



General Assembly

Tenth Emergency Special session

44th plenary meeting
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New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Francis (Trinidad and Tobago)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Lapasov (Uzbekistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 5 (continued)

Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the United Arab Emirates aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Gulf Cooperation Council (see A/ES-10/PV.39 and A/ES-10/PV.40).

I welcome the important resolution ES-10/21, adopted by the General Assembly on 27 October, in response to the ongoing bloody war in the Gaza Strip, the brunt of which is being borne by civilians. Confronted with scenes of massive devastation, the killing of around 9,000 Palestinians and the displacement of more than 1.4 million Palestinians as a result of the violent Israeli bombing and the expansion of ground operations, the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States adopted the resolution, which calls for an immediate, sustainable and lasting humanitarian truce. The resolution sends a clear message about the need to uphold international humanitarian law and to reject double standards when it comes to protecting civilians. We recall that almost 70 per cent of those Palestinians killed over the past few weeks were women and children.

We call on the international community to stand in solidarity, coordinate and redouble diplomatic efforts to put an end to all hostilities and to maintain regional and international peace and security. The tensions and manoeuvres we are witnessing in southern Lebanon, the occupied Syrian Golan and the Red Sea risk spreading and escalating the conflict to a level that cannot be contained.

The United Arab Emirates will support all efforts to put an end to the war, both through our efforts in the Security Council and our intensive outreach with actors in the region and throughout the world.

The position of the United Arab Emirates has been clear since 7 October. We have condemned Hamas's attacks against civilians, and we have demanded the release of all hostages. We have also categorically rejected the Israeli policy of collective punishment and stressed the need to fully respect international humanitarian law, which demands that Israel stops its continuous and indiscriminate bombing of civilians and civilian objects.

Today there is not a single safe place or safe person in Gaza, because Israel is bombing refugee camps, schools, hospitals, mosques, churches and United Nations facilities where people are seeking shelter. Many journalists and medical workers have been killed, and 70 staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East have also been killed. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the violent Israeli strikes on the Jabalia refugee camp on 31 October, which resulted

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in hundreds of people killed and injured. Even those who fled to the south were not safe from the bombing, despite Israel's impossible orders to evacuate the population of the north.

As we have stated repeatedly, the United Arab Emirates firmly rejects the forced displacement of the Palestinian people from their land. We will not allow a new Palestinian Nakba.

We are deeply concerned about Israel's total blockade of the Gaza Strip and the cutting off of electricity and fuel resulting in the collapse of the health sector, in addition to the imposition of severe restrictions on commodities and other basic services such as water and food, while humanitarian aid is accumulating at the Rafah crossing. Only very few trucks have entered Gaza carrying less than 4 per cent of the commodities that used to enter before the war.

We appreciate the continued efforts made by the Arab Republic of Egypt to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza, in addition to other critical efforts, including receiving yesterday a number of injured and sick persons coming from the Gaza Strip for treatment. All parties to the conflict, especially Israel, must allow and facilitate the urgent, safe, sustained and unhindered passage of humanitarian aid and its delivery to all those in need throughout Gaza.

The full and unimpeded access of humanitarian workers must also be ensured. We also stress the importance of allowing them into the Gaza Strip to address the acute humanitarian crisis there. We further stress that the Internet and communication networks in Gaza should continue to operate without interruption to facilitate the work of medical teams and humanitarian actors.

The United Arab Emirates continues its historic and steadfast approach of supporting the Palestinian people. Once the war erupted, my country hastened to launch a national campaign, entitled "Tarahum for Gaza" which means Compassion for Gaza, and we facilitated a humanitarian air bridge to transfer aid from the United Arab Emirates and the United Nations to the Arab Republic of Egypt to be delivered to Gaza as quickly as possible. Last month, we also pledged to contribute \$20 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, in addition to the \$35 million that we contributed earlier this year. Moreover, the President of the United Arab Emirates, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed

Al Nahyan, also ordered that 1,000 Palestinian children and their families from Gaza be hosted in the United Arab Emirates to receive medical treatment there.

We continue to call on the international community to stop managing the conflict and to protect and achieve the two-State solution, so that a sovereign Palestinian State can be established on the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Palestinian people have suffered for too long under the occupation. Like other peoples, they deserve a stable and secure future, in which the children of Gaza can attend schools and not take shelter in them, and young men and women can build the institutions of their State and not search for their relatives under the rubble.

Mr. Milambo (Zambia): I thank the President of the General Assembly for reconvening this emergency session to discuss this very important subject matter.

Zambia joins the rest of the international community in condemning the 7 October attack on Israel by Hamas, which has now deteriorated into an ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip. This dire situation has led to grave loss of life in both States, especially in Gaza, where thousands of innocent lives have been lost, including children. Zambia extends its heartfelt condolences and sympathy to all the families and communities affected by these events.

Zambia respects the principle of protection of all civilians in situations of conflict. We therefore call for unhindered humanitarian support to all civilians affected by the conflict, to ensure that the necessary aid flows in a timely manner to all areas in need in the Gaza Strip and in compliance with international humanitarian law. We also call for the immediate release of all hostages to ensure adherence to and respect for international human rights law and in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Zambia therefore supports the efforts of the international community and the African Union, which have also called for the immediate cessation of hostilities.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia also recognizes that the acts of terrorism and killing of innocent civilians cannot continue to be committed in the pursuit of peace. Zambia joins the international community in condemning all acts of violence and continues to urge all parties to return to a space

of dialogue. All efforts by all parties towards a de-escalation of the war must be pursued. There is a need to return to the negotiating table and to implement the principle of the two-State solution, upon which the General Assembly agreed, whereby the two nations would live side by side in peace.

If there was ever a time that the world has looked to the United Nations for a unified position in the pursuit of peace, it is now. We therefore commend the Secretary-General's efforts in seeking peace in this conflict. It is hoped that in the spirit of seeking peaceful avenues to resolve the conflict, the world will rally together, stand resolute against chaos and seek a brighter and more harmonious path forward. In this regard, Zambia calls upon all Member States to defend true multilateralism and uphold the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We should together support the United Nations system and its institutions and institutional leadership in discharging the mandate of the Organization.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Zambia will continue to advocate for peaceful methods of conflict resolution. It is well known that without peace, the global community cannot attain sustainable development or effectively pursue programmes for economic and social development. We therefore reiterate our call for a more effective diplomatic dialogue and the need for the United Nations and Member States to urgently come up with a workable, agreeable solution to resolve this conflict with which the international community has been grappling for so many years.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Government of the Sudan aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of Arab States at the beginning of the resumed tenth emergency special session (see A/ES-10/PV.39), as its content represents the least in achieving the urgent demands of the Palestinian people after the Security Council has failed to uphold its duties and responsibilities.

Once again, the tragic situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, has the utmost attention of the international community as a result of the ongoing and unprecedented brutal violence and destruction there. The deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories is the inevitable result of the international community's failure, over decades, to resolve the Palestinian question on the basis of international law, the Arab Peace Initiative and other

relevant United Nations resolutions, in a manner that would lead to just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, which is the only strategic option for achieving stability in the region.

The continued conflict without any clear political horizon for achieving a solution will have dangerous repercussions and will prolong wars in the region at large. It is unacceptable to deprive the Palestinians of their legitimate and just right, guaranteed by international law and international conventions, to establish an independent and sovereign State, within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Moreover, the international community and the Security Council must shoulder their moral and legal responsibility and work seriously to achieve the two-State solution and establish an independent and sovereign Palestinian State.

The failure to protect civilians from barbaric and systematic shelling is a failure of the international community and the United Nations. Therefore, utmost priority must not be given solely to the protection of civilians and to alleviating their suffering, but also to the protection of civilian objects and indispensable facilities for daily life. Moreover, delivery of necessary humanitarian aid and the supply of electricity, water, food and fuel must be ensured.

The practices of the Israeli occupying authority in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including the siege imposed on Gaza, the closure of crossing points to prevent the delivery of humanitarian and medical aid, attempts to forcibly displace people, the cutting off supplies, and the targeting and killing hundreds of civilians in air raids are clear violations of international humanitarian law and cause for deep concern.

The Government of the Sudan reiterates that it supports all efforts made to de-escalate the situation and stop the aggression against Gaza and the forced displacement of its people. The prolongation of the conflict will lead only to more victims, more tragedy and more humanitarian catastrophes in an area that is already riddled with crises.

Therefore, the Government of my country stresses its support for the ministerial declaration issued by the League of Arab States at its regular session, held in Cairo on 11 October, on the means to end to the Israeli aggression, achieve security and stability and establish a fact-finding mission on crimes committed in Gaza

and the West Bank that may be considered war crimes and genocide.

The Sudan also calls for lifting the siege that has been imposed on the Gaza Strip for more than 16 years and for achieving an immediate ceasefire for humanitarian purposes while delivering humanitarian and medical aid, so as to prevent a humanitarian disaster and another imminent Nakba. The Sudan reiterates that the Palestinian question is the central question. We reiterate our firm position calling for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, within the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the principles of international law, the United Nations resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and international terms of reference. We stress our position on the need to respect the historical, Islamic and Christian identity of East Jerusalem and its status quo, and to make no changes to its demographic structure.

Resolution ES-10/21, which was adopted by the General Assembly on Friday, 27 October, and supported by the vast majority of Member States, is a victory for humankind and for justice, although we see that the number of victims has increased to more than 8,600 in Gaza and the West Bank and the number of those injured has exceeded 23,000. Supporting the resolution is the least we can do to save civilians from the machinery of destruction and death that is targeting the Palestinian people, in particular women, children and the elderly. There is also need for serious collective efforts to revive the two-State solution and to achieve sustainable peace that puts an end to the cycle of evil that is taking lives and property in such a terrible manner.

We hope that resolution ES-10/21 will also be adopted by the Security Council in its entirety as the basis for a ceasefire, an opening of the border crossings, an end to forced displacement and the delivery of relief aid, because the Palestinian people are facing genocide and war crimes, as described as by legal experts. Therefore, pressure must be exerted to stop the vicious ground offensive that will only cause more innocent civilian victims, including women, children, and sick and elderly persons. Images are being broadcast by Arab and international media of demonstrations throughout the world in support of Palestinian rights.

The viciousness of the Israeli attack and the huge numbers of victims and those in need of aid make it imperative to extend the humanitarian truce in order to avoid another humanitarian catastrophe that will be

remembered in contemporary history books. The forced displacement of the people of Gaza to the desert or the borders with Egypt is considered an act that threatens international and regional peace and security and must be stopped so that the current war does not expand. We join those delegations that have commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and his important visit to the Rafah crossing, and that have demanded it be opened to deliver urgent and unimpeded humanitarian aid. We warn that preventing the Security Council from playing its part in line with the Charter and the Secretary-General from performing his duties in addressing conflicts will undermine the purposes for which the United Nations was established.

