



Breathing in a World Without War

THE TURKISH THORACIC SOCIETY
DECLARATION ON PEACE AND HEALTH

Medicine and War Represent Inherently Incompatible Philosophies



The Logic of War

- Legitimizes the right to kill.

- Equates victory with moral justification.

- Constructs success on the deaths of civilians and the violation of the right to life.



The Philosophy of Medicine

- Fundamentally grounded in the preservation of life.

- Rooted in the moral stance of doing no harm.

- Adheres strictly to scientific and ethical standards to prevent suffering.

The Cascading Human Toll of Armed Conflict



80%

Proportion of war fatalities who are non-combatant civilians.



25%

Percentage of bombing survivors who subsequently die from infectious diseases.



10x to 20x

Increase in mortality rates within refugee camps following mass displacement.



13%

Healthcare Access Gap: Refugees lacking primary care, compared to 6% of host communities.

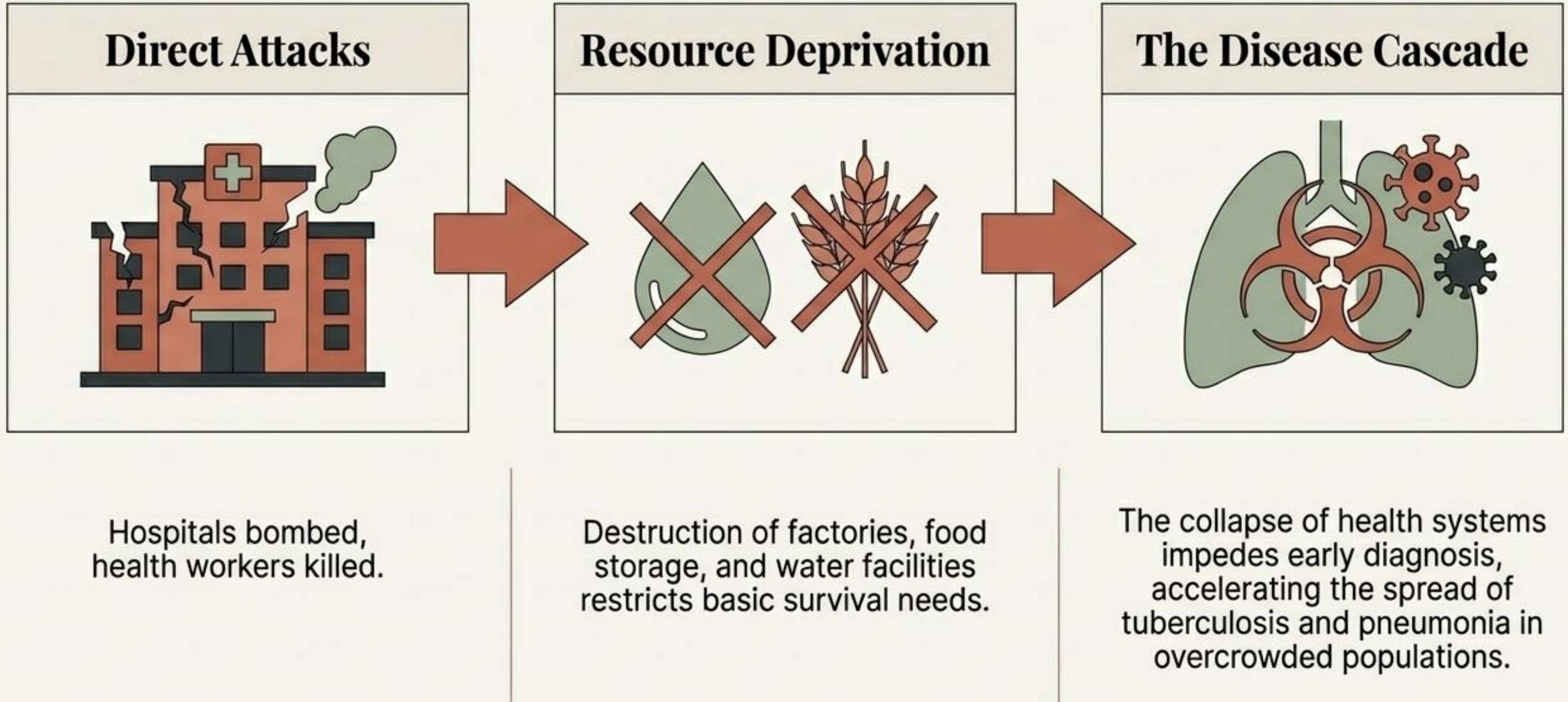
War Disproportionately Burdens the Most Vulnerable



