



Security Council

Eightieth year

9939

th meeting

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New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett	(Guyana)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria.	Mr. Bendjama
	China.	Mr. Fu Cong
	Denmark	Ms. Lassen
	France	Mr. Bonnafont
	Greece	Mr. Sekeris
	Pakistan.	Mr. Ahmad
	Panama	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone	Mr. George
	Slovenia.	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
	Somalia	Mr. Dhakkar
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America.	Ms. Shea

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kuwait, Türkiye and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite His Excellency Mr. Stavros Lambrinidis, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, and I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: Allow me to deliver a brief introduction before my colleagues' briefings.

There are moments when the choices before us are not just consequential, they are defining— moments when the direction taken will shape not only the fate of nations, but potentially, our collective future. This is such a moment.

To the parties to the conflict — the potential parties to the conflict — and to the Security Council as the representative of the international community, I have a simple and clear message: give peace a chance.

The confrontation between Israel and Iran is escalating rapidly with a terrible toll, killing and injuring civilians and devastating homes, neighbourhoods and civilian infrastructure, with nuclear facilities being attacked. The world is watching with growing alarm. We are not drifting toward crisis — we are racing towards it. We are not witnessing isolated incidents — we are on course to potential chaos. The expansion of this conflict could ignite a fire that no one can control. We must not let that happen.

It may be easy to list the range of problems that have affected relations between Israel and Iran in the past decades, but the central question of this conflict is the nuclear question. Non-proliferation is a must for the safety and security of us all. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a cornerstone of international security. The Islamic Republic of Iran must respect it. And Iran has repeatedly stated that it is not seeking nuclear weapons. But let us recognize there is a trust gap. The only way to bridge that gap is through diplomacy to establish a credible, comprehensive and verifiable solution, including full access to inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency, as the United Nations technical agency in this field.

For all of that to be possible, I appeal for an end to the fighting and a return to serious negotiations. At this defining moment, I urge the Council to act with unity and urgency for dialogue. And I urge the international community to rally behind the sole path that can deliver lasting peace: diplomacy grounded in international

law, including the Charter of the United Nations. This is even more crucial given the unfolding horrors in Gaza.

The only thing that is predictable is that the consequences of continuing this conflict are unpredictable. Let us not look back on this decisive moment with regret. Let us act responsibly and together to pull the region, and our world, back from the brink.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks.

I now give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: We meet as the scope and scale of attacks in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Israel continue to widen, with grave consequences for civilians in both countries.

In Iran, Israel claims to have targeted more than 100 military sites and nuclear facilities, including the Kermanshah missile base, the Natanz and Isfahan nuclear facilities, and the Khondab — formerly Araak — heavy water reactor. At the same time, government buildings, homes and residential neighbourhoods, factories, hospitals, airports and refineries have been struck in and around Tehran, Isfahan, Tabriz and Ahvaz, among other cities. The bombing on 17 June of Iran's state-run television channel during a live broadcast marked a chilling moment. Residents of Tehran and other cities have received warnings to evacuate on more than one occasion. Iran has closed its airspace until further notice and has shut some border crossings.

In Israel, residential neighbourhoods and essential infrastructure have been hit throughout the country, notably in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Bat Yam, Dimona, Petah Tikva and Eilat. Several civilian sites have been directly impacted by Iran's airstrikes, including the Weizmann research institute in Rehovot, the Bazan petrochemical complex in Haifa, and yesterday the Soroka Medical Center in Beersheba. A state of national emergency remains in place, with severe restrictions on air travel. Several areas in the occupied West Bank have also been affected, and checkpoints and road closures are affecting movement, especially for Palestinians.

Throughout the region, airspace remains severely constrained by those exchanges, not only within Iran and Israel but also throughout Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and beyond.

The intensifying cycle of attacks and counterattacks has resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties, including fatalities, in both Iran and Israel.

According to Iran's Ministry of Health, as of 19 June, 224 people had been killed and more than 2,500 others injured in Israeli strikes across Iran. The Health Ministry added that 90 per cent of the victims were civilians. Other estimates, based on local non-governmental organizations and human rights groups, suggest the death toll is at least double the official figure.

In addition, there have been over 20 high-ranking Iranian military leaders killed, notably the Commander and Chief of Staff of the Iranian armed forces, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Commander-in-Chief and IRGC Intelligence Chief, as well as several nuclear scientists.

We have also received reports of significant displacement out of Tehran — a city of more than 12 million residents — resulting in massive traffic jams. Fuel shortages are leading to long queues at petrol stations, sometimes for more than five hours, further hampering movement. And still, many remain trapped in their homes in Tehran with nowhere to flee. In the absence of bomb shelters or air raid sirens in the city and widespread Internet blackouts, further strikes are bound to harm more civilians.

In Israel, the Office of the Prime Minister stated that, as of 19 June, Iran's strikes have killed 24 people and injured 915 others, the vast majority civilians. The strikes have also damaged homes, leading to the displacement of Israelis.

