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Documenting the Antisemitic Organizational Culture of Doctors without Borders (MSF)

- *Alain Destexhe, former Secretary-General: “MSF is lying, MSF is partial, MSF is biased and MSF are accomplices.”*
- *Alain Destexhe: “Since October 7, MSF... has not made a single tweet denouncing the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by Hamas on October 7, including the abduction of over 240 Israelis ... and the use of hospitals as barracks or human shields.”*
- *Michael Goldfarb, Doctors Without Borders USA: “European colleagues freely told me, knowing I am Jewish, that Israel doesn't have a right to exist.”*
- *Dr. Estrella Lasry, consultant, MSF Geneva: “the appalling lack of empathy in the organisation towards the victims in Israel” and “‘explicit request’ from an MSF office in the Middle East ‘not to speak out on behalf of victims in Israel as it would victimise the perpetrators.’”*

I. Introduction

This report builds on NGO Monitor’s April 2026 publication, “[NGO Malpractice: MSF \(Doctors Without Borders\) and the Gaza ‘Genocide’ Campaign](#),” which demonstrates that Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF, Doctors Without Borders) messaging regarding Israel is anchored in false “testimonies” and consistently violates the principles of neutrality and medical ethics.

The evidence presented in this report reveals a widespread organizational culture dominated by antisemitism that produced a highly disproportionate obsession with and singling-out of Israel, as well as direct and repeated support for Hamas. These aspects are reflected in the Gaza “genocide” campaign; in the demonstrably false “testimonies” of MSF

staffers and volunteers, such as the case of Al Ahli hospital¹; in the systematic erasure of Israeli victims and hostages; and many other examples.

Drawing from publicly available, open-source evidence relating to current and former MSF employees and board members, this report documents MSF's internal staff conversations and culture regarding Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the personal experiences of Jewish staff members within the organization. We present direct quotations from employees' media interviews and posts on MSF's internal staff forum, spanning a wide spectrum of positions.

Based on these many testimonials by MSF insiders, it is clear that **antisemitism and anti-Israel bias are widespread in MSF's organizational culture and are expressed by both top officials and lower-level staff. These prejudices are reflected in the organization's highly biased agenda and political campaigning on Israel.**

II. Current and Former MSF Employees and Leadership

Richard Rossin

Richard Rossin served as MSF's Secretary-General in the 1970s and later co-founded Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World). On July 13, 2024, Canada's *National Post* published "'Not the MSF I knew': Doctors Without Borders accused of picking side[s] in Israel-Hamas war," [in which Rossin is quoted](#) extensively:

- Rossin: "I think [the ideological bias against Israel] was perceptible around the beginning of the 80's. Antisemitism within MSF began under the cover of anti-Zionism."
- Rossin: "It [the ideological shift] cannot be fixed. How can you fix antisemitism, which is not an opinion but a mental disease?"

¹ On October 17, 2023, immediately after the explosion at Al-Ahli Hospital, MSF's official X account posted: "[We are horrified by the recent Israeli bombing of Ahli Arab Hospital in #Gaza City, which was treating patients and hosting displaced Gazans. Hundreds of people have reportedly been killed. This is a massacre. It is absolutely unacceptable.](#)" Subsequent investigations by the United States, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, Human Rights Watch and others concluded that the explosion resulted from a misfired rocket launched by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, not an Israeli strike. MSF neither corrected nor deleted its post. For detailed analysis of MSF's role in media amplification of this disinformation, see CAMERA, "[The Medicalization of Hamas Disinformation: Médecins Sans Frontières \(MSF\).](#)"

- *National Post*: “Rossin recalled his experience in 2010 on a mission to Uganda when an MSF Holland contingent refused to interact with a fellow Israeli medical NGO team dispatched to help. Rossin remembered it as an episode of ‘one-way empathy,’ where prejudice had poisoned the MSF team’s ability to cooperate with Israel in their shared goal of helping civilians. He feels these same issues continue to plague MSF’s mission in Gaza today.”

Alain Destexhe

Alain Destexhe served as a doctor with MSF in the 1980s and as Secretary-General in the 1990s. He accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on MSF’s behalf in 1999.

