STATEMENT ON HEALTH IN CONFLICT ZONES
Sustaining adequate social determinants of health is critical for well-being and access to healthcare in conflict areas

The Current Situation
Conflict zones across the globe face severe disruptions to their health systems. The destruction of healthcare infrastructure, including hospitals and clinics, leaves millions without access to essential medical services. Disruptions to supply chains for medications and medical supplies exacerbate the situation, creating shortages that hinder effective treatment. The loss of healthcare professionals, whether through displacement or casualties, places additional strain on already overwhelmed systems.

In conflict areas, from a public health perspective, sustaining adequate social determinants of health is critical for well-being and access to healthcare, which is often fraught with barriers. Physical obstacles such as damaged roads and ongoing hostilities impede movement to medical facilities. Economic hardships, often exacerbated by conflict, prevent many from affording necessary care. Infrastructure damage, such as downed electricity lines, limits delivery of quality healthcare services safely. Vulnerable populations, including women, children, and the elderly, and patients with systemic conditions face discrimination and marginalization, further limiting their access to health services.

The situation in Gaza exemplifies the broader challenges faced in conflict zones worldwide. Morbidity and mortality rates, already very high due to attacks with bombs and other weapons, increase even further due to the lack of timely medical care. The prevalence of infectious diseases increases, fueled by unsanitary living conditions and disrupted public health services. In Gaza, damaged infrastructure, indiscriminate killing of medical staff, and blockades further complicate access to care. Additionally, continuous exposure to violence and instability leads to widespread mental health issues and trauma among the population.

Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach, including safeguarding healthcare infrastructure, ensuring the availability of medical supplies, and supporting the healthcare workforce. Moreover, efforts must be made to remove barriers to healthcare access and address the specific needs of vulnerable populations.

Ceasefire
In all conflicts, political efforts should prioritize peace talks, enforce ceasefires by all sides, ban arms trade or donations, and protect human life above all. One country’s veto power against 192 nations reveals the undemocratic UN governance and the urgent need to restore human Democracy, Peace, Justice and Dignity.
STATEMENT ON HEALTH IN CONFLICT ZONES

Sustaining adequate social determinants of health is critical for well-being and access to healthcare in conflict areas

The Need for Sustainable Health Equity

Sustainable Health Equity is defined as ensuring everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve their highest level of health, free from avoidable and unjust disparities caused by social inequality and the climate crisis. It involves addressing these interconnected challenges to ensure that health improvements are enduring and accessible to all. This is crucial for long-term resilience and stability, promoting social justice and human rights, and fostering economic development and prosperity.

Strategies for Achieving Health Equity in Conflict Zones

To achieve health equity in Gaza, several strategies are essential. Protecting healthcare infrastructure and personnel is paramount, ensuring facilities are safeguarded and workers can operate safely. Strengthening health systems through rebuilding infrastructure and investing in workforce training is critical. Promoting community engagement empowers residents to actively participate in their health, ensuring services are culturally sensitive and context-specific. Collaboration and partnership at the international level can mobilize resources and support for health initiatives.

Recommendations

Policymakers and advocates must prioritize health equity in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts, pushing for policies that protect the right to health. Resource allocation should focus on increasing funding for health programs in conflict areas and ensuring equitable distribution to reach the most vulnerable. Research and data collection are essential for understanding the specific health needs in conflict zones and to implementing evidence-based strategies for effective health interventions.