

08<sup>th</sup> January 2025

The Chairperson  
Health Professional Council of South Africa HPCSA  
Dr Desmond Mathye

Dear Dr Mathye,

The Ophthalmology Society of South Africa (OSSA) is hosting their annual congress in February 2025, and they have invited an Israeli doctor, Didi Fabian as one of the keynote speakers. As you well know, the International Court of Justice, Amnesty International, and other UN agencies have documented and confirmed without any dispute, the fact that Israel has committed genocide and continues to do so.

The deliberate massacre of healthcare professionals and their families, destruction of the entire healthcare infrastructure in Gaza, and the collective punishment of millions of people, denying them even food and humanitarian aid, has been captured live for the world to see, and the facts are undisputed. The deliberate assassinations of doctors, healthcare workers, and their families, kidnapping, torture, and raping of doctors in Israeli prisons, is also well-documented.

Francesca Albanese, UN special rapporteur on Palestine, has urged medical professionals to sever ties with Israel. After the kidnapping of paediatrician Dr Said Abdurrahman Marius, the calls to medical workers worldwide has been resounding.

Many members of the Ophthalmological Society of South Africa have urged OSSA to withdraw the invitation to the Israeli speaker as part of a broader campaign to isolate Israel, just like apartheid South Africa was isolated, which played a significant part in the eventual dismantling of the apartheid regime. To date, OSSA has refused to withdraw the invitation and has, in fact, confirmed that it does not intend to withdraw the invitation to the Israeli speaker.

In addition, this year, the society has opted to nominate and outspoken IDF supporter with their highest award. This decision was taken in 2024, when the genocide was well underway.

All these actions speak volume to the society's stance on human rights atrocities. We believe the HPCSA, as part of the broader society, as part of the ethical and humanitarian fraternity of healthcare professionals, should, as a matter of principle, not accredit the OSSA congress with CPD points.

During the apartheid regime, we made the case that there could be no normal activities in an abnormal society, and that all forms of soft and direct pressure were necessary to bring the human rights violations against the majority of people in South Africa to an end.

Similarly, all forms of pressure and isolation are necessary to convince the Israeli regime to stop the genocide and to restore the dignity and human rights of the Palestinian people. We therefore do not believe that we can remain aloof or apolitical in a matter of genocide. We therefore urge the HPCSA not to accredit the OSSA congress with any CPD points for the Congress in February.

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Kind regards

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**ISLAMIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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