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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,

Thank you for convening this important meeting on the situation in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. It comes at a critical moment.

While the fragile ceasefire in Gaza and regional tensions consume much of the international community's attention, the West Bank is at the breaking point.

And this has not been a sudden deterioration. It is the result of decades of unresolved conflict that has deepened the unlawful Israeli occupation, driven the Palestinian Authority to the brink of collapse, and undermined the prospects for an independent, viable, and sovereign Palestinian State.

In my briefing to this Council last month, I described the explosive dynamics unfolding in the West Bank.

Today, I would like to highlight several developments that are deepening instability, while moving us further away from a negotiated end to the conflict.

I will begin with the sobering human toll.

As of 10 August, 76 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank in 2026, including 18 children, by Israeli forces or settlers.

In 2026, three Israelis, including one civilian and two members of the Israeli security forces, were killed in confrontations with Palestinians, and in an alleged ramming by a Palestinian in the West Bank.

127 Palestinian communities have experienced full or partial displacement since January 2023, including 47 that have been entirely displaced, affecting more than 6,390 Palestinians.

In 2026 alone, about 3,800 Palestinians, nearly half of them children, have been displaced due to settler violence, demolitions and evictions.

Settler violence has reached unprecedented levels. So far this year the UN has documented more than 1,430 incidents involving Israeli settlers that resulted in casualties, property damage or both, affecting approximately 260 Palestinian communities. Many incidents occurred in the presence of Israeli forces.

Nablus Governorate has been particularly hard hit by recent violence.

As delivered

On 24 July, Israeli settlers attacked Tell village, triggering an escalation which left four Palestinians and two members of Israeli security forces killed. Hundreds of settlers then carried out multiple attacks, resulting in Palestinian injuries and extensive property damage.

That same day, large groups of settlers attacked the villages of Urif and Sarra, also in southwest Nablus, causing injuries and extensive damage to Palestinian property.

Similar incidents are occurring on a daily basis across the West Bank.

While accountability for such crimes remains rare, I note the 6 August indictment of an Israeli settler in connection with the July 2025 killing of Palestinian community activist Awdah Hathaleen in the South Hebron Hills. Last year, I visited Awdah's family as they were mourning his death, and I experienced firsthand the grief of this entire community.

All perpetrators of such crimes must be brought to justice.

Madam President,

The pattern is clear. Palestinian populations are increasingly being forcibly displaced from villages across the West Bank before settlers seize the vacated land. Settler attacks, which were previously concentrated in Area C, are increasingly reported in Area B and even Area A.

Israeli military operations and movement restrictions continue to disrupt civilian life and humanitarian operations, with refugee camps particularly affected.

From 5 to 7 August, Israeli forces conducted a large-scale operation in Qalandia refugee camp, resulting in dozens of Palestinians injured, more than 60 people arrested or detained, and extensive property damage.

On 27 July, Israeli forces and officials again entered the UNRWA Kalandia Training Centre without authorization, while classes were in session. I reiterate that UN premises are inviolable and immune from any form of interference.

Tensions have also increased in East Jerusalem. On 23 July, during Tisha B'Av, large organized Israeli visits to Haram al-Sharif, including by an Israeli minister, again raised concerns over the preservation of the status quo at the holy sites.

Madam President,

Alongside the mounting violence, Israel is significantly accelerating its settlement activities while consolidating its control across the occupied West Bank.

Since the beginning of the year, Israeli planning authorities advanced or approved approximately 12,360 housing units in the occupied West Bank, including 7,200 housing units in Area C, and 5,160 housing units in East Jerusalem.

Significant resources are being allocated towards settlement expansion. On 14 July, the Government announced some USD 431 million to support the establishment of 34 new settlements approved earlier this year. The funding will finance infrastructure and prefabricated housing.

Israeli authorities described the decision as strengthening Israel's hold on the West Bank and preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state.

On the administrative track, implementation of reforms transferring planning, land management and heritage responsibilities in the West Bank from the military administration to Israeli civilian authorities continued, further entrenching Israeli civilian governance.

The IDF also issued an unprecedented seizure order for privately owned land in Area A near Qabatiya, south of Jenin City, to construct a road linking Noa and Emek Dotan - two of the 34 settlements recently approved. This marks the first reported seizure of Area A land explicitly for settlement infrastructure.

These developments are taking place as the Palestinian Authority's fiscal crisis remains acute. According to the PA, Israel is withholding some USD 6 billion in clearance revenues, preventing the PA from paying full salaries and delivering basic services.

Meanwhile, Palestinian financial stability faces a looming threat from 1 September, when Israeli correspondent banks plan to end arrangements for processing shekel transactions. The extension of the indemnity waiver through year-end is welcome but insufficient; sustained engagement between regulators is needed to secure a durable arrangement.

The Palestinian Authority's reform efforts must also continue, as outlined in Security Council Resolution 2803.

Furthermore, I welcome ongoing preparations ahead of the planned 28 November Palestinian legislative elections, including steps to update voter registration and publish the electoral timetable. All stakeholders must facilitate credible, inclusive and transparent arrangements enabling all eligible Palestinians to exercise their electoral rights across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Madam President,

The situation in the West Bank must be treated as an emergency requiring urgent action. The concern is not only the continued expansion of settlements, but the speed and systematic manner in which new facts are being created on the ground.

New outposts are established, often with state support, and can be retroactively authorized or incorporated into the wider settlement system. From these outposts, settler violence and intimidation have driven the displacement of Palestinian communities.

The spread of agricultural and grazing outposts is deeply troubling. Requiring only a small number of settlers, they enable control over vast areas of land. Israeli monitoring organizations report that agricultural and pastoral outposts now exercise effective control over close to 20 percent of the West Bank.

On 10 August, members of my team participated in a PA-led diplomatic visit to Bethlehem Governorate, where only some 7 per cent of the land falls under Area A. They observed firsthand the impact of Israeli policies constricting Palestinian movement while enabling settler encroachment, including incursions at the historic site of Solomon's Pools, in Area A.

Madam President,

We must be clear-eyed about what is taking place. These are interconnected steps, not isolated developments. They are reshaping the West Bank, weakening Palestinian governance and advancing de-facto annexation.

The stakes are high. If the West Bank continues to unravel, it will not only undermine the implementation of Security Council resolution 2803, which is the immediate focus of the international community, but further erode the prospects for ending the occupation and realizing a negotiated Israeli-Palestinian peace based on the two-State solution.

We have the means to prevent further deterioration and advance a credible path forward. There is broad consensus on the essential elements of such a path.

Security Council Resolution 2803 must be implemented immediately and in full. The New York Declaration must be implemented together with Resolution 2803, a complementary, mutually reinforcing manner. Together, and within the framework of existing Council resolutions – including Resolution 2334 - they can provide the political vision and coordinated international effort needed to end the unlawful occupation, advance the two-State solution, and resolve the conflict.

We must act now, collectively and determinedly, to ensure concrete steps are taken towards that objective. The UN remains committed to supporting all efforts in support of a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians based on 1967 lines, with Jerusalem as capital of both States, living side by side in peace and security.

Thank you.