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The situation in the Middle East

Demand for ceasefire in Gaza

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/26](#), entitled “Demand for ceasefire in Gaza”. As requested in paragraph 10 of the resolution, it contains a needs assessment for Gaza in the short, medium and long term, an elaboration of the humanitarian, social and economic consequences of the conflict in Gaza, and an overview of the work of different parts of the United Nations system relevant to Gaza, along with recommendations on how to strengthen coordination across these parts.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [ES-10/26](#), entitled “Demand for ceasefire in Gaza”. In that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive written report within 60 days of the adoption of the resolution, which should include a needs assessment for Gaza in the short, medium and long term, an elaboration of the humanitarian, social and economic consequences of the conflict in Gaza, and an overview of the work of different parts of the United Nations system relevant to Gaza, along with recommendations on how to strengthen coordination across these parts. As indicated in the letter dated 31 December 2024 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, the report also contains proposals as to how the United Nations could help advance accountability.

2. Information on the political, humanitarian and socioeconomic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Gaza, and on the work of the United Nations system is also provided in several periodic reports prepared by the relevant entities and submitted to various United Nations organs, including the monthly Security Council briefings by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; Security Council briefings by the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza; the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#); the annual report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people; the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on the economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people; the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); the biannual reports of the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians; and the annual and biannual human rights reports of the Secretary-General and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

3. On 19 January 2025, a ceasefire and hostage release deal in Gaza came into effect. The first phase of the deal is being implemented over 42 days, during which Hamas has committed to releasing 33 hostages, and Israel has committed to releasing some 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and detainees. Negotiations to extend the ceasefire through a second phase are set to begin during phase one. The ceasefire is allowing a significant scaling up of humanitarian aid in Gaza, including to the north.

II. Humanitarian, social and economic consequences of the conflict in Gaza

4. Following the horrific acts of terror by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Israel on 7 October 2023, the hostilities and Israeli military operations in Gaza have resulted in tragic levels of casualties, including a significant number of women and children, the massive displacement of civilians and widespread destruction, including of civilian infrastructure. During such hostilities, repeated violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, are likely to have occurred. Since the adoption of resolution [ES-10/26](#) on 11 December 2024 and until 19 January, operations resulted in further mass casualties, displacement and

widespread destruction, with a siege of northern Gaza. Some 1.9 million people – 90 per cent of Gaza’s population – were internally displaced, with most experiencing repeated or prolonged displacements due to the conflict and Israeli military evacuation orders that have covered as much as 80 per cent of the Gaza Strip. Throughout the conflict, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups have held hostages, including women and children, in horrific conditions, launched attacks at Israeli forces and fired rockets and other projectiles indiscriminately toward Israel. Israel has stated that Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups placed fighters and military equipment among civilians and civilian infrastructure and underneath densely populated areas.

5. According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, some 47,354 Palestinians have been killed, including over 13,319 children and 7,216 women, and thousands of people remain unaccounted for, presumed buried under rubble. At least 111,563 Palestinians have been injured in the Gaza Strip, the majority women and children, many with life-altering injuries. According to Israeli authorities, some 1,700 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in the attacks of 7 October 2023 and in the context of ensuing hostilities between Israel and Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Gaza, including at least 310 women and 57 children, and at least 820 members of Israel’s security forces. Since 7 October 2023, thousands of Israelis have been injured in these hostilities. The attacks of 7 October had a devastating impact on numerous communities in Israel, including in southern Israel near Gaza, from where many were abducted, killed or displaced. In total, 251 persons were abducted from Israel during the attacks; 109 of them were released in 2023. According to Israeli sources, 90 hostages, including 6 women and 2 children, are still being held captive by Palestinian armed groups in Gaza as at 27 January 2025, and a number of hostages still held are presumed dead. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has also released disturbing reports on the conflict. According to her findings released on 4 March 2024, the mission team received clear and convincing information that sexual violence, including rape, sexualized torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment occurred against some women and children during the hostages’ time in captivity and had reasonable grounds to believe that this violence may have been ongoing. In September 2024, she also expressed her deep concern about recently published reports by the United Nations describing a dramatic deterioration in conditions of detention for Palestinian men, women and children under Israeli custody since the attacks on 7 October and the escalation of the conflict in Gaza. These reports of sexual violence and other inhuman and degrading treatment could amount to sexualized torture. She called for prompt, thorough, independent, impartial and effective investigations into all alleged violations.