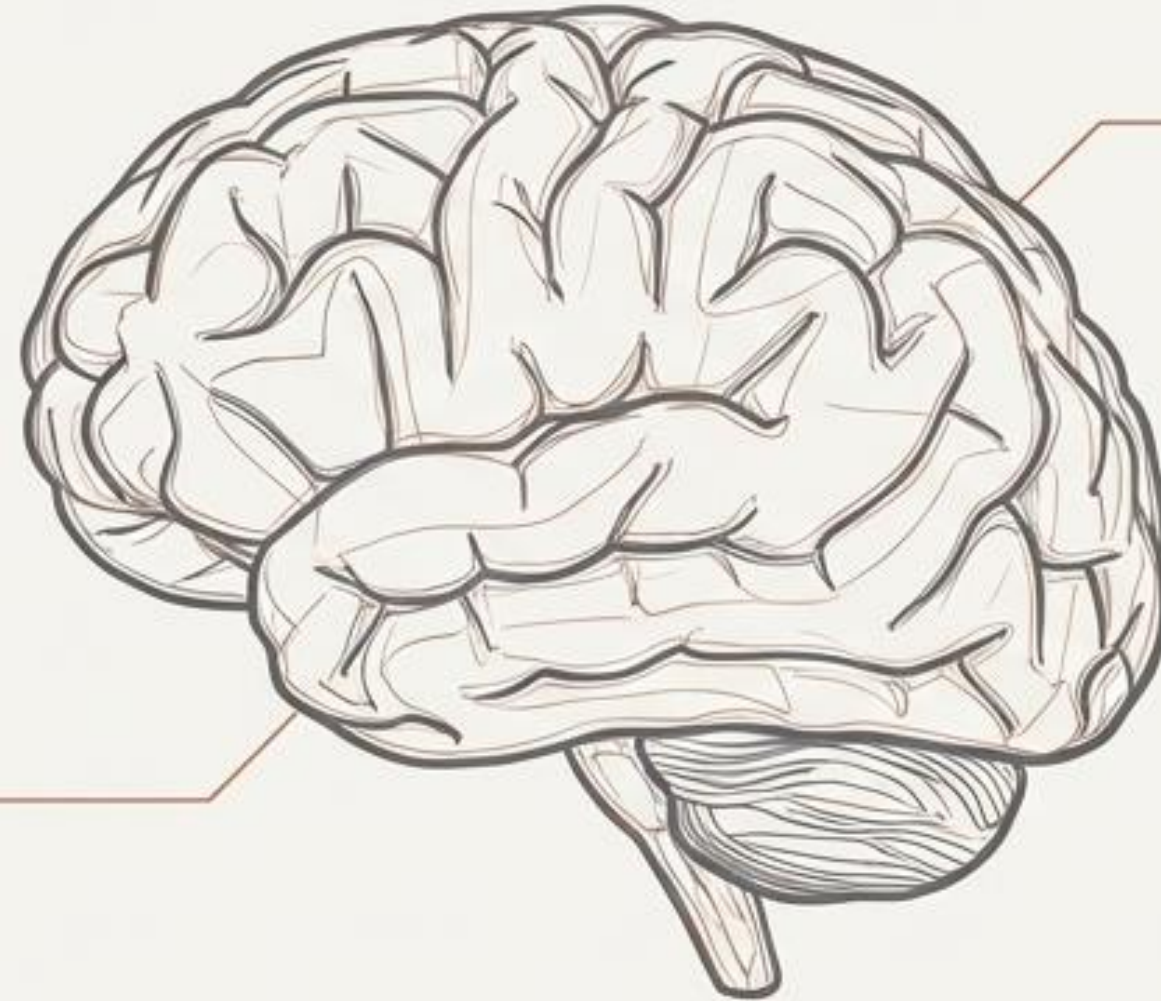
The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Affirms the fundamental right to healthy development.
- Guarantees access to the highest attainable standard of medical care.
- Article 37: No child shall be subjected to unlawful or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

Healthcare Infrastructure Becomes a Direct Target



The Invisible Wounds Manifest as Moral Injury



Standard Trauma

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety caused by persistent insecurity and fear of death.

