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# War crime: World's health professionals call for an end to Syria hospital airstrikes

**The World Health Professions Alliance\* representing 31 million healthcare professionals responds to latest reports of hospitals being deliberately targeted in Idlib Province, Syria.**

**Geneva, Switzerland, 14 September 2019** - The World Health Professions Alliance condemns the continuing targeted attacks on hospitals in Idlib province, in Syria's north-west.

Urgent action is needed to stop these airstrikes on hospitals which are deliberate and systematic and have claimed hundreds of lives and left millions of people without proper healthcare.

WHPA Chair Catherine Duggan said: "The WHPA unanimously call for an end to hostile targeting of hospitals and health facilities in Syria. In line with the humanitarian efforts being afforded to all citizens in areas of conflict, we unanimously support the provision of care without risk to any health personnel."

Howard Catton, the CEO of ICN said: "The ICN, which represents nurses worldwide, condemns these continuing barbaric and cynical acts which amount to crimes against humanity. We join with our colleagues in the health professions in demanding immediate action to halt these airstrikes and stand in solidarity with the civilians and frontline healthcare staff who are being targeted and killed, and their communities destroyed. Access to health is a human right, as is the right of workers not to be subject to violence at work – these attacks are abhorrent and unacceptable."

Dr. Otmar Kloiber, Secretary General of the World Medical Association, speaking for 112 national and regional Medical Associations said: "Side by side with nurses and other health professionals and health workers, physicians work to save the lives of the wounded and ill. Such deliberate and systematic attacks against health professionals amount to a crime against humanity and should be punished as that."

WHPA members were responding to the latest media reports of continuing targeting of hospital in the rebel-held province of Idlib, including a BBC news report (12.09.2019) which showed how hospitals were being forced underground to survive.

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**About WHPA**

The World Health Professions Alliance WHPA is a unique alliance of The International Council of Nurses (ICN), the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT), FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) and the World Medical Association (WMA). WHPA addresses global health issues striving to help deliver cost effective, quality health care worldwide. Together, the partners of the WHPA include more than 600 national member organisations, making WHPA the key point of global access to health care professionals within the five disciplines.  
[www.whpa.org](http://www.whpa.org)

**Note to Editors**

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