6. At least 351 humanitarian workers have been killed in Gaza since 7 October 2023, most of them UNRWA personnel. In total, 277 United Nations personnel have been killed.

7. As a result of the attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups inside Israel on 7 October 2023 and the projectiles launched from Gaza towards Israel since those attacks, tens of thousands of Israelis were displaced from their homes in southern Israel. There has been significant damage to residential and civilian infrastructure in Israel. According to Israeli authorities, more than 16,000 private property damage claims were reported, and over 1,800 commercial damage claims were reported. The Government of Israel has paid more than 1.32 billion new shekels in compensation claims for residents in the south and centre of Israel who suffered direct physical damage to property as a result of hostilities.

8. The destruction and humanitarian, social and economic consequences resulting from the intense Israel Defense Forces military operations in Gaza have been devastating. Recent analysis by the United Nations suggests that the conflict has set

back human development in Gaza by as much as 69 years.¹ The health and water systems have nearly collapsed, with the massive destruction of distribution networks and the destruction of over 80 per cent of key water, sanitation and hygiene facilities; the energy sector, sewage and wastewater management, and solid waste mechanisms have collapsed owing to extensive damage, inaccessibility and a lack of critical operating resources. Over 60 per cent of homes and 65 per cent of roads have been destroyed. In addition, 88 per cent of schools in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged. Some 20 of Gaza's 36 hospitals were not functioning before the ceasefire came into effect. The remaining 16 were only partially functioning. Only 37 per cent of primary healthcare centres were partially functional amid the destruction and were facing critical shortages of medicines, essential supplies and equipment, as well as a lack of reliable power. Approximately 14,000 critically ill and injured people required medical evacuation before the ceasefire came into effect. Attacks on and near hospitals in Gaza during the conflict left northern Gaza without sufficient essential healthcare before the 19 January ceasefire.

9. More than 50 million tons of debris have been generated in Gaza because of the conflict, within which human remains are buried alongside unexploded ordnance, asbestos and other hazardous substances. Livestock are dying. Croplands, trees and the agrifood systems infrastructure have been decimated. Damage to essential electricity infrastructure coupled with stringent limitations imposed by Israel on the import of fuel and gas has resulted in a broad energy crisis, with the main power plant ceasing to function, and resulting in a near total blackout since 11 October 2023.

10. According to the interim rapid damage and needs assessment, conducted by the World Bank, the European Union and the United Nations, the total damage to physical infrastructure and economic and social losses caused by the conflict in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are estimated as at least \$29.9 billion and \$19.1 billion, respectively, bringing the total estimated effects of the conflict to \$49 billion. In terms of physical damage, housing has been the hardest hit sector at \$15.8 billion (53 per cent of total damage), followed by commerce and industry at \$5.9 billion (20 per cent), transport at \$2.5 billion (8 per cent), and water, sanitation and hygiene at \$1.53 billion (5 per cent).

11. The large-scale displacement of 1.9 million people has eroded family and community support systems, leaving individuals increasingly vulnerable, particularly women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. The destruction of or damage to virtually all of Gaza's schools has halted education for hundreds of thousands of children, potentially for years to come, raising concerns about a "lost generation" deprived of learning opportunities. Widespread psychological distress, particularly among children who have been exposed to continuous violence, bereavement, extreme insecurity and the lack of essentials for survival, has led to increased cases of trauma, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, which are further exacerbated by the collapse of mental health services. Thousands of children have been orphaned by the conflict or left with no surviving family members, rendering them even more vulnerable due to the absence of vital care and support. Women and girls face heightened risks, including gender-based violence in overcrowded and unsafe displacement settings, while single-parent households, many of them led by widowed women, struggle with economic and social marginalization. The social fragmentation caused by the conflict, coupled with the depletion of essential resources, have also increased tensions within displaced communities and

¹ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and United Nations Development Programme, "Gaza war: expected socioeconomic impacts on the State of Palestine", policy brief No. 2, 16 October 2024. Available at www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/gaza-war-expected-socio-economic-impacts-state-palestine-october-2024.

between those seeking aid and those providing it. These deep social fractures will have long-term consequences for the recovery of Gaza.

