



# Security Council

Eightieth year

## 9841

st meeting

Friday, 24 January 2025, 3.10 p.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Bendjama/Mr. Gaouaoui . . . . .	(Algeria)
<i>Members:</i>	China . . . . .	Mr. Zheng Minghao
	Denmark . . . . .	Ms. Landi
	France . . . . .	Mrs. Morghad
	Greece . . . . .	Mr. Thanopoulos
	Guyana . . . . .	Mrs. Edwards
	Pakistan . . . . .	Mr. Jadoon
	Panama . . . . .	Mr. Moscoso
	Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Jaeseob Kim
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Khloponin
	Sierra Leone . . . . .	Ms. Baimarro
	Slovenia . . . . .	Ms. Kelly
	Somalia . . . . .	Mr. Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. O'Malley
	United States of America . . . . .	Ms. Postel

## Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

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*The meeting was suspended at 6.05 p.m. on Monday, 20 January and resumed on Friday, 24 January at 3.10 p.m.*

**The President:** I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after three minutes.

I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

**Mr. Muhamad** (Malaysia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. Malaysia takes this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the new non-permanent members of the Council.

We align ourselves with the statements of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

A new year has begun on a promising note, praise be to God. We welcome the deal on a ceasefire in Gaza. We hope that it will end the catastrophic suffering endured by the Palestinian people for over 15 months. During that period, the world witnessed sheer barbarity and utter contempt for international law. It saw the wanton killing of civilians, mostly women and children, and widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure. It witnessed the Council's ineptitude in upholding international peace and security.

It is, however, concerning that just as the world sees a glimmer of hope in Gaza, Israel's occupation forces are escalating their violent operations in the West Bank and illegal settlers intensify their expansion of the illegal settlements, destroying Palestinian homes and properties. Those provocative acts have the potential to undermine the fragile ceasefire in Gaza.

The Council has a responsibility to ensure that the ceasefire in Gaza holds. It must ensure that those who either renege on it or actively seek to unravel it are held to account.

The laws adopted by the Israeli Knesset against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which will enter into force in the coming days, will impede multilateral efforts to protect Palestinians and also jeopardize the ceasefire in Gaza. Malaysia condemns those laws, which seek to dismantle UNRWA. We are also appalled by Israel's continued refusal to cooperate with the Agency and the United Nations. It is abundantly clear that Israel wants to unravel UNRWA and expel it from Palestinian territory so that it can complete its insidious plan of ethnic cleansing and full annexation. The indispensable and irreplaceable role of UNRWA has been reaffirmed countless times by various parties. Israel must rescind these laws and cease its attacks against the Agency and the United Nations.

Seventy-eight years since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II), the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian State remains unfulfilled. The Council must compel Israel to reverse all actions that undermine the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the creation of a sovereign Palestinian State. The occupation has lasted for far too long. The International Court of Justice has made clear Israel's obligation to end its occupation of the Palestinian territory as rapidly as possible. We hope that the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, scheduled for June, will chart a clear and irreversible path towards the long-overdue establishment of a sovereign Palestinian State.

As the United Nations commemorates its eightieth anniversary this year, this is the most opportune moment to resolve the Palestinian question. We call on all parties

to muster the political will to ensure that international law is upheld and support the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people in order for peace to prevail for Palestine, for Israel and for the region.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of India.

**Mr. Parvathaneni** (India): This is the first quarterly open debate on this subject in 2025. We are happy that this new year has ushered in hope and a potential pathway to peace and stability as we witness some green shoots in the region. We welcome the announcement of the agreement for the release of hostages and a ceasefire in Gaza, and it is our hope that this will lead to the safe and sustained supply of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. We take positive note of the initial measures taken by the concerned parties towards the implementation of these understandings.

The Council is aware of our position. We have consistently called for a ceasefire, the accelerated and unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance, the release of all hostages and a return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy. Unfortunately, during the 16 months of conflict, we witnessed devastation, the loss of civilian lives and infrastructure. It is our hope that the implementation of the current agreement will alleviate the suffering of the hostages, their families and the people of Gaza.

India has been categorical and consistent in its position. Conflict does not offer any solutions. The need for the release of hostages, the continued flow of humanitarian assistance and a ceasefire is more dire than ever. It is our hope that the parties concerned will seize the opportunity afforded by the ceasefire and resort to dialogue and diplomacy for a sustainable and durable solution to the current conflict. There should be an end to the human suffering of our fellow brothers and sisters. Humanitarian assistance should flow without any hindrances. India has also unequivocally condemned the terror attacks of 7 October 2023. We believe that terrorism and hostage-taking have no justification, even as we have called for respect for international humanitarian law.

India has demonstrated its unwavering support to the friendly Palestinian people over decades. Such support has taken several forms. India's endeavour to make a tangible and lasting impact on their daily lives has been at its very core. Our continued support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) bears testimony to our commitment. In that context, we underline that UNRWA has an important role in providing much-required relief to the people of Gaza. We also reiterate our concerns about the recent restrictions that have been imposed on its operations.

At this juncture, I would like to emphasize that India was among the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine, in 1988. We remain committed to a two-State solution, which entails the establishment of a sovereign, viable and independent State of Palestine within recognized and mutually agreed borders, living side by side with Israel in peace. India remains hopeful that peace and calm will be restored in the Middle East at the earliest. India will remain engaged with all parties concerned in a proactive manner in order to achieve the vision of a peaceful and stable Middle East.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Cameroon.

**Mr. Tommo Monthe** (Cameroon): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in my capacity as a Chair of the OIC Group.