The fact that the Security Council failed to achieve a just and sustained peace in the Middle East and in undertaking its duties owing to strictly national considerations undermines the United Nations, which was established after a devastating war to support world peace. The deliberate inaction to achieve sustained peace and peaceful settlement to conflicts threaten future generations in a dangerous world in which war is rampant and nowhere is safe from bloodshed and destruction. That would be a failure of all humankind. We must work together, so that we do not push the United Nations towards the fate of the League of Nations, which was destroyed by its inability to implement its own decisions.

In conclusion, positive approaches must be taken that do not give preference to national interests based on force over the interests of world peace, in order to resolve problems and conflicts and arrive at settlements and constructive concessions. One of the features of multilateral diplomacy is for all parties to employ an equation that benefits all. However, the equation currently employed is a zero-sum equation, which will only lead to more paralysis and hinder the Security Council in performing its Charter-mandated duties. If we are to make progress, then we must adhere to the consensus methodology and collective consensus to achieve world peace. Therefore, we call on the international community to adopt multilateralism, put the common interests of humanity first, achieve consensus, commit to peace and end the scourge of war. The United Nations is the mechanism to establish values and criteria, realize multilateralism and sustain international peace and security.

Mrs. Dongobir (Nauru): Nauru welcomes the reconvening of the tenth emergency special session. However, we are disappointed that the Security Council

was not able to fulfil its mandate to maintain and ensure international peace and security. Nevertheless, as Members of the United Nations and upholders of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the rule of law, it is our duty to meet and discuss this very important issue.

Nauru condemns the horrendous terror attacks of 7 October against the Israeli people perpetrated by Hamas, a genocidal terror organization that is responsible for the loss of innocent lives and for taking innocent civilians as hostages. We join the call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. Moreover, we call on Member States to intensify efforts to suppress the financing of terrorism. We support Israel's right to defend itself and its citizens in accordance with international law. We acknowledge the efforts by the Secretary-General and some Members in trying to resolve and de-escalate the situation. It is more important than ever that we all work together to redouble our diplomatic efforts so that the situation in the Middle East does not spill over across the region. We also encourage and welcome all efforts to facilitate humanitarian corridors and other initiatives for the safe passage and delivery of humanitarian aid to civilians. It is critical that we provide essential goods and services, including water, food, medical supplies and humanitarian aid.

I take this moment to express our sincere condolences to the families following the loss of innocent lives in Israel and Gaza, and to the brave humanitarian staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, who lost their lives in the line of duty. Nauru supports the two-State solution, whereby the people of Israel and Palestine live side by side in peace, security and dignity.

Ms. Zakaria (Brunei Darussalam): I thank the President of the General Assembly for resuming this necessary tenth emergency special session at this urgent time. Brunei Darussalam is grateful to the delegations that promptly submitted the request to convene the emergency special session at the earliest possible opportunity.

At the outset, we align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Mauritania on behalf the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/ES-10/PV.39).

In particular, Brunei Darussalam strongly condemns the recent severe escalation of violence that has resulted in the unjustifiable loss of innocent lives, suffering and

the destruction of property in the occupied Palestinian territory. We are deeply saddened by the intensifying number of civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip, including the elderly, women and babies, which is only increasing, day by day.

The current escalation is a direct result of the injustice and suffering that has been imposed by the occupying Power for the past 75 years. After all those decades of being on the international agenda, there needs to be full understanding and recognition of the Palestinian struggle. As Brunei Darussalam has mentioned for many years, including during our general debate statements, Palestine has been subject to daily siege, violence and occupation, suffering the apartheid policies of the occupying Power and the settlers' illegal activity and violence. Palestinians suffer daily violations to their basic human rights and dignities, including restrictions to food, water, electricity, shelter and medicine, and even restrictions on their right to worship whereby they are not being allowed access to the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and their places of worship are being bombed.

Violence and breaches of international law in the occupied Palestinian territory are increasing with impunity. Urgent action is needed. We urge all parties to immediately cease all forms of violence and exercise utmost restraint. Brunei Darussalam will continue to fully support all efforts and mediation initiatives to de-escalate the situation immediately and to ensure that the situation in Palestine remains the top priority on the international agenda, especially here at the United Nations. We call upon all parties to abide by their obligations in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law and the Charter of the United Nations, especially in ensuring the safety and security of all civilians and civilian infrastructure in the conflict.

The level of violence and indiscriminate attacks in both Gaza and the West Bank has not only been disproportionate and excessive, but also targets innocent civilians and continues unabated, from the inhumane blockade in Gaza to the intentional deprivation of food, water and electricity and the targeting of civilian infrastructure and evacuation routes. We have seen Palestinians forced out of their homes and the escalation of settler violence. Of particular concern is the forced displacement of Palestinians from the north to the south of Gaza. We cannot allow such acts to continue as we merely stand by and watch the forcible displacement of a group of people from their homes, reminiscent of the first

Nakba, 75 years ago. We need to ensure that displaced Palestinians are assured of their right to return to their homes and properties.

The escalation of violence within a crippling occupation has exacerbated an already dire humanitarian crisis. While we welcome news that humanitarian aid has begun to enter Gaza through the reopening of the Rafah border, it has been in limited quantities — insufficient for a population already struggling under occupation and facing the looming advent of winter. We call for the establishment of humanitarian corridors to the occupied Palestinian territory for full and sustained access to relief, aid and assistance.

In that regard, we would like to commend the various humanitarian agencies under the United Nations, the Red Crescent Societies and other organizations for facilitating the delivery of food, water, medicine and other much-needed emergency supplies, as well as contributions from Member States. As part of our national efforts to contribute to such relief assistance, we have established the Humanitarian Fund for Palestinians in Gaza 2023. We hope that those various international and national efforts can safely and steadfastly continue with no impediments, so that much-needed aid can be provided and reach everyone in need.

In particular, we would also like to acknowledge the work and sacrifice of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East personnel. We express our deepest gratitude for their unwavering dedication to alleviating suffering in the most challenging circumstances and our heartfelt condolences to the loved ones of those who have lost their lives in that pursuit.

The work of the United Nations, from the Secretary-General to humanitarian personnel, is absolutely indispensable in this time of conflict. Brunei Darussalam strongly supports their efforts and believes that those carrying out such work and activities should never be targeted. The escalation of conflict and violence in Palestine did not occur in a vacuum. To that end, we also reaffirm our support for international efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

In that regard, we fully supported the adoption of the resolution introduced by Jordan, entitled “Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations” (resolution ES-10/21), which

we co-sponsored. We also welcomed its adoption with the support of an overwhelming majority of Member States. It is a clear and resounding indication that the international community recognizes the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and that urgent and immediate action is needed to prevent any further destabilization or escalation of violence in the region.

The Security Council has a special and moral responsibility to faithfully fulfil its obligations to uphold international peace and security. As members of the Assembly, we must ensure that we do not fail the people of Palestine yet again. Brunei Darussalam continues to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people, and we remain resolute in our commitment to supporting Palestine in pursuit of its inalienable right to self-determination. We also reaffirm our commitment to the two-State solution, with an independent and sovereign State of Palestine based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Ms. Hayovyshyn (Ukraine): For the past 20 months, the full-fledged war against Ukraine waged by Russia has shown how fragile our world is, if an insane dictator equipped with weapons of mass destruction decides to employ terrorist practices against a peaceful sovereign State. The fact that the Assembly had to resume its tenth emergency special session is another warning sign that, instead of resolving existing conflicts, we are dealing with their multiplication. Terrorist groups and terrorist regimes are the only beneficiaries of those menacing developments.

We condemn the brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks by Hamas on Israel on 7 October, which plunged the Middle East region into hostilities. The barbaric massacre by Hamas led to a horrendous toll of casualties in the course of ongoing hostilities, including among the citizens of Ukraine, as well as many other countries. I would like to reiterate once again that Ukrainians feel deeply the pain and devastation of war. Russia and Hamas are driven by the same motivation. As Hamas denies the right of Israel to exist, Russia denies the same right of Ukraine and continues its terror and war of aggression against Ukraine and Ukrainians as a nation.

We are concerned that Hamas continues to terrorize the region with indiscriminate attacks against civilians, as well as using them as human shields. They are still keeping more than 200 hostages in Gaza, including babies, children, women and the elderly. It is also clear

that all of those actions are only aggravating the situation in the region. There is a real threat that conflict could spread throughout the entire region. We must increase our common efforts to avoid further escalation.

We are convinced that the strong condemnation of Hamas should be an essential part of the General Assembly's response to the current situation. Ukraine has always advocated for calling a spade a spade. We regret that the proposed draft amendment (A/ES-10/L.26) to resolution ES-10/21 regarding the condemnation of Hamas terrorist attacks against Israel has not been approved. We also firmly support Israel's right to defend itself in line with international law and international humanitarian law. We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

Today it is critically important to avoid a further increase in the number of civilian casualties, both in Israel and Palestine. Every life is valuable. All civilians must be protected. The international community must take all possible measures to safeguard innocent civilian lives, including those of international and local humanitarian personnel working on the ground. We urge all parties to strictly abide by the rules of warfare and respect the norms of international humanitarian law. Every action must be taken to save lives and minimize harm to civilians.

Ukraine expresses its gravest concern for the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Gaza. We emphasize the need for unhindered humanitarian access and aid to protect and help civilians, including through humanitarian corridors. Ukraine is convinced that humanitarian support and access must be maintained into Gaza to enable access to essential aid, water, food, medical care, fuel and shelter, to reach all civilians who are suffering. We commend the dedicated humanitarian work of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East staff and all agencies providing humanitarian support. We express our sincere condolences to the families of the humanitarian personnel who have lost their lives since 7 October.

The current situation in the region only undermines the prospects of a peaceful future for two peoples. At the same time, the Middle East peace process remains the basis of any efforts aimed at restoring regional stability and security. Ukraine has consistently supported the implementation of the principle of two States — Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security — and advocates the settlement of

the Palestinian-Israeli conflict with the help of political and diplomatic means. We are confident that a just, comprehensive and sustainable peace in the Middle East can be realized within the framework of the unconditional implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and other international agreements.

The General Assembly has demanded that the protection of civilians and civilian objects be ensured and that humanitarian access be enabled and facilitated for essential supplies and services to reach all civilians in need, as well as the immediate, continuous, efficient and unhindered provision of essential goods and services to civilians throughout the Gaza Strip.

The Assembly also called for immediate, full, sustained, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and all other humanitarian organizations, upholding the humanitarian principles and delivering urgent assistance to civilians in the Gaza Strip, encouraged the establishment of humanitarian corridors and other initiatives to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to civilians and welcomed efforts in that regard. Ukraine calls for those urgent tasks to be fully implemented.

Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): We thank the President for reconvening this emergency special session meeting of the General Assembly, as the ongoing hostilities in the Middle East necessitate urgent attention.

My delegation begins by recalling Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which enshrines the international community's commitment to seeking a two-State solution for Israel and Palestine to peacefully exist alongside each other, within secure and recognized borders, free from threats or acts of force. The resolution, from which there must be no derogation, constitutes the cornerstone of diplomatic efforts in the Middle East.

In that vein, we unequivocally condemn the abhorrent attacks carried out by Hamas and the Israel Defense Forces in Israel and Gaza, which run counter to our ambitions. The illegal colonization and occupation of Palestinian territory and the gradual erosion of its internationally established borders continue to be the root cause of violence. If that remains unaddressed and unresolved, hostilities will continue unabated, haunting us and future generations. We underscore that the right of Israel to exist in peace is not tantamount

to an unfettered license for the illegal occupation and suppression of the rights of the Palestinian people, which are egregious affronts to international law.

The Security Council's ability to effectively transform the situation on the ground is being questioned by the international community, which, more and more, is becoming understandably frustrated with the Council's paralysis. That inaction is the reason that we are gathered here today. The will of the Palestinian people and an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly have been thwarted by a minority of powerful States. We urge the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility and rise to the occasion. We appeal to the veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council — more specifically the United States, France and the United Kingdom, which have regularly supported Israel's policies — to engage constructively to facilitate a cessation of hostilities, support the urgent and unhindered passage of humanitarian aid and insist on the equal application of international law. We underscore that, while Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations preserves the inherent right to self-defence, that mechanism cannot be allowed to be used as a justification for the indiscriminate killing of civilians, or to shield violations of international law. To remain within the parameters of what is legally acceptable and appropriate, self-defence must be both necessary and proportionate.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) estimates that more than 640,000 people have been internally displaced and are sheltering in UNRWA facilities. More than 9,000 people have been killed in the Gaza Strip since 7 October, with children making up more than 3,000 of the aggregate, and more than 20,000 injured. Behind each of those numbers is a face, no less worthy of a right to life than you or me. Those statistics unambiguously illustrate that the justification of self-defence has gone beyond what is proportionate and necessary, and therefore have exceeded the realm of what is legally acceptable. In other words, how many human beings must die before the Security Council considers the act of exercising the veto as more egregious than its moral and legal obligation of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war? The ambitions enshrined in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) necessitate action to enable their realization.

In that context, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines co-sponsored the resolution (resolution ES-10/21) that was submitted by the Group of Arab States and adopted by the General Assembly last week. We believe that

the resolution contains fundamental elements that demonstrate the international community's commitment to upholding international law, as well as to facilitating the action necessary to safeguard the rights of civilians. An immediate ceasefire is non-negotiable. The people of Palestine deserve to exist in peace in the same way that the people of Israel deserve that peace. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reaffirms its support for the Secretary-General's leadership and sustained engagement on the Palestine question, and we express our appreciation to the United Nations agencies that are undertaking efforts to bring immediate relief to those most in need. We urge all stakeholders, particularly those with influence, to work constructively towards facilitating an immediate end to the hostilities that would enable the creation of an environment conducive to achieving a just and lasting peace, in line with Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

Mr. Sitaldin (Suriname): Suriname aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Mauritania on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/ES-10/PV.39), and the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/ES-10/PV.40). I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

The international community must be vigorous in applying all means to avoid human suffering and the killing of innocent people everywhere throughout the world. The already-disturbing situation and developments between Israel and the State of Palestine, especially in the Gaza Strip, continue to worsen, causing immense and unacceptable human suffering. We must welcome all efforts, initiatives and opportunities to foster peace and dialogue between the parties. In an already-uncertain and conflictive world, we must do everything possible to avoid another political, security and humanitarian crisis.

It is our collective responsibility, as members of the international community, to uphold the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirm the need for a just and lasting solution to the conflict. Suriname deeply regrets the escalation of the ongoing conflict resulting in the loss of so many innocent lives. We offer our condolences and sympathy to all who have lost family and loved ones in this deep-rooted age-old conflict. We also condole with the families of the United Nations staff members who have lost their lives during this conflict.

Suriname joins the rest of the international community in calling for an immediate ceasefire to prevent further escalation that endangers civilians and to avoid further

destruction. We call on all involved to provide immediate unrestricted humanitarian access to enable essential aid, water, food and medicines to reach the people of Gaza. The well-being of the population in the Gaza Strip must be ensured. The hardship experienced by those innocent persons must be mitigated. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of all remaining hostages.

Suriname's foreign policy is inspired by moral values and principles, with the aim of achieving global peace, security and welfare for all and of settling conflicts, should they occur, through dialogue and negotiations in a peaceful and just manner, recognizing the internationally accepted principles of respect, dignity and international and humanitarian law. We reiterate our support for the ongoing efforts of the United Nations to realize a two-State solution, as that is the best way to achieve sustainable and comprehensive peace, security and stability between Israel and Palestine. Such an outcome is the only just and sustainable path to ending this long-standing conflict.

Finally, in this critical moment, we call on all parties to exercise restraint, de-escalate tensions and return to the path of dialogue and negotiation. It is our collective responsibility to seek a peaceful resolution that respects the rights and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr. Nunes (Timor-Leste): At the outset, Timor-Leste wishes to thank the President for reconvening this emergency special session. We were pleased to join the Group of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the countries of the region in requesting the resumption of this session.

We are witnessing the gravest escalation of violence in the Middle East in decades. Thousands of lives have been lost. There is mass displacement, with over 1.4 million displaced in Gaza from their homes since 7 October. Each day, more than 400 Palestinian children are killed or injured in Gaza. Nowhere in Gaza is safe, and the most intense bombardment was recorded in the past few days.

United Nations data on this conflict is horrifying. As of 25 October, there have been 6,547 people killed in Gaza, of which 68 per cent are women and children, and 17,439 people have been injured. Approximately 1,400 Israelis have been killed, and 5,431 Israelis have been injured. Meanwhile, the Rafah crossing has allowed only a very limited amount of aid through, and that aid has been restricted. That data is current as of 25 October.

Since 21 October, only 62 trucks bearing aid have gone into Gaza, as compared with a daily rate of 500 trucks prior to 7 October. Fuel — which is desperately needed for essential services such as hospitals, desalination plants and water pumping stations — remains banned. That untenable situation is only getting worse. We commend the Secretary-General and the United Nations for the ongoing provision of humanitarian assistance to people in Gaza.

Remaining silent in such a situation is not an option. The Security Council failed to meet its responsibility four times in the past three weeks. We are pleased that we took the collective responsibility to step up and speak to protect all civilians through the resolution adopted by the Assembly (ES-10/21).

We subscribe to the core humanitarian principles highlighted in the resolution, which are essential to reaffirm at this stage the need to spare civilians further suffering. We supported the key elements: first, the call for an immediate humanitarian truce — the Secretary-General and virtually all United Nations officials and non-governmental organizations have made such calls — secondly, the condemnation of all violence against Palestinian and Israeli civilians, including all acts of terror and indiscriminate attacks; thirdly, the emphasis that civilians must be protected and the demand that all parties comply with their obligations under international law; fourthly, the call for unhindered humanitarian access, while encouraging the establishment of humanitarian corridors to facilitate the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid to civilians; and fifthly, the call for the protection of civilian and humanitarian facilities, such as hospitals, schools, places of worship and United Nations facilities. The resolution also underlines the need to take appropriate steps to allow the safe movement of civilians.

As we have done before in other contexts, it is critical that the General Assembly protect the fundamental principles that underpin our collective humanity. Adopting a General Assembly resolution that calls on parties to respect their obligations and that calls for aid to be provided those in need is the very least we can do, and that is why Timor-Leste co-sponsored the resolution and voted in favour of it.

While supporting the call for an immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce and ceasefire, the call for immediate, full, sustained, safe and unhindered humanitarian aid access and other important elements

of the resolution adopted by the Assembly, we also voted in favour of the draft amendment (A/ES-10/L.26) to the resolution presented by Canada.

We are of the view that the attacks by Hamas on Israelis on 7 October 2023 also deserve condemnation, as they contravene international humanitarian law.

We believe that it is the responsibility of all, including the Assembly, to work towards a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the relevant United Nations resolutions, in accordance with international law and on the basis of the two-State solution.

Mr. Dandy (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The purpose of the resumption of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly is to discuss the dangerous situation in the occupied Palestinian territories against the backdrop of the paralysis faced by the Security Council because the United States of America is preventing the Council from shouldering its responsibility to maintain international peace and security and insisting on giving Israel the green light to continue its brutal aggression in Gaza.

The brutal Israeli practices undertaken against the Palestinian people for decades, and more recently against the residents of the Gaza Strip, are part of the Israeli occupation's systematic policy of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and of killing the Palestinian people's dream of establishing their independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital.

The Israeli occupation bears full responsibility for the humanitarian suffering of the Palestinian people as a result of its continued direct aggression, its forced displacement policies and its arresting of Palestinians and throwing them in Israeli prisons. It has become evident that Israel is thirsty for further Palestinian bloodshed, which it has yet to quench despite having killed thousands of innocent Palestinians, including at least 3,000 children. Israel is not yet satisfied with the destruction of homes and residential buildings over the heads of their unarmed civilian residents in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Certain Western States, especially the United States of America, have provided protection and impunity for Israel and its continued violations — for decades — of the hundreds of United Nations resolutions that have called upon it to end its ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories and to respect international

law and international humanitarian law. That has encouraged Israel to commit the most heinous crimes and acts of terrorism against Palestinians. It recently targeted Al Ahli Hospital, Saint Porphyrius Church and schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, including the criminal bombing of Jabalia camp. Those acts amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The positions of the Western States, especially the United States, in support of Israel's so-called right to self-defence, which has no legal basis, are an open invitation to Israel to kill more Palestinians. The Western interpretation of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations is a despicable distortion of its provisions, which guarantee peoples' rights to freedom, independence and human rights.

More than seven decades have passed since the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and the continuing tragedy of expulsion of millions of Palestinians from their country, causing their displacement across the globe. Their lands and properties have been seized and turned into Israeli settlements, in blatant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. For more than seven decades, the West has been trying desperately to legitimize the Israeli occupation. That raises the following question: how long should Palestinians wait for the world to finally acknowledge the need to take immediate and serious steps to stop this humanitarian tragedy? How many innocent civilians should fall before the world is finally convinced that the Israeli occupation of Arab territories is the main threat to peace and security in our region?