We are teetering on the edge of a full-blown conflict and a humanitarian crisis. International humanitarian law must be respected, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in attack. Attacks directed against civilians and civilian objects, and indiscriminate attacks, are strictly prohibited. Medical personnel and medical facilities, including hospitals, must be respected and protected.

We are witnessing in real time the impact of the conflict regionally, with missile launches by the Houthis in Yemen towards Israel, and heightened tensions involving armed groups in Iraq. With each passing day of fighting the danger, particularly for civilians, grows. Interceptions and explosives falling short have been reported over Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Syria, sending debris into populated areas, sowing fear and uncertainty. Any further expansion of the conflict could have enormous consequences for the region and for international peace and security at large.

The fallout of the conflict is also economic. We cannot discount the global impact of a potential disruption of trade through the Strait of Hormuz, described by the World Bank as the world's most critical oil passageway. Trade through that vital route has already fallen by 15 per cent amid heightened tensions starting in late 2023.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Grossi will address the Council shortly. Allow me at this juncture to express our appreciation to the IAEA and its staff still on the ground in Iran. We also convey our deepest gratitude to our colleagues who have continued to stay and deliver.

At the centre of the ongoing conflict are concerns about Iran's nuclear programme. As the Secretary-General has stated, the best way to address those concerns is through dialogue, leading to a negotiated solution.

But the window to prevent a catastrophic escalation and achieve a peaceful resolution has not yet closed, as demonstrated by positive recent openings for diplomacy. We welcome in that regard the talks between the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Iran in Geneva today. We strongly encourage such efforts. We must pursue every possible opportunity to de-escalate, to cease the hostilities and to settle disputes by peaceful means. The Charter of the United Nations that binds all of us mandates it. The imperative for diplomacy has seldom been greater.

The President: I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Grossi.

Mr. Grossi: Attacks on nuclear sites in the Islamic Republic of Iran have caused a sharp degradation in nuclear safety and security in Iran. Though they have not so far led to a radiological release affecting the public, there is a danger that could occur.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been monitoring closely the situation at Iran's nuclear sites since Israel began its attacks a week ago. As part of its mission, the IAEA is the global nerve centre for information on nuclear and radiological safety, and we can respond to any nuclear or radiological emergency.

Based on information available to the IAEA, the following is the current situation at Iran's nuclear sites, which I offer as a follow up to my most recent report to the Security Council.

The Natanz enrichment site contains two facilities. The first is the main fuel enrichment plant. Initial attacks on 13 June targeted and destroyed electricity

infrastructure at the facility, including an electricity substation, the main electricity power supply building and emergency power supply and back-up generators. On the same day, the main cascade room appears to have been attacked using ground-penetrating munitions.

The second facility at Natanz is the pilot fuel enrichment plant. It consists of above-ground and underground cascade rooms. On 13 June the above-ground part was functionally destroyed and the strikes on the underground cascade rooms caused serious damage.

The level of radioactivity outside the Natanz site has remained unchanged and at normal levels, indicating no external radiological impact on the population or the environment there. However, within the Natanz facility there is both radiological and chemical contamination. It is possible that uranium isotopes contained in uranium hexafluoride, uranyl fluoride and hydrogen fluoride are dispersed inside the facility. The radiation, primarily consisting of alpha particles, poses a significant danger if inhaled or ingested. That risk can be effectively managed with appropriate protective measures, such as using respiratory devices. The main concern inside the facility is chemical toxicity.

Fordow is Iran's main enrichment location for enriching uranium to 60 per cent. The Agency is not aware of any damage at Fordow at this time.

At the Isfahan nuclear site, four buildings were damaged in last Friday's attack — the central chemical laboratory, a uranium conversion plant, the Tehran reactor-fuel manufacturing plant and the enriched uranium metal processing facility, which was under construction. No increase in off-site radiation levels was reported. As in Natanz, the main concern here is chemical toxicity.

The Khondab heavy water research reactor, under construction in Arak, was hit on 19 June. As the reactor was not operational and did not contain any nuclear material, no radiological consequence is expected. The nearby heavy water production plant is also assessed to have been hit, and, similarly, no radiological consequence is expected. As stated in the IAEA's update of 18 June, at the Tehran Research Centre, one building, in which advanced centrifuge rotors were manufactured and tested, was hit. At the Karaj workshop, two buildings, in which different centrifuge components were manufactured, were destroyed. There was no radiological impact internally or externally.

Let me now refer to the Bushehr nuclear power plant. That is the nuclear site in Iran in which the consequences of an attack could be most serious. It is an operating nuclear power plant, and, as such, it hosts thousands of kilograms (kg) of nuclear material. Countries of the region have reached out directly to me over the past few hours to express their concerns, and I want to make it absolutely and completely clear: in the event of an attack on the Bushehr nuclear power plant, a direct hit could result in a very high release of radioactivity to the environment. Similarly, a hit that disabled the only two lines supplying electrical power to the plant could cause its reactor's core to melt, which could result in a high release of radioactivity into the environment. In the worst case, both scenarios would necessitate protective actions, such as evacuations and sheltering of the population, or the need to take stable iodine, with the reach extending to distances from a few to several hundred kilometres. Radiation monitoring would need to cover distances of several hundred kilometres, and food restrictions might need to be implemented.

