

Dr. Ketan Desai Dr. Otmar Kloiber Dr. Heidi Stensmyren
World Medical Association 13, ch. du Levant
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Ferney-Voltaire France

31 May 2017

Dear President Desai, Secretary General Kloiber and Chairperson Stensmyren,

I am writing in regards to the Physician for Human Rights, Israel's (PHRI) appeal for support against the force-feeding and force-treatment of Palestinian hunger strikers in Israeli prisons and detention centres.

As you are aware, on 17 April 2017, over 1,000 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention centers declared the beginning of an open hunger strike to protest poor conditions in prisons and violations of basic rights. The prisoners' demands include: proper medical care, an end to Israel's practice of administrative detention and stopping the use of isolation.

We are very concerned about issues raised by PHRI in their May 7, 2017 letter regarding the Israeli High Court of Justice ratification of Prison Ordinance No. 48 5775-2017, henceforth referred to as the "force-feeding bill". We believe that the steps taken and planned by the Israeli authorities to break the hunger strike to be a grave violation of medical ethics.

We are pleased to hear from colleagues at the PHRI that the World Medical Association is following the developments closely and are in close touch with the Israeli Medical Association (IMA). We are also reassured by your reiteration that *'the WMA will continue to oppose the force-feeding of hunger strikers and demands undisturbed access of physicians for diagnosis and treatment without interference by the authorities.'*

We are pleased that the WMA will consider vocalizing the concerns publically if the Israeli government tries to import physicians from abroad. We view force-feeding as a form of torture and additionally recommend that the WMA publically call on the Israel government to respect the choices and preserve the dignity of the hunger strikers and in accordance with the Malta and Tokyo declarations cease all action to break the hunger strike.

Your Sincerely,



Dr David McCoy
Director
Medact