



## **Statement by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, on the Situation in the Middle East**

**Cairo, 21 October 2023**

“I welcome the efforts of the Arab Republic of Egypt for convening today’s Cairo Summit for Peace to address the ongoing hostilities in Gaza and Israel.

Alongside the Secretary-General, today we continued the United Nations’ political engagements with relevant parties in the region and beyond to bring an end to the bloodshed and prevent further loss of civilian lives.

I took note of the shared concerns about the risk of a spillover of the conflict to the wider region and welcome the many calls for a political solution as the way forward.

I wish to thank the Egyptian authorities for facilitating today’s entry of the first truckloads of aid into the Gaza Strip through Rafah. This is an important step that must not be the last. Aid needs to flow safely and continuously going forward.

It is a war zone in Gaza and the needs are immense. All of us can and must do more to save lives now.

I reiterate the Secretary-General’s urgent appeal for the immediate and unconditional release of hostages and an immediate humanitarian ceasefire.”