

Deadly Gaza Hospital Blast a 'Crime,' Russia Says

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Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. **Russian Foreign Ministry Press Service**

The deadly blast at a Gaza hospital Tuesday night was a “crime” and Israel must provide proof that it was not involved, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

At least 500 people were killed in the blast at the al-Ahli al-Arabi hospital, Gaza’s Hamas-run health ministry said, blaming an Israeli airstrike. Israel [claims](#) the blast was the result of rockets fired by an Islamic militant group.

"Regarding our assessment, we certainly qualify such an act as a crime, as an act of dehumanization," Zakharova [said](#) Wednesday on her Radio Sputnik program.

“We are now seeing a desire [from Israel] to absolve responsibility,” she continued. “If there are serious intentions ... to prove it was not involved and is innocent, then it needs not only to comment in the media and on social networks, but to provide facts.”

Zakharova said that Israel and the United States should provide unedited satellite footage as

well as evidence regarding flight locations.

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She compared the situation to that of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 — which Russia-backed separatists [shot down](#) over eastern Ukraine in 2014, killing 298 civilians — saying that in that case the U.S. had not shared satellite data to prove claims of [Russian culpability](#).

Speaking at a press conference in Beijing, President Vladimir Putin [called](#) the hospital attack a catastrophe and a humanitarian tragedy, adding: “I hope that this conflict will wind down as quickly as possible.”

The Israeli army said Wednesday it had "evidence" that militants were responsible for the hospital blast, and said that a review proved others were at fault.

In an interview with state broadcaster [Rossiya 24](#) on Wednesday, Russian Ambassador to Israel Anatoly Viktorov [said](#): “This is not the first time that this particular hospital has been hit; a few days ago there was also a hit to this hospital, but there was not such terrible destruction as there was this time.”

World Health Organization officials [said](#) there have been 115 attacks on healthcare facilities in Gaza since the beginning of the latest conflict.

Russia has sought to maintain ties with both Israel and Palestine and has called for an “immediate ceasefire” following the outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas militants in Gaza on Oct. 7.

AFP contributed reporting.

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