



Statement by PRCS Regarding Israeli Occupying Forces Attacks Against Medical Missions

On October 2, 2022, the Israeli occupying forces attacked two members of PRCS' Emergency Medical Teams (EMT), at the entrance of Beit Fourik, South of Nablus. The two medics were threatened at gunpoint, kicked and beaten. One of them was also hit on the head with the rifle, and both sustained injuries and were held by Israeli soldiers who also kicked the ambulance and struck it with their rifle butts. The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) considers such frequent and systemic incidents as a serious attack against its medical teams and its humanitarian mission.

Such violations are taking place on a quasi-daily basis throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt) even though the distinctive emblem of the Red Crescent is clearly marked on all of PRCS uniforms and vehicles. Furthermore, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) strictly prohibits targeting medical missions, including health and humanitarian personnel, vehicles and facilities. IHL also asserts the obligation by all parties to respect and protect them, in all circumstances, and prohibits interference in their operations.

Since the beginning of 2022, 383 violations were committed against PRCS emergency medical services in the oPt: 19 violations were documented against PRCS ambulances; 19 cases of obstructing ambulances on mission, 331 cases of teams denied access and 14 cases of attacks against PRCS staff and volunteers.

PRCS stresses that protection must be afforded to the sick and wounded, as well as to the medical services, facilities, units and vehicles. It reaffirms that the sick and wounded must be guaranteed full and unrestricted access to medical and health services, and recalls that IHL prohibits violence or threats against medical missions as well as any interference in their activities.

PRCS urges all States Parties to the Geneva Conventions, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as well as the International Humanitarian Organizations to ensure that Israel, the Occupying Power, upholds its full legal responsibilities, respects the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions and ensures protection of the medical missions in the oPt.