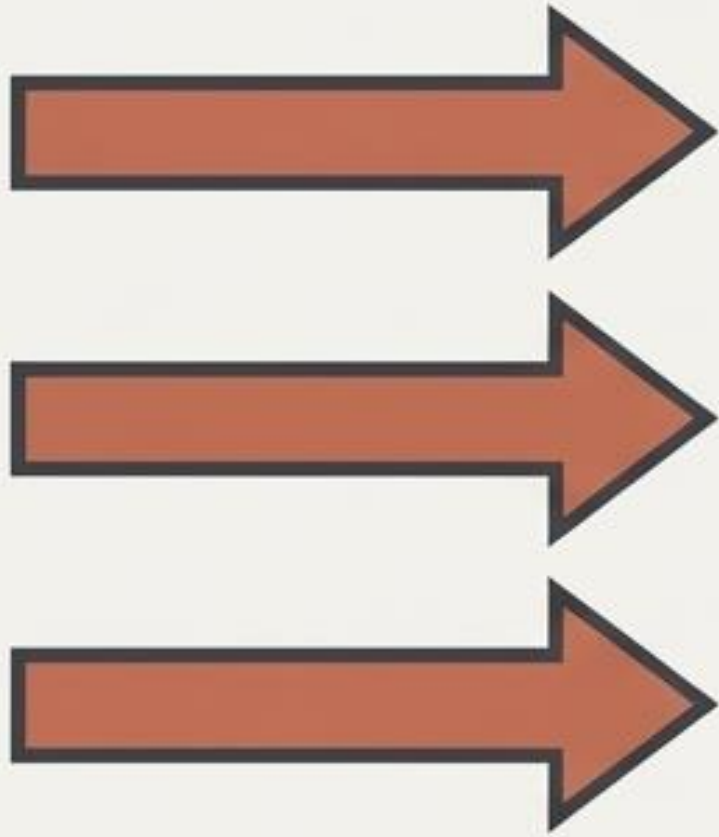
Moral Injury

A profound cognitive and emotional response to events that violate an individual's deeply held moral values.

