



**PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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STATEMENT BY  
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ASSEMBLY

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Mr. President,

As we enter the 20th day of the Israeli operations in Gaza, the death toll continues to rise, which is now over one thousand, which includes great number of women and children. Entire families have perished in the violence. For the people of Gaza, the borders are closed; there is no place to go. Even the UN headquarters and buildings are not spared from attacks.

No one can accept such a siege. No one can tolerate such an action by which civilians take the brunt and become victims. We deeply regret the ongoing human tragedy in Gaza. There should at least be a basic consideration and obligation to protect civilians and respect the sanctity of life.

We reiterate our urgent appeal to stop the bloodshed and to halt all military activities. We invite the parties to implement the UN Security Council resolution 1860 without further delay, which calls for "immediate ceasefire" and a "full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza".

There is no time to lose. The longer the Israeli military operation continues, the more innocent lives will be in jeopardy.

The situation in Gaza has now become a humanitarian catastrophe. Unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance throughout Gaza, as well as the sustained and regular flow of goods to the people of Gaza, as stated in resolution 1860, is a must. The blockade on Gaza should be lifted in all its aspects.

Having said this, of course, Israel has a right to live in security. We by no means condone the continued rocket attacks launched against civilian targets in Israel.

However, we call on Israel to reconsider its policies which cannot deliver the sense of security it seeks. Excessive use of force, punitive measures which harm the well-being of the entire population are not the way towards permanent peace. It should not be forgotten that Palestinians which are being bombed and attacked today will be Israel's neighbors forever.

The tragedy in Gaza, if not stopped immediately, will increasingly continue to fuel the flames of hatred and enmity in the region. This is a very dangerous trend which has the potential of poisoning not only the present but also future generations.

Mr. President,

With these thoughts in mind, we continue our efforts and contacts, at all levels, towards helping to bring an end to this conflict. Our Prime Minister's Special Representative is now in the region, involved in an intense shuttle diplomacy.

We sincerely hope that all the endeavors exerted by different players would yield positive results promptly.

In the meantime, we also continue our massive humanitarian relief efforts for the people of Gaza and try to alleviate their suffering as much as we can.

We also underline the importance of the national reconciliation among Palestinians which, we believe, is crucial not only for the national unity and integrity of Palestine but also for the prospect of permanent peace and stability in the region.

Mr. President,

UN Security Council Resolution 1860 provided an opportunity to end the hostilities in Gaza.

This opportunity must be seized.

The calm in the region must be restored so that we can once again start addressing the urgent need to have a viable and comprehensive peace on all tracks of the Middle East Peace Process.

Thank you.