UN accused of downplaying Hamas terrorists' use of Gaza hospitals as new report ignores important details

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<https://www.foxnews.com/world/un-accused-downplaying-hamas-terrorists-use-gaza-hospitals-new-report-ignores-important-details>

During the Israel Defense Forces’ military offensive in northern Gaza to strike at ‘[the heart of Hamas](https://archive.vn/o/hDLx5/https:/www.foxnews.com/world/un-israel-odds-over-cause-decline-aid-deliveries-false-narratives-international-community%23&_intcmp=tw_fnc),’ starkly different narratives between the IDF and the Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health have led to variable reporting on the conflict at large. Particularly divisive are recent reports on Hamas’ use of hospitals.

On Nov. 3, the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), which oversees the humanitarian-civil effort in Gaza, reported that during its attempts to evacuate patients and staff from Kamal Adwan and Al-Awda hospitals in northern Gaza, terrorists ‘detonated an explosive device only a few hundred meters away from the [Kamal Adwan] hospital.’ While the convoy was spared injuries, COGAT reported that six children in the hospital were injured.

Hamas' Gaza Ministry of Health failed to mention the explosive device. An IDF spokesperson told Fox News Digital that the COGAT Gaza Coordination and Liaison Administration (CLA), with heads of the World Health Organization, discovered that the device had been ‘planted by the terrorist organizations in Gaza.’

On Nov. 4, the Hamas Gaza Ministry of Health stated that ‘occupation forces continue to bomb and destroy Kamal Adwan Hospital violently, affecting all the hospital facilities.’ The ministry accused the IDF of deciding ‘to execute all the staff who refused to evacuate the hospital.’

In its reporting, the New York Times noted the Ministry of Health assessment, giving a perfunctory mention of the detonation from the previous day.

An IDF spokesperson told Fox News Digital that ‘after further review,’ they are ‘not aware of any attacks on the Kamal Adwan hospital’ on Nov. 4. They stated that a terror target some 100 meters from the hospital was engaged with a ‘precise munition’ that day. ‘It’s important to remember that Hamas is still heavily armed and operating ruthlessly in the Gaza Strip, often harming Gaza’s civilians, with over 3,000 rocket launches by the terrorist organization landing within Gaza itself,’ the spokesperson continued.

Previously, on Oct. 28, Reuters reported that an Israeli raid on Kamal Adwan Hospital resulted in the capture of about 100 suspected Hamas terrorists. The IDF told Reuters that ‘a few of the fully identified terrorists disguised themselves as medical staff,’ resulting in the need ‘to check the medical staff as well.’ While inside the hospital, the IDF found terrorist funding, weapons and intelligence documents.

In the Gaza Ministry of Health’s version of events, ‘the occupation arrested and deported all the medical staff,’ leaving ‘only one pediatrician.’

The IDF spokesperson emphasized that the IDF had been ‘required… to take action’ because ‘Hamas militants used medical facilities for military purposes, operating from within hospitals, disguising themselves as medical staff, and storing weapons in the hospital compounds.’ The IDF had also ensured ‘the continued treatment of patients with the necessary medical equipment or the evacuation of patients to other hospitals in Gaza.’

Brig. Gen. Elad Goren, head of COGAT, spoke to Fox News Digital about the Ministry of Health’s statement that the IDF was executing staff at Kamal Adwan Hospital. ‘We are focusing on trying to assist people that are not a part of the violent circle in Kamal Adwan and to evacuate them because we want to take the terrorists and have to investigate them to find out where are our hostages,’ Goren said. ‘If the world wants to believe Hamas, I think they have a problem with their values.’.

The use of Kamal Adwan Hospital by Hamas has been previously confirmed, including by Ahmad Kahlot, a high-ranking Hamas member and former director of the hospital. In December 2023, Kahlot admitted [that Kamal Adwan Hospital](https://archive.vn/o/hDLx5/https:/www.foxnews.com/world/gaza-hospital-safe-place-hamas-terrorists-hospital-chief-admits-interrogation) was used ‘to hide high-ranking military activists,’ who know they ‘won’t be targeted when they are in the hospital.’ The hospital, he said, contained housing for the terrorists as well as ‘areas for interrogations, internal and special security.’

COGAT released an interrogation conducted in October 2024 of an ambulance driver who claimed that Hamas fighters are present throughout the exterior and interior of Kamal Adwan Hospital, and ‘operate ambulances to transport their wounded military operatives and to transport them for their missions’ rather than ‘using the ambulances for the benefit of civilians.’

A September 2024 report from the United Nations’ Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory purports to detail Israel’s treatment of Gazan medical facilities and staff. It does not mention Hamas’ presence in Kamal Adwan Hospital.

This omission from commission chair Navi Pillay is the tip of a larger iceberg for Anne Bayefsky, president of Human Rights Voices and director of the Touro University Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust. Bayefsky told Fox News Digital that Pillay’s commission ‘is a professional hit job, having nothing to do with facts or law.’ She added that Pillay’s latest report ‘traffics in blood libels.’