The OIC Group welcomes the announcement in Doha on 15 January that the parties to the conflict in the Gaza Strip have reached a ceasefire agreement. We express our deep appreciation of the efforts by the State of Qatar, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the United States that led to the agreement. Alongside the overwhelming majority of the international community, the OIC Group has long

called for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the Israeli military onslaught against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, which has caused a horrifying casualty toll, massive destruction and unbearable human suffering. That call for an immediate, permanent and unconditional ceasefire was demanded most recently, inter alia, in General Assembly resolution ES-10/26, following the regrettable use of the veto in the Security Council once again.

While we welcome that important progress, which led to the agreement announced by the Prime Minister of Qatar on 15 January, it is imperative to ensure a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire, the complete withdrawal of the Israeli occupying forces from the Gaza Strip and the immediate provision of adequate, sustained and safe humanitarian aid at large scale throughout the Gaza Strip for all Palestinians in need, in order to address the catastrophic humanitarian situation, including conditions of famine, dehydration and spread of disease; the mass devastation of the healthcare system; and the mass displacement inflicted by Israel, the occupying Power, on the population.

In that context, we commend the outcome of the Cairo Ministerial Conference to Enhance the Humanitarian Response in Gaza, which was convened on 2 December 2024. We call for full respect of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and in that regard, we recall also the urgent need for the respect of the orders indicating provisional measures of the International Court of Justice. We also appreciate the efforts of the international community, led by Saudi Arabia and including Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Türkiye, Indonesia, Nigeria, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, to discuss the situation in Gaza and to move immediately and urgently to stop the ongoing violation by the Israeli occupation of international humanitarian law in a manner that ensures full protection for civilians in the Gaza Strip. Similarly, the OIC Group welcomes the launch of the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on behalf of Arab and Islamic countries and European partners to revitalize the peace process, and we call on those countries that have not yet joined the Alliance to do so.

In that context, the OIC Group calls on the Security Council to form an independent and credible international investigation committee to investigate crimes committed by the Israeli occupying army in the Gaza Strip in the context of the crime of genocide, including mass graves, the crime of torture, field executions, enforced disappearance, looting and ethnic cleansing; to take serious steps to prevent the obliteration of evidence and proof; and to hold the perpetrators accountable and ensure that they do not escape punishment. In that regard, the OIC Group also affirms its full support for the Palestinian Government in implementing its relief, economic recovery, reform and reconstruction programmes. The principle of territorial integrity in one State, one Government, one law and one system in the Palestinian territory is of the utmost importance in ensuring a unified and effective approach to the post-war reconstruction and recovery of the Gaza Strip, which will require years of concerted national and international action.

We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements and the escalation of violence and terrorism perpetrated by settlers against the Palestinian civilian population in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Those actions, coupled with attempts to alter the historical and legal status quo of the holy sites, particularly the Al-Aqsa Mosque, pose a direct threat to peace and stability in the region. We urge the Security Council to take decisive measures to halt those violations and hold Israel accountable for its actions, which are in blatant contravention of international law, the relevant United Nations resolutions and the 19 July 2024 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied*

*Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem* (see A/78/968). We further call on the Security Council to ensure the full implementation of all its resolutions, including resolutions 2720 (2023), 2735 (2024) and 2334 (2016), which unequivocally condemn Israeli settlement activities, demands that they be halted and reaffirms the two-State solution, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. We also urge the Council to uphold its responsibilities under General Assembly resolution ES-10/24, on the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which deems the Israeli occupation illegal and demands that it be brought to an end.

The international community should not remain silent in the face of Israel's illegal acts violating the rights of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination and return, and undermining the two-State solution. The illegal legislation adopted recently by Israel, the occupying Power, against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a matter of grave concern. That law threatens to obstruct the Agency's operations in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to prevent it from providing essential humanitarian services to Palestine refugees, particularly in the Gaza Strip. We call on the Security Council to ensure Israel's compliance with its obligations under international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant United Nations resolutions. The international community must protect the mandate of UNRWA pending the achievement of a just solution for the plight of the refugees and must ensure that the necessary and predictable financial resources to its budget and enable the Agency to provide the basic services to Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in all its areas of operation without impediment or restriction. The OIC underscores that UNRWA remains an indispensable lifeline for Palestinian refugees and that it remains the backbone of United Nations humanitarian operations in the occupied Palestinian territory and is vital for the effective implementation of the ceasefire agreement and for the immense recovery efforts.

The Group condemns Israel's repeated attacks and intrusion into Syrian territory, which constitute a grave violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. We affirm the need to support stability, security, territorial integrity, accountability, humanitarian aid and dialogue among political Syrian actors and the peaceful transition of power in Syria. Such action by Israel only exacerbates regional tension and undermines efforts to achieve security and stability in Syria.

The OIC Group welcomes the election of General Joseph Aoun as President of the Lebanese Republic and the nomination of Judge Nawaf Salam in order to form a new Government in Lebanon and calls on the international community to extend every support to Lebanon to help in the reconstruction efforts needed because of the year-long Israeli aggression, which left widespread destruction. The OIC Group also welcomes the cessation of hostilities arrangement, which came into effect on 27 November 2024, bringing an end to Israel's aggression against Lebanon, and calls for its implementation within the 60-day time frame. In that regard, the Group calls on Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese occupied territories and for the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) in a manner that ensures sustainable stability along the border. It also calls for respect for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The Palestinian people have waited far too long for their inalienable rights to freedom, dignity and self-determination and the realization of an independent the State of Palestine on the basis of 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital. At this time, decisive action is now more urgent than ever.

