

29 December 2023

New York

# Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the Middle East

## Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General

As the hostilities between Israel and Hamas and other groups in Gaza intensify, the Secretary-General remains gravely concerned about the further spillover of this conflict, which could have devastating consequences for the entire region.

There is a continued risk of wider regional conflagration, the longer the conflict in Gaza continues, given the risk of escalation and miscalculation by multiple actors.

The escalating violence in the occupied West Bank, including intensified Israeli security forces operations, high numbers of fatalities, settler violence and attacks on Israelis by Palestinians, is extremely alarming.

The daily exchanges of fire across the Blue Line risk triggering a broader escalation between Israel and Lebanon and affecting regional stability.

The Secretary-General is increasingly concerned about the spillover effects of the continuing attacks by armed groups in Iraq and Syria, as well as the Houthi attacks against vessels in the Red Sea, which have escalated in recent days.

The Secretary-General urges all parties to exercise maximum restraint and take urgent steps to de-escalate tensions in the region.

The Secretary-General again appeals to all members of the international community to do everything in their power to use their influence on the relevant parties to prevent an escalation of the situation in the region.

The Secretary-General reiterates his call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

[Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General – on the Middle East | United Nations Secretary-General](#)