The Commission states that it ‘interviewed senior medical personnel at hospitals and they denied that there was any military activity, emphasizing that the hospitals’ only role was to treat patients.’ In the instance of the tunnel and [command center below Al-Shifa hospital](https://archive.vn/o/hDLx5/https:/www.foxnews.com/world/us-intelligence-confirms-hamas-used-al-shifa-hospital-command-center), the commission ‘confirmed the presence of a tunnel and shaft’ but could ‘not verify that they were used for military purposes.’

Bayefsky noted that Israel has ‘publicly exposed, with photographic and video evidence, the use of hospitals by Hamas for military purposes,’ including underground tunnels ‘that utilized the power sources and served as command centers and weapons depots; weapons and equipment on hospital floors alongside patient wards; weapons hidden in incubators; and the use of hospitals as operational facilities to direct military activity.’

In its report, the commission also described how ‘two [Israeli] hostages had been held in [Gazan] hospitals and received medical treatment for their wounds.’ What the commission failed to mention, according to Bayefsky, is that the hostages’ ‘treatment’ involved ‘doctors pouring chlorine and vinegar onto hostage Maya Regev's dangling foot in order to cause pain,’ or cutting ‘into her without pain relievers.’ They also fail to address how ‘Gazan doctors pulled a bullet from hostage Itay Regev's leg without using anesthesia while Hamas members spat on him, slapped him and threatened to kill him if he screamed.’

Fox News Digital asked the Commission of Inquiry why it did not include information about the use of Kamal Adwan Hospital by Hamas, why it failed to recount the maltreatment Israeli hostages received, and whether it believed there could be a non-military purpose for the Hamas tunnels found below medical facilities.

A spokesperson from the commission told Fox News Digital that the report’s findings ‘were made in accordance with international standards and based on reasonable grounds to believe.’ The spokesperson explained the commission used ‘specific hospitals’ as ‘emblematic cases,’ and lamented that the commission has not been allowed into Gaza ‘to conduct investigations on the ground or speak to victims and witnesses.’

Dr. Tal Mimran of the Cyber Security Research Center at Hebrew University’s Faculty of Law talked with Fox News Digital about whether Hamas’ tunnels are used for other-than-military activities.

Mimran said ‘the existence of a tunnel is the best justification to enter a hospital, because it is not something that you can deal with without entering the hospital.’ He added that it would ‘be very hard to claim that the tunnels inside Gaza are not controlled and operated by Hamas and as such, even if they are used for non-military means… even if it only allows for a place to stay, if it only allows for a place to recuperate, even if it only allows for a place to gather and prepare, it’s more than enough to allow the IDF to operate within it.’

Mimran also added that the provision of international law that protects against entry into a hospital ‘can be eroded if the hospital is being misused in order to bring about a military advantage to Hamas,’ whether it is being used to store weapons, act as a headquarters, or holds hostages. In those cases, ‘Israel has a right to enter the hospital, to operate from within the hospital,’ but must ‘minimize any harm to the functionality of the hospital.’ If a hospital is being used as a permanent structure to ‘promote attacks against an army,’ Israel could ‘treat the hospital as a military object.’

Other elements of disinformation and antisemitism have been witnessed in conflict coverage.

The Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health data on casualties elicit [serious misgivings from researchers](https://archive.vn/o/hDLx5/https:/www.foxnews.com/world/biden-admin-should-check-hamas-ministry-health-death-stats-expert-warns). As author Salo Aizenberg told Fox News Digital, ‘It's obvious that Hamas has been falsifying casualty figures in Gaza since the start of the war.’

Aizenberg noted that during Operation Cast Lead in 2009, Hamas underestimated how many fighters it lost, only to later admit to numbers of losses that matched Israeli figures. Aizenberg explained that Hamas ‘continues to deny that they have lost many thousands of fighters,’ despite the IDF’s estimate that it has killed around 17,000. ‘For some reason,’ Aizenberg said, ‘a U.S. designated terrorist group that kidnaps babies and rapes hostages is seen as a credible source of information, while Israeli claims are considered suspect.’

Meanwhile, officials of the U.N., including Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, have been accused of [trafficking in antisemitism](https://archive.vn/o/hDLx5/https:/www.foxnews.com/world/un-secretary-general-wont-condemn-official-accused-antisemitism-us-said-grant-visa-visit). The U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food published a treatise on hunger in Gaza in August. In an Oct. 17 letter to U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Israel’s Ambassador to the U.N. Danny Danon called the rapporteur’s report an ‘attempt to re-write the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and promote incitement against the State of Israel.’

Danon took particular offense at a 14-page ‘graphic report’ that accompanied the full report. In it, the artist depicts Israel as a multi-headed hydra whose heads spew fire on the Palestinian flag. ‘Israel is not ‘defending itself’ against a ‘Terrorist organization,’ but is attacking the indigenous Palestinians as a people,’ text superimposed over the hydra reads.

Danon described the illustrations as ‘appalling’ and said they corresponded ‘with Nazi and antisemitic propaganda.’

Fox News Digital asked the Human Rights Council and Farhan Haq, deputy spokesperson for Guterres, whether they believed the graphic report contained antisemitic incitement against Israel. A spokesperson from the Human Rights Council responded that special rapporteurs are ‘independent human rights experts,’ and that ‘the positions taken by Special Rapporteurs do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Council.’

Haq said ‘the Secretary-General is opposed to all expressions of antisemitism, from anyone.’