

San Diego healthcare workers protest AMA's refusal to support Gaza ceasefire

Healthcare Workers for Palestine - San Diego
15 November 2023

Healthcare Workers for Palestine - San Diego helped to organize the walkout and demonstration at the UC San Diego School of Medicine which took place November 9, 2023. They have asked the World Socialist Web Site to publish their statement in response to the American Medical Association (AMA) refusal to take up a resolution calling for "a ceasefire in Israel and Palestine in order to protect civilian lives and healthcare personnel."

Just three days after JAMA published an article sanitizing Israel's murder and mass expulsion of the Palestinian civilian population, the American Medical Association's House of Delegates (HOD) voted against the consideration of a ceasefire resolution, 136-458. The resolution, Res. 610, co-sponsored by the Minority Affairs Section, was put forward by the Medical Student Section (MSS) and Resident & Fellow Section (RFS) and passed in both sections with overwhelming popularity.

At the HOD meeting there was a palpable tension in the air as testimony was presented. A former AMA President in opposition stated, "Geopolitical issues have no purview in this house." A different doctor asked, "Can you imagine if the AMA put out a statement after 9/11 when the US was going into Afghanistan to go after Al Qaeda?"

When a resident doctor used his 90 seconds of time to read the text of the resolution, the Speaker interrupted him before his time had expired. "We are voting to determine whether the resolution is appropriate or not, not on the resolution itself," she stated. He wasn't given any time back for the interruption and was told that his testimony was over.

The AMA does not shy away from geopolitics when it comes to ceasefire statements and funding for Ukraine, or publishing articles in JAMA that are so

biased they can only be interpreted as propaganda. But when their own medical students and residents call for the cessation of the mass killing of Palestinians, the resolution is deemed "inappropriate" and is buried.

The same day the AMA voted against the ceasefire resolution, the death toll in Gaza reached over 11,000, including over 4,500 children, with nearly 30,000 wounded. Premature babies are dying as their incubators stop working from the lack of fuel. The month-long blockade of water and food is now causing deaths from dehydration and malnutrition. Thirty-six health centers have already been destroyed and the healthcare system is in complete collapse. Tanks are currently surrounding three of the remaining hospitals in Northern Gaza, attacking these sacred spaces where thousands of scared and wounded souls are sheltering.

Despite the bloodshed, the physicians in Gaza have refused to abandon their patients. They demonstrate an unwavering dedication to their calling despite the near certainty that they will be killed. In refusing to take the common-sense stand for a ceasefire, the AMA is demonstrating a complete disregard for the Hippocratic oath as well as the democratic process. This cowardice is born out of the same complicity that prevents the organization from addressing root causes of dysfunction of our own healthcare system in the United States. The AMA should support an immediate ceasefire—not doing so guarantees more deaths every day.

- Healthcare Workers for Palestine - San Diego



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