Any action against the Tehran nuclear research reactor could also potentially have severe consequences for large areas of the city of Tehran and its inhabitants. In such a case, protective actions would need to be taken. I will continue to provide public updates about the developments at all those sites and their possible health and environmental consequences.

The Agency is — as Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo kindly recalled — and will remain present in Iran, and inspections there will resume, as required by Iran's safeguards obligations under its Safeguards Agreement pursuant to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as soon as safety and security conditions allow. In that context, let me restate that the safety of our inspectors is of the utmost importance. The host country has a responsibility in that regard, and we expect every effort to be made to ensure that their security and their communication lines with the IAEA headquarters will be maintained.

As stated in my most recent report to the Agency's Board of Governors and based on inspections conducted at the relevant facilities since then, Iran's uranium stockpiles remain under safeguards, in accordance with Iran's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. Council members may recall that more than 400 kg of that stockpile is uranium enriched up to 60 per cent of uranium-235. It is essential that the Agency resumes inspections as soon as possible to provide credible assurances that none of it has been diverted. Importantly, any special measures by Iran to protect its nuclear materials and equipment must be taken in accordance with Iran's safeguards obligations and as agreed with the Agency. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that the Agency's inspectors are allowed to verify that all relevant materials, especially those enriched to 60 per cent, are accounted for. Beyond the potential radiological risks, attacks on such materials would, of course, make that effort more difficult.

The IAEA has consistently underlined, as stated in its General Conference resolutions, that armed attacks on nuclear facilities should never take place and could result in radioactive releases with grave consequences within and beyond the boundaries of the State that has been attacked. Therefore, I again call for maximum restraint. Military escalation threatens lives and delays indispensable work towards a diplomatic solution for the long-term assurance that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon.

The presence, support, analysis and inspections of technical experts are crucial to mitigating risks to nuclear safety and security. That is true during peacetime and even more so during military conflict. For the second time in three years, we are witnessing a dramatic conflict between two States Members of the United Nations and of the IAEA in which nuclear installations are coming under fire and nuclear safety is being compromised. The IAEA, just as has been the case with the military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, will not stand idly by during this conflict. As I stated in this Chamber just a few days ago (see S/PV.9936), I am ready to travel immediately and to engage with all relevant parties to help to ensure the protection of nuclear facilities and the continued peaceful use of nuclear technology, in accordance with the Agency mandate, including by deploying Agency nuclear safety and security experts, in addition to our safeguards inspectors in Iran, wherever necessary.

For the IAEA to act, a constructive, professional dialogue is needed. I urge the members of the Council to support us in making it happen sooner rather than later. The IAEA must receive timely and regular technical information about affected nuclear facilities and their respective sites. In that regard, I urge the Iranian regulatory authorities to continue a constructive dialogue with the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre, which has been operating 24/7 since the beginning of this conflict. Nuclear facilities and material must not be shrouded by the fog of war.

Yesterday there was an incorrect statement to the media by an Israeli military official that the Bushehr nuclear power plant had been attacked. Though the mistake was quickly identified and the statement retracted, the situation underscored the vital need for clear and accurate communication, and the Agency's unique role in providing it in a technically accurate and politically impartial way is obvious.

Let me conclude by assuring the international community of the IAEA's continued support at this very grave time. A diplomatic solution is within reach if the necessary political will is there. Elements for an agreement have been discussed. The IAEA can guarantee, through a watertight inspections system, that nuclear weapons will not be developed in Iran. That can form the basis of a long-standing agreement that brings peace and avoids a nuclear crisis in the Middle East. That opportunity should not be missed. The alternative would be a protracted conflict and a looming threat of nuclear proliferation that, while emanating from the Middle East, would effectively erode the NPT and the non-proliferation regime as a whole.

The President: I thank Mr. Grossi for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank you, President, for convening this emergency open meeting. I thank Secretary-General Guterres for his statement and support his call for an end to the fighting and a return to diplomatic negotiations. I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their briefings.

As the Israel-Iran military conflict enters its eighth day, it is distressing to note that it has resulted in a large number of civilian casualties and damage to facilities on both sides. If the conflict escalates further, not only will both sides suffer greater losses, but the countries of the region will also be severely affected. Israel's actions violate international law and the norms of international relations, jeopardize the sovereignty and security of Iran and undermine regional peace and stability. China unequivocally condemns these actions.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has put forward a four-point proposal regarding the current situation. Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs Wang Yi has spoken separately with his counterparts in Iran, Israel and countries in the region. At this critical juncture, the international community should forge further consensus and do the utmost to promote talks in order to defuse tensions. I will make four points.

First, there must be an immediate ceasefire and an end to the fighting. The use of force is not the right way to resolve international disputes. It will only exacerbate hatred and conflict. The sooner a ceasefire is achieved, the less damage will be done. The situation in the region cannot be left to slide into an unknown abyss. The parties to the conflict, and Israel in particular, should promptly agree to a ceasefire so as to prevent spiralling escalation and avert any spillover of the fighting.

