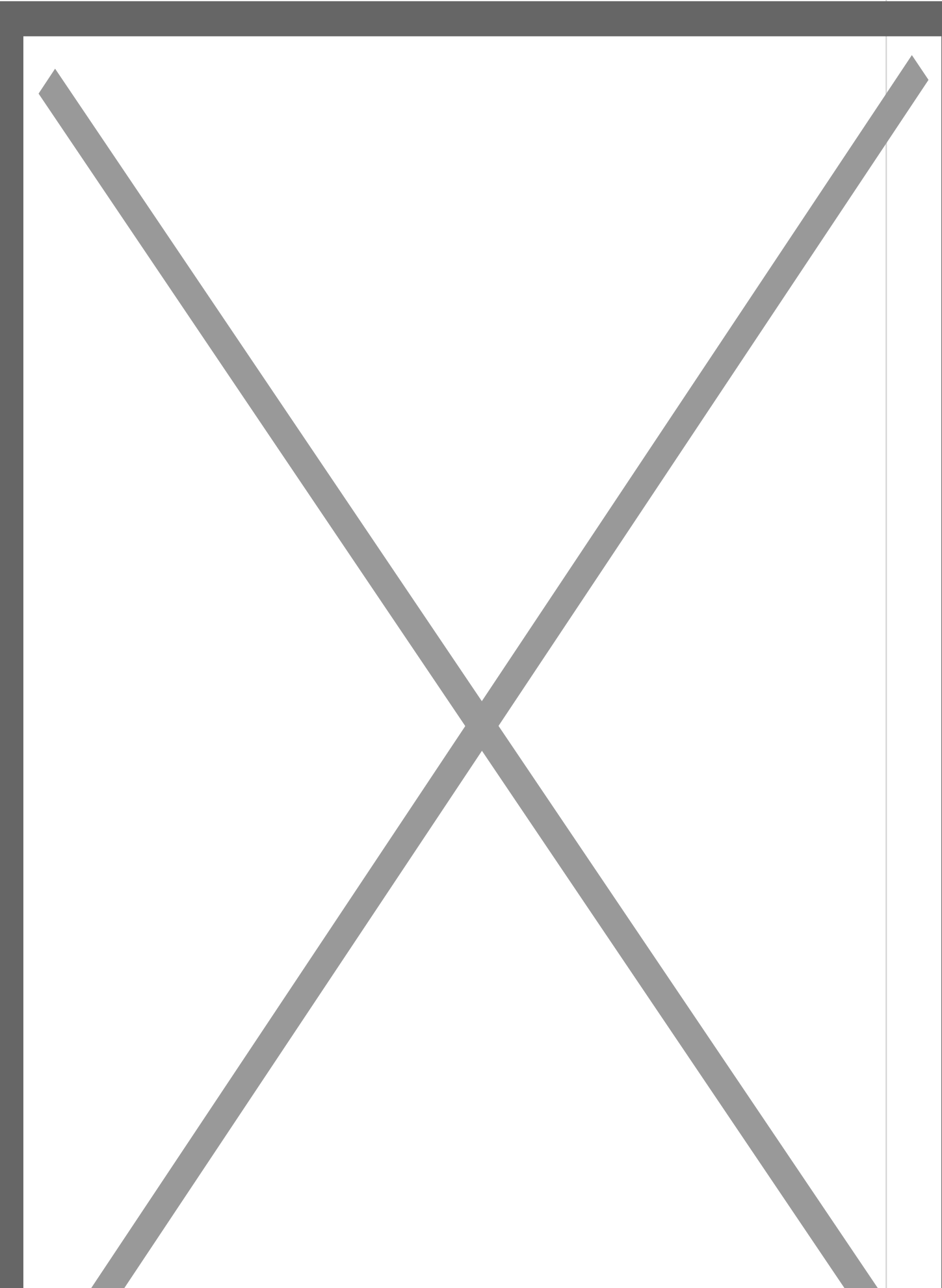


Image of mourning Palestinian wins World Press Photo Award

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The 2024 World Press Photo of the Year is of Inas Abu Maamar, 36, embracing the body of her five-year-old niece Saly, who was killed in an Israeli strike, at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis [File: Mohammed Salem/Reuters]

Amsterdam, April 19 (RHC)-- A haunting image of a grieving Palestinian woman embracing the body of her little niece, who was killed in an Israeli strike in the Gaza Strip, won the 2024 World Press Photo of the Year Award on Thursday.

The photograph taken by the Reuters news agency's Mohammed Salem shows Inas Abu Maamar cradling the body of five-year-old Saly, who was killed with her mother and sister when a missile hit their home in Khan Younis, in southern Gaza, in October.

Salem was in Khan Younis's Nasser Hospital on October 17 when he saw Abu Maamar, 36, sobbing and tightly holding the shrouded body of her niece in the morgue. The picture was taken 10 days after the start of the current conflict, following the attack by the Palestinian group Hamas in southern Israel.

"It was a powerful and a sad moment and I felt the picture sums up the broader sense of what was happening in the Gaza Strip," World Press Photo quoted Salem as saying.

"It is a really profoundly affecting image," said Fiona Shields, jury chairwoman. "Once you've seen it, it's kind of seared in your mind," she said. "It works as a kind of literal and metaphorical message really about the horror and futility of conflict." "It's an incredibly powerful argument for peace," Shields added.

South Africa's Lee-Ann Olwage, shooting for GEO, won the Story of the Year Award with an intimate portrayal of a Malagasy family caring for an elderly relative suffering from dementia. "This story tackles a universal health issue through the lens of family and care," the judges said.

"The selection of images is composed with warmth and tenderness reminding viewers of the love and closeness necessary in a time of war and aggression worldwide," they added.

Venezuelan Alejandro Cegarra won the Long-Term Project Award with his vivid monochrome images of migrants and asylum seekers trying to cross Mexico's southern border.

Shooting for The New York Times/Bloomberg, Cegarra's own experience as a migrant "afforded a sensitive human-centred perspective that centres on the agency and resilience of migrants."

In the Open Format, Ukraine's Julia Kochetova won with her website that "brings together photojournalism with the personal documentary style of a diary to show the world what it is like to live with war as an everyday reality".

The 2024 award-winning pictures were selected from 61,062 entries by 3,851 photographers from 130 countries.

The photos are on exhibit at De Nieuwe Kerk, a 15th-century church in the center of Amsterdam, until July 14.



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