In an October 2025 [interview](#), Destexhe stated:

- “It would have been impossible at the time when I was secretary-general of MSF to be as biased as MSF – Doctors Without Borders – is now in Gaza. We were defining ourselves as a neutral, impartial and humanitarian organization ... I think now MSF in Gaza is really taking the side [of] Hamas and against Israel. Americans need to know that Doctors Without Borders is not anymore the organization that it was 15 or 20 years ago. It has become a biased, partial and militant organization.”
- On MSF operations in Gaza: “The only thing that MSF can do is to say, ‘No, we don’t want to be part of this. We have to quit Gaza. And we don’t want to become accomplices with a terrorist organization like Hamas.’”
- “MSF is lying, MSF is partial, MSF is biased and MSF are accomplices of Hamas.”

In December 2023, Destexhe published a 47-page report, “[Doctors Without Borders: An Accomplice of Hamas?](#),” an [analysis](#) of MSF’s social media posts following Hamas’ atrocities of October 7, 2023. His report included the following:

- “The public statements since October 7 of Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and its employees, on the ground in Gaza, show a systematic bias in favor of Hamas and hostility to Israel. MSF has failed in its humanitarian purpose and violated its own charter.”
- “Since October 7, MSF, which is extremely active on X, has not made a single tweet denouncing the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by Hamas on October 7, including the abduction of over 240 Israelis and others who have been held in Gaza as hostages, and the use of hospitals as barracks or human shields.

MSF has constantly denounced Israel in virulent terms, but never the violations of humanitarian law committed by Hamas.”²

- “This biased analysis of events can also be found among MSF’s official spokespeople, who - usually quick to communicate - are completely silent on 7 October.”
 - Destexhe quotes a social media repost (since deleted) by Ghassan Abou Chaar, the Vice President of MSF France, which Abou Chaar shared during the October 7 Hamas massacre: “I think it is important for people to be educated on Gaza before spewing anything from talking points you have heard.”
 - Destexhe also quotes Louis Baudoin Laarman, MSF Field Communications Manager in Jerusalem, in his [X post](#) on October 7, 2023: “Rockets still shooting from #Gaza right now. No Israeli response for now,” followed by a reposting of a tweet about an Israeli airstrike. This post highlights the complete erasure of the Israeli victims of the Hamas atrocities by top MSF officials.
 - Separately, in an [X post of his own](#) dated December 18, 2023, Destexhe points out that: “In its X’s (tweets) MSF has never denounced the crimes committed by Hamas on 7 October, the taking of civilians hostage, the use of hospitals as barracks or human shields.”
- “The information provided by MSF, which often repeats without proof the words of its local Palestinian employees, should therefore be no more credible than that of Hamas.”
- “Despite being subject to the MSF Charter, a significant proportion of its staff seem to share the Hamas point of view and support the terrorist attacks of 7 October. The proximity between some MSF staff and Hamas raises questions about possible links between MSF in Gaza and extremist groups.”

² MSF did eventually and briefly reference the October 7 massacre, five days later, in a statement dated October 12, 2023: “Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is horrified by the brutal mass killing of civilians perpetrated by Hamas, and by the massive attacks on Gaza, Palestine, now being pursued by Israel.” The statement linked this minimal acknowledgement with an immediate condemnation of Israel and a demand for a ceasefire, with no mention of the hostages.

Michael Goldfarb

Michael Goldfarb was with MSF / Doctors without Borders US for more than 15 years, and was interviewed by [The Jewish Chronicle](#) of London in March 2026³:

- Goldfarb: “European colleagues freely told me, knowing I am Jewish, that Israel doesn't have a right to exist.”
- “[Goldfarb] recalled one colleague expressing outrage at being mistaken for Israeli while abroad. At a restaurant with MSF colleagues in northern Italy, in a town’s former Jewish quarter, one colleague told Goldfarb: ‘There better not be Israeli flags here.’”
- “Goldfarb alleges there is ‘selective outrage’, giving rise for example to internal messages of solidarity with Asian American staff when the minority group was attacked during the first outbreak of Covid. When violence against Jews in New York surged during the 2021 Gaza conflict, his suggestion of a similar message of support being sent out was rejected. ‘The executive director told me, “If we do that, we have to do it for every minority,” he said.’ “My response was: why wouldn’t we? And I was told, “Well you know, because Israel – it’s complicated.’”
- Goldfarb: “You see extreme ideological fervour – Israel as a Nazi state, Jews as the oppressive, colonial, white supremacists, Zionism as Nazism.”
- Goldfarb: “Nothing meaningful has been done to address antisemitism, to show solidarity with Jewish staff, or call out this hate. That creates a permissive environment in which it flourishes.”
- Goldfarb: “My 15-plus years with MSF were among the most meaningful of my professional life. It does essential, life-saving work that few organisations can match, and the world would be worse without it. But an internal reckoning is long overdue. For an organisation that prides itself on self-reflection and course correction, it has yet to confront the antisemitism in its midst.”

Additional Posts on the Staff Forum (Souk)

[The Jewish Chronicle](#) reviewed messages about Israel that had been posted on MSF’s closed online staff forum, known internally as “the Souk.” Among the statements they discovered by staff:

³ March 2026, *The Jewish Chronicle* (London), “[Revealed: MSF Accused by Own Staff of Israel ‘Obsession’ That Breaches Pledge of Neutrality.](#)”

- “We must decolonise our minds.” – posted in November 2023 by Rasha Khoury, who later became President of the MSF USA Board of Directors and co-author of [“Israeli necropolitics and the pursuit of health justice in Palestine”](#)⁴ (see below).
- “[The IDF] ticks every box of crimes imaginable, including the ultimate one: genocide.”
- Descriptions of Zionism as “genocide,” “ethnic cleansing,” “fascism,” and “absolute evil.”
- Descriptions of Israel as a “76-year-old crime scene” and “a textbook example of violent, racist settler colonialism.”



MSF vs Israel (2016)

In 2016, *The Forward* (New York) published [“Why Doctors Without Borders Has an Israel Problem,”](#) tracing anti-Israel conduct across MSF sections seven years before the October 7 Hamas atrocities. Examples included: 1) “Recent comments by the former president of MSF France equated the wearing of the yarmulke with support of Israeli state policies.” MSF publicly described the remarks as “ill-informed, offensive and just plain wrong” and stated they had been retracted — an acknowledgment that the statement had been made by a senior figure and warranted a formal organizational response. (2) The same investigation described an MSF France exhibition that, as reported by *The Forward*, “parrots the ‘Nakba’ narrative that views the founding of the State of Israel as a catastrophe, delegitimizing the very existence of the Jewish state,” and that displayed images of Palestinian violence as “icons symbolizing the struggle of the Palestinian people.” Roger Cukierman, head of the Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF), condemned the exhibition as “an apology for terrorism” and warned that it “could inflame antisemitic violence.”

Anonymous MSF Staff Quoted by “The New Humanitarian”

In December 2023, *The New Humanitarian* published [“For Some Aid Workers, Internal Gaza Tensions Unearth Long-Overdue Debates,”](#) based on interviews with six aid workers across multiple organizations. (*The New Humanitarian* [describes itself](#) as a [Geneva-based](#) “independent, non-profit newsroom” that produces “fact-based journalism from the heart of conflicts and disasters” and “hold[s] the aid industry accountable.”) The article explained

⁴ The article's summary box states that “framing Palestinian violence on October 7 as provocation and Israeli violence as response is ahistoric,” and describes Israel's occupation as demonstrating “the horrors of Israeli necropolitics, which leads to the creation of ‘death-worlds’ in which people survive and resist in perpetual proximity to death.” The article's competing interests section discloses that co-author Rasha Khoury was “an unpaid member of the Doctors Without Borders/MSF-USA Board of Directors” a fact not mentioned in the email forwarding the article to MSF global leadership for “insight” into the conflict.

that one interviewee asked not to be named for fear of retaliation, and that “others who spoke to The New Humanitarian also asked to remain anonymous out of concern that their career could be negatively impacted.” The MSF employees who were interviewed shared threads from the internal MSF staff platform (Souk):