Secondly, the safety of civilians must be ensured. The red line of the protection of civilians in armed conflict must not be transgressed at any time, and the indiscriminate use of force is unacceptable. The parties to the conflict must abide strictly by international law, resolutely avoid harming innocent civilians, refrain from attacking civilian facilities and facilitate the evacuation of third-country nationals.

Thirdly, we must remain committed to dialogue and negotiation. Communication and dialogue are the right paths to lasting peace. The current conflict has disrupted the negotiation process on the Iranian nuclear issue. The attacks on multiple Iranian nuclear facilities have set a dangerous precedent, with potentially catastrophic consequences. We must not waver from the general direction of a political settlement to the Iranian nuclear issue, and we must persevere in returning the Iranian nuclear issue to the track of a political solution through dialogue and negotiation. China welcomes ongoing talks in Geneva among the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom, France and Germany, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iran.

Fourthly, we must galvanize the efforts of the international community to promote peace. Without stability in the Middle East, peace in the world will be elusive. The Israel-Iran conflict has led to a sharp upsurge in tension in the Middle East and has also had a serious impact on global security. Recently, 21 Arab and Islamic countries issued a joint statement of Ministers for Foreign Affairs calling for a ceasefire, the resumption of talks on the Iranian nuclear issue and the maintenance of lasting peace in the region, which China fully supports. The international community, specifically major countries with particular influence on the parties to the conflict, should strive to defuse the situation, rather than the opposite.

The Council, as the primary body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, should play a greater role in that regard. We support the Council in taking the necessary action swiftly. China stands ready to continue strengthening communication and coordination with all relevant parties, building synergies, upholding justice and playing a constructive role in restoring peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his presence and his thoughtful and compelling remarks. The Secretary-General spoke about a defining moment, our collective future and our collective responsibility. We fully agree with him, with his call to give peace a chance and, in that context, with his appeal for an end to the fighting and a return to negotiations. I am also thankful to Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her complementary briefing and to Director General Grossi for his briefing. We note in particular his view that a diplomatic solution is within reach with the necessary political will.

Last Friday, the Council held an emergency session in the wake of Israel's military strikes (see S/PV.9936), which were in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran and in flagrant violation and contravention of the Charter of the United Nations and fundamental principles of international law. One week later, as a result of such irresponsible behaviour, the situation has only been exacerbated, with grave implications for regional and international peace and security. Pakistan strongly condemns the unjustified and illegitimate aggression by Israel. We stand in solidarity with the people of Iran. We unequivocally denounce the blatant attacks and military strikes carried out by Israel, which constitute a grave danger and a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of the entire region and beyond, with serious implications. We offer our sincere condolences and sympathies to the brotherly people of Iran on the loss of life as a result of those unprovoked attacks.

The ensuing humanitarian crisis and civilian toll on both sides are also deplorable. International humanitarian law must be observed by all sides. The attacks against nuclear facilities intended for peaceful purposes are deeply troubling. Such attacks contravene international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and relevant IAEA General Conference resolutions on the issue. It is the responsibility of the IAEA to clearly pronounce its legal position with regard to such attacks and report to the Board of Governors and the Security Council on the implications of such attacks for the legal safeguards and safety and security. The Agency should fulfil that responsibility.

The latest crisis has aggravated existing tensions in the region arising from Israel's continuing ruthless assault on Gaza, which has resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe for the innocent Palestinians, and its reoccurring violations of international law in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. The Security Council bears primary responsibility for immediately stopping that wanton aggression and holding the aggressor accountable for its actions. The Security Council must fulfil its duty and proceed as follows.

First, it must issue a categorical rejection and condemnation of Israel's attacks on the Islamic Republic of Iran since 13 June and all actions that contravene international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Secondly, it must play its due role to end the hostilities and promote de-escalation for the purposes of achieving a comprehensive ceasefire before the situation spirals out of control and threatens the peace and stability of the entire region.

Thirdly, it must issue a clear denunciation of the targeting of IAEA-safeguarded nuclear facilities, which is against the provisions of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, as reflected in Security Council resolutions, IAEA resolutions and international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions. The Security Council must implement its own resolution 487 (1981).

Fourthly, it must call for dialogue and diplomacy to promote a peaceful and lasting resolution of the crisis. Diplomacy must be given a chance.

Regrettably, Israeli unlawful strikes against Iran came at a time of intense diplomatic engagement on Iran's nuclear issue. Those illegal actions must not be allowed to scuttle that dialogue. Parties must swiftly return to the path of negotiations, which is the only viable means to reach a sustainable agreement regarding the Iranian nuclear programme. We note the willingness expressed by the United States to keep the door for negotiations open. We also take note of the dialogue between the E3 — Germany, France and the United Kingdom — and Iran. We hope that diplomatic efforts and engagements will bear fruit.

We reaffirm our long-standing position that all issues concerning Iran's nuclear programme must be resolved peacefully, through dialogue and diplomacy, in accordance with the rights, international obligations and responsibilities of all the parties concerned.

At the same time, verification activities by the IAEA, as the competent international technical organization mandated to implement respective safeguards obligations, should continue unimpeded. The IAEA must continue its work in an impartial and apolitical manner to provide objective reporting and credible information regarding the issues under its purview.

