

KHALED KHIARI
ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
BRIEFING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST,
REPORTING ON UNSCR 2334 (2016)

New York, 30 June 2025

Madam President,

Members of the Security Council,

Today's briefing is devoted to the Secretary-General's quarterly report on the implementation of resolution 2334. Since the 17 June cutoff date for the written report hostilities continued between Israel and Hamas, including Israel Defense Forces (IDF) airstrikes, artillery shelling, and ground operations across Gaza. The devastating human toll is mounting.

According to the Gaza Ministry of Health, the total number of Palestinian fatalities since 7 October 2023 reached over 56,500, with 1,068 fatalities since 17 June, an average of 82 per day. On 19 June, Israeli forces reportedly struck three houses in Jabalia, killing at least 14 people from the same family, including two children and one woman. On 20 June, 12 people, including four women, were reportedly killed when the IDF struck a residential building in Deir al Balah. Amidst renewed evacuation orders and intensified airstrikes in Gaza City and Jabalia, another larger-scale military operation is expected in the area.

According to the Israeli sources, since 17 June, 9 members of the IDF were killed in hostilities in Gaza, including 7 soldiers killed when Hamas targeted their armoured vehicle with an explosive device. Israeli sources reported that more than 1,748 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in attacks in or originating from Gaza since 7 October 2023. Fifty hostages, including one woman, are still being held captive by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Gaza.

Attacks on Palestinians seeking aid continued, including frequent casualty incidents in the vicinity of militarized food distribution points and aid convoys. Since 17 June, at least 580 Palestinians have been killed either trying to reach Gaza Humanitarian Foundation distribution points or waiting for other aid convoys, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health. On 17 June, at least 50 people were killed and 200 were wounded in Khan Younis when an IDF tank opened fire on a crowd of people waiting for WFP food trucks. On 24 June, IDF troops reportedly opened fire near GHF sites north of Al Bureij Camp and northwest Rafah, killing 49 Palestinians and injuring 197 others. In the occupied West Bank, Israeli security forces continued operations in the northern part of the occupied West Bank. On 25 June, a 15-year-old Palestinian was killed during an Israeli operation in Al Yamun, west of Jenin. On the same day, an elderly woman was reported shot and killed by Israeli security forces in the Shu'fat refugee camp in East Jerusalem.

Attacks by Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank have intensified in recent days. On 19 June, armed Israeli settlers, in the presence of Israeli forces, reportedly opened fire on Palestinians in the town of Surif, northwest of Hebron, killing one and injuring seven others. On 25 June, three Palestinians were killed during an assault on Kafr Malik, including arson, by Israeli settlers in the presence of ISF. The following day, Israeli Security Forces dismantled the nearby Ba'al Hatzor settlement outpost leading to repeated clashes with settlers over several days. According to ISF, settlers threw stones at and assaulted Israeli soldiers, and on 27 June, ISF said settlers attempted to ram a military vehicle and threw stones, with ISF using live ammunition in response and possibly leading to the injury of a 14-year-old Israeli boy.

Madam President,

Allow me to highlight some of the Secretary-General's observations regarding the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) during the reporting period.

The Secretary-General once again strongly condemns the horrific attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Israel on 7 October 2023 and their continued holding of hostages in horrific conditions. Nothing can justify these acts of terror. We remain appalled that hostages may be subjected to ongoing ill-treatment and that the bodies of hostages continue to be withheld.

The Secretary-General also unequivocally condemns the widespread killing and injury of civilians in Gaza, including children and women, and the destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, and mosques. The level of suffering and brutality in Gaza is unbearable. The continued collective punishment of the Palestinian people is unjustifiable.

We remain deeply concerned by Israeli military operations in Gaza that render large areas of Gaza uninhabitable. We reject the forced displacement of the Palestinian population from any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which would constitute a breach of international law obligations. We mourn the United Nations personnel killed in Gaza and strongly condemn the killing of all health and humanitarian personnel and journalists. Following almost 80 days of Israel's denial of entry of all humanitarian and commercial supplies into Gaza, supplies have started to enter Gaza at wholly inadequate levels which do not meet the massive needs of the population. We call upon Israel to fulfil its obligations under international law, and allow the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need. We strongly condemn the loss of lives and injuries of Palestinians seeking aid in Gaza and we call for an immediate and independent investigation into these events and for perpetrators to be held accountable

The United Nations will not participate in any aid delivery modality that does not comply with the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence, and neutrality.

I echo once again the Secretary-General's call for an immediate ceasefire and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages in Gaza.

Madam President,

We remain deeply alarmed by the relentless Israeli settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The ever-growing settlement footprint contributes to settler-related violence, further entrenches the Israeli occupation, hampers the free movement of the population, and undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

We are deeply concerned by the Israeli Government's decision to resume formal land registration in Area C and the serious risk that this will facilitate further settlement expansion and entrenchment.

The demolition and seizure of Palestinian-owned structures, including internationally funded humanitarian projects, entail numerous violations of international law and raise concerns about the risk of forcible transfer.

The escalating violence in the occupied West Bank is alarming. Military operations by Israeli security forces in the northern West Bank have resulted in high levels of fatalities, including women and children, significant population displacement, and destruction of homes and infrastructure, particularly in refugee camps.

We are concerned that the Palestinian Authority continues to face a deepening fiscal crisis, that threatens to further undermine Palestinian institutions and basic service delivery. Increased Israeli clearance revenue deductions and measures that introduce instability to the Palestinian financial sector should be urgently resolved.

The international community must provide immediate support to the Palestinian Government to strengthen its governance capacity, address its fiscal challenges, and prepare it to reassume its responsibilities in Gaza. This will require the establishment of political and security frameworks that can relieve the humanitarian catastrophe, start early recovery and reconstruction, address Israel's legitimate security concerns, and lay the groundwork for a political process to end the occupation and establish a viable two-State solution.

We welcome reform steps undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, including the appointment of a Vice President of Palestine. and encourage continued reforms, urging international partners to support these efforts.

We regret the need to suspend the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution and welcome the continued commitment of the co-chairs France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to convene the conference as soon as possible.

Madam President,

Allow me also a brief comment regarding the recent military escalation between Iran and Israel, which the Council has discussed in the past days.

I reiterate the Secretary-General's, condemnation of the tragic and unnecessary loss of lives and injuries to civilians and damage to homes and critical civilian infrastructure. The Middle East region has been devastated by conflict and cannot withstand yet another major escalation. We welcome the 24 June ceasefire agreement announced by President Trump and commend the efforts of the United States, in coordination with Qatar, to end the hostilities.

We hope that this ceasefire can be replicated in the other conflicts in the region – nowhere is this more needed than in Gaza.

Thank you.