

Tripoli, 24 May 2019 — The World Health Organization strongly condemns the death and injury of health workers rushing to rescue people who have been wounded during armed conflict in Libya's capital. Two health workers were killed and three others injured on 23 May when two clearly-marked ambulances were struck in the Triq Al Matar area of Tripoli.

One ambulance was struck, immediately killing a doctor on board. A second ambulance, sent to recover casualties from the first attack, was subsequently also struck by shelling, killing one paramedic and injuring two others and a doctor on board.

“Thursday was a dark day for health workers in Tripoli,” says Dr Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative in Libya. “This is a shocking and unacceptable violation of international humanitarian law. When medical professionals are in danger, patients will suffer.”

Since the start of the conflict, six health workers have been killed and seven others have been injured, while 14 ambulances have been impacted and two health facilities have been evacuated as a result of fighting.

“We insist that all parties to the conflict exercise restraint and caution to ensure that health workers and facilities are not caught up in the fighting,” says Dr Hussain. “We cannot tolerate the loss of lives—especially of those who are dedicated to saving others.”

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