

STATEMENT BY H.E. JULIUS PRANEVIČIUS, VICE
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THE UN HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON "THE
PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE QUESTION OF
PALESTINE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
TWO-STATE SOLUTION"

Your Excellencies, Co-Chairs,

I would like to express appreciation to France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for organizing this important Conference, as mandated by General Assembly resolution of December last year, which Lithuania has supported. I also thank the UN Secretary General and President of the UN General Assembly for their remarks.

From the outset, I underline Lithuania's full support for all efforts aimed at achieving lasting peace and security in the Middle East. Lithuania also welcomes further steps towards reviving a political process to implement the two-state solution. This envisions the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign, and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace and

security with mutual recognition, and with Jerusalem serving as the future capital of both states.

The role of the Palestinian Authority is key to achieving this goal. Lithuania is committed to continuing to assist the state-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority through Team Europe initiatives, EU Twinning projects, as well as bilateral cooperation. Lithuania has implemented or is implementing 21 national development cooperation projects in Palestine so far and will continue its support in line with its Development Cooperation Strategy for the Middle East 2022–2025 and beyond. Lithuania looks forward to new partnerships in various fields such as ICT, Fintech, women's digital empowerment, environment and recycling, and others.

Another key element in implementing the two-state solution is Israel's participation. Lithuania expects that a way can be found to address legitimate Israeli concerns and have them join this initiative in the future. For example, the international community's position regarding Hamas, which poses an existential threat to Israel, could be clearly mentioned in the outcome

document of the conference. We call for international consensus that, by resorting to terrorism and hostage-taking, Hamas has become a major obstacle to the two-state solution and cannot be part of the future Palestinian State.

Furthermore, we strongly condemn the further escalation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, following increased settler violence, the expansion of illegal settlements, and continuing Israeli military operations. At the same time, we strongly condemn the increased terrorist attacks against Israel.

Your Excellencies,

Lithuania fully shares the grave concerns of the international community regarding the humanitarian and human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. It is unimaginable that in the 21st century people in Gaza, and particularly children, are facing hunger. They are prevented from accessing medical treatment, schools, and other social infrastructure. This must stop immediately. In June, Lithuania supported the

UNGA resolution "Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations" covering these issues, as well as terrorist attacks and hostage-taking by Hamas, illegal settlement expansion and settler violence, mass displacements, hate speech, and antisemitism. Lithuania supports the UN aid delivery system and pays tribute to the fallen humanitarian workers – the numbers are shocking - during this tragic war. Foremost, it is an obligation of the parties to the conflict to always ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.

Lithuania joins calls to all parties to respect international humanitarian law and to return to the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Humanitarian aid should resume without hindrances, and Israeli hostages should be immediately released. Lithuania strongly supports the ongoing mediation efforts by the USA, Qatar, and Egypt. Any decision regarding the future of the Gaza Strip must be based solely on international law. Lithuania welcomes the Arab Recovery and Reconstruction Plan endorsed at the Cairo Summit on 4 March 2025. We will continue providing humanitarian aid to Palestinians through the UN system.

Your Excellencies,

I appreciate the hard work done in the working groups and their co-chairs regarding these and other aspects, as well as the input from civil society. Wishing this conference every success, I reiterate Lithuania's constructive support for further efforts in this regard.