12. The economic impact of the conflict is already more severe than any previously recorded economic downturn in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The extensive damage to Gaza's capital stock, combined with declining productivity, and the labour market impact of casualties, injuries and displacement are expected to have resulted in an 83 per cent contraction of the economy of Gaza in 2024. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, poverty is projected to have risen to 74.3 per cent in 2024, up from 38.8 per cent at the end of 2023. Unemployment in Gaza is reaching 80 per cent. The economic cost of the damage is almost twice the real GDP of the Occupied Palestinian Territory before October 2023. Consequently, the contribution of Gaza to the overall Palestinian economy is expected to have dropped to 3 per cent in 2024, down from 17 per cent before October 2023, despite it being home to 40 per cent of the Palestinian population residing in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The consequences of this shock are expected to exert a prolonged and substantial burden on economic activities for several years to come.

III. Needs assessment for Gaza

13. In the immediate and short term, the scale of the humanitarian crisis will require a continued focus on delivering life-saving humanitarian assistance. On 11 December 2024, the United Nations issued a humanitarian flash appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory for \$6.6 billion, \$3.6 billion of which are requested to address the most critical needs of 2.1 million Palestinians in Gaza, nearly the entire population of the Strip. These short-term needs are focused on addressing acute humanitarian needs through the delivery of emergency supplies and the provision of critical services, including protection, until local services and markets are restored.

14. There are two priority short-term humanitarian needs: more robust protection of civilians by the parties and respect for international humanitarian law; and conditions for the safe and unhindered access of aid, allowing for a measurable scale-up of humanitarian assistance. With a large majority of residential buildings damaged or destroyed, some 1.13 million people are in makeshift shelters or tents that do not provide adequate protection. Women and girls face heightened risks of gender-based violence and must contend with limited access to privacy, security and basic hygiene facilities and menstrual products, and medical care is woefully insufficient for the estimated 4,000 pregnant women giving birth each month. The situation is further exacerbated by the collapse of social support systems and unequal access to scarce resources. The Ministry of Health in Gaza has reported the deaths of eight children from hypothermia in December 2024 and early January 2025.

15. In the medium term, large-scale humanitarian needs will persist. However, if enabling conditions are met – in particular, a sustained ceasefire, a significant easing of access and movement restrictions, donor support and improved security conditions, in parallel with humanitarian response – early and medium-term recovery activities could be scaled up alongside efforts to transition to longer-term reconstruction.

16. The United Nations country team and the humanitarian country team have collaborated to plan for early and medium-term recovery. These planning processes included establishing a close partnership with the World Bank and the European Union on assessments and recovery, along with continuous engagement with the Palestinian Authority, Member States, civil society and others. While it has not been possible in the current environment to fully assess the totality of needs that will be required in Gaza, the interim assessment offers an early indication of the enormous scale of recovery and reconstruction needs in the Gaza Strip. The report estimates the

recovery and reconstruction needs in the short, medium and long term across the Gaza Strip at \$53.142 billion. Of these, the near-term needs in the first three years are estimated to be around \$20.568 billion.

17. In terms of recovery and reconstruction needs, the housing sector requires an estimated \$15.2 billion, accounting for around 30 per cent of total recovery needs. This is followed by needs in the commerce and industry sector, estimated at \$6.9 billion (12 per cent), in the health sector, also estimated at \$6.9 billion, in the agriculture sector, estimated at \$4.2 billion, and in the education sector, estimated at \$2.6 billion in terms of recovery needs. Other sectors with substantial recovery needs include social protection (\$4.18 billion), transport (\$2.9 billion) and water and sanitation (\$2.7 billion). While some sectors have sustained less damage, they have much higher recovery needs. These sectors include the environment sector (\$1.9 billion) as a result of the massive debris laced with unexploded ordnance and the high cost associated with removal of debris. Other recovery needs such as services for mental health and psychosocial support, disability and for victims and survivors of gender-based violence will have a relatively lower cost but will be a critical element of any comprehensive recovery.

18. In partnership with the United Nations, the Palestinian Authority has also undertaken recovery and reconstruction planning that is focused on life-saving measures and the response to basic needs, while laying the foundations for longer-term recovery across four main sectors, namely in the social, infrastructure, economic and governance sectors. The activities planned include the management of, debris, rubble and hazardous waste, the reactivation or establishment of health, educational, recreational and municipal services, the provision of temporary shelters, psychosocial support and social protection, repairs to provide accessible water systems, support to rehabilitate energy infrastructures, the use of emergency employment through cash-for-work across all sectors of intervention, revitalization of the private sector and the restoration of government capacities and infrastructures.

