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A new low: Israel blocks vaccine shipment at Gaza border

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](https://www.aohr.org.uk)) joins Palestinians in decrying Israel's deliberate blocking of Gaza's first shipment of life-saving Covid-19 [vaccinations](#).

“As Israel blocks vaccines from entering occupied Gaza, AOHR UK demands the occupying power fulfills its legal obligations”

It has been reported that Israeli authorities blocked the entry of 2000 doses of the Sputnik V into Gaza on Monday (15th) evening.

These doses were intended for medical staff working in intensive care rooms designated for Covid-19 patients, and for staff working in emergency departments.

As the occupying power, Israel is responsible for providing adequate and equitable healthcare provision to Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and Al-Quds (East Jerusalem). Various Palestinian authorities' own duties does not absolve the occupying force of that primary responsibility, contrary to Israeli officials' claims.

Yet throughout the vaccination-stage of the [Covid-19](#) emergency Israeli authorities have continued to deny life-saving vaccinations to Palestinians, including to those most vulnerable to the virus.

At the same time, Israeli authorities have provided vaccinations to residents of its various illegal settlements. In 2016, the United Nations (UN) Security Council affirmed again that those settlements are illegal with [resolution 2334](#).

Approximately 1500 Palestinians have died due to COVID-19 to date.



Israel has a duty under the [Fourth Geneva Convention](#) to provide health care without discrimination to Palestinians in equal measure to that received by Israeli citizens.

[Article 56](#) in that Convention relates to the protection of civilians during times of war: “the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring and maintaining, with the cooperation of national and local authorities, the medical and hospital establishments and services, public health and hygiene in the occupied territory”, it reads, “with particular reference to the adoption and application of the prophylactic and preventive measures necessary to combat the spread of contagious diseases and epidemics.”

The success of Israel's vaccination program shows that it has the economic and administrative power, due to massive support from the US, to provide equitable care to Palestinians under its occupation, as it is legally obliged to do.

The blocking of life-saving vaccines into Gaza represents a new low for the occupying power's war against Palestinians.

AOHR UK totally [condemns](#) the action, demands that the vaccines are granted entry into Gaza, and that Israel abides by international legal norms, and its specific responsibility, to provide adequate healthcare in the Palestinian occupied territories.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)