



**Statement by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,  
Tor Wennesland, on the period of paused fighting in Gaza and Israel**

**Jerusalem, 28 November 2023**

“During the four-day humanitarian pause which started on 24 November, we have seen the release of 51 Israeli and 18 foreign hostages, including women and children, who have been held in Gaza since their abduction by Hamas and others on October 7th. At the same time, 150 Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including women and children, have been released from Israeli prisons.

This period of paused fighting has allowed the United Nations and partners to scale up their delivery of humanitarian aid across the Gaza Strip, including to northern parts of the Strip.

I welcome what has been an important humanitarian breakthrough, especially for civilians who have been living in agony or under the gun or bombardment. I call for the release of all remaining hostages held in Gaza, and I am encouraged by tonight’s announcement of an extension of the agreement.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains catastrophic and requires the urgent entry of additional aid and supplies in a smooth, predictable, and continuous manner to alleviate the unbearable suffering of Palestinians in Gaza.

I reiterate the Secretary-General’s call for a full humanitarian ceasefire, for the benefit of the people of Gaza, Israel, and the wider region.”

[ENDs]