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*The Episcopal Church
in Jerusalem and the Middle East
The Diocese of Jerusalem*



الكنيسة الأسقفية
في القدس والشرق الأوسط
مطرانيتة القدس

**A STATEMENT FROM THE DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM FOLLOWING THE FORCED
CLOSURE OF AL AHLI ANGLICAN HOSPITAL IN GAZA**

8th JULY 2024

In the midst of escalating military activity in the Old Gaza City area of the Gaza Strip we are sorry to report that the Al Ahli Arab Anglican Hospital has been compelled to close by the Israel army. Suheila Tarazi, Hospital Director, reported that on Sunday July 7, between 6pm-7pm a large amount of firing from drones occurred in the immediate vicinity of the hospital. This was immediately followed by an IDF announcement that the area had been declared a Red Zone and everyone should immediately evacuate all the buildings including everyone in the hospital. As a result, all vulnerable people sheltering in the hospital grounds, the staff and all patients had to leave the safety of the grounds of the hospital. Inevitably this placed the injured and the sick in great jeopardy.

To our great dismay, our hospital is now out of operation at a time when its services are in very significant demand and where injured and sick people have few other options for places to receive urgent medical care.

We are also deeply distressed that today, one of our ambulances was fired at en route to the hospital. We currently have no information about the condition of our driver and any patients who were being transported for treatment.

Archbishop Hosam Naoum, Anglican Archbishop of the Diocese of Jerusalem, has said: 'We protest the closure of our hospital in the strongest possible terms. In a time of warfare and great suffering it is essential that emergency healthcare services are maintained to treat the injured and the dying. We appeal to the Israeli forces to permit us to continue our sacred ministry of medical care and healing. We plead for an end to the targeting of civilians and all vulnerable people and demand all parties agree to an immediate ceasefire.'