This is a critical moment. The Security Council must fulfil its responsibility and facilitate the peaceful resolution of disputes. Military means and coercion cannot bring about a lasting settlement. Dialogue and diplomacy, in full adherence to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, remain the only viable path to resolving the ongoing crisis. The Council must therefore unite in support of the call of the Secretary-General for an end to the fighting and return to negotiations and dialogue.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Guyanese presidency for its prompt response to the request by Russia, China, Pakistan and Algeria to convene this meeting. We thank the Secretary-General for his opening remarks, as well as the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for their briefings.

It has been exactly one week since the start of the escalation of the Iranian-Israeli conflict, which the Security Council discussed on 13 June (see S/PV.9936). During this time, the world has been flooded with images depicting the night skies over Tel Aviv, Tehran and other cities lit up by explosions of dozens and hundreds of rockets. The apocalyptic predictions have become reality. People in both countries are forced to take shelter and hide, and the number of civilian casualties on both sides is growing with each passing day. Owing to the closure of the airspace in the region, many citizens of third countries have become trapped, and they are striving to find

a way home. Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities remain under attack, which is liable to plunge the world into an unprecedented nuclear catastrophe. The Security Council, the principal organ for the maintenance of international peace and security, cannot shirk its responsibility and must provide an objective assessment of the situation and devise an appropriate decision.

We cannot deny the obvious facts: it was indeed Israel that attacked Iran on the eve of the most recent round of indirect talks between Washington and Tehran. In so doing, not only did West Jerusalem show blatant disregard for the efforts being undertaken to seek a diplomatic solution to issues surrounding Iran's nuclear programme, but it also demonstrated contempt for its key ally, the United States, which until recently had declared its intention to reach a compromise on that issue.

It is worth recalling that Iran's nuclear programme is not a scroll secured by seven seals, hidden from the eyes of the international community. Nuclear facilities and sites in that country are under the safeguards of the IAEA and are continuously subjected to thorough inspections by the Agency. Not one of the Member States of this organ are subject to more stringent oversight and scrutiny. Iran has been strictly complying with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. Moreover, the Agency's Secretariat reports do not contain a single mention of proliferation risks.

It turns out that Israel ignored the assessments by the specialized international Agency and arbitrarily appointed itself as judge and single-handedly took a decision to carry out strikes against a sovereign country without regard for the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Not that long ago, a tragic precedent was set in the Middle East — a State was invaded under the pretext of its alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction, which were never found. It is a pity that the United States, which in 2003 demonstrated that discredited example to the entire world, which led to the suffering of millions of people, is unwilling to learn from its mistakes. Today the United States, together with the United Kingdom, France and Germany, is attempting to persuade all parties to believe the fabrications about Tehran's presumed plans to acquire nuclear weapons.

We also cannot forget the fact that the attack on Iran was carried out at a time when the entire world observed with horror the ongoing man-made catastrophe in Gaza and condemned the continued humanitarian blockade of the Strip and was awaiting the high-level conference in support of the two-State solution under the aegis of the United Nations, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions. Instead of returning to the sole possible negotiated peaceful solution for Palestine, the Israeli military and political leadership raised the stakes and expanded the geography of the conflict in the region. Perhaps western Jerusalem is also willing to use this new misadventure to distract the global community's attention away from the crimes perpetrated by the Israel Defense Forces in Gaza and the West Bank. We have seen extremely perilous attempts to drag third countries into this confrontation, which — as was rightly noted by the Secretary-General — would have major repercussions not only for the parties involved, but also for the entire region and international peace and security as a whole. We align ourselves with the Secretary-General's position on the need to avoid the internationalization of the conflict.

The current escalation around Iran did not start yesterday. Having attacked the country, Israel first received an immediate pass from a number of Western States. The rhetoric expressed by British, French and German diplomats in the lofty Chamber of the Security Council and in the IAEA Board of Governors is no less dangerous than the deadliest weaponry. Blackmailing the Agency's leadership to compel it to draft a vague so-called comprehensive assessment of Iran's nuclear programme and pushing through a biased anti-Iranian resolution in the IAEA Board of Governors made those three countries virtually complicit in Israel's aggression. Let us recall that it was

precisely that IAEA report that became one of the justifications used by the Israeli leadership for its attack on Iran. What is telling in that regard is a cynical statement by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz that “this is the dirty work Israel is doing on behalf of all of us”. The fact that the launch buttons are being pressed by West Jerusalem does not absolve Washington, London, Paris and Berlin of responsibility for what is happening.

Russia deems Israel’s ongoing intensive attacks targeting civilian objects in Iran as completely unacceptable and unlawful under international law. Those reckless actions are creating unacceptable threats to international peace and security. Nuclear facilities cannot be targeted by strikes. We demand that West Jerusalem immediately cease its raids and attacks on Iran, first and foremost, on nuclear facilities which are under IAEA protection.

We expect the Agency’s leadership to promptly draft a detailed written report and subsequently regular reports for consideration by the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council with frank assessments of the damage sustained by Iran’s nuclear energy complex and details on the failed application of the Agency’s safeguards in that country, including in the context of the presence there of inspectors, whose lives were under imminent threat.

