

Soroka Medical Center Struck by Ballistic Missile, Impacting Healthcare for Over One Million in Israel's South

BE'ER SHEVA, ISRAEL, June 24, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- In the early hours of June 19, Iran launched a ballistic missile that struck Soroka Medical Center, the only major hospital for southern Israel. It was a direct hit to the heart of Israel's healthcare system. Located in Be'er Sheva, Soroka serves over one million people across the diverse Negev region. Famous as a symbol of peaceful coexistence, Soroka, one of Israel's largest and most respected hospitals, is now operating in crisis mode. Most non-emergency medical services have been suspended. For a region already reeling since October 7, the missile strike brought additional trauma and a dangerous disruption to vital medical care. Though no lives were lost, the damage is profound. The lack of fatalities was thanks to Soroka's visionary leadership, which placed the hospital on high alert and activated emergency protocols refined over years of operating under threat. The timely evacuation of all hospital areas ensured the safety of patients, staff, and clinics in the hours preceding impact.



A ballistic missile struck the six-story Surgical Building at Soroka Medical Center.

"We saved lives, but we couldn't save our hospital," Prof. Shlomi Codish, Soroka's CEO, reflected. "Soroka is not just walls and steel; it's a community, a promise of care for every resident. We will persevere. A missile may have hit our buildings, but it cannot break our commitment. Our mission, professionalism and humanity — these core foundations of this hospital remain unshaken. We will continue to serve the people of the South, no matter what."

The missile struck a central area of the campus, its force rippling across the entire 70.5 acre of the medical center. The surgical building, once a center of healing and advanced care, is now inoperable. Nearly 100 people were injured, and while we are deeply grateful no lives were lost, the impact is severe. Structural damage, infrastructure failures, and ongoing safety risks have

rendered large parts of the hospital unusable. Clinics and inpatient wards have been shut down. Hundreds of patients have been transferred to facilities across the country or safely discharged to home care. Soroka's Emergency Department and trauma services remain active, operating in fortified zones.



Hundreds of patients have been transferred to medical facilities across the country following the ballistic missile attack.

To grasp Soroka's importance to the region, consider this: even while operating in reduced capacity mode, Soroka has welcomed 117 new babies

— life affirming even in the darkest hours. But nearly all other services—consultations, routine surgeries, diagnostics—have been suspended. For residents of Be'er Sheva, Rahat, Dimona, Arad, and dozens of rural and Bedouin communities across the South, this widening healthcare gap is now a life-threatening crisis.

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Soroka is not only one of the best hospitals in Israel, it is, one of the best in the world. This attack put children, mothers, and the elderly in harm's way. This was a crime against humanity.”

President Isaac Herzog

Damage extended to the hospital's laboratories, including a key lab central to pioneering research on treatments for tumors, infectious diseases, and diabetes. Beyond their groundbreaking studies, these labs provided rapid diagnostics and expert consultations vital to patient care. Decades of work, data, and lives dedicated to advancing science and improving society were lost in an instant, a devastating setback that will take years to overcome.

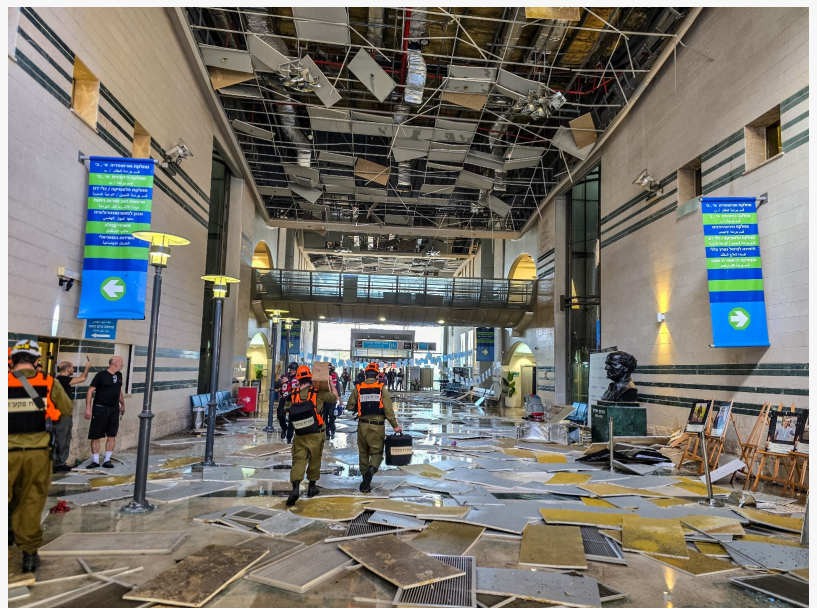
Now, Soroka's staff are fighting a different battle: salvaging what they can from the wreckage. By flashlight, they move equipment and critical supplies through darkness, trying to preserve tools essential for continuing care and recovery. Equipment worth millions of shekels was destroyed, and rebuilding the research infrastructure and restoring capabilities will demand a long-term effort.

Soroka has never been just a hospital. It is the anchor of life in Israel's South—a center of medical innovation, and constant care in a region often underserved and under threat. Its closure reverberates far beyond the blast site. People with cancer, heart disease, and chronic illnesses now face heightened risk, not from failure, but from force.

President Isaac Herzog condemned the strike, calling it a direct attack on civilian medical infrastructure and a violation of international law. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, after touring the damaged campus, vowed a forceful response. “This attack will not go unanswered.

More urgently, we will restore Soroka—stronger and more secure than ever.”

Soroka’s leadership is coordinating with the Ministry of Health, Clalit Health Services, the Home Front Command, and emergency responders to stabilize operations and plan reconstruction. American Friends of Soroka Medical Center (AFS) has launched the Rebuilding Soroka Emergency Fund, a global campaign to restore vital infrastructure, replace destroyed equipment, enhance protective systems, and swiftly restore full medical access to southern Israel. Learn more at [Soroka.org](https://soroka.org).



The ballistic missile struck a central area of Soroka's campus, its force rippling across all 70.5 acres of the medical center.

“Our response goes beyond repairing buildings,” said Rachel Heisler, Executive Director of AFS. “It’s about restoring healthcare and hope to over a million people. The South cannot be without a Level 1 trauma center, especially in these critical times. With support from our global community, we will rebuild Soroka stronger—ensuring it remains a beacon of resilience, compassion, and innovation for generations.”

Soroka’s strength has always come from its people: doctors, nurses, staff, patients, and supporters worldwide. Today, that strength faces its greatest test. Rebuilding is not just a goal but a necessity. And it begins now. Visit [Soroka.org](https://soroka.org).

American Friends of Soroka Medical Center Inc.

American Friends of Soroka Medical Center Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in New York, composed of a dedicated community of individuals, families, foundations, and businesses. AFS is committed to supporting the lifesaving medical care and breakthrough research of Soroka Medical Center, ensuring that the hospital can continue to provide world-class care to the people of Israel, now and in the future. Located in Be’er Sheva, Soroka Medical Center is a living symbol of peaceful coexistence, and is the only major medical center for the profoundly diverse southern half of Israel.

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