



Arab Coalition for Adolescent Health and Medicine

Statement on the War in Gaza

The Arab Coalition for Adolescent Health and Medicine strongly denounces the ongoing 2023 war in Gaza inflicted by the Israeli occupation and the catastrophic toll it exacts on the Palestinian people, most acutely on the shoulders of the vulnerable adolescents. The ongoing chronic violence and chaos shrouding Gaza have inflicted deep, unhealed wounds on this susceptible demographic. Palestinians not only grapple with the fear of death but also the relentless dread of perishing without access to basic necessities such as food and clean water.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the cumulative death toll in the Gaza Strip, since 7 October, has reached a staggering **4,385 individuals** as of October 21st, including **at least 1,756 children and 967 women and about 13,561 injuries**, as reported by the Ministry of Health in Gaza¹. It is tragic to acknowledge that hundreds more may be trapped under the rubble.

Adolescents, navigating the precarious path from childhood to adulthood, find their lives upended by this enduring conflict. Gaza, home to a predominantly youthful population, shelters almost a million children and youth under 19. The current war has ruthlessly robbed hundreds of thousands of Gazan adolescents of their fundamental rights to safety, education, and the promise of a brighter future.

The ongoing war by the Israeli occupation has disrupted access to quality education, truncating their chances for academic and personal growth. These young souls bear the scars of emotional and psychological trauma, as they grapple with the harrowing realities of violence and conflict. Consider this: an adolescent born in **2007 has weathered five wars**, including this current one, exposed to an unimaginable amount of pain and trauma.

Furthermore, the conflict has shattered families and communities, leaving adolescents grieving of crucial social and emotional support. Many have been cruelly pushed into displacement, further subjecting them to an unrelenting storm of instability and insecurity. These relentless hardships have exacted a toll on their mental health, intensifying the emotional and psychological trauma they must bear.

The Gaza Strip remains besieged, devoid of humanitarian aid, including basic essentials like food, water, and medicine.

We urgently plead the Arab and international community to intervene, cease this war, and save the besieged people of Gaza.

¹<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-15>