

By Tracey Elliott



We are lost for words tonight at the unfolding devastating news that the Al Ahli hospital in Gaza has just been bombed with an estimated 500 people killed and 600 injured. Al Ahli hospital is very dear to my heart and I cannot believe the footage I have watched unfold this evening! In 2015 as a cancer nurse, I visited medical projects and the cancer services at Al Ahli Hospital with the Amos Trust. That hospital is full of beautiful people doing wonderful work and I am so grief stricken by this news. The bomb this afternoon hit in the centre of the hospital. It was supposed to be a place of safety, 4000 civilians were sheltering in the hospital in addition to the staff and patients. This HAS TO STOP, this is a humanitarian horror, there has to be a ceasefire.

What happened on the 7th October was truly horrific; the Hamas bombings, hostage taking and brutal murders in Israel were just devastating, and our hearts go out to the families of those taken hostage or killed. We call for the release of the hostages. Hamas' actions were simply inhumane and inexcusable and our thoughts are with the bereaved and the people of Israel as they grieve this truly awful attack.

We do need to say out loud that Hamas is not the Palestinians and our thoughts are with the Palestinian people who are now suffering. In the last 10 days there have been 3000 people killed in Gaza including 1000 children, most of whom are civilians and have nothing to do with Hamas. 28 Ambulances have been targeted and 22 other health clinics or smaller hospitals have also been destroyed.

When I went to Gaza in 2015 the living conditions were bad enough; an area the size of Birmingham but with 2.5 times the population, half of which are children under 18, one of the most densely populated places in the world. They were running out of water, it was so highly salty, it burnt when you showered and the water came on trucks as tap water was unusable. The people of Gaza have been under siege since 2008, with food and medical supplies at a basic level – not enough to live well and with dignity.

This is a population who highly prize education, with 97% literacy rates, who had seen education as their future, but with the siege hope was being crushed. Most Gazans are refugees from 1948 who had been forcibly displaced from their homes to Gaza, unable to return or travel to see family in the West Bank. Before the war, 70 percent of the population were already dependent on food aid and the water is 95% salinated. Gaza has been likened to an open air prison. This was a people squeezed of their tolerance to live in these conditions. The world has stood by and let this continue and the situation has worsened. I could not have imagined the horror of what has happened in Israel, but we, the international community cannot now stand by and let one atrocity to innocent life be met with a second. International law must be upheld by all sides.

**Don't look away, keep sharing stories and messages of solidarity to those innocent people, caught in the crossfire.**

PALESTINE, AND IT'S BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE, ARE CLOSE TO OUR HEARTS AS THREE OF THE FOUR OF US TRUSTEES HAVE BEEN TO THE WEST BANK TO RUN 'THE RIGHT TO MOVEMENT' BETHLEHEM MARATHON, ALONG WITH MANY PALESTINIANS, AND TRACEY HAS ALSO VISITED GAZA - ALL WITH OUR FRIENDS AT THE **AMOS TRUST**.



This feels like the punishment of an entire civilian population and cannot continue. We are seeing unimaginable loss of life and Human suffering in Gaza as we did last week in Israel.

To imagine myself as a nurse in a Gazan hospital with no electricity, faced with dying people, under the threat of even hospitals being bombed and unable to even give them a sip of water, with no supplies is horrific! The bombing of Al Ahli shows there is no safe place in Gaza.

Two thirds of hospitals in Gaza are in the North including the largest hospital, who this evening has lost electrical power. Medical professionals cannot be expected to evacuate to the South, as they have been instructed to and leave their patients. Hospitals have to be safe places. This killing, destruction and bombing of safe places IS NOT ACCEPTABLE, it is against all human rights and human decency. We have to implore our Government to speak out, this cannot continue. We are calling for National condemnation of the attacks on innocent civilians.

**Ways in which you can help;**

**Support and donate if you can to organisations like Doctors Without Borders and The Amos Trust**

**Write to your MP and visit their surgeries, demanding they take action and call for an immediate end to this violence in parliament.**

**North Devon - Selaine Saxby**  
[selaine.saxby.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:selaine.saxby.mp@parliament.uk)

**Torridge - Sir Geoffrey Cox**  
[tellgeoffrey@geoffreycox.co.uk](mailto:tellgeoffrey@geoffreycox.co.uk)

**Sign Sanctuary Foundation's open letter to the UK Government, calling for urgent aid to go out to those in desperate need and to allow a safe and legal route into the UK for those seeking safety.**