

“It’s Raining Bombs and Shells”: A Doctor’s Notes From Gaza

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Global Research, August 06, 2014
[CounterPunch](#) 31 July 2014

Region: [Asia, Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#),
[Militarization and WMD](#)

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I’m still alive. I don’t know what this means, but I can say that most of the time I can still walk and do some work with people who need help. It all depends on my luck. And here, for people living in Gaza, luck means how close to you the bombs fall from Israel’s tanks, planes, or warships. Some hours it’s raining bombs. Americans say “It’s raining cats and dogs.” In the new Gaza idiom, we say “It’s raining bombs and shells.”

Today I started my day in the Red Crescent Society’s medical center. The electricity has stopped, but the X-ray still functions, so we received many patients. Let me share with you some of what I saw.

First is the story of an unnamed child we called “Number 6.” He was around three years and had identifying stickers on his arms saying “Unknown” and “Number 6.” I was shocked and immediately asked the nurses and ambulance drivers, “What is his name?” I was told no one knew his name. They found him in a mass of destroyed houses and he was the only survivor in his family. He had a head injury and wounds on other parts of his body. Immediately I asked, “Doesn’t anyone remember where the house was?” They said that in the area where they found him, all the buildings were destroyed and the rubble was mixed up with each other and sometimes the children’s bodies were thrown from one area to another. So they didn’t know where he had lived.

And then I realized he’s Number 6, and that means there were five other unknown children before him and many more children after him.

Second, there is the story of Reem Ahmad, six years old. Reem arrived in the X-ray unit also. She has a name and she used to have a family. She is the only survivor of her family. She lost her parents and brothers and sisters. She is injured in the head.

Third is the story of a fifty-two year old woman who arrived at our clinic with her son. Her son is a nurse and he was panicking. His mother had gone outside to her garden to take care of her plants. Some shrapnel hit her head and her son was crying like crazy and he said in very few words “We are a simple family staying in our home. This shrapnel flew all around the garden and hit my mom. I want my mom to live.” This woman is named Buthaina el-Izraia.

Fourth is the story of my colleague Afaf Jabar, a nurse on our team. Afaf lost her daughter Leena, who was also a nurse, her two grandchildren and her daughter’s husband when one bomb fell on their house in Bureij refugee camp.

We have gone through a lot in Gaza. But this is a new kind of war. Israel is committing new massacres every day. In the Red Crescent clinic we receive at least 200 patients a day. And we are not an emergency clinic. A lot of diseases are appearing in Gaza because of the Israeli destruction of the water systems, the electrical system and ongoing stress and fear from over three weeks of bombings. People are experiencing different illnesses: gastrointestinal problems, diarrhea, breathing and skin problems, and most of the patients are the most vulnerable of all, children.

We have a real crisis now. Thanks to your donations, we managed to get some medicine for several clinics and hospitals in Gaza and to distribute hygiene kits, milk, and food to more than 1000 families. But right now we are facing a lack of medicine. I want people to know this and [contribute and support us and help us get the proper medicines and supplies so we can treat these people who are suffering](#). Please share my message about what I've seen in just this one day of the Israeli assault and also let your friends and family know how they can help us to buy more medicine.

This is what I can tell you about today and with luck, I will report more information to you tomorrow.

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