18 October 2023 – WHO strongly condemns the attack on Al Ahli Arab Hospital in the north of the Gaza Strip. The hospital was operational, with patients, health and care givers, and internally displaced people sheltering there. Early reports indicate hundreds of fatalities and injuries.

The hospital was one of 20 in the north of the Gaza Strip facing evacuation orders from the Israeli military. The order for evacuation has been impossible to carry out given the current insecurity, critical condition of many patients, and lack of ambulances, staff, health system bed capacity, and alternative shelter for those displaced.

WHO calls for the immediate active protection of civilians and health care. Evacuation orders must be reversed. International humanitarian law must be abided by, which means health care must be actively protected and never targeted.

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