



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

Jerusalem, 5 April 2023

I am appalled by the images of violence inside the al-Qibli mosque. I am disturbed by the apparent beating of Palestinians by Israeli security forces and large number of arrests. I also strongly reject the stockpiling and use of fireworks and rocks by Palestinians inside the mosque.

This holy period and places of worship should be for safe and peaceful religious reflection, noting that nearly 600,000 people have visited the Holy Sites in Jerusalem since the beginning of Ramadan. I call on political, religious and community leaders on all sides to reject incitement, inflammatory rhetoric, and provocative actions.

The historic status quo of the Holy Sites must be upheld, in line with the special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The role of the Waqf is vital and it must be empowered to fulfill its crucial duties.

Leaders on all sides must act responsibly and refrain from steps that could escalate tensions.

The indiscriminate firing of rockets from Gaza is unacceptable and must stop.

The UN remains in close contact with all concerned parties to de-escalate the situation.

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