

Mr President

The Security Council has called for an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire, leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

The Foreign Minister of Norway added his voice to all those in the Security Council who demanded an immediate ceasefire. We now demand that Security Council resolution 1860 is fully implemented by all parties.

Hamas' launching of rockets targeting civilians in Israel must stop.

Israel's shelling of Gaza must stop. Israel must withdraw its troops from Gaza.

We place our hope in the Egyptian initiative for an immediate ceasefire.

At the same time, the on-going violence in Gaza has created new and urgent humanitarian needs. The Security Council entrusted the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee with alleviating the humanitarian and economic situation in Gaza. As Chair of the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee, Norway stands ready to convene an international donor conference to mobilise international support for the rebuilding of Gaza. Humanitarian assistance must be channelled through existing channels, in particular the UN-system on the ground.

International humanitarian law is crystal clear: civilians must be protected.

Norway strongly condemns Israel's shelling of the Headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Gaza. UNRWA is the lifeline and the safety net for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. UNRWA has continued to deliver assistance to Palestinian refugees under dangerous circumstances throughout this conflict. Norway also strongly condemns Israel's shelling of the al-Quds Hospital of the Palestinian Red Crescent. Such attacks are completely unacceptable and contrary to international law.

Mr President

We reiterate our demand for an immediate ceasefire to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population in Gaza and to lay the foundations for a lasting peace.

Thank you, Mr President