

Free Abu Safiya

written by Dan Fischer | October 7, 2026



The Gaza genocide enters its fourth year today with an estimated violent death toll well above 100,000, overwhelmingly civilians, and a total number of dead—including from lack of adequate food, water, sanitation, shelter, and healthcare due to Israel's attacks—reaching perhaps hundreds of thousands. Since the so-called ceasefire began last October 10th, Israel has attacked Gaza almost daily and killed over 1,400 Palestinians in Gaza according to the Gaza Health Ministry's methodologically conservative count.

Still, Israeli authorities have not succeeded in their aim of even more completely obliterating the population of Gaza which they consider to be successors to the biblical Amalek. At last month's UN speech, Netanyahu quoted from the first book of Samuel, and his far-right and religious-extremist supporters could not have missed the meaning implied by the context. It's in the same chapter where God commanded Israelites to "go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites" and to "slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Saving Gaza from complete eradication has been the steadfast courage of people like Palestinian doctor Hassam Abu Safiya. As a pediatrician and neonatologist, Abu Safiya worked tirelessly to keep the Kamal Adwan Hospital functioning in northern Gaza and became the facility's director in February of 2024. Surrounded by horrendous bombardment, he somehow increased the number of hospital beds to 200 and started a malnutrition unit treating hundreds of children. Though he's not a licensed surgeon, he conducted life-saving surgery when no surgeons were available.

Abu Safiya also delivered crucial updates to a global public including viewers of Doctors Against Genocide broadcasts and readers of the *New York Times*. In those latter pages, he described the dire conditions in which he and colleagues worked:

"We are down to the last gallons of fuel necessary to run the electric generators, despite our most stringent efforts to ration it since the start of hostilities. Lights are off most of the time, elevators are out and patients are carried between floors. When the fuel runs out, we will no longer be able to function at night after the sun goes down. Most of the tools and equipment needed to run a modern hospital like ventilators, defibrillators and our neonatal units will become useless. When the generators fall silent, we will be relegated to practicing medieval-level medicine. Without an urgent resupply of fuel, the lights will go out permanently, and our hospital could turn into a morgue."

An Israeli raid on December 27th, 2024 abducted Abu Safiya and other medical workers. Abu Safiya has been denied adequate medical care and food and subjected to beatings, sleep deprivation, and

solitary confinement. As part of Israel's decimation of Gaza's healthcare sector, occupying forces has repeatedly attacked Kamal Adwan Hospital including this July in violation of the supposed ceasefire.

Israeli authorities have not provided evidence for their claim that Abu Safiya was a Hamas operative. The doctor's colleagues and fellow detainees have called Israel's allegation false. Amnesty International and the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights have demanded Abu Safiya's release and condemned Israel's arbitrary detention and torture of Abu Safiya as violations of international law.

In the United States, there several public letters and statements supporting justice for Abu Safiya. First, there's a letter with prominent signers at FreeDrAbuSafiya.org and which Stanley Heller has previously written about for this website. To little fanfare, a second letter, addressed to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, released a month ago from the halls of Congress.

Spearheaded by Representative Maxine Dexter, the letter boasted 69 signatures including three Senators - Merkley, Sanders, and Warren - and former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. Denouncing how Israeli authorities have unjustly detained Abu Safiya "for nearly two years, reportedly without adequate medical care," the statement laments that Abu Safiya's lawyer in July "found that the severity of his injuries had rendered him nearly unrecognizable. His body bore fresh bruises, and he struggled to remain conscious." Media coverage was limited to one ABC story in addition to Heller's brief for the *Progressive Action Roundtable*, based in Connecticut where organizers convinced all five House delegates to sign.

Yesterday, another statement was released, by Representatives Chuy García, Delia Ramirez, Rashida Tlaib, Summer Lee, Ilhan Omar, and Pramila Jayapal:

"Over the last three years, the Israeli government has systematically destroyed the health system in Palestine, murdering at least 1,700 Palestinian doctors, nurses, paramedics, and other healthcare workers and destroying dozens of hospitals. It has arrested and arbitrarily detained hundreds of Palestinian healthcare workers, including at least 16 physicians who continue to be held in inhumane conditions. Among them is Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, whom the Israeli government has arbitrarily detained since 2024 and tortured to the point of near-death after previously murdering his son and brutally attacking his hospital

Israel's systematic annihilation of medical facilities and healthcare workers is not an accident or unfortunate consequence of war; it is an intentional policy designed to further occupation, apartheid, and genocide against the Palestinian people. We demand the immediate release of Dr. Abu Safiya and all other arbitrarily detained healthcare workers and Palestinian prisoners. And we demand an end to U.S. arms transfers to Israel, including the Trump Administration's latest \$2.8 billion sale of bombs. Congress must block this sale and pass the *Block the Bombs Act* to finally end our government's shameful complicity in Israel's mass atrocities."

Visit FreeDrAbuSafiya.org to support the campaign for his release. Freeing Abu Safiya is the least that can be done, amid priorities to stop the Gaza genocide and free Palestine from the nightmares of Zionist apartheid.