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PROCESS**

**BRIEFING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE
EAST**

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Madam President

Members of the Security Council,

I am briefing you today as tensions are rising and uncertainty deepens in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

As talks continue on the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) and the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, the ceasefire remains fragile. Israeli strikes on Gaza are continuing, while humanitarian and security challenges persist. Meanwhile, the situation in the West Bank continues to rapidly deteriorate.

Madam President,

I would like to acknowledge the presence of High Representative Mladenov. I thank him for his persistent efforts, including recent discussions with the parties on the 15-point Roadmap.

Full implementation would advance the Plan's transitional arrangements, including the disarmament of Hamas and all other armed groups, the withdrawal of the IDF from Gaza, the deployment of the International Stabilization Force (ISF), and the transfer of transitional governance responsibilities to the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG). I urge all parties to build on this momentum, fulfil their commitments and advance the Roadmap in accordance with international law.

These steps must lay the groundwork for the broader objective - the establishment of a political horizon that will end the unlawful occupation, realize Palestinian self-determination, and advance a two-State solution, with Palestine and Israel living side by side on the basis of the June 1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

Addressing the dire situation in Gaza remains paramount. People in Gaza continue to endure intolerable conditions and immense hardship - and they are losing hope.

Israeli airstrikes resumed on 12 August following a week-long lull, while military activity including shelling, drone attacks, and ground operations never stopped. During the reporting period over 100 Palestinians were killed and over 400 injured, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health.

Around two-thirds of Gaza remain inaccessible or subject to severe access restrictions, leaving civilians confined to overcrowded and insecure areas. The needs are immense and urgent. Humanitarian actors, especially INGOs, continue to face operational constraints related to access, supplies, and funding, with the 2026 flash appeal only 40 percent funded. More than 10 months into the ceasefire, this situation is unacceptable. Key bottlenecks must be addressed.

I'm sure our colleague Athena Rayburn, representing INGOs, will speak broadly on this matter and more.

Soon, winter will descend on Gaza. Winterization efforts must be scaled up and facilitated. Plans are in place, but stocks of shelter and non-food items are depleted, access constraints on the entry of critical humanitarian items continue, and funding remains critically low. We must all do better. Gaza should not face another winter in cold tents.

Madam President,

The truth is: Improving living conditions in Gaza requires moving beyond emergency relief. Essential systems and services must be restored with no further delay, particularly sewage, waste management, health services, and essential livelihoods.

Specifically, we must restore electricity, including the Gaza Power Plant. A reliable electricity supply remains critical to the functioning of water, sanitation, and other essential services. Fuel and engine oil must be allowed to enter at scale. The people of Gaza deserve dignity, stability, and hope. Palestinians expect us to deliver more. As I said, they should not spend another winter in cold tents.

Human dignity must be at the centre of all efforts. The recovery of human remains, and their dignified burial must be facilitated without delay.

The conflict has also inflicted significant environmental damage. Massive quantities of untreated sewage are flowing as we speak into the Mediterranean every day, uncontained by borders. This must be addressed. The clearance of explosive hazards is also vital.

Over six months since the reopening of Rafah crossing, over 5,400 Palestinians have been able to exit and over 5,400 have returned to Gaza, accessing vital medical treatment and reconnecting families. Increased movement in both directions is essential. Patients from Gaza must be facilitated to receive specialized care in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and internationally. In parallel, access to medical services must be expanded in Gaza, enabling its dedicated medical professionals to carry out their vital work.

Madam President,

Women and girls are key to recovery efforts. The message from women-led organizations in Gaza is clear: "Nothing should be written without the people in Gaza: they have to write the first step in every planning, in every recovery."

This will require all parties to fulfil their commitments, and enhanced coordination between all stakeholders must be put in place. An effective and operational liaison function between the Palestinian Authority and the NCAG is critical. It is equally imperative that the international community aligns behind a unified national Palestinian recovery plan, addressing the needs identified in the RDNA. In this context, I led a UN delegation for a meeting hosted in Cairo with the NCAG, during which we reviewed practical coordination mechanisms.

Madam President,

In recent years, Arab countries have contributed over half of all resources dedicated to relief efforts in the OPT. As resources are stretched globally, the role of the region remains essential.

I would like to recognize Egypt's steadfast commitment to humanitarian action. The Egyptian corridor has facilitated the entry of half a million tons of aid from various donors and organizations. Egypt also supports 18 displacement sites in Gaza, and recently restored

electricity services for some 11,000 people in Netzarim, one of the few places in Gaza where every family has electricity.

Sustained engagement by Egypt, Qatar and Türkiye has also been instrumental in advancing mediation efforts.

Qatar has also remained a steadfast partner through its field presence, providing shelter and non-food items.

The United Arab Emirates remains the largest humanitarian donor to the Gaza response, through the Chivalrous Knight operation 3, and has been a vital partner in bringing critical humanitarian items into Gaza.

Jordan supports Gaza through humanitarian assistance and health care. The Jordan corridor remains an important source of supplies and must be enabled to operate at full scale. Jordan also maintains its special and historic role at the Holy Sites in Jerusalem.

Saudi Arabia continues to demonstrate important leadership in sustaining international support for a two-State solution, including through the Global Alliance. I look forward to these efforts being further advanced during next month's High-Level Meeting marking the anniversary of the New York Declaration.

Madam President,

The situation in the West Bank remains dire.

Large-scale settler attacks continue with virtually no accountability for these crimes. Israeli security forces have frequently failed to protect Palestinians from settler attacks and, in some cases, have reportedly facilitated or participated in such violence. Israel, as the occupying power, must ensure that the civilian population is protected, and perpetrators are held to account.

On 18 August, the Israeli authorities opened bidding for over 1,200 housing units in the E1 area of east Jerusalem. If implemented, the E1 plan will effectively sever the northern and southern parts of the West Bank and its connection to East Jerusalem, eroding prospects for a viable Palestinian state. I reiterate that settlements have no legal validity and are in flagrant violation of international law.

Yesterday, the Israeli authorities forcibly entered and unlawfully seized the UNRWA Kalandia Training Centre in East Jerusalem. On Monday, members of my team participated in a PA-led diplomatic visit to the Centre, which plays a critical role in the community. I reiterate my call on Israel to act in accordance with its obligations under international law. All efforts to seize, control, or expropriate UNRWA facilities must cease.

Madam President,

The Palestinian Authority's fiscal crisis remains acute. Israel continues to withhold some \$6 billion in clearance revenues, while uncertainty over correspondent banking poses a further serious threat to Palestinian financial stability.

The parties must urgently secure a longer-term extension of correspondent banking arrangements, allowing regulators time to implement suitable solutions.

Madam President,

Gaza's recovery and reconstruction and the broader political process are mutually dependent and neither can be sustained in isolation.

We have the means to advance a credible path forward. There is broad consensus on the essential elements of that path. Security Council resolution 2803 must be implemented immediately and in full. Equally, the New York Declaration should be advanced in parallel and in a mutually reinforcing manner.

Together with previous Council resolutions, they provide a political vision, practical framework and coordinated international effort needed to support Gaza's recovery, reunify Gaza and the West Bank under a single, legitimate Palestinian Government, end the unlawful occupation, and advance the two-State solution.

We must act now to translate this vision into concrete steps. The United Nations remains committed to supporting all efforts towards a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians, living side by side in peace and security.

Thank you, Madam President and Members of the Council for your attention.