The adoption by the General Assembly on 27 October of a humanitarian resolution (resolution ES-10/21) calling for an immediate truce, the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the rejection of forced displacement of Palestinians is a message by the vast majority of Member States to stop the aggression and to end the brutal massacres and crimes against the people of Gaza after the United States and its allies made the Security Council fail in shouldering its responsibilities. Israel responded to that General Assembly resolution with criminal military operations in the Gaza Strip, immediately violating it in a shameless manner. That portends dangerous repercussions for the international system and threatens peace and security everywhere.

The Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns the ongoing brutal Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. We denounce any attempt to cover up the Israeli crimes against innocent Palestinian

civilians. Those crimes have killed no fewer than 10,000 Palestinians, including nearly 4,000 children. We stress the need for an immediate end to this aggression to allow humanitarian assistance to enter, including food, medicine and fuel for more than 2.5 million Palestinians in Gaza. It is important to ensure that Israel and its supporters be held accountable for those crimes and that they do not enjoy impunity.

Mrs. Moote (Kiribati): Let me start by thanking the President of the General Assembly and the leadership of our United Nations family for bringing us together at this very sad and troubling time in the search for peace in the Middle East, where thousands of human lives are being destroyed, terrorized, threatened or traumatized on a daily basis in the heat and rubble of the fighting between the Israeli and Hamas forces, which has been ongoing since 7 October. When Hamas fighters attacked Israel, they killed over 1,400 civilians and held over 200 Israeli civilians hostage, in addition to a number of nationals from other countries. The situation in the region, which has significantly deteriorated, is deeply alarming. We fully appreciate Jordan's call for a pause in the fighting for the sake of innocent human lives. However, the framing of the circumstances that led to the armed conflict was not balanced, and that was our reasoning for supporting Canada's draft amendment (A/ES-10/L.26) to balance the narrative.

I thank the President for reminding us to use this occasion not to fan the flames and create divisions, but to do all we can to put out the flames and foster reconciliation and peace between the two warring sides. It is clear from listening to the various statements that the scale of the destruction of human lives and property is colossal on both sides — but more so on the Palestinian side. We therefore support calls for a ceasefire, the immediate release of all innocent hostages and safe passage for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and life-supporting services for more than 2 million innocent Palestinians being squeezed in the Gaza Strip. We join the many delegations in expressing our deepest condolences to the many families and individuals who have lost loved ones during the past three weeks. Our hearts bleed with sorrow and sadness to see so many innocent and helpless lives, especially of children, the elderly and hospital patients, being destroyed by rockets, missiles and bombs. We also express our deepest condolences and pay special tribute to the brave United Nations and Red Cross staff serving in the Gaza Strip, who allow themselves to make the ultimate sacrifice while discharging their duties for the innocent victims of this heartbreaking conflict.

Driven by our sorrowful heart over the rising human toll of the conflict, we humbly appeal to Israel and Hamas to put their weapons down and start initiating the pacific settlement of dispute mechanisms under Chapters VI and VII of the Charter of the United Nations. We appeal to the Middle East region to play a leading role, under Chapter VII of the Charter, in the search for lasting peace, progress and prosperity for the Israelis, the Palestinians and the people of the Middle East. We also appeal to the leadership of our United Nations to help in facilitating the efforts of the two sides to strike a peace deal, in line with past relevant resolutions and in accordance with international law. The peace deal must include measures to repair and heal the root causes of these long-standing conflicts. Such measures must be met with the urgent and priority attention and action of our United Nations leadership. Since the problems before us are human-made, they can also be fixed by human-made solutions. By working together as one human family, we have no doubt that these human-made problems are not as insurmountable as they appear. They can be fixed quickly if we all now agree to allow for the two peoples to coexist happily and peacefully side by side. May Almighty God pour his abundant peace, mercy and blessings on the people of the Holy Land, the Middle East, the whole world and the United Nations.

Mr. Niang (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Mauritania on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see A/ES-10/PV.39) and with the statement to be delivered by the Permanent Observer of the African Union.

The thousands of victims resulting from the recent resumption of hostilities between Israel and Palestine stir our conscience. We need to hold the perpetrators of the loss of human lives directly accountable. Those deaths reflect the blatant failure of the international community to find a lasting solution to this long-standing conflict.

With Israel's reprisals in the form of shelling of civilian infrastructure and housing in Gaza, which has already caused more than 10,000 dead, we are today once again witnesses to a new episode in a tragedy that has lasted all too long. The shelling of Jabaliya refugee camp last night reminds us that it is women, children, the elderly and the sick who continue to pay the highest cost. What is happening in Gaza is a disgrace for the entire international community, which

has long remained indifferent in the light of the daily tragedy faced by the Palestinian people, deprived of their inalienable right — the full enjoyment of their independence and sovereignty.

The sad reality of the occupation of the West Bank has been compounded, over the past 16 years, by the illegal blockade of Gaza, which has transformed this strip — home to 2.3 million people — into an open-air prison that has ultimately impoverished its population. The time has now come for the international community to mobilize and to decisively engage the parties to resume negotiations in order to restore the sovereignty and independence of the State of Palestine along the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, as well as to provide a just solution to the fate of the Palestinian refugees.

We urgently must bring an end to the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe through a ceasefire and immediate, full, lasting, safe and unhindered humanitarian access throughout the Gaza Strip. Senegal welcomes the opening of the Rafah crossing point to enable sorely needed humanitarian aid to reach the people of Gaza. That is a step in the right direction, but it is far from enough, as humanitarian actors have alerted us.

My delegation therefore encourages further discussions in order to optimize more humanitarian corridors. We believe that, however grave the situation, the Gazan people are at home and should be able to remain there in security. Attacks against civilians run counter to international law, and Israel, the occupying Power has a duty, under international humanitarian law, to ensure the protection of the population across all occupied Palestinian territories. Senegal therefore reiterates its call for de-escalation, and we hail and encourage all efforts towards calming tensions. We also encourage all actions towards the release of the hostages, and we hope that they will soon be returned with their loved ones.

My country also commends the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about peace and to respond to the humanitarian crisis, which is getting worse by the minute before our very eyes. Senegal therefore co-sponsored resolution ES-10/21 and is delighted that it was adopted by a broad majority, reminding us of the need to move beyond our differences when the situation requires it.

In that regard, my delegation wishes to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all of the humanitarian organizations that are active on the ground and to pay tribute to the memories of all humanitarian workers, including those of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), who have laid down their lives in the attempt to save others. In particular, my delegation commends the Agency's invaluable contribution and joins the call of its Commissioner-General, Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, to mobilize the resources that UNRWA urgently needs and to ensure the Agency sufficient, lasting and predictable funding, including through increasing its budgetary allocation from the regular budget.

Given the tragedy, the Council's repeated failure to take a position undermines the credibility of the Organization, which has already been damaged by the collapse of multilateralism. The Security Council cannot remain silent any longer. It must call for de-escalation and ensure the safe and unhindered deployment of humanitarian aid, which is a matter of existential survival for the people of Gaza, who are being deprived of food, water and fuel. Given the urgency, Senegal again calls for strict adherence to international law and international humanitarian law. Civilians, hospitals, schools, places of worship United Nations facilities, as well as all humanitarian, medical and media staff must be spared.

Senegal, which has the honour to preside over the United Nations Committee for the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, reaffirms here that the only recourse for this conflict remains international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations — that is, a two-State solution, Israel and Palestinian, living side by side within secure and internationally recognized borders. The State of Israel has a right to exist, and the Palestinians also have a right to live in an independent, contiguous, viable and sovereign State, with East Jerusalem as its capital. That is the ultimate guarantee of security. It is this path that should guide our common action in order for both parties to the conflict to turn away from rage and hate, which destroy and devastate, to embrace the only cause that will prevail — peace, which elevates and liberates.

We must therefore relaunch peace talks, which are the only way to achieve lasting peace because war has never been and never will be the solution. For all of these reasons, which we have repeated on many occasions,

Senegal once again calls for the implementation of these resolutions on behalf of our shared humanity and the universal humanitarian principles that underpin them.

Mr. Mwasota (United Republic of Tanzania): I thank the President for availing us of this opportunity to address the Assembly on the agenda item at hand.

The United Republic of Tanzania wishes to register its concerns pertaining to the situation currently unfolding in the Middle East, particularly the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The conflict has once more exposed the fault lines of our Organization, the United Nations, whereby the organ entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security has thus far failed to stop a deep-rooted conflict, which is having dire ramifications on the civilian populations in Gaza and Israel. The paralysis of the Security Council to act on this matter is not a new phenomenon.

Addressing this Chamber in 1967, the United Republic of Tanzania warned — and I wish to reiterate that warning for the record — that the effective survival of the United Nations as an instrument for world peace is seriously endangered by its inability to stop conflicts and aggression in the world and in the Middle East in particular. That inability, which is chronic when it comes to the question of Palestine, has necessitated this emergency session.

Tanzania joined 120 Member States in voting for a resolution that calls for an immediate ceasefire to allow for humanitarian assistance to those that badly need it (resolution ES-10/21). We participated in the vote, fully aware that it would take more than the voices raised in this Chamber to achieve that objective. We know that it is up to Israel or Palestine to put a stop to the deadly conflict, which has the potential to turn into our worst nightmare.

Peace, which is the ultimate desire of the United Nations, has been and remains elusive. Instead of sowing peace in the region, we have witnessed the sowing of violence, hatred and vengeance. If the old proverb, “you reap what you sow”, is anything to go by, we should not be surprised to witness a continuation of the conflict and the violence between Israel and Palestine. We must opt for peace if we seek to achieve lasting peace in the region and the world.

Tanzania strongly denounces all forms of violence, by whomsoever they are committed. We recognize that conflict and violence have never been viable tools for

achieving peace. If anything, an eye for an eye will leave all concerned blind. We therefore implore all concerned to exercise restraint in order to avoid further suffering. Tanzania recognizes that Israel has the right to live in peace and security, but the same applies to its neighbours, including Palestine.

Violence is the wrong way. Peace is the best way. We therefore implore all parties concerned to seek a path towards lasting peace through genuine dialogue, underpinned by the support of the international community. Despite the thick clouds and blinding mist, there is hope to achieve the long-desired goal of establishing two equally viable States coexisting in peace, harmony and prosperity. Let us work together towards peace. It can be done. Let each of us do their part.

Ms. Eneström (Sweden): Sweden aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/ES-10/PV.40).

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening the resumed tenth emergency special session, as the situation is deeply alarming and risks implications for the whole region.

Sweden takes note of last week’s attempts by the Security Council to adopt a draft resolution addressing the situation in Gaza and Israel. It is deeply regrettable that the Security Council failed to address the increasingly alarming situation. We encouraged Council members to find a common position and fulfil the Council’s mandate and responsibility. Sweden abstained in the voting on the resolution (resolution ES-10/21) put forward last Friday (see A/ES-10/PV.41), owing to its lack of condemnation of the abhorrent terrorist attack perpetrated by Hamas and the lack of reference to Israel’s right to defend itself in line with international law and international humanitarian law.