The international community, in particular the Security Council, must rise to its responsibility and take concrete steps to end the illegal Israeli occupation, uphold international law without exception and grant the State of Palestine full membership

of the United Nations, which is considered a prerequisite to a just and lasting solution and a test of the credibility of the international system and the international legal order.

In conclusion, the OIC Group calls on the Security Council to act with urgency and determination to address the ongoing injustice faced by the Palestinian people. This organ must discharge its responsibility to maintain international peace and security by ensuring the implementation of its resolutions and holding Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for the violations, thereby upholding the Charter of the United Nations, discharging its duties and restoring credibility and trust in the institution.

I personally thank you, Mr. President, and congratulate you on the month — well done; it was filled with success.

**The President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Muhamad.

**Mr. Muhamad:** I extend congratulations to Algeria on its presidency of the Security Council and thank His Excellency Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf for presiding over this meeting.

I also welcome Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama and Somalia to the Council and express appreciation to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts for peace, justice and a just resolution of the question of Palestine.

The Committee welcomes the hope that 2025 has brought with it, including the ceasefire arrangement in Gaza between Israel and Hamas on 15 January. We commend Egypt, Qatar and the United States for their critical role in achieving the agreement, which outlines a phased implementation. It includes what we have all been demanding: the release of hostages, the planned release of Palestinian prisoners and the entry of much-needed humanitarian aid into Gaza.

While we applaud the ceasefire, it is disheartening that Israeli air strikes have continued even after its announcement, causing additional casualties and undermining the agreement. In just 24 hours after the ceasefire deal was reached, 80 Palestinians, including women and children, were killed. Gaza's death toll now exceeds 47,000, with more than 110,000 injured, many permanently, and more than 2.1 million people displaced, often repeatedly. Humanitarian aid remains blocked, worsening starvation, disease and suffering. We call on Israel to end its attacks, displacement and violations of international law.

The Security Council's division and failure to implement resolution 2735 (2024) are costly and must end. Our inaction undermines our credibility and moral standing. The world and the Council have grown desensitized to the horrors in Gaza. In the absence of action from the Council, we commend the General Assembly and Member States for stepping up, demanding a ceasefire, protecting civilians and pursuing justice. The Committee has amplified those efforts by featuring testimonies from Palestinians, civil society and experts on the dire realities in Gaza. Committee events such as the 2024 International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People the exhibits such as "Gaza, Palestine: A crisis of Humanity, A Cry for Justice" at Headquarters, remind us of the human cost of the conflict.

The ceasefire must be a stepping stone to lasting peace. Israel's actions in Gaza pose a threat to international peace and security and are persistent violations of humanitarian and human rights law. We urge the Security Council to ensure that the ceasefire holds, prevent further atrocities and set a path towards recovery and peace. We call on the Council to play its part in advancing a political horizon for the question of Palestine on basis of the two-State solution and United Nations resolutions. We commend the General Assembly's adoption of resolution ES-10/24, which demands Israel's withdrawal from occupied Palestinian territory within a

year and urges Member States to cease importing products from the settlements and supplying arms that may be used in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity is critical, and we stress the need for enforcement at national and international levels. Following resolution ES-10/25, which reaffirms support for the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the General Assembly requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on Israel's obligations regarding the presence of United Nations entities in the occupied Palestinian territory. We are confident that the International Court of Justice will reaffirm the vital role of UNRWA and other United Nations bodies. The Security Council must also support those mandates and reject efforts to undermine UNRWA's critical work. Denying Palestinian rights is a death sentence for the people of Gaza.

Immediate and unhindered humanitarian access is essential. UNRWA's role is indispensable in delivering aid and crucial life-saving services at the scale required. The ceasefire offers an opportunity to rebuild and heal, but only if the international community provides unwavering support. The Committee will continue to engage Member States, regional organizations, parliamentarians, civil society and United Nations bodies to advocate for Palestinian rights and ensure adherence to the ceasefire agreement and the achievement of a just and lasting peace. We urge all Member States to support the Palestinian Government in leading the recovery process in Gaza. The people urgently need food, shelter, water, healthcare and a pathway to healing and hope. That is a collective responsibility. Our efforts continue to be driven by the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and freedom in an independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living in peace with its neighbours. A just resolution for Palestinians remains vital, in line with international law and long-standing United Nations resolutions that demand implementation. Let us unite in this noble cause for justice, peace and human dignity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Iceland.

**Mr. Hannigan** (Iceland): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. We wholeheartedly welcome the long-awaited ceasefire in Gaza and are grateful to Egypt, Qatar and the United States for their painstaking efforts. Now another difficult chapter begins — the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Iceland calls on all parties to uphold their commitments and on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility in that regard. Respect for international law, including international humanitarian law, must be maintained — and when it is not, there must be accountability.

Iceland has repeatedly called for the freedom of all the hostages and welcomes the releases over the weekend. We urge the release of all the remaining hostages rapidly, in compliance with phase two of the ceasefire agreement. Their appalling ordeal must be brought to an end.

Iceland has also repeatedly called for immediate and unhindered humanitarian access, in line with international humanitarian law. Reports of a rapid roll-out of aid to Gaza are very welcome. Gaza has been left in ruins. Most homes and businesses have been destroyed and livelihoods lost. Schools have been turned into emergency shelters and hospitals flattened. Reconstruction will be a mammoth task. We, the international community, have failed the people of Gaza, especially its children, for over a year. Those who have survived are losing their second school year in a row. We must not fail them again.

