

28 October 2023

Doha, Qatar

UN Secretary-General's statement on the situation in Gaza

I am in Doha, where I met with His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, for consultations on the Middle East crisis. I expressed my deep gratitude, appreciation and support for the mediation initiatives of Qatar, namely for the release of the hostages kept in Gaza.

Regarding the situation in Gaza, I was encouraged in the last days by what seemed to be a growing consensus in the international community, including the countries supporting Israel, for the need of at least a humanitarian pause in the fighting to facilitate the release of hostages in Gaza, the evacuation of third country nationals and the necessary massive scale up of the delivery of humanitarian aid to the people in Gaza.

Regrettably, instead of the pause, I was surprised by an unprecedented escalation of the bombardments and their devastating impacts, undermining the referred humanitarian objectives.

Given the breakdown in communications, I am also extremely concerned about the UN staff who are in Gaza to deliver humanitarian assistance.

This situation must be reversed. I reiterate my strong appeal for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, together with the unconditional release of hostages and a delivery of humanitarian relief at the level that corresponds to the dramatic needs of the people in Gaza, where a humanitarian catastrophe is unfolding in front of our eyes.

I want to repeat what I said yesterday. This is the moment of truth. Everyone must assume their responsibilities. History will judge us all.

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