- MSF staffer: “The message about this conflict that we share with the world is one-sided, divisive, and inflammatory. It paints Israel as the sole offender in this conflict, unprovoked and heartless. This message feeds directly into the narrative that has fuelled hatred against Israeli[s] and Jews in the US and around the world.”
- MSF staffer, a doctor from Pakistan: “I have never seen this level of polarisation within the organisation.”
- *The New Humanitarian*: “Other INGO workers, including those at MSF, said they were exasperated by their employers’ insistence on describing Palestinian deaths in the passive voice – rather than embracing active language that names Israel as the perpetrator.”
- *The New Humanitarian*: “a petition currently making the rounds within MSF describes Israel’s actions in Gaza as ‘genocide’, and calls on the organisation to work towards ending ‘the Israeli occupation and apartheid exerted over Palestinians.’” (One year later, MSF published its “genocide” [Life in a Death Trap](#) report and joined the broader “genocide campaign” in parallel with similar publications and campaigns from HRW, Amnesty international, among other humanitarian groups.)

Bryon Sonberg

In March 2024, Bryon Sonberg resigned as Treasurer of MSF Canada’s Board of Directors. He was interviewed by the [National Post](#) article that also quotes Richard Rossin (above)

- A November 2023 email from a “major Canadian Jewish donor,” in which the donor stated plainly that MSF was biased against Israel, “rattled Byron Sonberg, who’d proudly served as MSF Canada’s treasurer for two years. He’d begun to sense the organization straying from its principle of impartiality, especially after he was copied on the donor’s email chain expressing growing frustration with the group.”
- “The final straw came in mid-February 2024 when Sonberg and hundreds of MSF global leaders were forwarded an article titled ‘[Israeli necropolitics and the pursuit of health justice in Palestine](#)⁵.’” It had been forwarded by Ruby Gill, president of MSF

⁵ The article’s summary box states that “framing Palestinian violence on October 7 as provocation and Israeli violence as response is ahistoric,” and describes Israel’s occupation as demonstrating “the horrors of Israeli necropolitics, which leads to the creation of ‘death-worlds’ in which people survive and resist in perpetual proximity to death.” The article’s competing interests section discloses that co-author Rasha Khoury was “an

Canada's Board of Directors, to provide "insight" into the Gaza-Israel War. One of the article's authors, Rasha Koury, was a member of the MSF-USA board of directors.

- In his resignation letter and subsequent statements, Sonberg said "MSF's response in the first months of the Israel-Hamas war undermined his confidence that MSF was living up to its charter principles of neutrality and impartiality," and that MSF Canada's claims to be "independent, neutral and impartial" were, in his assessment, "untrue."
- Sonberg: "When I asked about MSF's silence about the October 7 Hamas attacks, I was told that MSF only comments on what it witnesses; as MSF did not witness the attacks or their effects, they could not comment on them."

Dr. Estrella Lasry

Lasry served as a [tropical medicine advisor](#) and [consultant in the Medical Branch of MSF's Geneva](#) headquarters from approximately 2011 to approximately 2025, and was serving on its board on October 7, 2023. She was interviewed for [the same March 2026 London Jewish Chronicle](#) article that quoted Goldfarb (above).

- "I said our communication was biased and for an organisation that claims to be impartial, it was creating a biased, skewed, false narrative around what was actually going on. It was giving a very one-sided view ... I was told I was part of the 'Israeli propaganda machine' in a meeting, and nobody flinched."
- "[Lasry] described what she saw as 'the appalling lack of empathy in the organisation towards the victims in Israel'. She recalled one 'explicit request' from an MSF office in the Middle East 'not to speak out on behalf of victims in Israel as it would victimise the perpetrators.'" Lasry's reaction: "For a humanitarian organisation, that was shocking."
- "Lasry later called for internal training on antisemitism and took part in staff discussions, including with the secretary general: 'There was some sympathy, but there was also a level of vitriol.' She claims that Jewish staff concerns about antisemitism that had been raised with the internal Diversity, Equality and Inclusion department (DEI) were 'dismissed'."

unpaid member of the Doctors Without Borders/MSF-USA Board of Directors" a fact not mentioned in the email forwarding the article to MSF global leadership for "insight" into the conflict.

