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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Letter dated 24 March 2025 from the representatives of Bahrain, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to write to you upon instructions from our respective Governments.

In the light of the recent developments on the ground in the Gaza Strip and the repeated violations of the ceasefire agreement that was announced in Doha, State of Qatar, on 15 January 2025 and went into effect on 19 January 2025, especially the resumption of hostilities by Israel in the Gaza Strip on 18 March 2025, members of the Ministerial Committee assigned by the Joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary Summit on developments in the Gaza Strip express their deep concern over the continued deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. We emphasize the urgent need for full adherence to the agreement to protect civilian lives and prevent further violence and escalation in the region.

The Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee acknowledges the significant role played by the United States in advancing efforts to secure the ceasefire agreement, which has successfully contributed to alleviating civilian suffering and laid the foundation for achieving a final and lasting ceasefire.

The Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee underscores that the current dire situation is a direct consequence of the failure to commence negotiations for the second phase on schedule as stipulated in the agreement and in line with Security Council resolution [2735 \(2024\)](#). This delay has obstructed efforts to achieve a long-term ceasefire, hindered the further release of hostages and detainees and exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Commitment to the agreed-upon framework is fundamental to making tangible progress towards a sustainable resolution.

In this regard, the Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee calls for the immediate resumption of negotiations to finalize the understandings related to the second phase. This path remains the only viable means to safeguard Palestinian lives in Gaza, ensure



the safe release of surviving Israeli hostages and facilitate the release of hundreds of Palestinian detainees. Such efforts are also crucial for fostering stability and bringing an end to the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe. As mediators, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the State of Qatar, members of the Committee, remain committed to exerting all necessary efforts to continue to facilitate negotiations towards that end.

The Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee emphasizes that targeting civilians, obstructing the delivery of humanitarian aid and conducting military operations in densely populated areas constitute grave violations of international humanitarian law. It urges the immediate implementation of measures to protect civilian populations and ensure unrestricted access for medical teams and humanitarian relief agencies to all affected areas in the Gaza Strip.

Our countries firmly uphold the necessity of de-escalation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory as an immediate step towards preventing further suffering and creating the conditions for peace. They remain steadfast in their commitment to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, one that ensures commitment to international law, security, stability, coexistence and prosperity for all its peoples.

We would also like to bring to your attention the joint statement issued recently at the meeting of the Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee with Kaja Kallas, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, on 23 March 2025 in Cairo (see annex).

We would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 34 and item 35.

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to the United Nations

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(Signed) Ahmet **Yıldız**

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Permanent Representative of Türkiye to the United Nations

(Signed) Mohamed Issa **Abushahab**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates
to the United Nations

(Signed) Riyadh H. **Mansour**

Ambassador

Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the letter dated 24 March 2025 from the representatives of Bahrain, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint statement

The Arab - Islamic Ministerial Committee met today, 23rd of March 2025, in Cairo with H.E Kaja Kallas, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The Parties discussed recent developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and expressed their grave concern over the breakdown of the ceasefire in Gaza and the large number of civilian casualties in recent airstrikes.

They condemned the resumption of hostilities and the targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure, and called for an immediate return to the full implementation of the ceasefire-hostage and detainees release agreement, that went into effect on January 19th, and as brokered by Egypt, Qatar, and the United States, and stressed the need for progress towards its second phase with a view to its full implementation, including the release of all hostages, a permanent end to hostilities, and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2735.

The Parties further called for the complete respect of international humanitarian law and international law. They underscored that this includes ensuring swift, sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access and the provision of humanitarian assistance at scale into and throughout the entire Gaza Strip. In light of this, they demanded the lifting of all restrictions that hinder the delivery of humanitarian aid, as well as the immediate restoration of all basic services in the Strip, including the supply of electricity, including for water desalination plants.

The Parties welcomed the Arab Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, presented at the Cairo Summit on 4 March, subsequently adopted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and welcomed by the European Council.

The Parties highlighted that the aforementioned plan ensures that the Palestinian people will remain on their territory, and emphasized in this regard their categorical rejection of any displacement or expulsion of the Palestinian people out of their territory, Gaza and the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and warned against the grave repercussions that would result from such actions.

The Parties underscored in this regard the importance of supporting the Conference on the Early Recovery and Reconstruction of Gaza, which is to be held in Cairo with the participation of relevant stakeholders. They called on the international community to work to mobilize resources, to be announced during the Conference, to address the catastrophic situation in Gaza.

The Parties stressed the importance of unifying the Gaza Strip with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority (PA) and of supporting in this regard the PA in assuming all of its responsibilities in the Gaza Strip, and ensuring it can effectively uphold its role in administering both Gaza and the West Bank. They emphasized the need for respect, and the preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is key to consolidating the Palestinian state on the basis of the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regards to Jerusalem, in line with UN resolutions, and as part of the two-state solution, thus achieving long-term peace

and stability in the region. They reiterated in this regard that the Gaza Strip constitutes an integral part of the territory occupied in 1967 and reiterated the vision of the two-state solution, with the Gaza Strip as part of the Palestinian state, in line with International Law, including relevant Security Council resolutions and stressed that this should guide any discussion on the future of the Gaza Strip.

The parties expressed as well their deep concern over the Israeli military incursions in the occupied West Bank, as well as illegal practices such as settlement activities, home demolitions, and settler violence, which undermine the rights of the Palestinian people, threaten the prospects for a just and lasting peace and further entrench the conflict. They recalled that Israel as occupying power, must protect civilians and comply with international humanitarian law. They firmly rejected any attempts at annexation and unilateral measures that seek to alter the legal and historical status quo of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem.

Together, the Parties reaffirmed their full commitment to a political resolution to the conflict on the basis of the two-state solution with Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, on the basis of the relevant UN resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative, paving the way for lasting peace and coexistence between all the peoples of the region. They reaffirmed their commitment in this regard to the convening of a UN High Level International Conference in June in New York co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia to advance these goals.