We reiterate the call of the European Union on Hamas to unconditionally release all hostages. The use of human shields is unacceptable. At the same time, we are concerned by the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. We strongly support the call in the resolution for continued, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and aid to reach those in need. Sweden and the European Union have underscored the importance of humanitarian assistance reaching Gaza, including through humanitarian corridors and humanitarian pauses.

Sweden reiterates the importance of ensuring the protection of all civilians at all times, in line with international humanitarian law, and deplores all loss of civilian life. In particular, we recall the need to protect children in armed conflict. In response to the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Sweden has announced approximately \$13 million in new humanitarian aid, channelled through the World Food Programme, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and the International Committee of the Red Cross. That is in addition to Sweden's substantial core funding to the humanitarian actors who have been responding on the ground since the start of the current crisis. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the United Nations and all its staff for their relentless work on the ground, often at the risk of their lives, and the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts to de-escalate the conflict. We deeply regret the deaths of United Nations personnel and express our condolences to their families.

Mr. Valtýsson (Iceland): This emergency special session is reconvened as another humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding in Gaza. We regret the impasse in the Security Council and call on Council members to redouble their efforts to address the situation. Similarly, we are disappointed by the missed opportunity to build a broader consensus in the Assembly last Friday (see A/ES-10/PV.41). That would have been possible had the resolution (resolution ES-10/21) included an explicit condemnation of the terrorist attack by Hamas on 7 October and a clear call for the immediate and unconditional release of the more than 200 hostages, including almost 30 children, being held in captivity by Hamas. With that inclusion, Iceland fully supports the resolution's strong humanitarian call, including a call for an immediate, durable and sustainable humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities.

We deplore the immense suffering of innocent civilians and the fact that thousands, including thousands of women and children, have been killed to date. We are alarmed by the impact of mass evacuations of civilians in Gaza. The grave situation and the unacceptable civilian death toll and suffering call for an immediate humanitarian pause and humanitarian corridors to facilitate the safe delivery of humanitarian aid throughout Gaza. Calls for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access, the lifting of restrictions on necessities, including fuel, and the protection of civilians, must be heeded.

We are gravely concerned about reports of apparent serious violations of international humanitarian law, including the significant civilian death toll resulting from Israeli strikes that hit the Jabalia refugee camp. We call for an investigation of all possible violations of international humanitarian law and underscore the responsibility of all those involved to strictly abide by the rules of war. Civilians and civilian objects, medical personnel and humanitarian workers and assets must be protected and never targeted.

Iceland greatly appreciates the Secretary-General's tireless efforts to ensure the urgent delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to the civilian population of Gaza. We echo his calls for humanitarian aid to be provided to the civilian population of Gaza, which is in such desperate need of food, water, shelter and medical care. Fuel and electricity are urgently needed. More aid is needed in Gaza, and it is needed now.

We commend all humanitarian personnel working night and day to facilitate the urgent delivery of humanitarian assistance. We deplore that in the past month, more than 70 United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) staff members in Gaza have been killed because of this conflict. Iceland has responded to the United Nations emergency appeals with contributions to UNRWA, our long-standing humanitarian partner and the lead United Nations agency mandated to support Palestine refugees. Today we are doubling our contributions to the emergency appeal, bringing the total to 140 million Icelandic króna, and we urge all the donors to step up their support to UNRWA's critical front-line delivery of aid to the people of Gaza.

Iceland has condemned in the strongest possible terms the brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks by Hamas. There can be no justification for terrorism. All hostages should be released immediately and unconditionally. We have also stressed that, while Israel has an inherent right to defend itself, it must do so within the bounds of international law. International law provides States with rights and obligations — both are sacred. We must prevent further escalation for the sake of Israelis, Palestinians and the wider region. The continuous cycle of violence is fuelling the flames of hate and racism. We have seen too many incidents of antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-Arab sentiment across the world.

The decades-long cycle of violence in Israel and Palestine will not stop as long as Hamas continues to use its position in Gaza to wage terror on innocent civilians and spread radicalism, and it will not stop as long as Israel's unlawful settlements continue in the West Bank and Gaza remains under blockade. The international parameters for a sustainable long-term solution to the conflict are clear — a two-State solution based on international law, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition. That is what we in the international community should strive for.

Ms. Romualdo (Cabo Verde): We would like to thank the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session for convening this tenth emergency special session in response to the unprecedented humanitarian crisis that has been happening for the last four weeks and is ongoing at this very moment, as we deliver our statements.

Guided by the principles of the United Nations and the universal values that we stand for, the Government of Cabo Verde condemned the attacks on Israel perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October immediately after they occurred. For that very reason, Cabo Verde voted in favour of the Canadian draft amendment (A/ES-10/L.26). However, it did not pass, and for that reason Cabo Verde abstained from voting on the resolution (resolution ES-10/21).

Our Government reiterates that civilians and civilian structures should never be targets and expresses deep concern by the development of the situation in the region and the resulting heavy civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip. The protection of civilians is paramount and should be observed at all times. We strongly condemn all violence and hostilities against civilians, which are unjustifiable regardless of their motivation, whenever and by whomsoever they are committed.

The Government of Cabo Verde expresses grave concern at the continuation and escalation of the tragic and violent events taking place and the enormous number of civilian casualties, including very high numbers of infants and children, which continue to rise at alarming rate. Moreover, we appeal to all to fully respect and observe their responsibilities under international law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law in relation to the protection of civilians, humanitarian workers and United Nations staff members.

The humanitarian crisis is growing more dire by the day, and in order to face increasingly critical and colossal needs, we cannot postpone the provision of a much larger volume of adequate, unimpeded and immediate humanitarian aid and assistance on a regular basis to alleviate suffering, prevent the further deterioration of the situation and guarantee the basic rights of all civilians. We appeal for the urgent delivery of and full access to essential supplies and services to all in need, in particular access to communication, electricity, potable water, fuel, food and medical supplies, to help all infants, children, the elderly, injured, women, men, civilians and humanitarian workers in need, and so restore some of their dignity and humanity.

Mr. Muhamad (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Government of Cabo Verde appeals to the international community to uphold all political, legal, humanitarian and moral obligations and responsibilities to bring an end to this horrific and unprecedented crisis through additional efforts by all parties involved to maintain the mechanism of dialogue for peace under the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and the Vienna Convention, so that peace can prevail for all families and people in the region. We also ask for the immediate release of all hostages.

Before concluding, on behalf of the Government and people of Cabo Verde, we express our heartfelt condolences to the Governments, international organizations and all those who have lost family members, colleagues, friends and loved ones. We also express our deepest solidarity with all families, in Israel, in Palestine and in all other nations affected in these moments of darkness, deep grievance and unbearable pain.

Mr. Dibba (Gambia): At the outset, let me state that we stand in full solidarity with the Secretary-General for his moral clarity on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for the unvarnished truth he brings us regarding the ongoing carnage in this brutal conflict. We pay tribute to the fallen United Nations personnel in Gaza for paying the ultimate price in the service of humankind, as we strongly condemn the killing of United Nations personnel and the targeting of its facilities. The General Assembly has a solemn duty to ensure the protection of United Nations personnel at all times.

One of the former Secretaries-General of the Organization, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, once said that “the United Nations was not created in order to bring us

to heaven, but in order to save us from hell” Those words of wisdom were simply amplifying the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, in which it is stated:

“We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind”.

We therefore condemn the untold sorrow that is being unleashed on civilians in Israel and Palestine. We strongly condemn the barbarity and violence against civilians in Gaza and on civilian infrastructure. The senseless, disproportionate, indiscriminate bombing and terrorizing of civilians is unacceptable. The war must stop.

We convey our sympathy to the families of the thousands of dead civilians, including children and women. With almost 10,000 people dead, no side can claim victory here. Collective punishment is unacceptable. We therefore call for immediate humanitarian access to Gaza for the urgent delivery of much-needed aid. The situation is dire, and the siege must end.

A lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be achieved only through peaceful means, not violence. It is therefore regrettable that the Security Council continues to abandon its responsibility to save the lives of defenceless people and provide space for peaceful dialogue. Moral equivalence, selective outrage and a hierarchy of compassion that discriminates among peoples, communities and religions in the conflict is unacceptable. We are all one big human family.

At the root of the conflict is the illegal long-standing occupation of the Palestinian land and the oppression of Palestinians. The occupation must come to an end. We will only have more cycles of violence as long as the occupation continues. The supply of weapons into the region only perpetuates the suffering of civilians.

As members of the international community, we must invest in serious dialogue and peace. We cannot continue being idle bystanders in this dehumanizing world. War is not normal. The killings must stop. The extrajudicial killing and persecution of the population in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly in the West Bank, must stop immediately. War crimes and crimes against humanity are unfolding before our eyes. Impunity and violations of international law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law must be addressed.

It is outrageous that children are being treated as collateral damage in the conflict. Children are buried under the rubble with no chance of being saved. Imagine the extent of their suffering and agony. With the heartless manslaughter of more than 3,200 children in Gaza already, where is the moral outrage from the international community? The carnage needs to stop now.

Our final message to the international community is that we must revive peace initiatives and a credible peace process with a view to achieving lasting peace for the peoples of Israel and Palestine, leading to a final status negotiation — a viable peace initiative that has the support of the region. The Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 still exists. It is a comprehensive and credible regional peace initiative, and we call for its urgent revival. A fresh political dialogue towards that end must be initiated. Both sides in the conflict, with the support of the United Nations, must commit to such a dialogue on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative.

The global peace movement must step up its advocacy for lasting peace in the Middle East. We therefore call on the international community to take immediate steps towards reviving the two-State solution for lasting peace to prevail in Israel and Palestine. May peace reign in the holy land.

Mrs. Adeng (South Sudan): The Government of South Sudan extends its heartfelt condolences for the tragic loss of innocent lives, including children and women, on both sides of the conflict. We know too well the truth of conflict, and we know that loss during a time of crisis is never easy. We share in the grief of both Israel and Palestine.

During times of crisis, it is also imperative that we unite and strive for a peaceful resolution of the matter. The Government of South Sudan firmly believes that peace is the only path forward, and we call on the involved parties to earnestly work towards resolving the conflict through peaceful means.

The Government of South Sudan unequivocally denounces the use of terrorism as a means to achieve political objectives. South Sudan abstained in the vote on the resolution (resolution ES-10/21) because terrorism is indefensible. Any resolution must hold those responsible for the events of 7 October accountable. Furthermore, we implore Hamas to release all hostages without preconditions. Children should never be used as pawns. They deserve the opportunity to live

out their childhood without fear. We also advocate for unrestricted access for humanitarian aid and the safeguarding of all civilian populations on both sides.

