

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.

Statement on detained healthcare professionals in Gaza

CPME is gravely concerned about reports of the serious mistreatment of Dr Hussam Abu Safiya, the director of the last functioning hospital in North Gaza at the time, who has been held in detention by the Israel Defence Forces since December 2024. We are further alarmed by the continuing arbitrary detention of a number of Palestinian medical professionals in Israel.

Dr Abu Safiya has been held in Israeli detention for more than eighteen months without charge or trial and is now being held in solitary confinement. When visited by his lawyer on Thursday 2 July, it is reported that his lawyer observed that Dr Abu Safiya appeared to be in a life-threatening condition, had been subjected to torture, and denied critical medical examination and treatment, and that his injuries were so severe that at first he was unrecognisable. The protections afforded to healthcare professionals and facilities under international humanitarian law and the principle of medical neutrality, must be respected and upheld.

CPME calls upon the European Commission to intervene urgently by urging the Israeli government to ensure Dr Abu Safiya's immediate transfer to a hospital, and ensure that he is given appropriate medical treatment and an independent medical assessment, including granting access to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and furthermore, where torture or ill treatment are alleged, it must be ensured that a medical evaluation is carried out in accordance with the Istanbul Protocol. CPME also urges the European Commission to call upon the Israeli government to either bring charges and guarantee a fair trial for detained Palestinian healthcare professionals, or to provide their immediate and unconditional release. CPME also calls on the Israeli government itself to carry out these actions immediately.