We take note of the unequivocal statements by the Iranian side regarding its unwavering commitment to uphold its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its willingness to resume contact with Washington in order to arrive at solutions that would dispel any unfounded suspicions and bias regarding Tehran’s nuclear programme, provided that Israeli attacks cease. We support that position.

We share the Secretary-General’s call for immediate de-escalation leading to a ceasefire. We firmly believe that a lasting settlement can only be secured through diplomacy and negotiations. The goals of nuclear non-proliferation — with the NPT as its foundation — cannot and must not be achieved through aggression and at the cost of innocent lives. We believe that it is quite possible to forge a solution that would both respect Iran’s right to peaceful nuclear activities and ensure the unconditional security of the Jewish State. We have conveyed those options to our American and Israeli colleagues, as well as to our Iranian partners. We are ready to provide them with the necessary assistance in seeking a formula that would be agreeable to everyone.

For now, we still have a chance to avoid another devastating war, which would have unpredictable consequences for the entire region and the world as a whole. We stand ready to seek appropriate solutions in the Council and to engage constructively with all those who genuinely advocate diplomacy and dialogue.

Mr. Bendjama (Algeria): First, I wish to express our appreciation to you, Madam President, for convening this urgent meeting — the second within a week, which underscores the seriousness of the situation before us. I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks and his personal engagement towards peace and stability in the region. We echo his call for dialogue and for ending the fighting. I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their briefings.

Israel’s attack against Iran is an unprovoked and unjustified act. It constitutes a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. It is an attack on nuclear facilities and their International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. If those safeguards, those guarantees and even the presence on the ground of international inspectors cannot guarantee the protection of such installations, then the credibility of the entire nuclear non-proliferation regime is called into question. If those entrusted with upholding that regime are unable or unwilling to condemn and

denounce such violations, they must ask themselves: what is their purpose and are they truly fulfilling their responsibilities?

We must resist any attempt to justify what, in essence, is an act of aggression against a sovereign State Member of the United Nations. Any misleading narrative is unacceptable.

As Director General Grossi stated in an interview with CNN, “we did not have any proof of a systematic effort to move into a nuclear weapon”. Those words merit our full attention.

It is imperative that everyone return to a path of reason. Negotiation between the E3 — the European 3 — and Iran, and negotiation between the United States and Iran, with the facilitation of Oman, remains a viable and constructive option available for diplomacy.

Algeria has always believed in the power of dialogue, and we echo the call of the Secretary-General in that regard. Even at a time of heightened tension, mediation and the principles of the Charter remain our only viable tools. Let me quote the Charter: “All members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means”.

International humanitarian law is clear. Nuclear power plants enjoy specific protection and shall not be made the object of attack. Attacks against such facilities are prohibited. If there remains a risk of radioactive material spreading from the affected facilities, the potential danger extends well beyond borders, endangering civilian populations across the region.

For my country, Algeria, there can be no double standard when it comes to respecting international humanitarian law. Civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected, everywhere and under all circumstances. We have consistently warned against violations of international humanitarian law, notably in Gaza, in which, tragically, violating international humanitarian law became the norm.

Today, the same patterns of conduct are being repeated. We reiterate, in the strongest terms, our condemnation of all violations of international humanitarian law. The protection of civilians is not optional. It is an obligation. Upholding international humanitarian law is a matter of preserving our shared humanity.

However, those responsible for the collapse of the health system in Gaza, for the killing of 1,580 health workers, for the killing of more than 18,000 children and more than 10,000 women, for the killing of 225 journalists and for the killing of 467 humanitarian workers cannot credibly claim to be upholding international humanitarian law.

No measures can substitute for the responsibility that rests with the Council. In 1981, following the Israeli attack on Iraq’s Osirak reactor, remember that the Council unanimously adopted resolution 487 (1981). It is true that that resolution was never really implemented, that Israel’s nuclear facilities were never placed under IAEA safeguards, that Iraq never received any compensation and that the Council was never properly informed of follow-up measures.

That shows that the legacy of impunity and immunity has dangerous consequences. What we are witnessing today is not simply an isolated act of aggression. It is a profound challenge to the very foundations of the international legal order. The Security Council must fulfil its mandate. Acts that threaten international peace and security demand an adequate response. Inaction should not and cannot be an option.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): At the outset, let me express my gratitude to Guyana for swiftly convening today’s meeting at this critical juncture. I thank the Secretary-General for his important statement and compelling message. I also

express appreciation to Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Grossi for their informative briefings.

I reiterate our deepest concern about this dangerous escalation of conflict in the Middle East, despite the unanimous calls for maximum restraint during last Friday's Council meeting (see S/PV.9936). We regret that Israel and Iran have continued to exchange attacks, putting the safety and security of their own people at grave risk. The Government of the Republic of Korea condemns all actions that further aggravate the worsening situation.