The core of the matter lies in a clear moral distinction between right and wrong. War inflicts pain and destruction, while peace fosters healing and prosperity. Let us work together in pursuit of a peaceful solution that benefits all parties involved. Today we stand before the Assembly with heavy hearts, fully aware that this very organ was established to address the crises that may arise similar to the one we face today. While disagreements are inevitable among us as human beings, we believe that, in such moments, unprovoked terror cannot be equated with rights, nor can it justify any grievances.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been extensively documented in various United Nations resolutions and negotiated agreements. Therefore, the final agreement must be the result of negotiations between the concerned parties. While external support can facilitate peace, the primary commitment must come from the parties themselves. We draw inspiration from South Sudan's long struggle for self-determination, which eventually led to our independence in 2011. It demonstrates that, even after years of conflict, negotiations accepted by both parties can pave the way towards a peaceful settlement.

Once again, we emphasize that the core issue here is a clear moral distinction between right and wrong. Terrorism is unacceptable, and any resolution must ensure accountability for the events of 7 October.

South Sudan urgently calls for the release of all hostages by Hamas without preconditions. Children should not be used as bargaining chips. They deserve the opportunity to enjoy their childhood. Additionally, we have to advocate for unhindered access to humanitarian aid and the protection of civilian populations by all involved parties. The path to a win-win situation lies in embracing peace, as war brings only destruction and suffering.

South Sudan remains optimistic about the future of the world. We have come a long way since our struggle for independence, overcoming numerous challenges and gaining valuable experience. With continued international coordination, we are confident that we can realize our vision of a peaceful, prosperous and progressive world. Our historical struggle for self-

determination stands as a testament to the power of dialogue, understanding and cooperation in shaping a better world.

We are committed to contributing to the global efforts to address challenges facing our human family. We pledge our dedication to multilateralism and international cooperation as the most effective means of achieving our shared aspirations. We are eager to actively engage in the Assembly and other forums to exchange insights, experiences and best practices with fellow Member States. Together, we can rebuild trust and rekindle global solidarity, ensuring a brighter future for current and future generations.

In these trying times, when the world faces terror, unprovoked attacks and crisis, it falls upon those unafraid to condemn to pave the way that leads to peace. President Salva Kiir Mayardit extends his condolences for the loss of innocent women, children and population. His Excellency condemns the heinous and unprovoked terrorist attack perpetrated by Hamas, emphasizing that no political grievances can ever justify the killing of innocent civilians.

This message conveys South Sudan's solidarity with the innocents in the face of conflict and its resolute condemnation of violence targeting civil society and people. South Sudan stands firmly with the international community in denouncing all forms of terrorism and violence against civilians. South Sudan stands for peace and is calling for peace.

Ms. Panteli (Cyprus): Cyprus aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (EU) (see A/ES-10/PV.40) and welcomes the reconvening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly.

While we have been debating in this forum over the past few days, a major crisis has been unfolding in the Middle East. We mourn the loss of life and suffering of so many innocent civilians, including United Nations personnel who perished in the line of duty.

That situation did not evolve in a vacuum. The terrorist attack perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October, which we unequivocally condemn, cannot be justified by any means. Faced with that heinous act, Israel has the right to self-defence, in line with international law, including international humanitarian law. We echo the

calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, while at the same time underscoring that Hamas does not represent the Palestinians.

Cyprus reiterates the importance of ensuring the protection of all civilians at all times, in line with international humanitarian law, and deplores all loss of civilian life. It is imperative that the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza be addressed by allowing for constant, unhindered and safe delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip. Cyprus supports United Nations and regional efforts to ensure the sustained flow of humanitarian aid to those in need. Increasing humanitarian assistance for Palestinians, while ensuring that such assistance is not abused by terrorist organizations, is a priority for Cyprus and the EU as a whole.

As that grave situation is rapidly evolving, the urgent need for de-escalation cannot be emphasized enough. A spillover to neighbouring countries would be disastrous and right now does not appear unlikely. It is a crisis with potential catastrophic consequences, not least because the conflict also poses a serious national security threat, particularly for countries of the region, which should not be underestimated, including owing to the potential increase of refugee flows.

The Charter of the United Nations remains the cornerstone of international law and the pursuit of international peace and security. Respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law should be a guiding principle for all parties, in particular when that concerns the protection of civilians, civilian infrastructure and medical facilities, including United Nations premises and their personnel.

Our region cannot shoulder further instability, and the current crisis has amplified the need for reinstating a political process on the horizon. There is no other option than to create the necessary conditions and fully recommit to a viable two-State solution in line with the parameters reflected in the relevant Security Council resolutions. A comprehensive, lasting solution to the conflict is now critical in order to avoid repeated cycles of violence.

As a country in the region, Cyprus has been offering a safe platform for evacuations via sea and air. Owing to our geographical proximity, we have been consulting and coordinating with our regional partners to practically facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance to address the dire humanitarian needs in

the Gaza Strip. Those efforts include the establishment of a maritime humanitarian corridor from Cyprus as a mid- and long-term necessity which would contribute to alleviating the constantly increasing assistance necessities and serve to decompress other corridors with full consideration of the security aspect, as well as the need to secure the sustained, regulated and robust flow of humanitarian aid.

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): Denmark aligns itself with the statement of the European Union (EU) (see A/ES-10/PV.40).

Since 7 October, the world has witnessed a horrifying escalation of the situation in the Middle East. The outbreak of violence has already caused immense human suffering and, regrettably, the crisis is deteriorating by the day. We mourn the thousands of innocent civilians already killed or wounded in that terrible conflict and extend our most heartfelt sympathy and condolences to their families and loved ones.

Denmark condemns in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel. We reiterate that there can be no justification for terror. And we strongly emphasize Israel's right to defend itself, in line with humanitarian and international law, in the face of such violent and indiscriminate attacks. We also call on Hamas to immediately release all hostages without any precondition.

We are witnessing a heartbreaking level of civilian suffering. Denmark reiterates the importance of ensuring the protection of all civilians at all times, in line with international humanitarian law. That includes taking all feasible precautions to prevent civilian casualties and reduce damage. We also underline the importance of protecting medical facilities, schools and United Nations premises at all times.

Denmark is gravely concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Together with the EU, we continue our call for continued, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access throughout Gaza, including through humanitarian corridors and pauses. It is paramount to ensure an urgent increase in the provision of humanitarian aid to the civilian population of Gaza so desperately in need of food, water, shelter, electricity, fuel and medical care. We welcome the fact that some trucks with humanitarian aid have entered Gaza through the Rafah crossing but reiterate that much more is needed.

Denmark is a long-term donor to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and among its top 15 donors. To respond to the current situation, the Danish Government has increased Denmark's humanitarian aid for Gaza and the West Bank with an extraordinary pledge of approximately \$7 million.

Denmark is grateful to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts to ensure the urgent delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to the civilian population of Gaza. We commend the humanitarian personnel working day and night in Gaza to facilitate the urgent delivery of humanitarian assistance, but deeply regret that this heroic work has cost more than 70 United Nations personnel their lives. We express our deepest condolences to their families and reiterate that humanitarian workers and United Nations personnel must be protected at all times.

As Member States of the United Nations, we all have an obligation to work constructively to find solutions to that immense crisis. In particular, we have entrusted the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Rarely should the weight of that responsibility be felt heavier than today. For that reason, we urge the Security Council and particularly its permanent members to redouble their efforts towards finding a common position that can address the current escalation of violence. In that regard, we recommend the constructive role played by the elected members of the Security Council.

While we are deeply concerned about the situation in Gaza, it is also crucial to prevent regional escalation, and we call on all regional actors to refrain from any action that could further aggravate the situation. We also note with great concern the significant increase in violence against Palestine in the West Bank. We stress the importance of engaging broadly with Israeli authorities and the Palestinian Authority, as well as regional and international partners, in order to prevent further escalation.

In this tragic situation, we are reminded once again of the need for a lasting and sustainable peace based on the two-State solution. For that reason, we remain committed to reinvigorating the efforts in the Middle East peace process. Amid the present crisis, we must never lose sight of that viable path to a durable peace.

Ms. Kabua (Marshall Islands): The Republic of the Marshall Islands is deeply concerned about the escalating security and humanitarian crisis in Gaza. We join many others in deploring the gruesome and terrorist acts of Hamas, and we urge the safe treatment and immediate release of hostages.

The Marshall Islands supports the ongoing engagement and diplomatic dialogue within the wider Middle East region, and we stand in support of recognizing Israel's right to self-defence, the same general duty of security that every country in this Hall owes its own people. Addressing Israel's security from terrorist acts is important, and it is no less urgent to scale up the wider response to the humanitarian crisis.

All war is difficult and horribly tragic, and nobody wins, but the international community has learned lessons from the distant and recent past — or we certainly should have. But those lessons are not always simple issues, and the current crisis is highly complex and layered.

The Marshall Islands supports international efforts to urgently address the growing and difficult humanitarian crisis in Gaza and to ensure supplies are safely monitored and delivered to vulnerable civilian populations. The people of Gaza are not the same as Hamas, and addressing militant terrorists who are embedded in the civilian infrastructure is complex. Hamas has not been elected since 2006. Appropriate and responsive humanitarian measures and specific, narrowly targeted and time-bound pauses are needed to ensure further and faster delivery of humanitarian aid. But that cannot be at the expense of worsening security threats or allowing Hamas to rearm itself, which would only extend the cycle of violence and conflict. Harm to civilians, regardless of nationality, should and must be minimized. That is true of any conflict.

We can do better as the General Assembly, even as there are difficult issues on which we all struggle to find common words. The Marshall Islands stands with the majority of voting members who voted to condemn Hamas by voting for Canada's draft amendment (A/ES-10/L.26) or did not move to block it, even if the draft did not meet the procedural two-thirds threshold.

Yes, this war has a difficult context and a clear history before it. But if the General Assembly cannot even state or directly acknowledge what happened, then we are all doing something wrong. If we cannot call for the release of hostages, then we are

doing something wrong. If we cannot address the humanitarian and security dimensions, then we are doing something wrong.

Hamas's barbaric attacks on Israel happened, and those were indiscriminate and specifically targeted at civilians, with limbs and heads ripped from bodies. That cannot be a call for revenge. Instead, it should serve to underscore the gravity of the threat posed by Hamas. And we are equally clear-eyed and concerned about the devastating humanitarian crisis within Gaza and the wider regional impacts of the war. And as I speak, this remains an active hostage situation, involving people from 40 nations.

