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Secretary-General's message on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

Every year on this day, the international community stands in solidarity for the dignity, rights, justice and self-determination of the Palestinian people. This year's commemoration is especially painful as those fundamental goals are as distant as they have ever been.

Nothing justifies the 7 October terror attacks by Hamas and the taking of hostages. And nothing justifies the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

Yet, more than a year later, Gaza is in ruins, more than 43,000 Palestinians – mostly women and children – have been reportedly killed, and the humanitarian crisis is getting worse by the day. This is appalling and inexcusable.

Meanwhile, in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israeli military operations, settlement expansion, evictions, demolitions, settler violence and threats of annexation are inflicting further pain and injustice.

It is past time for an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of all hostages; an end to the unlawful occupation of the Palestinian Territory – as confirmed by the International Court of Justice and the General Assembly; and irreversible progress towards a two-State solution, in line with international law and relevant UN resolutions – with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security, and Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

As a matter of urgency, I appeal for full support of lifesaving humanitarian relief for the Palestinian people – in particular through the work of UNRWA, which represents an irreplaceable lifeline for millions of Palestinians.

The United Nations will continue to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their inalienable rights to live in peace, security and dignity.

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