"Alisha"

In the [Jewish Chronicle's report](#), a current (as of March 2026) MSF employee – identified as "Alisha" and speaking via a third party – described MSF's operations at the Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, Gaza:

- "Alisha": "When MSF operates in Gaza they have to play by Hamas rules – there are certain things they can say, and certain things that can limit their security."
- "[Alisha] described restricted areas at [the hospital] and said staff knew which floors they were 'not welcome' on. She described a 2024 debrief in which a colleague who had just left Gaza said: 'We know there are doors we can't go through in the hospital, and we know that Hamas is in the hospital.' Revealing Hamas's use of the healthcare facilities would likely result in being forced to leave, the colleague said, according to Alisha."
- "[Alisha] also raised concerns about hiring practices, claiming that some local workers were not properly vetted, and recalling a senior manager who said 'people are becoming militants because of the war and we have to expect it.'"

"Lisa"

The *Jewish Chronicle's* [report](#) quotes another current (as of March 2026) employee, identified by the pseudonym "Lisa" and described as female and Jewish:

- "Lisa": "MSF is now threatened with having to leave Gaza and part of that could be because of its public campaign against Israel Are they a humanitarian aid organisation or an activist organisation?"
- "Lisa": [Regarding MSF's billboard campaign in London headlined, "We're witnessing a genocide in Gaza," funded by donor contributions:] "Has the money of donors given to a charity been used to convince people that this is a genocide?"

III. Analysis and Recommendations

As numerous MSF officials and staff members have stated repeatedly, antisemitism, antizionism, and other expressions of hostility and consistent bias towards Israel are deeply rooted within the organization. MSF's statements, publications, and posts on Gaza, particularly after the October 7 Hamas atrocities, including the intense "Gaza genocide" campaign, reinforce this evidence.

Clearly, the organization has blatantly and repeatedly violated its claim to act on the basis of neutrality, impartiality, and independence, and instead "has become a biased, partial and

militant organization” that takes “the side [of] Hamas and against Israel” – in the words of former Secretary-General Alain Destexhe. Similarly, as a staff member (“Alisha”) stated, “When MSF operates in Gaza they have to play by Hamas rules – there are certain things they can say, and certain things that can limit their security.” This results in the “biased, skewed” statements, posts, and reports that promote a “false narrative” with deliberate and consistent factual omissions, such as omissions of Hamas’ extensive terror presence and exploitation of Gaza’s hospitals. In parallel, as attested by Destexhe, “The information provided by MSF, which often repeats without proof the words of its local Palestinian employees, should therefore be no more credible than that of Hamas.”

In addition, expressions of antisemitism include statements by staff members referring to Israel as a “Nazi state” and telling Jewish staff that “Israel doesn’t have a right to exist.” Officials routinely dismissed the evidence of systemic antisemitism and requests to take action against the hatred that is part of the organizational culture. As Richard Rossin stated, “antisemitism within MSF began under the cover of anti-Zionism.” Highly discriminatory posts on the internal message board (the Souk) referred to Israel as a “76-year-old crime scene” and “a textbook example of violent, racist settler colonialism,” while promoting the “Gaza genocide” accusation that was central to the political war that accompanied the October 7 Hamas massacre.

These consistent “testimonies” – first-hand and independently verifiable evidence from MSF officials and employees – have been systematically ignored by the organization’s leadership, contradicting MSF’s claim to base its actions throughout the world on the testimonies of its staff and volunteers.

In order to address the toxic organizational culture of antisemitism and antizionism, fundamental changes in MSF’s structure, leadership, and staffing are required at both the international level and among the many country branches and sections. Current leadership responsible for this culture should be replaced, as well as staff-based purveyors of discrimination and hate against Jews and Israel. Additionally, independent oversight frameworks should be established to ensure that MSF’s leaders, including board members and funder-enablers, are held accountable.

Such measures are vital in restoring MSF’s reputation and role as an authoritative, respected and credible partner in providing medical and humanitarian aid worldwide.