



## EFN STATEMENT ON REBUILDING GAZA A CALL FOR NURSE-LED RECOVERY AND SUSTAINABLE HEALTH SYSTEMS

As the international community prepares for the rebuilding of Gaza, the European nursing community extends its deepest solidarity with our nursing colleagues and all healthcare professionals who have served with courage, compassion, and humanity under unimaginable conditions. Throughout the conflict, nurses and allied healthcare professionals have remained at the frontlines, safeguarding life, alleviating suffering, and upholding their professional and ethical duty to care for all - regardless of background, circumstance, or belief. Their service stands as a testament to the humanitarian essence of nursing.

The toll of this prolonged crisis has been devastating. Many nurses and other health professionals were targets of attacks and have lost their lives while serving their communities. The nurses who remain face exhaustion, grief, and burnout after enduring tremendous physical and psychological pressure. Yet, despite loss and hardship, their commitment to serve has not wavered. These nurses are the cornerstone upon which Gaza's future health system must be rebuilt.

Rebuilding Gaza's healthcare system is not merely a technical task; it is an essential step toward restoring health, dignity, and stability. A sustainable, resilient, and equitable health system must be rooted in the expertise and leadership of nurses, who constitute the largest group of health professionals and the backbone of health and care delivery. Their knowledge of community needs, their capacity to work across all levels of care, and their deep understanding of public health are indispensable for rebuilding a healthcare system that is accessible, people-centred, and future-oriented.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN), representing nurses across the EU and Europe, urges that nurses in Gaza are fully supported and recognised as key partners in the reconstruction process. Their participation must be ensured at every level — from policy planning to implementation. The rebuilding of health facilities and services must be accompanied by the rebuilding of human capacity:

- **Nurse leaders** must be empowered to lead teams, guide recovery, and restore trust in the healthcare system.
- **Nurse educators** must be supported to educate and train the next generation of nurses, ensuring that the values of care, ethics, and evidence-based practice remain strong.
- **Mentorship programmes** must be established to help nursing students and newly educated nurses transition from providing care in a context of conflict to serving across all dimensions of health and wellbeing.
- **Capacity building** must include rehabilitation, trauma care, and the management of neglected health issues that have deepened during the crisis.
- **Adequate finances** must be provided for the rebuilding of the nursing workforce and healthcare systems, with the nursing workforce at the lead of these reconstruction efforts. In this regard, the EU should put in place a dedicated funding stream to support the rebuilding of skills and resilience of the nursing workforce, as well as the reconstruction of public health infrastructures.
- **Mental health care** must be provided to frontline nurses and allied healthcare professionals to support their recovery from the traumas of war.

EU and European nursing organisations are ready to share their collective expertise in building strong nursing systems, professional education, leadership frameworks, and community health capacity. We stand ready to collaborate with the World Health Organization (WHO), the European Union (EU), the International Council of Nurses (ICN), and all humanitarian partners to support this effort.

On behalf of European nurses, the EFN demands immediate and sustained support for our colleagues in Gaza. We call for their rightful place as decision-makers in all discussions and decisions affecting nursing and health and care workforce rebuilding. The experience and knowledge embedded in the European nursing community must be mobilised to contribute to the recovery, ensuring that the rebuilt healthcare system in Gaza is not only restored, but transformed into one that is inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

Nurses across Europe reaffirm their humanitarian duty: to care for all those in need, to restore dignity where it has been lost, and to help rebuild hope where it has been shattered. We will stand by our colleagues in Gaza — as professionals, as partners, and as fellow human beings - to ensure that the people of Gaza receive the care, compassion, and competence they deserve.

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*A Call for Nurse-Led Recovery and Sustainable Health Systems – October 2025*

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