

Date: January 9th, 2024

Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

Ms. Mirjana Spoljaric, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, World Health Organization Director-General

Subject: An urgent appeal for humanitarian action: Delivery of medicines and medical treatment to the hostages in the Gaza Strip.

Distinguished Leaders,

Over three months have elapsed since the October 7th massacre. This surprising assault resulted in the kidnapping of more than 240 Israeli and foreign citizens from their homes and a party in southern Israel, with an additional 1,200 murdered. In response, the Israel Defense Forces initiated a substantial counterattack, an operation that persists as of the time of this writing, leaving a landscape of devastation and despair and nothing short of a humanitarian catastrophe.

As laureates of the Nobel Prize, we express deep concern about the hostages held in Gaza. We find ourselves compelled to speak out against the backdrop of innocent lives being held captive, families being torn asunder, and communities grappling with the harsh realities of war. We insist on speaking the voice of reason, and call you, as leaders, to take actions to promote the release of all hostages as an essential step toward truce and prevention of further bloodshed.

Beyond a brief respite of ten days under a temporary ceasefire, facilitating the release of over 100 hostages as part of the hostages-prisoners exchange between Israel and Hamas, coupled with the influx of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, the last ninety days have borne witness to several heart-wrenching images of despair, fear, and death. Our collective apprehension deepens in the face of the human tragedy unfolding, with thousands now internally displaced within both the Gaza Strip and Israel, accompanied by an unfathomable loss of lives. The medical reports of the hostages in Gaza, along with the reports from the World Health Organization, emphasize the urgent need for intervention. Ninety days in captivity are life-threatening for every hostage still held in Gaza's tunnels. Their ongoing captivity prevents

solutions to stop the war. Their lives and health are in great danger, as detailed in the attached medical report.

The findings of the medical report show an alarming picture of the health of the hostages. As described in the report, *at least one-third of these hostages have chronic illnesses and need regular medication. Many others were wounded from the brutal abduction and need care. Others suffer from illnesses related to the harsh captivity conditions, which include mental and physical torture. **If no medical care is provided urgently for all hostages, the result could be irreversible health problems at best and death at worst.** The testimonies of the survivors who were released reveal extreme cases of psychological and physical violence, including brutal sexual assault, mutilation, torture, starvation, and forced dehydration. **As each day passes, the health and lives of all hostages are seriously endangered.***

The release of hostages is an essential step toward alleviating the suffering and building the foundation for lasting peace. In the words of Amelia Earhart: “The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.”

We respectfully urge your immediate action to ensure the provision of medical assistance to all hostages, whose lives are at risk without such vital support. Urgency is paramount in this critical situation. In addition, we call you to visit Israel and the affected communities in southern Israel as soon as possible. Your presence is needed to witness firsthand the destruction and atrocities inflicted during the October 7th massacre and to meet with survivors of captivity and families of the hostages.

Your call and your visit are two actions you can take to promote health and peace.

Only through concerted efforts can we envisage an end to this devastating conflict and pave the way for a future where Israelis and Palestinians coexist harmoniously.

Sincerely,

Aaron Ciechanover,
MD, DSc,
Laureate, the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Avram Hershko,
MD, PhD,
Laureate, the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Michael Levitt,
PhD,
Laureate, 2013 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Arieh Warshel,
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Laureate, 2013 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Dan Shechtman,
PhD,
Laureate, the 2011 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Ada Yonath,
PhD,
Laureate, the 2009 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Roger Kornberg,
PhD,
Laureate, the 2006 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Daniel Kahneman,
PhD,
Laureate, the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics

Enclosure: Levine et al. Medical Report: Urgent Health Concerns for All Hostages

Abducted to Gaza Three Months Ago