It is important that accountability is upheld and that there remains wider multilateral engagement even — or especially — when there is disagreement. Objectivity cannot be cast aside. The playing field must be level, not predetermined, and must address all evidence, facts and actors. The Marshall Islands is now understanding the implications of multi-theatre conflicts and tensions around the world. Through each, we can start to understand the common threads of security, humanity and dignity. It is imperative that this organ find better means of working across divides and building common action. That task will be hard, but it is not impossible to capture the common concern and the diversity of views. As the General Assembly, we must keep working together to find an appropriate way to specifically express what has happened and the need of all populations for security, safety, essential rights and well-being.

Ms. Font Vilagines (Andorra) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President for re convening this emergency special session.

Andorra aligns itself with the statement made by the Observer of the European Union, and is honoured to make a few remarks in its national capacity.

In the face of one of the most difficult crises in the region, we wish, first of all, to express our strongest and most resolute condemnation of the terrible terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas in Israel on 7 October. We express our condolences for all the victims of the conflict and urgently call for the release of all hostages.

We also regret that more than 70 members of United Nations agencies have lost their lives in the course of their duties in responding to the needs of the civilian

population. Our sympathy and condolences go to the families of the victims.

Andorra urges respect for international law for the protection of the civilian population and attaches the utmost importance to humanitarian action, which is urgently needed in this case. The establishment of a humanitarian truce, as stated in resolution ES-10/21, creates possibilities to give access to resources for the care of the people living in Gaza and the high number of displaced persons.

We appreciate the efforts made to achieve that, and it is encouraging that the passage of humanitarian supplies is being opened up, although it is currently clearly insufficient.

(*spoke in French*)

This conflict has already claimed an appalling number of victims, most of them women and children, and we are deeply concerned about that. In addition, the conflict is severely affecting the very access to basic services we have advocated since the founding of the Organization. Moreover, people are no longer able to exercise their rights to health and education, which will incur a very high cost in the future. The effects are devastating and traumatizing for families and communities. There can be no doubt that the only alternative is to create a space of hope in which to find peace. Children everywhere, including those in every part of this conflict, live in the present — but they look to their futures, and it is essential that they realize them in peace.

We recognize the actions and initiatives of the United Nations, the Secretary-General and agencies at this critical time. Andorra calls for an immediate ceasefire, for every diplomatic effort to be undertaken to protect the civilian population in all areas affected by the conflict and for access to humanitarian assistance to be facilitated, in accordance with international law.

Ms. Seid (Palau): We convene here at a fragile and precarious time in the world. Since the 7 October attack on Israel by Hamas, an attack that triggered a traumatic and heavy response from Israel, we are now seeing devastating, heartbreaking events tragically unfold in the Gaza Strip. Palau unequivocally condemns the terrorist attacks on Israel and expresses our deepest condolences to Israel and the families of those who lost their lives or were injured, and we call for the immediate release of the hostages. The brutal fighting

between Israel and Hamas that has ensued has already taken the lives of thousands of civilians in the Gaza Strip — more than 8,000 people and mounting — and inflicted wrenching misery on both sides. We similarly extend our sincere condolences to the families of the victims in Gaza, and for the loss of United Nations staff and personnel.

It would be remiss of us not to mention that Hamas intentionally puts the Palestinian people in harm's way by storing weapons and command posts under civilian hospitals, schools, mosques and buildings. The suffering of the citizens of Gaza is not incidental to Hamas — it is essential. It is part and parcel of their propaganda. Hamas has repeatedly declared opposition to a two-State solution and to any negotiations, with their stated goal to annihilate Israel completely. So how does one negotiate with an entity that wants to annihilate Jews from the face of the Earth? Using the old tropes of Jewish occupation as a root cause of Hamas's barbarism does not in any way justify Hamas's murderous actions, or its continued use of unguided missiles sent into Israel. Invading civilian homes, terrorizing civilians, murdering young people at a concert and kidnapping babies — torturing them — in a well-orchestrated attack that was probably meant to do exactly what it is doing now, Hamas is content to sacrifice the Palestinian people as they try to turn the world against Israel. It is for that reason that Palau voted to support the Canadian draft amendment (A/ES-10/L.26) to condemn Hamas.

We can condemn the terrorist actions of Hamas and call for humanitarian response and restraint from Israel in Gaza. Those are not mutually exclusive actions, but because of the deep wounds of this region, they are often posed as an either-or — a proposition that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend”. But that leads to a downward spiral of hatred and extremism and perpetuates conflict and despair. Because the draft amendment to condemn Hamas failed to be adopted, and because resolution ES-10/21 lacked language calling for the release of hostages, Palau abstained in the voting on the resolution.

However, while we maintain that Israel has the right, if not the obligation, to defend itself, it should do so in accordance with regard for the safety of innocent civilians and in accordance with international law. Food, water, medicine and other essential humanitarian assistance must be able to flow into Gaza and to the people who need them. We commend efforts by many Member States and United Nations agencies, who have

stepped up to help in the past few weeks. While dozens of trucks have passed through the Rafah crossing, hundreds more must follow to meet the dire needs of more than 2 million people. Palau also joins the calls by others for humanitarian pauses in order to get more people out of Gaza and out of harm's way.

We are all too familiar with the atrocities of war, but war has its rules — rules that we all agreed to as members of this esteemed body — and in the midst of the fighting, we must not forget our humanity. We urge for restraint to allow for certain events to happen that will remind us of that humanity, so that innocent people, including children, may be relocated to safer areas; so that hungry, thirsty, shell-shocked people can get some relief; so that injured civilians may get treatment; and so that both sides may mourn and bury their dead. Palau calls on all the parties to remember the sanctity of innocent human life. So many of those who have been killed are women and children — innocent children who have grown up in an already challenging environment. Many of those killed did not have any recourse or anywhere to go. We should not forget that a Palestinian mother will mourn her child the same way an Israeli mother does.

In looking ahead as the Middle East rebuilds from this conflict, as it has done many times before, we urge for the resumption of talks for a two-State solution. Our concern is that, if the status quo continues, it may ultimately result in a situation in which Israel may win the battle but lose the peace. It could result in yet another generation of retribution, extremism and hatred, perpetuating this ongoing conflict that has plagued the Middle East for far too long. Our international community must redouble the efforts to bring back the peace process. A durable solution, with two peoples, Israelis and Palestinians, and two democratic States, living side by side in peace, security and dignity, within mutually recognized borders, is necessary for a lasting peace. The representative of the United Kingdom said it well: we call for love over hate and for light over darkness (see A/ES-10/PV.40). Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Israel and the people of Palestine.

Ms. Brattested (Norway): For the sake of children — Palestinian and Israeli children — the world must do better. Diplomacy must do better. Save the Children reported on Sunday that nearly 3,200 children had been killed in Gaza in just three weeks. Some 1,000 more are missing, presumed dead. On

the Israeli side, at least 30 children have been killed. Every child's death is one too many. Children bear no responsibility for the situation and must be protected. We grieve with Israeli and Palestinian parents and can only imagine the desperation and sorrow caused by the loss of their loved ones. People on both sides deserve to live in peace and security.

Let me make two issues crystal clear. First, all parties must act in accordance with international humanitarian law and ensure the protection of civilians caught up in the midst of hostilities — even wars have rules. And secondly, all lives are equal and there is no hierarchy between them. That is essential, not only for the protection of civilians today but for the future, for both Israelis and Palestinians. How people are treated during the conflict can determine the prospects for a political solution that can lead to a durable peace.

We meet at an extremely critical time for Israelis and Palestinians, and for the Middle East and the world. Norway has strongly condemned Hamas's heinous terrorist attacks on 7 October, in which as many as 1,400 people were killed and more than 200 hostages were taken. We demand that Hamas and other actors in the Gaza Strip release all hostages immediately and unconditionally. Israel has a right to defend itself against the armed attacks by Hamas. However, we emphasize that the self-defence measures taken must be necessary and proportionate. Furthermore, all military operations must be conducted in line with international humanitarian law. All parties to armed conflicts have an obligation to protect civilians and civilian objects, including hospitals, schools and other civilian infrastructure. The scale of the civilian suffering, both physically and mentally, inflicted by the combination of intense Israeli bombardments and the blockade is heartbreaking and unacceptable.

On the basis of this humanitarian catastrophe, we find it difficult to draw any other conclusion than that the parties to the conflict are not doing enough to comply with their obligations to protect the civilians affected by the ongoing hostilities. We call on all actors to strictly adhere to the international humanitarian law principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. We also call on the parties to ensure safe, rapid and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance and essential services for all civilians in the Gaza Strip. All parties to the conflict must make sure that the civilian population can uphold the bare necessities of life, even in the middle of war.

Opening the Kerem Shalom border crossing would also improve humanitarian access, while safeguarding Israel's legitimate security concerns. On the Egyptian side, we encourage accepting the offer of international humanitarian staff to complement and boost the impressive work of the Egyptian Red Crescent. We commend the courage and resilience of Palestinian health and humanitarian workers and volunteers for their heroic efforts to save lives, while risking their own. We mourn with the families of those who tragically lost their lives in the pursuit of humanity, peace and a better world for others. We must honour their memory by giving it our best. Diplomacy must do better.

We are deeply concerned about the increase in violence in the West Bank, including from Israeli settlers. The consequences of a further escalation of violence and potential destabilization in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the broader Middle East region, would be devastating. We call on all actors in the region to contribute to de-escalation to prevent a wider regional conflict.

The United Nations role is indispensable in this crisis. The United Nations family on the ground is making tremendous efforts to deliver on the humanitarian needs of Gaza's population under impossible circumstances. Despite years of underfinancing, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East is making an absolutely crucial contribution. We encourage all Member States to respond to appeals for additional financial support to ensure that the United Nations can maintain and scale up its response.

We regret the Security Council's inability to come together to recommend actions to de-escalate and alleviate the grave humanitarian situation. The right of the veto should never prevent the United Nations from fulfilling its mandate. It is therefore vital that the General Assembly has taken up its responsibility, adopting a resolution (resolution ES-10/21) calling for a durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities. Norway voted in favour of the resolution, in the light of the gravity of the situation on the ground, in particular regarding the humanitarian catastrophe we see evolving in Gaza. The violence must stop. We hope that the Council will take up its responsibility.

On 25 October, as Chair of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, Norway hosted an informal

meeting among partners in the international donor group for Palestine. There was broad agreement among participants about the urgency of providing humanitarian assistance and ensuring access to Gaza. The need to continue our support for the Palestinian Authority, its institutions and service delivery to the Palestinian people was another clear call from the meeting.

There is no military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The solution can only be political. There must be a credible political path. The only viable solution to achieve lasting peace, security and self-determination for both peoples is a negotiated two-State solution. Even in the middle of a war there is the need to discuss ways to build a credible path towards peace. The children in Palestine and Israel are paying the highest price. They are being traumatized for life by the war. Those children will one day be the leaders that we all depend on for a peaceful Middle East.

