



Aleppo Cancer Kids Denied Medical Aid and Food As Part of US-EU Sanctions Against Assad

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No life-saving drugs, necessary equipment, or chance of survival – RT’s Murad Gazdiev visited children in an Aleppo hospital who are suffering from cancer – some treatable – but vital medicine can’t reach them due to EU and US sanctions.

Dozens of young cancer sufferers gathered at Cancer Care Syria, a small organization which helps cancer patients. Since the EU and US imposed sanctions on Syrian President Bashar Assad, some of these children have almost lost all hope for recovery. The sanctions, which target the Syrian regime and its supporters, have deeply affected the economy, including the health care sector.

The center helps children with forms of cancer that can be easily treated with western medicine. Three-year-old Waffa could have had her eye cancer cured, but the sanctions made the medicine unavailable, and she had to have her eye amputated. On top of that, the only hospital in Aleppo that specialized in cancer was taken by rebels and destroyed in fighting.

Waffa had to live with an empty eye socket for almost a year until Cancer Care Syria managed to collect enough money to buy her a prosthetic eye.

The girl’s mother told RT that this new eye has brought back hope for a normal life “She said, ‘look at me, I have my second eye! Now nobody will stare at me strangely,” the woman said.



Waffa could have had her eye cancer cured © RT

RT's Murad Gazdiev also talked to 3-year-old Omar who is not aware how dangerous cancer can be - he just says he'll battle it.

"I will fight and beat the cancer... because I am strong," he said.



Omar says he will battle his cancer © RT

10-year-old Kamar doesn't even know she has cancer - she was told that she is a bit sick.

The girl thinks she comes here to the center to help other children, but in fact, they also help her.

“I like to help them. I have a lot of friends here. I love them – and they love me,” she told RT.



Kamar doesn't even know she has cancer © RT

“Almost all the children who died of cancer did so because of European sanctions. We ask the European Union and humanitarian agencies to lift these sanctions and let cancer medicine in because children are suffering,” Muzzna Al-Ulabi, a head of Cancer Care Syria, told RT.

Cancer Care Syria is struggling to collect money for children. Sometimes it buys or smuggles cancer medicine from neighboring Lebanon.



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"When the war began, we dreamed of opening a specialized children's cancer hospital – but we don't have that sort of money. We don't even have \$6,000 dollars a month for medicine for the children," Al-Ulabi said.

But even if there is vital medication, mothers of cancer-affected children worry that their sons and daughters won't get enough food to recover.

"The children need enough food, or they won't survive. It's what all the mothers think about – having enough food for the children."

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