Over the past week, both Iran and Israel have carried out repeated and large-scale missile and drone strikes against one another's military assets and critical infrastructure, resulting in widespread destruction and a growing number of casualties, including many civilians. Should that vicious cycle of mutual retaliation persist, not only the peoples of Iran and Israel, but also millions in neighbouring States and beyond could face intensifying threats to their safety and livelihoods. The region's instability is also generating negative impacts on maritime security and on global energy markets and supply chains, risking the economic security of the whole world.

In recent days, we have repeatedly heard the positions of both sides. What is important, however, is that all Member States respect international law and the Charter of the United Nations, uphold the global non-proliferation regime and work towards the promotion of international peace and stability. That is precisely the core mandate of the Security Council and the very reason that we have reconvened here today. As repeatedly voiced in this Chamber, the protection of civilians in armed conflicts is not optional. It is a legal obligation and a moral imperative that we cannot afford to neglect. The indiscriminate use of explosive weapons in populated areas and on civilian facilities, including hospitals, must cease immediately. In addition, we reiterate the concerns that attacks on nuclear facilities can have serious implications for nuclear safety, security and safeguards. In that regard, we commend the IAEA's prompt establishment of a task force and continued reporting on the management of the affected facilities. Appropriate assessments by the IAEA of potential risks, such as radioactive releases, from further possible attacks on nuclear facilities would be highly welcome.

As a country that has long faced mounting nuclear and missile threats from its neighbour, the Republic of Korea does not view this situation as a distant issue confined to the Middle East. The international community remains unconvinced of the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, and that issue should be clearly addressed. We must take the grave consequences of potential nuclear proliferation seriously. At the same time, we should recognize that military measures cannot be the ultimate solution to addressing proliferation concerns or securing long-term peace and security anywhere in the world. The manner in which Iran's nuclear issue is resolved carries significant implications for us all. We take note that the key parties have publicly maintained that they remain open to diplomacy. We sincerely hope that the talks among the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Iran in Geneva today will achieve a timely outcome to navigate through this precarious situation and open another window for diplomacy. The Republic of Korea implores all parties to exercise both wisdom and determination to urgently resolve these immensely tough challenges.

Ms. Shea (United States of America): I thank the Secretary-General for his introductory remarks and Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Director General Rafael Grossi for their briefings.

We commend the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) team for their professionalism in implementing the Agency's critical responsibilities, especially during this complex and evolving situation.

We meet at a decisive moment in the Middle East, convening amid an intensifying conflict between Israel and Iran. It is not too late for the Government of Iran to do the right thing. President Trump has been clear in recent days that Iran's leadership must completely abandon its nuclear enrichment programme and all aspirations of acquiring a nuclear weapon. The Iranian Government has long posed a constant menace to the peace and security of its neighbours and the entire world, which the Council is charged to maintain. The Iranian Government has repeatedly called for Israel's destruction and for "death to America". They have launched direct and proxy attacks on Israeli civilians, including most recently on southern Israel's largest hospital and just recently, in the past couple of hours, on Haifa.

Iran's Government has also spread chaos, terror and suffering throughout the region. Let us not forget that the Iranian Government was an enabling and ideological material force behind Hamas' deadly assault on Israel in October 2023. And it twice attacked Israel last year with hundreds of ballistic missiles. The Iranian Government also encouraged its terrorist proxy Hizbullah to open a northern front from Lebanon and enabled Houthi rebels in Yemen to become a menace to global trade and freedom of navigation and to launch long-range missiles endangering civilians in Israel.

In January 2024, a drone attack from an Iran-backed terrorist group on a United States military facility in Jordan killed three American service members. Enough is enough.

As the leaders from the Group of Seven (G7) stated earlier this week, Iran is the principal source of instability and terror in the Middle East. The G7 also reaffirmed the right of Israel to defend itself. While the United States was not involved in Israel's strikes, let there be no doubt that the United States continues to stand with Israel and supports its actions against Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Iran's leaders could have avoided this conflict had they agreed to a deal that would have prevented them from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon, but they refused to do so, choosing instead to delay and deny. We can no longer ignore that Iran has all that it needs to achieve a nuclear weapon. All that it needs is a decision from its supreme leader. That is unacceptable, and the Council must urge it to change course. The Government of Iran has nothing to gain by escalating its rhetoric towards the IAEA, launching missiles at civilians, threatening neighbours or pursuing nuclear weapons. For too long, it has prioritized terrorism in its nuclear programme above the well-being of its own people. Iran's resulting weakness is now on full display for the entire world. The Iranian Government must abandon its nuclear ambitions so that there is no more destruction and choose instead prosperity for its people.

Mr. Alfaro de Alba (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome and thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency António Guterres, for his powerful message, in which he urged us to give peace a chance. We extend our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi for their briefings and to the delegations represented here today, who honour us with their participation.

