

Ten Years of UN Security Council Resolution 2286: WHPA Calls for Protection of Health Personnel and Accountability for Attacks on Healthcare

Geneva, Switzerland: 4 May 2026—Ten years after the adoption of [United Nations Security Council Resolution 2286](#), the World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) is calling on all states and parties involved in armed conflict to fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law and take urgent action to protect health personnel, patients and healthcare facilities.

Adopted on 3 May 2016, Resolution 2286 strongly condemns acts of violence, attacks and threats against the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel engaged in medical duties, their means of transport and equipment, as well as hospitals and other medical facilities. It demands that all parties to armed conflict respect and protect them, facilitate the safe and unimpeded passage of medical personnel and supplies to people in need, and ensure accountability for serious violations.

A decade later, these obligations are systematically breached. Since 2016, sources like Insecurity Insight report over 4,500 health facilities damaged in conflicts around the globe, and more than 3,800 health workers killed (see source below). Across multiple conflict settings, including Syria, Sudan, Ukraine and Gaza, health professionals continue to face violence, arrest, detention, intimidation and harassment simply for treating patients and upholding their ethical obligations. Hospitals and clinics have been damaged, raided or militarised, and access to essential care has been obstructed, with devastating consequences for civilians and for already fragile health systems.

Howard Catton, WHPA Chair and CEO of ICN, said: “Ten years after the adoption of Resolution 2286, we are compelled to ask what has truly changed. When health professionals are attacked, obstructed, detained or punished for carrying out their ethical duties, this is not only a violation of international humanitarian law, it is an attack on humanity itself and on the communities that depend on care for survival.”

WHPA emphasizes that health professionals have both the right and the duty to provide care based solely on medical need, without discrimination and without interference from state authorities, or other parties to conflict. As recognized in Resolution 2286 and under international humanitarian law, health personnel must not be compelled to act contrary to medical ethics, and must not be punished for carrying out medical activities compatible with those ethics. The neutrality of healthcare must be respected at all times.

Resolution 2286 urges states to prevent such attacks, strengthen legal protections, collect data on obstruction and violence, and conduct full, prompt, impartial and effective investigations. It also makes clear that impunity fuels recurrence. WHPA therefore calls on states not only to condemn attacks on healthcare, but to ensure that those responsible are investigated and held to account in accordance with domestic and international law. Without respect for medical

neutrality, safe access to care, and meaningful accountability for violations, the promises of Resolution 2286 will remain unmet.

[Sign WHPA's open letter calling for the safeguarding of healthcare facilities and personnel in areas of conflict, in accordance with international law](#)

Source:

[Insecurity Insight](#). 2026. Attacked and Threatened: Health Care at Risk. Interactive Map. Accessed on 21 April 2026.

Note for Editors

The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) brings together the global organizations representing the world's dentists, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and physicians and speaks for over 47 million health care professionals in more than 179 countries and territories. The WHPA works to improve global health and the quality of patient care and facilitates collaboration among the health professions and major stakeholders.

www.whpa.org

Press contact

Joannah Caborn Wengler, Manager of the WHPA Secretariat
jcwengler@whpa.org
+41 22 560 8147

[END]