Under these circumstances, a total halt to the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the most centrally placed humanitarian organization responding to the needs of Palestinian

refugees in the Middle East, would have devastating consequences. Israel must allow UNRWA to operate in the humanitarian phase and secure its involvement in the transitional process. Israel's new law against UNRWA could further destabilize the situation in these areas, in Israel and in the region as a whole and fundamentally jeopardize the prospects for a two-State solution.

A ceasefire, by definition, is a temporary situation, not a solution. The people of Palestine and Israel deserve to live in peace and security in prosperous and democratic societies. They deserve to live without fear of aggression or terrorist attacks. We call on all parties to break out of the ongoing cycle of violence and work towards the only internationally recognized long-term sustainable solution available — a two-State solution based on international law, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

**Mr. Moncada** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

The lack of resolution to the question of Palestine is at the core of the situation in the Middle East, coupled with a prevailing cycle of impunity that has only emboldened the occupying Power to continue defying this organ and showing contempt for international law. Regrettably, the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip, which has claimed the lives of more than 46,600 innocent civilians, including women and children — a figure that may likely be 40 per cent higher than reported, according to a recently published study— and more than 110,000 wounded, the overwhelming majority also civilians, has not been enough to persuade those who today still continue to provide Israel with the means to continue its criminal policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem.

We demand that the Government of the United States of America, permanent member of the Security Council, to put aside its political calculations, which are responsible for holding this organ hostage to a paralysis that, among other things, has emboldened Israel to continue with its policies of apartheid and extermination against the Palestinian people.

We are mindful of the recent ceasefire agreement and hope that its full implementation by both parties will be an important practical step towards the long-term stabilization of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip and that it will help create the necessary conditions for allowing unimpeded humanitarian access — consistently, safely and to scale — to those in desperate need, as well as for improving the situation in the Middle East region as a whole and justly resolving once and for all the question of Palestine.

However, that does not absolve this organ of its responsibilities. We therefore reiterate that the Security Council must shoulder its responsibilities, including on the basis of the relevant provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and must also ensure that its resolutions on the question of Palestine are fully respected and implemented.

We seize this opportunity to emphasize the indispensable role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for ensuring basic services to the Palestinian refugees, given the catastrophic situation in Gaza, and we reaffirm the need to ensure the necessary political and financial support to enable it to carry out its vital operations as the backbone of the international humanitarian effort in Gaza and in accordance with its mandate in the

rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the other fields of operation in the region. We underscore that serious efforts are urgently needed to bring a halt to Israel's measures aimed at banning UNRWA and preventing its life-saving assistance.

Similarly, we also emphasize the urgent need of redoubling international efforts to effectively and immediately advance a much-needed process of accountability for all war crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the peoples of Palestine, Lebanon and other nationalities, in which all relevant mechanisms of international justice are expected to play a responsible role, in order to put an end to the prevailing cycle of impunity, which has only emboldened Israel to perpetuate its criminal policies and practices over time against the peoples of the region, most gravely against the Palestinian people for over 76 years, since the onset of the Nakba.

In that regard, we reiterate our call on the international community to take effective and concrete actions to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to adhere to international law, including through the continued denunciation of the prevailing double standards and selectivity in the application of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law, and through warning that such double standards seriously undermine the credibility of States that insist on protecting the illegal and criminal actions of Israel and the legitimacy of multilateral institutions.

In that context, we also take this opportunity to call on the responsible members of the international community to take urgent actions and decisively adopt all measures necessary to thwart the systematic attempts to undermine, including by force and through illegal settlers, the viability of the Palestinian State, particularly in the light of Israel's growing threats of annexing the West Bank. We recall the conclusion of the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion of 19 July 2024 — which we welcomed — that:

“The sustained abuse by Israel of its position as an occupying Power, through annexation and an assertion of permanent control over the occupied Palestinian territory and continued frustration of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, violates fundamental principles of international law and renders Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territory unlawful” (*A/78/968, para. 261*).

We reiterate that the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East as a whole requires the withdrawal by Israel from all occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and Lebanon, as well as the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981), which reaffirmed that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, and that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and has no international legal effect.

Furthermore, we take this opportunity to reiterate our grave concern at the continuing attempts by Israel, the occupying Power, to inflame and blow up the entire Middle East, as demonstrated, inter alia, by its repeated and grave violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, along with its deliberate escalation of violence and its continued provocations and violations against the sovereignty, territorial integrity, stability and security of the countries in the region.

We call once again on those who may have some influence to demand that Israel, the occupying Power, exercise restraint and desist from its aggressive policies and plans to widen the conflict and generate a spillover effect, mindful of the potentially

devastating consequences for the well-being of entire peoples and for the peace, stability and security of the Middle East region and even beyond.

Nevertheless, we welcome the agreement on the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Lebanon of 26 November 2024 and call for its full implementation by both parties, with the support of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, in line with their respective mandates, as well as resolution 1701 (2006).

However, we must express our serious concern at the numerous Israeli violations of the ceasefire and call for a halt to all violations of the agreement, while recalling that peacekeepers must never be the target of attacks. We also recall that, according to the agreement reached, Israel must gradually withdraw its forces south of the Blue Line before 26 January, in parallel with the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces. We reaffirm, in that regard, our strong support for the territorial integrity, political sovereignty and independence of Lebanon and urge Israel to respect the agreed timetable and to cease its occupation of Lebanese territories without delay.

