

**Statement by the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Latvia Mr. Artjoms Uršulis**

**“High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of
the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two - State
Solution”**

New York, 29 July 2025

Distinguished Participants, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for convening this meeting at a critically important time.

As a newly elected member of the United Nations Security Council, we are humbled by the responsibility we now share in upholding international peace and security. We approach this role guided by our own history of striving for sovereignty, dignity, and international recognition. Our experience is at the foundation of our belief that we can work together and make the two-state solution a reality.

We have been striving for peace in the Middle East for several decades, and the current crisis triggered by the brutal terror attacks of Hamas against Israel is a testament to the necessity for a political horizon that can guarantee the security of both Israel and the Palestinians. More than one thousand civilians killed in Israel during and after 7th of October 2023, and almost 60 thousand victims in Gaza are proof that the status quo is not sustainable. It is vital not to permit Hamas terrorists and other radical groups to hijack the Palestinian cause.

Therefore, Latvia joins the international community in calling for immediate release of all hostages without preconditions, an immediate return to the ceasefire, and ensuring supplying humanitarian aid at scale. Humanitarian situation in Gaza continues to spiral. Reports about civilian killings in Gaza while attempting to receive humanitarian assistance are deeply worrying and require independent investigation. Therefore, all efforts to expand humanitarian access to Gaza must be implemented swiftly and fully.

The current crisis cements Latvia's firm belief that the only path to sustainable peace is through upholding international law, including international humanitarian law and the principles of the UN Charter, in the Middle East and in other ongoing wars around the globe. We can build upon the Peace Day Effort, expanding its focus beyond the "day after" to formulate concrete steps that will lead to a lasting solution.

Meanwhile, it is essential to provide political and practical support to the legitimate Palestinian authorities, which the EU, including Latvia, has strived to do for many decades. This should bolster the standing of Palestinian representation in potential peace talks, and prepare the way for democratic elections in Palestine that should result in a government that has a strong mandate for negotiations towards a lasting, peaceful settlement. In this regard, we welcome the intention of President Abbas to hold elections for a new Palestinian National Council before the end of the year.

Latvia believes that the two-state solution must not be a slogan, but a common goal for both sides and the international community. Two-state solution also means recognizing Israel's right to exist as a state. It is an aim that leads to mutual recognition and practical guarantees for both sides, because the alternative is further cycles of more destructive violence and radicalization.

So let me take the opportunity to welcome the current conference once again as a crucial step towards building a roadmap that leads to the realisation of the two-state solution. This should lead to direct negotiations guided by international law and relevant UNSC resolutions resulting in two states living side by side in peace and security.

Thank you!