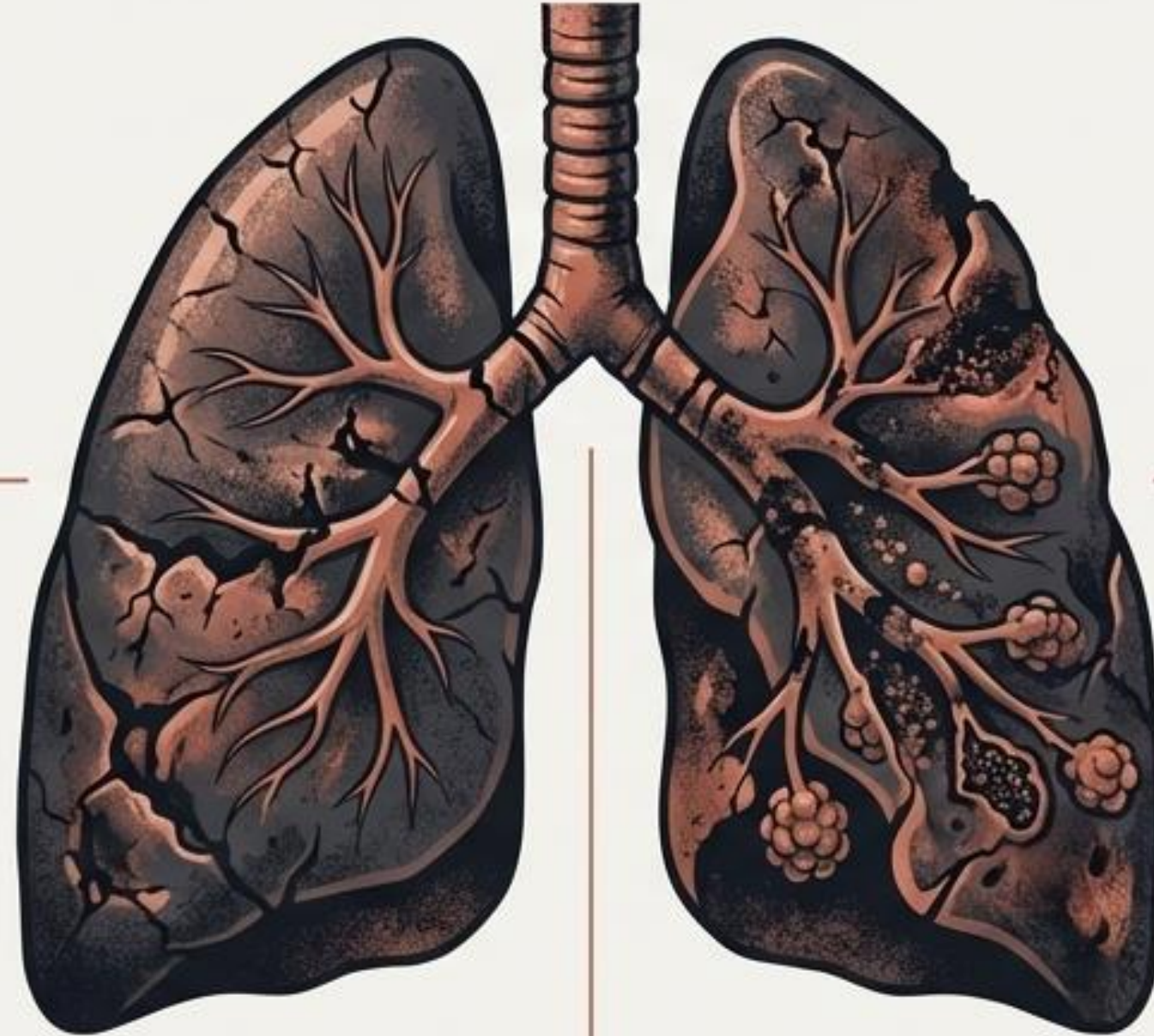
- **Triggers:** Perpetrating, failing to prevent, or witnessing acts that conflict with moral convictions.
- **Outcomes:** Self-harm, self-defeating behaviors, and pervasive hopelessness lasting years after conflict ends.

Explosives and Structural Collapse Destroy Respiratory Health

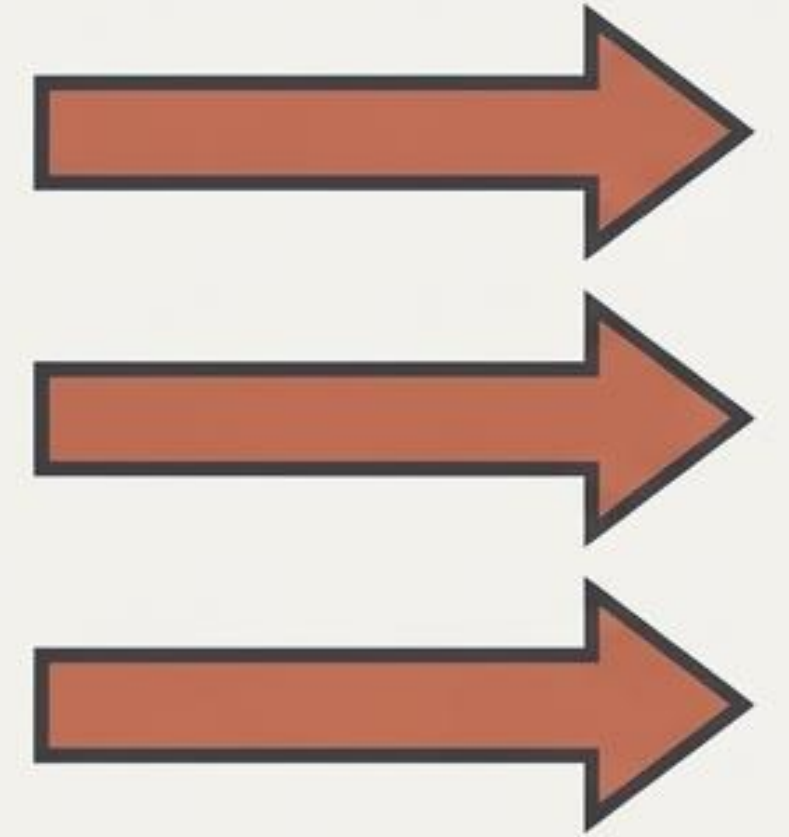
Input Sources:



- Explosives and fuels
- Collapsed buildings and concrete dust
- Toxic metal and chemical contamination



Clinical Outcomes:



- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Severe asthma
- Acute respiratory health crises

Supporting Evidence: Data verified by studies conducted in modern conflict zones including Gaza, Syria, and Ukraine.



The Unfolding Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza

Data Dashboard (Since October 2023)

70,000+

People killed (majority civilians;
half women and children).

161,600

Housing units **completely
destroyed**.

88%

Total **infrastructure damaged**.

90,000

**University students stripped of
their education**.

Context: Systematic attacks on schools, universities, and cultural heritage have eliminated the future educational prospects of an entire generation.

AI-generated

Famine and Malnutrition Accelerate Civilian Mortality



Integrated Food Security Phase
Classification (IPC) Data



30% - Minimum percentage of children suffering from acute malnutrition.



2 per 10,000 - People dying daily.



4 per 10,000 - Children dying daily.

Mechanism of Death

Excess mortality is driven not just by direct strikes, but by starvation alone or the deadly interaction between malnutrition and disease.

International Humanitarian Law Establishes Strict Protections

The Geneva Conventions & 1954 Hague Convention

 <p>Civilians: Homes, markets, residential buildings.</p>	 <p>Healthcare: Hospitals, ambulances, and health personnel.</p>	 <p>Survival Infrastructure: Food supplies, drinking water, electricity.</p>
 <p>Education: Schools, students, and educators.</p>	 <p>Sacred Sites: Places of worship.</p>	 <p>Culture: Historical property and cultural heritage.</p>

Unlawful, deliberate, and disproportionate attacks on these entities must be investigated as war crimes.