In conclusion, we stress the need to work together, decisively, to ensure that once and for all we can end the illegal Israeli occupation; that once and for all we can admit the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations; that once and for all we can achieve the independence of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital; that once and for all we can realize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and freedom; and that we can achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects, including the plight of the Palestinian refugees and the realization of their right of return, in accordance with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations, and on the basis of the two-State solution.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

**Mr. Chaivaivid** (Thailand): First of all, I would like to congratulate Algeria for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and for convening this very important debate. Allow me to congratulate also Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland for their contributions to the Council this past two years, and to Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama and Somalia for their successful election to the Council.

For more than 15 months, civilians in Gaza have suffered violence and hostilities, hunger and famine, and the collapse of all support systems. More than 46,000 lives have been lost — most were women and children. More than 110,000 people have been injured, and more than 1.9 million people have been displaced.

Therefore, Thailand welcomes the ceasefire agreement in Gaza, which took effect on 19 January. We are grateful for the tireless efforts made under the mediation of Egypt, Qatar and the United States. Thailand sincerely hopes that all parties concerned will adhere to the implementation of that agreement. We also hope that this will pave the way for a permanent ceasefire and sustainable peace and stability in the region.

Under that ceasefire agreement, we urge all parties to urgently facilitate the swift delivery of critical humanitarian assistance to the people in Gaza, without any impediments. Humanitarian assistance and the protection of civilians must be prioritized at all times. We hope that all remaining hostages and captives will be immediately released, including Thai nationals, who are not involved whatsoever in the conflict and who regrettably are still unaccounted for.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) remains the backbone of all humanitarian assistance in Gaza.

Thailand reiterates, as in resolution General Assembly resolution ES-10/25 of 11 December 2024, that “no organization can replace or substitute the Agency’s capacity and mandate to serve Palestine refugees and civilians in urgent need of life-saving humanitarian assistance” (*General Assembly resolution ES-10/25, para. 7*). Any interruption or suspension of UNRWA’s work will pose serious humanitarian and security risks for the lives of Palestinians in the region.

Thailand wishes to reaffirm our support for genuine and constructive dialogue between Israel and Palestine, with a view to finding a mutually agreed peaceful solution, in line with the two-State solution, whereby the States of Israel and Palestine live side-by-side in peace and security, in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

**Mrs. Narváez Ojeda** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the convening of the first quarterly Security Council debate on the Middle East for the year, including the question of Palestine.

Chile welcomes the agreement reached on Wednesday between Israel and Hamas, which provides for a ceasefire in Gaza after 15 months of a devastating war.

Since the reprehensible attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023, which was followed by an indiscriminate Israeli response against the civilian population of the Gaza Strip, our country has insisted on the need to end the conflict and demanded the release of all hostages. This war presents us with a bleak scenario.

We ended the year 2024 mourning the deaths of thousands of civilians and hundreds of United Nations staff and more than 100,000 wounded, most of them women and children. More than 70 per cent of critical infrastructure was destroyed. Thousands of Palestinians lost their homes and were displaced. We would like to express our solidarity with all the families who lost loved ones in the conflict.

With regard to health infrastructure, as stated in the most recent report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Israel’s attacks in Gaza caused the collapse of the health system, preventing the Palestinian population from gaining access to medical care and resulting in the deaths of doctors, nurses, health personnel and patients. This war will leave indelible traces for future generations. As the representative of the World Health Organization pointed out to the Council, thousands of people will require rehabilitation and medical support for the rest of their lives.

We would like to reiterate our unstinting support for the invaluable work carried out on the ground by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), an agency that is mandated to carry out a vital mission. We share the concern of the Secretary-General and Member States about the laws passed in the Israeli Parliament that undermine UNRWA’s coordination activities and constitute a violation of international humanitarian law and the legally binding provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice.

For Chile, it is essential that there be accountability for the actions that wiped out the lives of thousands of civilians during the war. There can be no impunity. In January 2024, Chile, together with Mexico, addressed to the International Criminal Court a letter of referral on the situation in Palestine, in support of the investigation of alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Israel. We consider the clarification of the facts to be a priority. That is the only way that we can prevent crimes of that nature in future. We urge all States to cooperate fully with the Court and to take the necessary measures to implement its decisions, which constitute a legal imperative for all States parties to the Rome Statute.

In the same vein, we reiterate what is specified in the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 19 July 2024, on the *Legal consequences arising from Israel's policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem* (see A/78/968), which should be applied in accordance with General Assembly resolution ES-10/24, of 18 September 2024. Chile, following up on that resolution, hopes that all States and international organizations will accept and implement the Court's conclusions.

All of us present here are aware that the Palestinian issue points back to a decades-old conflict, which, as we all know, cannot be reduced to the events triggered by the attacks of 7 October 2023. Certainly, the agreement reached lays the foundations for casting a vision towards a more auspicious future. However, in order to move in that direction, we as States have the duty to promote a stable and lasting solution, based on the principles of international law. Chile will continue to advocate for a two-State solution and to promote the right of Palestine and Israel to coexist in harmony, within recognized and secure international borders, while safeguarding the human rights of all their inhabitants.

We reiterate our call for compliance with the resolutions that support the right of the Palestinian people to establish a sovereign State. I refer to General Assembly resolution 181 (II), of 1947, and resolution 242 (1967), of 1967, and related resolutions, such as resolution 2334 (2016), which confirms that Israel's settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, have no legal validity and constitute a violation of international law.

