressure off has been struggling to treat its patients. The numbers who are arriving with acute trauma are at risk of overflowing the hospital though many patients still can't be seen due to the difficulty of even reaching it due to the number of military checkpoints that make the journey needlessly long and fraught with risk.

The international community must unanimously condemn the actions of Israel and isolate it from the body of nations. The Arab and Muslim world should play a leading role in this effort and advocate on behalf of the Palestinian people. FIMA has a role to play here in coordinating efforts between Muslim medical associations for lobbying efforts and aid delivery. And whilst the situation in the West Bank is not as dire of that of Gaza, the people there are suffering and Israel share the blame here too. Beyond the war, the spread of communicable diseases is a huge concern in the medium to long term. Tens of thousands of Palestinians rely on these hospitals; we cannot afford to let them down.