

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UN SECURITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2334 (2016)**

delivered by

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Mister President,

Members of the Security Council,

Today's briefing is devoted to the Secretary-General's quarterly report on the implementation of resolution 2334.

Before turning to the report, allow me a few remarks.

At the outset, I reiterate the Secretary-General's condemnation of Sunday's heinous terror attack on Jewish families gathered to celebrate Hannukah in Sydney, Australia. I share in the grief of the Jewish community, and stand with Jewish families worldwide as they mark the festival of Hannukah, which celebrates light vanquishing darkness.

Mister President,

Turning to the situation in Gaza, the ceasefire remains fragile, as we have seen with continued attacks and strikes in Gaza.

I welcome the ongoing efforts by the mediators to avert further escalation, support implementation of current commitments – including the recovery and return of the last Israeli hostage - and to advance discussions on the next phase and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for Gaza, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2803.

The UN is doing its part to support the ceasefire and meet the staggering needs of the population.

The UN's winterization efforts are underway, distributing tents, blankets and other essential supplies, reaching people where they are. But conditions remain dire, and the risk of hypothermia is increasing with the onset of winter weather. Tragically, the first hypothermia-related death, of a two-week-old newborn boy from Khan Younis, was confirmed earlier today.

Preserving and expanding operational space for the UN and its humanitarian partners, including through the renewal of NGO registration, is critical.

I welcome the partial reopening of the Allenby / King Hussein bridge crossing for the transfer of aid to Gaza following a deadly attack on Israeli soldiers there in September. However, supplies through this route are currently capped at low levels. Large quantities of aid are prepositioned in warehouses in Jordan, awaiting full resumption. I urge the Israeli authorities to enable the timely and at-scale movement of life-saving assistance through the indispensable Jordan corridor, in line with Security Council Resolution 2720.

Mister President,

In a deeply concerning development, on 8 December, Israeli authorities forcibly entered the UNRWA compound in East Jerusalem, seizing property and replacing the UN flag with an Israeli flag. The Secretary-General strongly condemned these actions, and emphasized that the “compound remains United Nations premises and is inviolable and immune from any other form of interference.”

On 11 December, the Israeli cabinet decided to approve or regularize 19 settlements in the occupied West Bank. These include the settlements of Ganim and Kadim in the northern West Bank, which had been evacuated by Israel in 2005.

Mister President,

I will now turn to highlighting some of the Secretary-General’s observations on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) during the reporting period.

I welcome the ceasefire in Gaza based on U.S. President Trump’s Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict and through the tireless mediation efforts of Egypt, Qatar, Türkiye and the United States. The ceasefire offers a critical opportunity to halt the bloodshed and improve the humanitarian situation. I urge Israel and Hamas to fully implement the ceasefire, exercise maximum restraint, and adhere to international law, including relevant UN resolutions. The ceasefire must be consolidated to enable recovery and reconstruction in Gaza. The United Nations stands ready to support these efforts.

I welcome the release of all living hostages held by Hamas in Gaza and am relieved that families are being reunited after long periods of anguish. I call for the immediate return of the remains of the last deceased hostage. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been indispensable in ensuring that releases and returns occur safely and humanely. I reiterate my condemnation of and remain appalled by the reported ill-treatment of hostages, including sexual violence, and by the withholding of some remains.

I unequivocally condemn the killing and injury of civilians in Gaza, including children and women. While the ceasefire has largely held, periodic Israeli military strikes continue, causing significant civilian casualties and extensive damage to homes and infrastructure. Armed Palestinian attacks against Israeli soldiers have also continued. Gunfire and shelling near withdrawal lines, and attacks on civilians attempting to return home or access land, have resulted in further loss of life. Such incidents must immediately cease.

I am deeply concerned by the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, where infrastructure damage is catastrophic. While hunger has improved due to increased aid and commercial foodstuffs, key protein sources remain out of reach for most of the population, alongside severe shortages of clean water, medical care, and shelter. Humanitarian access remains restricted, with aid convoys facing logistical and security obstacles. I call on all parties to respect international humanitarian law and allow the full, unimpeded entry of humanitarian assistance.

I condemn relentless Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which fuels tensions, impedes Palestinian land access, and threatens the viability of a contiguous and sovereign Palestinian State. The expanding settlement footprint, including outposts, coincides with rising settler attacks, further entrenching the unlawful occupation and violating international law, undermining Palestinian self-determination. All Israeli settlements in the West Bank,

including East Jerusalem, and related infrastructure have no legal validity and violate international law and UN resolutions.

In 2025, settlement advancement reached its highest point since UN tracking began in 2017. I urge Israel to abide by its obligations under international law, recalling the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024, which obliges Israel to cease all new settlement activities, evacuate settlers, and end its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory promptly.

Escalating violence and tensions in the West Bank are alarming. Israeli security operations in the northern West Bank caused high fatalities, population displacement, and large-scale destruction, especially in refugee camps. Continued Israeli security presence in camps contravenes obligations to end the unlawful occupation.

I condemn rising settler violence across the West Bank, which intensified during the olive harvest. Attacks have become more frequent and violent, often with the presence or support of Israeli security forces. Palestinian farmers have faced assaults, harassment, and obstruction from their lands; olive trees are uprooted or burned, and entire harvests destroyed. These attacks deprive families of vital livelihoods and risk forcible displacement. Israeli authorities must prevent attacks, hold perpetrators accountable, and ensure safe access for farmers.

I condemn continued armed attacks by Palestinians against Israelis. All violence against civilians, including terror, must cease immediately, with perpetrators held accountable.

I remain concerned about large numbers of Palestinians, including children, detained by Israel since 7 October 2023, including administrative detention without charge or trial. Reports of torture, ill-treatment, including sexual violence, and deaths in custody are deeply concerning. Israel must use detention as a last resort, for the shortest period, prevent ill-treatment, and end administrative detention of children.

I am appalled by officials glorifying violence and engaging in dangerous provocations, incitement, and inflammatory language. Incitement to violence must stop immediately.

I am deeply concerned by the Palestinian Authority's prolonged fiscal crisis, further destabilizing the economy, undermining trust, exacerbating insecurity, and eroding social stability. Israeli authorities must cease punitive unilateral economic measures that threaten peace and stability.

I remain committed to supporting Palestinians and Israelis in ending the unlawful occupation and resolving the conflict in line with international law, UN resolutions, and bilateral agreements, pursuing a two-State vision: Israel and a fully independent, democratic, contiguous, viable, sovereign Palestinian State, including Gaza, living side by side in peace and security, based on pre-1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

Thank you.