Undoubtedly, the ceasefire agreement reached in recent days is great news for the hundreds of thousands of people affected by the conflict. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that that agreement is the bare minimum that civilization demands — a minimum with which we cannot be satisfied. We view with concern the events and attacks that have been carried out by Israel in recent days in the West Bank.

Pressure from the international community must not waver in order to achieve progress towards a lasting peace. That peace will be possible only when the right of Palestine and Israel to coexist in harmony is guaranteed, in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda.

**Ms. Nabeta** (Uganda): I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the 121 member States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

I congratulate the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria upon its accession to the presidency of the Security Council this month and express appreciation for granting NAM the opportunity to present its position on the question of Palestine.

NAM reaffirms its long-standing, common and principled position on the question of Palestine and is deeply concerned about the implications of the conflict and the unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza for the Palestinian people, for the prospects for a just solution to this historic injustice and for peace and security in the region.

The intense conflict has worsened the humanitarian situation, not only in Gaza but also throughout the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Members of the United Nations conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with Articles 12 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council must uphold its mandate of maintaining international peace and security and must act to implement its own resolutions. The question of Palestine cannot be the exception to the rule of international law and to the authority of the Council. Therefore, NAM calls on the Security Council to overcome its paralysis on

the Palestinian question in order to justly resolve this protracted conflict and tragic injustice, in accordance with international law and the many relevant resolutions that continue to be systematically violated by Israel, the occupying Power, and that await implementation. A peaceful solution to the question of Palestine is central to establishing durable peace and stability in the Middle East, a matter of grave concern for the maintenance of international peace and security and must be a priority for the Council.

NAM condemns in the strongest terms all forms of violence, particularly Israeli military attacks and Israel's collective punishment against the Palestinian people, as grave breaches of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. The killing and injuring of tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians in Gaza — the majority of whom are children and women, and which include humanitarian workers and journalists — is testament to the Security Council's failure to carry out its mandate. NAM welcomes the ceasefire agreement that was reached and the Palestinian side's publicly stated commitment to that deal. NAM urges the Israeli side to follow suit and hopes that the agreement will be implemented fully, so that it can bring immediate relief to the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza and ease their suffering after enduring more than 15 months of unbearable trauma, loss and devastation.

NAM demands an immediate and complete cessation of all forms of armed hostilities, violent repression and illegal Israeli policies and practices against the Palestinian people and other nations in the region. NAM reiterates its abiding calls for an end to the Israeli siege and blockade on Gaza; for the implementation of the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice; and for an end to the illegal Israeli occupation in its entirety, in accordance with international law, the relevant resolutions, including General Assembly resolution ES-10/24 and the 19 July 2024 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legal consequences arising from Israel's policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem* (see A/78/968).

The Non-Aligned Movement welcomes the ceasefire agreement reached in Doha on 15 January 2025. Accordingly, NAM supports the diplomatic efforts aimed at ensuring a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces, the exchange of hostages and Palestinian prisoners, the return of Palestinian civilians to their homes and neighbourhoods in all areas of Gaza and the safe and effective distribution of sufficient humanitarian assistance, including medical assistance, throughout the Gaza Strip to all Palestinian civilians who need it.

NAM expresses concern about reports of forced starvation and forced displacement being suffered by the civilian population throughout Gaza, which need to be addressed immediately. NAM urges all Member States and international organizations to support and undertake urgent efforts to ensure immediate humanitarian assistance at scale so as to meet the colossal needs in Gaza and to support the healing of the Palestinian civilian population and recovery and reconstruction. In that context, we commend the outcome of the Cairo Ministerial Conference to Enhance the Humanitarian Response in Gaza, which was convened on 2 December 2024 under the auspices of His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

NAM expresses appreciation for the diplomatic efforts of all those who facilitated the recently concluded deal to secure a ceasefire and the release of hostages in Gaza. In that context, we pay special tribute to the role played by the State of Qatar and the Arab Republic of Egypt, which are both members of our movement. NAM also calls for the full and faithful implementation of the agreement and, in that context, we are confident that the members of the NAM caucus in the Security Council will

continue their active efforts to ensure that the Council upholds its duties vis-à-vis the crisis, the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the historic responsibility to justly resolve the question of Palestine.

NAM expresses grave concern about the continued expansion of Israeli settlements and increasing acts of violence and provocation by settlers in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The illegal actions, coupled with attempts to alter the legal status of the historic status quo of the holy sites, in particular that of Al-Haram Al-Sharif, pose a serious threat to peace and security in the region. We reiterate our call for the Council to take urgent and concrete measures to halt those violations, ensure accountability and compel Israel, the occupying Power, to fully adhere to its obligations under international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

The Non-Aligned Movement welcomes the election of General Joseph Aoun as President of the Lebanese Republic and the nomination of Judge Nawaf Salam to form a new Government in Lebanon and calls on the international community to extend every support to Lebanon to help in the reconstruction efforts needed because of the year-long Israeli aggression, which left widespread destruction. NAM also welcomes the cessation of hostilities arrangement, which came into effect on 27 November 2024 and brings an end to the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. NAM calls on all parties to implement it within the 60-day time frame. In that regard, NAM calls on Israel to withdraw from all occupied Lebanese territories and calls for the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) in a manner that ensures sustainable stability along the border. It also calls for respect for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

NAM recalls resolution 2334 (2016), which provides for a viable path to peace, setting forth the essential requirements and parameters for the realization of a just outcome on the basis of a two-State solution that is based on 4 June 1967 borders and ensures the fulfilment of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, including their right to self-determination, to an independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a just solution to the plight of the Palestinian refugees in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III). NAM calls on the Council to recommend, as a matter of urgency, the admission of Palestine as a full Member of the United Nations as a commitment to lasting peace in the Middle East and in recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

NAM Member States once again reiterate their call for the continued provision of needed humanitarian and socioeconomic assistance to the Palestinian people, including to Palestinian refugees. The Movement reaffirms the continued indispensability of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and that of other United Nations agencies and international organizations in providing urgently needed humanitarian assistance in line with international standards and urges the international community to support the Agency in every way, including with sufficient and predictable funding. NAM is concerned about Israel's attempts to legislate against the continuity of UNRWA, which are a threat to its General Assembly mandate to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees pending the achievement of a just solution.

