



**PRCS Statement on The Israeli Occupation Forces shelling of the Ambulance Convoy
transporting the injured from the aggression on Gaza towards Rafah crossing border on
November 3rd 2023**

The Palestine Red Crescent Society condemns the targeting of the ambulances convoy by the Israeli occupation forces while it was transporting the casualties of the aggression on Gaza towards Rafah crossing border. At approximately 16:05 PM, the vehicles departed from Al-Shifa hospital upon the decision of the MoH coordinator to head towards the southern area of the strip. The convoy consisted of 5 ambulances, 4 of which belong to the MoH and one belonging to PRCS.

As the convoy reached a distance approximately 4 KM away from Al-Shifa hospital on the only coastal road connecting Gaza governorate to the southern region (Al-Rasheed St.), it encountered the road blocked by large quantities of rubble and rocks due to the shelling in that area. Subsequently, the ambulance returned towards the hospital. However, during the return, at a distance of not more than 1 KM away from Al-Shifa hospital, the leading ambulance (belonging to the MoH) in the convoy was directly targeted by a missile, resulting in its immediate and direct damage, as well as injuring its crews and the injured inside.

Nevertheless, the other ambulances continued their path towards Al-Shifa hospital. Upon the arrival of Palestine Red Crescent society's ambulance (Mercedes 3-1242-55) at the hospital gate to unload the injured (Najwa Toutah, 35 years old, shrapnel in the chest and leg, in an ICU condition), who was destined for Rafah Crossing to receive the required medical treatment in Egyptian hospitals, the vehicle was struck by a missile fired by the Israeli forces, only at a distance of about two meters from the hospital gate.

This resulted in the martyrdom of several civilians (15 martyrs) and the injury of over 60 civilians and displaced individuals present at the hospital entrance. Additionally, medic Shadi Al-Taif sustained minor shrapnel injuries to the leg and bruises, while the ambulance driver, Ahmad Al-Madhoon, suffered chest bruises and extreme panic. This brings the total number of Red Crescent ambulances rendered inoperable due to Israeli targeting since the start of the aggression on the Gaza Strip to 8 vehicles. Additionally, 4 Red Crescent medics have been martyred in the line of their humanitarian duty in Gaza, with around 21 medics and volunteers sustaining injuries.

PRCS emphasizes that the deliberate targeting of medical teams constitutes a grave violation of the Geneva Conventions, a war crime, and that the parties to the four Geneva Conventions are legally bound to ensure the protection of medical teams and civilians under all circumstances.

PRCS calls upon the international community for urgent interventions to exert pressure on the Occupying Authorities to ensure the protection of civilians, healthcare facilities, and medical teams operating in the Gaza Strip.