

Dear President Obama,

We are 15 of the last doctors serving the remaining 300,000 citizens of eastern Aleppo. Regime troops have sought to surround and blockade the entire east of the city. Their losses have meant that a trickle of food has made its way into eastern Aleppo for the first time in weeks. Whether we live or die seems to be dependent on the ebbs and flows of the battlefield.

We have seen no effort on behalf of the United States to lift the siege or even use its influence to push the parties to protect civilians.

For five years, we have faced death from above on a daily basis. But we now face death from all around. For five years, we have borne witness as countless patients, friends and colleagues suffered violent, tormented deaths. For five years, the world has stood by and remarked how 'complicated' Syria is, while doing little to protect us. Recent offers of evacuation from the regime and Russia have sounded like thinly-veiled threats to residents – flee now or face annihilation ?

Last month, there were 42 attacks on medical facilities in Syria, 15 of which were hospitals in which we work. Right now, there is an attack on a medical facility every 17 hours. At this rate, our medical services in Aleppo could be completely destroyed in a month, leaving 300,000 people to die.

What pains us most, as doctors, is choosing who will live and who will die. Young children are sometimes brought into our emergency rooms so badly injured that we have to prioritize those with better chances, or simply don't have the equipment to help them. Two weeks ago, four newborn babies gasping for air suffocated to death after a blast cut the oxygen supply to their incubators. Gasping for air, their lives ended before they had really begun.

Despite the horror, we choose to be here. We took a pledge to help those in need. Our dedication to this pledge is absolute. Some of us were visiting our families when we heard the city was being besieged. So we rushed back - some on foot because the roads were too dangerous. Because without us even more of our friends and neighbors will die. We have a duty to remain and help.

Continued US inaction to protect the civilians of Syria means that our plight is being wilfully tolerated by those in the international corridors of power. The burden of responsibility for the crimes of the Syrian government and its Russian ally must therefore be shared by those, including the United States, who allow them to continue.

Unless a permanent lifeline to Aleppo is opened it will be only a matter of time until we are again surrounded by regime troops, hunger takes hold and hospitals' supplies run completely dry. Death has seemed increasingly inescapable. We do not need to tell you that the systematic targeting of hospitals by Syrian regime and Russian warplanes is a war crime. We do not need to tell you that they are committing atrocities in Aleppo.

We do not need tears or sympathy or even prayers, we need your action. Prove that you are the friend of Syrians.

Yours,

1. Dr. Abu Al Baraa, Pediatrician
2. Dr. Abu Tiem, Pediatrician
3. Dr. Hamza, Manager
4. Dr. Yahya, Pediatrician and head of Nutrition Program
5. Dr. Munther, Orthopedics
6. Dr. Abu Mohammad, General Surgeon

7. Dr. Abu Abdo, General Surgeon
8. Dr. Abd Al Rahman, Urologic Resident
9. Dr. Abu Tareq, ER Doctor
10. Dr. Farida, OBGYN
11. Dr. Hatem, Hospital Director
12. Dr. Usama, Pediatrician
13. Dr. Abu Zubeir, Pediatrician
14. Dr. Abu Maryam, Pediatric Surgeon
15. Dr. Abo Bakr, Neurologist