To conclude, the Movement seizes this opportunity to reiterate its call for collective international efforts to uphold international law in order to bring an end to this historic and grave injustice. NAM members reaffirm their commitment to promoting a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects, including as regards the plight of Palestinian refugees, and reaffirm their support for the Palestinian people in their struggle to achieve justice and fulfil their inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations, including self-

determination, freedom and independence in their sovereign and independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia.

**Mr. Alwasil** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Algeria's presidency of the Security Council this month. I wish you every success in your stewardship of the Council's proceedings and pay tribute to your skilful leadership. We also thank His Excellency the Secretary-General for his valuable briefing.

We meet today in this second year since the outbreak of the Israeli war against the Gaza Strip, while we continue to witness its catastrophic effects on the brotherly Palestinian people and even its expansion to the sisterly Lebanese Republic and Syria. The Israeli occupying forces would not have persisted in committing those crimes had it not been for the absence of accountability and the inability of the Council to assume its responsibilities.

My country has warned against the continuation of Israeli aggression, which has consequences for regional and international security, and that an end must be put to the Israeli aggression that stands as an obstacle to achieving peace.

In that regard, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reiterates its condemnation and categorical rejection of the genocide perpetrated by Israel against the fraternal Palestinian people, and we condemn the fact that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East has been prevented from carrying out its life-saving operations in Palestinian territory and obstructing the work of humanitarian organizations from providing relief aid to the brotherly Palestinian people.

In that connection, we affirm that Israel's ongoing crimes against innocent people, its persistent violations of the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and its undermining of the central role of the Palestinian National Authority in all Palestinian territories are impeding efforts to bring peace to the region.

My country also expresses its condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli occupying Government's attacks seeking to gain control of the buffer zone in the Golan Heights and its targeting of Syrian territory. That confirms Israel's continued violation of the rules of law and its deliberate scuttling of Syria's opportunities to restore its security, stability and territorial integrity. In that connection, my country urges the international community to condemn Israel's violations and to reaffirm the requirement to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria and the fact that Golan is occupied Syrian territory.

In the light of the ongoing gravity of the situation since the crisis erupted, my country has taken significant steps through joint action at the international level to condemn the vicious Israeli aggression, affirm the centrality of the Palestinian cause and demand an end to the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. My country chaired the ministerial committee tasked by the Joint Arab-Islamic Summit, held in Riyadh in November 2023, to conduct visits to a number of countries, with the aim of calling upon the international community to assume its responsibilities, stop Israeli aggression and protect civilians. Our joint efforts succeeded in urging more peace-loving nations to recognize the State of Palestine and to adopt General Assembly resolutions, including on Palestine's eligibility for full membership in the United Nations. We also launched an international coalition to implement the two-State solution, in partnership with the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway. We look forward to the convening of the High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, to be held in the United Nations General Assembly in June,

co-chaired by France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and we call on all Member States to participate actively at the highest level in this very important conference.

We applaud the ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip and appreciate the efforts made by the State of Qatar, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the United States of America in that regard. My country stresses the need to comply with the agreement, end the Israeli aggression against Gaza, secure the total withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the Gaza Strip and all the occupied Palestinian territories, and ensure the return of the displaced to their areas. My country also stresses the importance of building on this agreement to address the basis of the conflict, through ensuring that the brotherly Palestinian people can enjoy their rights, first and foremost, the establishment of a Palestinian State along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. We call for the immediate delivery of assistance and the implementation of early-recovery projects, in the light of the catastrophic humanitarian situation. This is an obligation for Israel under the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the customary provisions of international law contained in its 1977 Protocol Additional I.

We stress the pivotal and irreplaceable role of UNRWA in the lives of the Palestinian people and its central role in providing humanitarian and life-saving support to the population of the Gaza Strip during the war. We convey our appreciation for the sacrifices the Agency has made in fulfilling that central role in stabilizing and providing services until the establishment of a Palestinian State. We also condemn, in the strongest terms, the attack by the Israeli occupying forces on the city of Jenin in the occupied West Bank. The Kingdom reiterates its call on the international community to shoulder its responsibility to stop Israeli violations of the relevant international laws and treaties, warning that the continuation of violations may lead to renewed fighting and chaos in the occupied Palestinian territories, threaten the security and safety of innocent civilians and undermine the chances for peace in the region.

In conclusion, the Kingdom hopes that this agreement will definitively end Israel's brutal war, which has killed approximately 47,000 martyrs and wounded more than 110,000.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Bahrain.

**Ms. Alalawat** (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Attaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs, National Community Abroad and African Affairs of the sisterly People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to preside over this important meeting. I congratulate Algeria on its presidency of the Council and wish it every success. I also thank His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres for his valuable briefing.