IV. United Nations response in Gaza

19. Over 20 United Nations resident and non-resident agencies, funds and programmes work in or on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, responding to the development and humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. The Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process coordinates these efforts in addition to its political mandate to resolve the conflict and achieve a two-State solution in line with United Nations resolutions, international law and previous agreements. The Office mobilized international support for a set of principles based on United Nations resolutions, international law and previous agreements for post-conflict arrangements in relation to Gaza, while working towards the ultimate goal to end the occupation, resolve the conflict and achieve a two-State solution.

20. The Office of the Special Coordinator, as an integrated office, also leads the coordination of recovery and reconstruction planning through the Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator. Through the integrated office, the Office of the Special Coordinator has led United Nations country team-wide planning and response efforts in order to facilitate inter-agency collaboration, address pressing challenges in relation to access, movement and coordination, advocate the creation of an enabling environment for humanitarian and recovery and reconstruction activities and mobilize and coordinate Member States and donors. As an integrated office, the Office of the Special Coordinator has worked to bridge the political work of the United Nations system, the humanitarian response and the eventual recovery and reconstruction phase. Central to these efforts has been

ensuring that the humanitarian response and planning for recovery and reconstruction are aligned and complementary, and moreover that recovery and reconstruction planning reflect the wider political principles of the United Nations and Member States, with the objective of working to realize a two-State solution.

21. The United Nations system continues to provide the bulk of humanitarian assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Those organizations, including the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, significantly scaled up the provision of life-saving aid after October 2023, with the aim of reaching 2.7 million people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including some 2.1 million people in Gaza. The assistance provided includes emergency assistance in the areas of agriculture, food, education, health, water and sanitation, non-food items and income generation. Protection has also been provided as the foundation for the overall response, with a focus on addressing gender-based violence and on the protection of children. Despite these efforts, the humanitarian response has been severely constrained, falling critically short in addressing the full scale of needs. Before the 19 January ceasefire, humanitarian partners had faced severe challenges, including severe restrictions on humanitarian access, hostilities, including attacks by Israeli forces on humanitarian convoys and killings of humanitarian personnel, the breakdown of law and order within Gaza, armed looting of humanitarian supplies and attacks by gangs on convoys.

22. Since 19 January, with the lifting of severe access restrictions, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners are fully engaged in supporting implementation of the ceasefire agreement and scaling up the delivery of humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians in Gaza, who are in desperate need of food, water, medical supplies and other essential assistance. In the first week after the ceasefire took effect, some 5,000 aid trucks entered Gaza, to both the north and south of Gaza. Some 95 trucks carrying fuel and another 36 of cooking gas have crossed into Gaza. Supplies delivered include food, medicine, water and sanitation services, hygiene kits and cash support. In order to prevent more suffering and loss of life, the full cooperation of all parties to ensure safe and unimpeded access must be sustained.

23. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) remains the principal provider and the backbone of emergency assistance in Gaza, supporting over half of the overall humanitarian response. The Agency has distributed food to 1.9 million individuals facing severe hunger. UNRWA medical staff conduct approximately 16,000 primary health consultations daily, exceeding 6.8 million consultations since the conflict began. UNRWA continues to shelter approximately 400,000 internally displaced persons. The Agency provides more than half of the monthly shelter and non-food item assistance in Gaza. Water supply operations deliver over 80 million litres per month, benefiting approximately 600,000 persons, while solid waste collection services process around 4,000 tons of waste monthly. Before the conflict, UNRWA operated nearly 300 schools, serving 300,000 students. Since hostilities began, psychosocial support has reached around 730,000 displaced persons, including around 520,000 children. The “back-to-learning” initiative, launched in August 2024, provides literacy, numeracy and recreational activities to over 18,000 children across 86 temporary learning spaces. In December 2024, UNRWA introduced a formal education initiative for Gaza’s approximately 660,000 school-age children, using low-connectivity online and paper-based options, with around 100,000 children registering in the first week.

24. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2720 \(2023\)](#), the Office of the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza has worked to facilitate, coordinate, monitor and verify the humanitarian nature of relief consignments to Gaza. The Senior Coordinator has engaged with the Government of Israel to accelerate the provision of aid, advocating expanded border crossings, unhindered humanitarian access and the immediate entry of critical humanitarian items, while

emphasizing the need to respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The Senior Coordinator has also engaged with international stakeholders, including ministers for foreign affairs and humanitarian envoys, in order to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation and increase aid flows. The Office of the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator continues to collaborate with United Nations entities, including UNRWA, the Office of the Special Coordinator and regional United Nations teams to align messaging and ensure coordinated efforts. In partnership with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and in line with the provisions of resolution 2720 (2023), the Office of the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator has operationalized the mechanism to expedite humanitarian relief, enhance transparency and streamline the entry of aid through Cyprus, Jordan, Israel and the West Bank, with ongoing discussions to include Egypt. A monitoring team has been deployed inside Gaza to verify aid delivery. Engagement by the Office of the Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator has strengthened supply lines and established additional routes from neighbouring Member States.