I reiterate one last message: diplomacy must do better.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Mr. Beresford-Hill (Sovereign Order of Malta): The Sovereign Order of Malta is grateful for the opportunity to speak before the General Assembly today, as a neutral and non-partisan witness to the pain and suffering that is bedevilling the land in which we were founded 900 years ago and which is the place of the origin of our faith. As both a faith-based international entity and a Catholic hospitalier order, our mission is to serve all humankind through the provision of health care and related services. Our love of the Holy Land, as sacred to us as it is to Jews and to Muslims, has been severely tested by the calculated violence that has recently been unleashed on so many people — so many lives lost, so many people suffering and so many children and mothers in pain. A report issued today by the Permanent Observer of Palestine reports that 19 hospitals and 49 health clinics have been hit by incoming fire, while the main hospital for cancer patients was seriously damaged on 30 October and is no longer functioning. The main generator at the Indonesian Hospital in Gaza has run out of fuel. And, as a surgeon at Al Shifa Hospital warned, basically, without electricity, the hospital becomes a mass grave.

Our Ambassador to Palestine informs us that, in the West Bank, the Holy Family Hospital, in Bethlehem, operated by the Order of Malta, has made

every provision necessary to accommodate victims and those in need of medical assistance. However, due to blockades and border crossings being closed, hospitals across the West Bank, including ours, are unable to replenish their stocks of life-saving medical supplies and equipment. Patients are fearful of travelling to seek help, and doctors are prevented from operating the mobile clinics that used to bring such help and support to so many. There is more suffering, more anger and more death.

Consider the plight of pregnant women in Gaza, whose number has been estimated at up to 50,000, with 5,000-plus deliveries anticipated each month. The destruction of health-care facilities and the lack of suitable medical supplies puts the lives of the mothers and their infants, as yet unborn, in jeopardy. The overcrowding of shelters and the damage to water and sanitation infrastructure in Gaza are contributing to a public health disaster that is already manifest. Regardless of whichever faction was responsible for, or whoever's missiles landed in the grounds of, Al Ahli Hospital, one thing is clear: it is the innocent, particularly women and children, who ultimately bear the heaviest burden. Al Ahli Hospital is symbolic of what this once Holy Land has now become — a self-fulfilling prophecy of death, destruction and hatred.

The Assembly has been debating Palestine for many decades. Some of the best and most astute brains in the world have failed, however, to achieve much more than piecemeal and half-won compromise. Yes, amid it all, there has been a great deal of real promise, but promise that has not been realized. Perhaps at this moment of international crisis we can all put self-interest and global alliances aside and implore the Assembly to forge a peaceful settlement that will result in bringing more than a safe corridor, or 20 trucks a day bringing critical aid to 2 million people or the measured release of innocent, unjustly imprisoned hostages — all of which is necessary, all of which is needed, but which simply does not match the scale of what is happening in the lives, hearts and souls of millions of Muslim, Christian and Jewish families.

We urge the United Nations to live up to its Charter for the sake of the children of Palestine and Israel — the ones who will survive this conflict. Do not let history repeat itself by once more doing too little too late. Future generations may not be able to hold us to account, but Almighty God will.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the African Union.

Ms. Mohammed (African Union): On behalf of the African Union Commission, I want to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for reconvening this timely and important tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly. We thank the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, in their capacities as Chairs of the Group of Arab States and Organization of Islamic Cooperation, respectively, for requesting the resumption.

We are meeting today at a very difficult time. For the African Union Commission, the situation in Gaza and the occupied territories remains a matter of deep concern. As we sit in the Hall, the bombardment and hostilities are still going on right now. Israeli air strikes in the past few weeks and the recent major ground offensive in Gaza have claimed thousands of lives, including those of thousands of children. This has created a dire humanitarian situation, which has dramatically deteriorated an already fragile situation.

We condemn the escalating violence and loss of civilian and innocent lives, including those of United Nations staff and humanitarian workers. All human life, no matter race or creed, is sacred and must be protected, and fundamental rights and dignity for all must be upheld. We join others in extending our condolences to all those affected by the crisis. We also join in calling for an immediate ceasefire and the cessation of hostilities, while also urging all the parties to engage in a meaningful dialogue to de-escalate tensions. We also join the call for the release of prisoners and hostages.

The cycle of violence and suffering has to end, and a durable solution must be found through a just and comprehensive peace process that respects the aspirations and rights of Palestinians and Israelis alike. We reaffirm our support to, and confidence in, the Secretary-General's leadership and join in supporting his call for the provision of much-needed medical equipment, food, fuel and other humanitarian supplies that are desperately needed, as well as access for humanitarian personnel.

The African Union's support to the Palestinian cause is very profound for us. It is premised on the values of freedom, justice and humanitarian principles that Africa defends in international forums, alongside all those striving to ensure that Palestine regains its right

to exist as a key viable State. Africa has consistently expressed deep concern about the consequences of impunity, unilateral policies, provocations and non-adherence to international law. We therefore call upon the Government of Israel to ensure that it upholds its obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The international community must also shoulder its responsibilities by providing protection to civilians and access to humanitarian assistance. We all have a vested interest in promoting a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

We have regrettably witnessed over the past few weeks the inability of the Security Council to act and adequately deliver on the issue, while the situation was deteriorating at an unprecedented scale. We therefore welcome the adoption of the General Assembly's humanitarian resolution (resolution ES-10/21) last week, which calls for an immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce and a cessation of hostilities. While welcoming the resolution, however, it is clear that we must intensify our efforts to find a just and lasting solution to the conflict — one in which dialogue and diplomacy replace violence and destruction; one in which international law and the multilateral system serve and protect all equally, taking into account the legitimate concerns and aspirations of all parties involved. A peaceful resolution must be underpinned by a commitment to the principles of peace, justice and diplomacy. It also requires mutual recognition of the rights and security of both peoples, and it is crucial for all parties to demonstrate a genuine commitment to achieving lasting peace in the region.

To conclude, we emphasize the need for the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Middle East Quartet and the Secretary-General to resolutely commit to ending this situation and to relaunching the peace process, based on the two-State solution, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and a sovereign Palestine State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and within the framework of the relevant African Union pronouncements. Today more than ever before, we should recognize that we live in an interconnected world, in which respect for human rights, human dignity and agreed global norms should be the standard.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Abdelaziz (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): The resumed tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly is being held in the light of a real crisis facing the international multilateral system and threatening to undermine the foundations of the collective security system, on which we agreed upon at the United Nations. The threat also includes replacing that system with another one based on partisanship, alliance and fighting over geopolitical priorities and concerns, underpinned by obsolete colonial alliances and divorced from the established legal, moral and humanitarian bases of our well-established Organization.

The declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1) was a continuation of the sincere intentions to enhance and develop our international multilateral work and to create more bonds that bring us closer to the concepts of peace, security, development and human rights. It is shameful that the presentation of the New Agenda for Peace in the General Assembly has been met with attempts by some to implement a parallel agenda in the Security Council, one that replaces sustaining peace as a basis for our work with sustaining war. That is what certain permanent members of the Security Council are doing. They stubbornly continue to block any attempt to simply declare a ceasefire in Gaza. They simply pretend to deal with some of the humanitarian repercussions of the war on the unarmed Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the rest of the occupied State of Palestine. Unfortunately, that is amplified by the fact that Israel, the occupying Power, and those who support it, continue to block the application of the supreme humanitarian values that are the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which we adopted 75 years ago. They continue to prevent the unimpeded and unconditional passage of humanitarian aid, and they seek to displace the unarmed Palestinian civilian population, in a blatant violation of international humanitarian law. They seek to implement the hateful personal and colonial interests of the extremist Israeli Government.

That behaviour will not make the Palestinian people alone suffer, while being crushed under an unjust Israeli occupation and subjected to various violations of their legitimate and inalienable rights — since long before the recent events in Gaza began. The entire international community will also suffer, especially from the double standards that are being shamelessly

and persistently applied to Ukraine and to Palestine. Those double standards deepen the concepts of racial discrimination and hatred and further inflame anger and frustration, which in turn will lead to more violence and counter-violence.

Since the start of the dangerous situation in Gaza on 7 October, the League of Arab States has been following with great concern and sorrow the Security Council's failure — on four occasions — to adopt a draft resolution that would achieve the three main and just demands of the League of Arab States. In that regard, I associate myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Jordan on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/ES-10/PV.39). Those demands are a ceasefire, the unconditional and unimpeded flow of humanitarian assistance and the non-displacement of Palestinian residents to other areas inside or outside the occupied Palestinian territories.

Faced with that failure, the Group of Arab States, the Islamic Group and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries sought to salvage the remaining international multilateral order's credibility and called on the General Assembly to resume this emergency special session. With the support of all peace-loving States, we have succeeded in adopting the humanitarian resolution entitled "Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations" (resolution ES-10/21) with a majority of 120 votes in favour and 14 against. Those States who voted against the resolution have chosen the wrong side of international action and will bear the historic responsibility for the damage that they have done to collective international action.

The League of Arab States stresses that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict did not start on 7 October. The Palestinian question is not — and will not be — an offshoot of the war on terrorism, despite the efforts of some to mistakenly portray it as such. The legitimate right to self-defence does not apply to cases where the land of others is occupied by force. Those cases are strictly subject to the principles of relevant international humanitarian law. Moreover, despite the humanitarian nature of that resolution and the elevated legal and moral value thereof, given that it reflects the will of more than two thirds of United Nations Members, the discussions that took place in the Security Council afterwards clearly show that certain major Powers still insist on their position of granting Israel free reign in its aggression on the unarmed civilian population in the occupied Palestinian territory. Those Powers

encourage Israel to expand the scope of the conflict by perpetrating its aggressing against Arab territories in Syria and Lebanon, and by seeking to drag non-Arab States in the region into this conflict. That will worsen the regional crisis and allow Israel to reap the maximum benefit at the expense of the Palestinian people and their just cause.

In conclusion, we are required by our peoples and our leaders here in the General Assembly, the world's free democratic parliament, to enforce respect for the concepts of collective security, which we all agreed on as a basis for multilateral action. We are required to use all means possible to put an end to this farce, the episodes of which reflect increasingly destructive humanitarian, legal and institutional dimensions. The League of Arab States calls on the President of the General Assembly to coordinate with the Secretary-General, to whom we reiterate our trust and our support for his just and clear positions, to engage in urgent consultations to work on

the implementation of the humanitarian provisions of that important resolution, specifically a ceasefire and the entry of unimpeded, unconditional humanitarian aid. The League of Arab States will support every sincere effort that restores security and stability and initiates sincere attempts to create a political horizon that would end the Israeli occupation, which is the cause of all this suffering, and establish an independent Palestinian State, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

In accordance with the terms of the last paragraph of the resolution adopted at the forty-first plenary meeting on 27 October (resolution ES-10/21), the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly is temporarily adjourned.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.