True Peace Requires More Than the Absence of Violence



Negative Peace

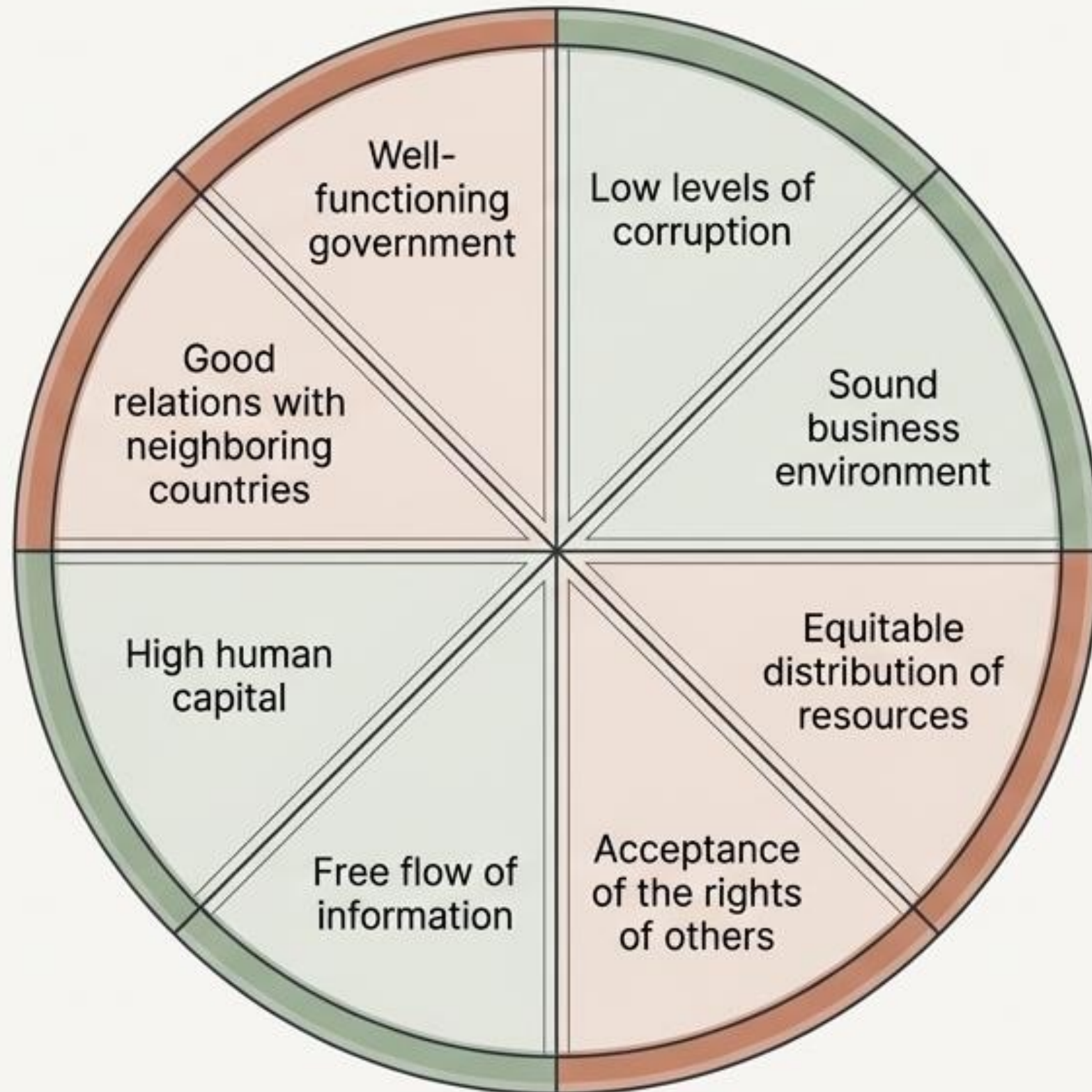
- Defined simply as the absence of war and direct violence.
- Does not guarantee stability or social cohesion.

Positive Peace

- Encompasses the attitudes, institutions, and structures that enable prosperity.
- Strengthens health systems, expands preventive care, and builds societal resilience against crises.

The Eight Pillars of the Positive Peace Index

Measuring Societal Resilience



Regional Context: Türkiye

Türkiye experienced a 7.8% decline in its PPI score (2013–2022)—the largest decline in Europe—placing 91st globally due to weakened societal resilience.

Lung Health is a Direct Indicator of Environmental Peace

Core Concept

Environmental peace demands a mode of living harmonious with nature and grounded in sustainability.

The Non-War Threats

Air pollution, climate change, and environmental degradation.



The Medical Link

Clean air policies and renewable energy are not just ecological goals; they are health-centered strategies. Respiratory health relies entirely on ecological balance and climate stability.

Health Professionals Have a Duty to Advocate for Peace

The “Peace through Health” (PtH) Mandate



01. Active Advocacy

Opposing war is a professional duty born from the principle of “do no harm.” Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) must monitor and socialize human rights protections.



02. Documenting Reality








Health workers must proactively document human rights violations to support legal accountability and bring abuses to an end.



03. Reforming Education

Medical curricula must urgently integrate peace education, human rights, and the specific study of “lung health in conflict settings.”

The Turkish Thoracic Society Mandates Seven Core Declarations

1	<p>Peace is a fundamental prerequisite for public health.</p> 	4	<p>The respiratory impacts of war must be integrated into medical education.</p> 
2	<p>Peace policies must be integrated with public health strategies.</p> 	5	<p>Research initiatives on peace and lung health will be actively supported.</p> 
3	<p>Peace is an essential condition specifically for lung health.</p> 	6	<p>Real patient experiences from war zones will drive The right to life is inviolable; we oppose all forms of genocide, particularly the atrocities in Gaza.</p> 
4	<p>The respiratory impacts of war must be integrated into medical education.</p> 	7	