V. Advancing accountability

25. Existing mechanisms mandated by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council address diverse aspects of human rights violations and abuses in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel.² With largely complementary mandates, collectively, these mechanisms have shown critical value through their monitoring, assessment, public reporting, victim-centred advocacy and engagement with legal and policy actors.³

26. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel is mandated to collect, consolidate, analyse, record and preserve evidence for use in legal proceedings. It should be noted that neither the Independent International Commission of Inquiry nor other existing mechanisms are mandated to compile case files on individual criminal responsibility and directly assist prosecutions by national or international tribunals.

27. The work will continue to identify how to address this gap, the result of which will be reported to the General Assembly once completed.

² The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories has a mandate from the General Assembly and was established in 1968 (see www.ohchr.org/en/countries/palestine/special-committee-reports). The mechanisms that have a mandate from the Human Rights Council are the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (see www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-palestine), and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel (see www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/co-israel/index). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also has a mandate to report on an annual basis on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice, which is complemented by other relevant mandated reports by the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, including yearly updates to the database of all business enterprises involved in the activities detailed in paragraph 96 of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (see Human Rights Council resolution 53/25).

³ The role played by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories has evolved, given that independent expert mechanisms also report to the General Assembly and engage with Member States and the media.

VI. Observations

28. I welcome the ceasefire and hostage release in Gaza that commenced on 19 January. I commend the mediators, Egypt, Qatar and the United States of America, for their dedicated efforts in brokering the deal and their unwavering commitment to finding a diplomatic solution. It is a critical step towards alleviating the immense civilian suffering. It is vital that it also allows for a significant increase in the entry and delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip at the scale required to meet the overwhelming needs of the population, including the provision of urgently needed supplies that are essential to the survival of the Palestinian civilian population. I urge all parties to fully adhere to the terms of the ceasefire and to act with the utmost restraint to prevent any relapse into violence. This fragile opportunity must lead to a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and the release of all hostages. It must also lead to establishing a political framework that will facilitate a legitimate Palestinian Government that can reunify Gaza and the West Bank.

29. The level of suffering and destruction witnessed in Gaza is unbearable and unprecedented during my term of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations. The United Nations is fully engaged in scaling up the delivery of humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians in Gaza. Humanitarian and vital commercial supplies must be enabled to enter Gaza in higher volumes, without impediment, and through all available entry points so as to meet the essential needs of civilians, in accordance with international humanitarian law. The resumption of the commercial sector, including the unrestricted entry of goods through all available crossings, is essential to meet the needs of the people in Gaza. A meaningful scale-up of humanitarian response in Gaza will also require improved safety for humanitarian workers and humanitarian assets. The presence and activities of the United Nations system, including its agencies and bodies, remain fundamental for such humanitarian response, protection and development assistance. Civilians must be protected and those seeking to return to their communities must have safe passage. All parties must comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. The protection of civilians is paramount in any armed conflict.

30. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) remains the backbone of all humanitarian response in Gaza. No organization can replace or substitute the capacity of UNRWA and its mandate from the General Assembly to serve Palestine refugees and civilians in urgent need of life-saving humanitarian assistance. Despite severe displacement and hardship, UNRWA staff continue to provide life-saving assistance. The Agency plays a pivotal role in the broader United Nations humanitarian operation, including with respect to fuel distribution for hospitals, water desalination and sewage processing. The Agency facilitates inter-agency coordination and hosts humanitarian partners, thereby ensuring the continuity of essential services. UNRWA remains the only entity capable of restoring education for all school-age children post-conflict. Its approximately 13,000 personnel in Gaza constitute an indispensable resource for recovery and political transition, as outlined by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Ongoing implementation by UNRWA of the recommendations from the Independent Review of Mechanisms and Procedures to Ensure Adherence by UNRWA to the Humanitarian Principle of Neutrality will ensure that such assistance remains in strict adherence to neutrality. I reiterate that the ongoing implementation of the two laws concerning UNRWA adopted by the Knesset of Israel on 28 October 2024 could have devastating consequences for Palestine refugees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and could be detrimental to peace and security in the region. I again urge Israel to act consistently with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and its other obligations under international law, including under international humanitarian law

and under relevant agreements concerning privileges and immunities of the United Nations. National legislation cannot alter those obligations.

