



## **Statement by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, Marking One Year Since 7 October 2023**

**Jerusalem, 7 October 2024**

Today marks one year since Hamas launched its abhorrent attacks that targeted Israeli towns and communities. That day left deep scars on individuals, families, and the collective memory of the State of Israel and the world.

Today, we mourn for the over 1,200 people, including many women and children, who were murdered in cold blood. Even a year later, the brutality is impossible to comprehend.

On that day, more than 250 people were abducted and taken to Gaza, including many women and children. Hostages continue to be held, enduring abhorrent and unimaginable conditions. My thoughts are with the families and loved ones of those who were kidnapped. I carry their anguish with me every day.

To the people of Israel, I say your pain and loss are felt across the world, and I stand together with you in grief during these difficult times.

I reiterate my call for an immediate and unconditional release of all hostages held by Hamas and other militant groups, allowing families to reunite and begin the healing process. In the interim, they must be treated humanely and be allowed visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The war that has raged over the past year continues to shatter lives and inflict profound human suffering for Israelis, Palestinians, and now the people of Lebanon. I call for an immediate ceasefire to ensure the safety and security of all civilians. Violence begets violence, and in these moments of grief, we must reaffirm our commitment to peace.

As we remember the victims of October 7th, and keep the hostages in our minds, we must pursue both their freedom and a more secure, stable, sustainable future for all who live here. Peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians are not only necessary; they are essential for a shared future.

[ENDS]