The developments taking place in the Middle East call for concerted efforts by the international community to support a just and comprehensive peace in the region and to give priority to the language of dialogue, understanding and peaceful solutions to conflicts, in addition to providing humanitarian and relief assistance to those affected. The Kingdom of Bahrain stresses the importance of the ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip; the exchange of prisoners, hostages and detainees; the entry of humanitarian aid and the return of displaced persons to their home in the northern Gaza Strip, as this agreement is an important step forward to alleviate the catastrophic humanitarian situation and end the devastating war that has lasted for more than 15 months.

The Kingdom of Bahrain also reaffirms the importance for all parties to honour their commitment to implement the terms of the agreement through an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip, the protection of civilians, and the urgent provision of relief, food, medical and fuel assistance, without

restrictions, in accordance with international humanitarian law. In that regard, we applaud the tireless diplomatic mediation efforts made by the Arab Republic of Egypt, the State of Qatar and the United States of America, which contributed to the conclusion of this agreement.

The thirty-third Arab summit, hosted last year by the Kingdom of Bahrain, reflected a collective determination to make a real and positive impact on the lives of the peoples of the region, as the Kingdom launched initiatives to address the essential issues of stability and development in the region, especially the call to hold an international peace conference in the Middle East, as well as full recognition of the State of Palestine and acceptance of its membership in the United Nations.

The Kingdom stresses the importance of the stability, sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and prosperity of Syria and its people. Regarding Lebanon, we continue to urge all parties to commit to the ceasefire and to comply with their obligations under resolution 1701 (2006) and international law.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain reiterates our commitment to the principles of dialogue, coexistence, mutual respect and cooperation in order to achieve sustainable and mutually beneficial outcomes on issues affecting the Middle East, with the aim of bringing peace to the region, restoring hope to millions of affected people and meeting the legitimate aspirations of its people for peace, development and prosperity.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

**Mr. Babo Soares** (Timor-Leste): I congratulate Algeria on its presidency of the Security Council for the month of January.

The recent ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, which includes the release of hostages and the commitment to various terms, signifies a pivotal and optimistic shift in the enduring conflict that has affected the Gaza Strip over the past 15 months. Timor-Leste applauds this accord and recognizes the relentless efforts of mediators and the shared hope for peace in the region.

The ceasefire, mediated by Egypt and Qatar, with the support of the United States, is a significant advancement in ending the violence in Gaza. The agreement consists of three phases, with the first phase anticipated to last six weeks. This preliminary phase is essential for establishing stability and preparing for subsequent negotiations and peace initiatives.

A critical component of the agreement is the hostage exchange. That exchange serves not only as a humanitarian act, but also as a vital confidence-building measure that can foster comprehensive peace discussions. The accord allows for an increase in humanitarian aid to Gaza, which has suffered extensive devastation due to the conflict. That aid is expected to address urgent civilian needs, including food, medical supplies and essential services, playing a crucial role in stabilizing the region and laying the groundwork for long-term reconstruction.

Despite new developments on the ground in recent days, we remain hopeful that peace will endure. All parties must remain committed to preventing a resurgence of violence. That will set the stage for the agreement's third phase, emphasizing the return of the remains of deceased individuals and initiating the reconstruction of Gaza. We hope that this effort will be overseen by Egypt, Qatar and the United Nations in order to assure transparency, coordination and effectiveness.

Although the ceasefire agreement signifies progress, we recognize resistance from hardliners within Israel, who perceive the deal as a concession to Hamas. However, families of victims are expressing their relief and are hoping for the complete release of hostages. The approval from the Israeli Security Cabinet is a

constructive step, although full Cabinet endorsement is essential for execution. We hope that Hamas will take this opportunity to cooperate and prove itself to be a promoter of non-violence by working together with interested parties in fostering peace and bringing about a long-lasting solution to the conflict.

Rebuilding Gaza encompasses more than just infrastructure repair — it is crucial to restore hope and normalcy for its inhabitants. That endeavour will need patience and openness to continue fostering dialogue and reconciliation. We must not allow the cycle of violence to resume, and a commitment to that end is essential. Coming from a region where dialogue and reconciliation are viewed as pathways to resolve conflicts, I can affirm, along with others, the importance of those principles. Therefore, to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the ceasefire agreement, several vital measures must be undertaken.

First, the violent conflict must be decisively halted, with the Palestinian Authority asserting control in Gaza, uniting all Palestinian factions towards peace and the implementation of United Nations resolutions concerning a two-State solution.

Secondly, Timor-Leste encourages ongoing dialogue between the parties that focuses on building trust, addressing grievances and fostering mutual respect for the sake of the Palestinian people and their future.

Thirdly, the international community must persist in supporting the peace process and providing essential resources, expertise and diplomatic backing to ensure the agreement's success, holding all parties accountable with respect to their commitments and facilitating continuous negotiations.

Fourthly, beyond immediate humanitarian aid and reconstruction, efforts must concentrate on sustainable development in Gaza, including investments in education, healthcare and economic opportunities that can empower the population and diminish the potential for future conflicts.

The agreement symbolizes hope but also highlights the region's complex and fragile peace. The conflict, which has caused the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians, in particular children, along with extensive destruction, requires more than temporary accords. It calls for ongoing diplomatic efforts and a sincere commitment from both parties and the international community to achieve a lasting resolution in the form of a two-State solution.

Timor-Leste stands with the international community in endorsing the accord and its implementation. We urge both sides to focus on reconciliation and unity, facilitating reconstruction and sustainable peace. Together, we can strive towards a future in which peace and prosperity are achievable for all. It is critical that both parties maintain their commitment to dialogue, ensuring a peaceful and stable future for the Palestinian people.

*The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.*