31. Any viable recovery and reconstruction efforts must be firmly rooted in a broader political and security framework that can address the effects of the war and the humanitarian catastrophe and lay the foundations for rebuilding Gaza as an integral part of a fully independent, democratic, contiguous, viable and sovereign Palestinian State, while addressing the legitimate security concerns of Israel. Critically, the Palestinian Authority must be at the centre of planning for and the implementation of recovery and reconstruction in Gaza. There must be a political and security framework that can address the humanitarian catastrophe, start early recovery, rebuild Gaza and lay the groundwork for a political process to end the occupation as rapidly as possible and establish a viable two-State solution. The framework must also reflect the principle that Gaza is and must remain an integral part of the Palestinian State, with no reductions in its territory, and that Gaza and the occupied West Bank must be unified politically, economically and administratively.

32. Central to achieving these objectives is the strengthening of the institutions of the Palestinian Authority, while rejecting any actions that systematically undermine its viability. International support is urgently needed to strengthen the capacities of the Palestinian Government and prepare it to reassume its full responsibilities in Gaza. Political, institutional and economic reforms will also be needed, but they must be achievable and properly financed. I urge the parties and Member States to align their efforts with these principles, and I reiterate that there can be no long-term solution in Gaza that is not fundamentally political. In this context, I again call for a reinvigorated political process to end the occupation and establish a two-State solution in line with United Nations resolutions, international law and previous agreements.

33. Recovery and reconstruction in Gaza will require a set of minimum operational conditions for the United Nations and its partners in Gaza. These conditions include: security, safety and access to the population; a minimum level of essential services; at-scale and predictable entry of humanitarian, commercial and reconstruction goods, including from the West Bank; and the ability for the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and their partners to obtain visas and permits, deploy experts and address other operational issues. The United Nations system and its partners, led by the Special Coordinator and the Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, have continued their intense advocacy efforts with relevant parties to bring about these conditions and stand ready to scale up humanitarian and recovery interventions as soon as the situation on the ground allows.

34. With regard to the need for full accountability and bearing in mind the mechanisms outlined above, the General Assembly may wish to consider the best way to ensure coordination and cohesiveness among the different mechanisms. Work will continue to identify any accountability gaps.

35. In addition, increased support for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and its mandate would also assist overall coordination and effectiveness of efforts and enhance available synergies in this area.

36. In addition to these enabling conditions on the ground, an effective and sustainable recovery in Gaza will require vast political, financial, human and technical resources, including from Member States. In order to ensure that the recovery process is coherent and aligned with the principles outlined above, it must be grounded in a robust framework for strategic engagement between the United Nations, the Palestinian Authority, the Government of Israel, humanitarian and development partners, donors, regional countries and other stakeholders. Existing mechanisms established to support the Middle East peace process, such as the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for

the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority's local aid coordination architecture, have proven effective over many years and could be further reinforced in support of recovery and reconstruction in Gaza. The United Nations system is committed to continuous dialogue with all relevant stakeholders on how these mechanisms can be further strengthened and augmented so as to improve its assistance to the Palestinian people.

37. The mechanism established according to Security Council resolution [2720 \(2023\)](#) will continue to be managed day-to-day by UNOPS, while reporting directly to the Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator and, through him, to the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The mechanism's database and pre-clearance processes will continue to operate within the existing United Nations coordination architecture in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

38. A strengthened Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process will play a critical role in resolving the conflict in line with United Nations resolutions and international law through its good offices role and by coordinating support to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority, including by ensuring that recovery and reconstruction efforts in Gaza are aligned with the above principles and priorities. The Secretariat will continue to engage closely with Member States to ensure that the Office remains adequately resourced in order to fulfil its mandate in the face of challenging and unpredictable conditions.

39. I remain steadfast in my commitment to support ending the unlawful occupation by Israel of the Palestinian territory as rapidly as possible and supporting Palestinians and Israelis in resolving the conflict in line with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and bilateral agreements in pursuit of the achievement of the two-State solution, with Israel and a fully independent, democratic, contiguous and sovereign State of Palestine, of which the Gaza Strip is an integral part, living side by side in peace and security within secure and recognized borders, on the basis of the pre-1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.