Today's meeting responds to the international community's appeal for the parties involved to take measures towards de-escalating the conflict, the sharp upsurge in which is terrifying. We have witnessed the regrettable launching of attacks, which have claimed civilian lives, including those of women and children, with the civilian population bearing the brunt of the conflict. The Security Council now, again, bears a duty to identify mechanisms through multilateralism to devise a solution to the

issue, as was achieved a decade ago with the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

In recent months, we have seen numerous rounds of negotiations aimed at finding a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear programme. As the Secretary-General pointed out, diplomacy, negotiations and dialogue are the only ways of arriving at solutions. We therefore urge all parties to heed his message and resume a genuine negotiation process that is conducive to progress towards an agreement in accordance with the rules of international law. Perfect negotiations or agreements do not exist. Nonetheless, through serious and constructive dialogue and commitment, significant strides towards fair and sustainable solutions can be made. We also underscore the remit of the International Atomic Energy Agency as the competent technical body tasked with verifying compliance with nuclear obligations.

We are witnessing a conflict in which the distinction between critical infrastructure and military targets appears to have become blurred. Accordingly, we issue an urgent and responsible appeal to all parties to adhere to international law and international humanitarian law. It is crucial to protect and safeguard the civilian population and to ensure that critical infrastructure is protected. In that regard, we recall that nuclear facilities must not be attacked under any circumstances, especially those that were already subject to IAEA monitoring and verification under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We cannot allow such acts to become acceptable under international standards. The risks to the civilian population are too great, as an incident of that kind could lead to the release of radioactive material, entailing grave consequences for the population and the environment in terms of radiological contamination and an unprecedented regional impact.

At this critical juncture, it is essential that the Council act decisively and consistently, so that its action translates into credibility that secures an immediate cessation of hostilities and full compliance with the principles of international law.

Mr. George (Sierra Leone): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this emergency meeting of the Security Council on the escalating conflict between Israel and Iran. We thank His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his powerful reminder about the Council's responsibilities, and Mr. Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, for their timely and insightful briefings.

The request for this meeting underscores the gravity of the recent regrettable developments, coupled with the expectation that the Council — indeed, its members — will enable the Council to discharge its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We remain gravely alarmed by the ongoing military strikes by Israel against Iran and the retaliatory strikes by Iran. Those hostilities, which began on 13 June, have reportedly claimed the lives of senior Iranian officials and nuclear scientists and those of civilians in both Israel and Iran — a toll that we find deeply troubling. As we express grave concern regarding the attacks on Iran, we are equally disturbed by reports of strikes against or affecting civilian targets in Israel, including hospitals and emergency services, and in densely populated areas, in clear violation of international humanitarian law. Those hostilities have displaced families, damaged critical infrastructure and disrupted essential services. Thousands face the prospect of urgent evacuation.

Sierra Leone recalls the obligations of all parties under international humanitarian law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, to protect civilians, medical personnel and civilian objects at all times. We call for safe corridors for

those seeking refuge, unimpeded humanitarian access and close coordination with relief agencies to ensure the delivery of life-saving assistance.

Swift humanitarian action is indispensable but is no substitute for a political solution. The region needs restraint, responsibility and credible diplomatic initiatives. Sierra Leone aligns itself with the Secretary-General's appeal for immediate de-escalation, renewed dialogue and the exercise of maximum restraint. Statesmanship, not brinkmanship, is required. We are therefore heartened and fully welcome the meeting in Geneva today of the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, France and Germany, including the European Union High Representative and the Iranian Foreign Minister, as part of efforts to ease the conflict. We believe this is a window of opportunity that clearly exists for genuine dialogue and peace to prevail.

We recall the binding obligations under international humanitarian law. Article 56 of the Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 prohibits attacks on works and installations containing dangerous forces, including nuclear electrical generating stations, if such attacks may cause the release of dangerous forces resulting in civilian losses.

The IAEA has also consistently underscored that the safety and security of nuclear facilities must never be compromised by military action. The ongoing hostilities risk triggering a disaster of unimaginable scale. Any military action that endangers nuclear facilities risks severe humanitarian consequences, irreversible environmental harm and further regional instability with global repercussions.

We therefore emphasize the need to safeguard and allow the full and unhindered implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses regime. The current conflict underscores the fragility of the international nuclear order and the urgent necessity to preserve the integrity of the NPT process. We call upon all States to recommit to the NPT's objectives and to engage constructively in dialogue within its framework.

Our Council has a duty to ensure that tensions do not derail the NPT's vital role in advancing peace and security.

We further urge support for regional initiatives, including a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as envisaged in General Assembly and NPT Review Conference outcomes.

We endorse inclusive diplomatic tracts aimed at restoring structured negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and addressing broader regional security concerns, including maritime safety and missile proliferation. Previous agreements, though imperfect, show that sustained engagement, grounded in international law and mutual respect, remains the surest path towards durable peace.

We also support the impartial technical work of the IAEA. Full cooperation by all States, including Iran, with its monitoring and verification mandate is essential to ensure transparency, build confidence and prevent miscalculation. We commend Director General Grossi for sustaining engagement under challenging circumstances.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone recalls the principle of sovereign equality under Article 2, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations and the duty of Member States to settle disputes by peaceful means under Article 33. We highlight Article 25 obliging States to accept and carry out the Council's decisions and Article 103, which establishes the supremacy of Charter obligations.

The Council must speak with one voice in upholding the law and encouraging peaceful settlement.

We welcome constructive efforts by regional actors and partners committed to the Charter. We encourage States with influence over the parties to use that influence and support non-military solutions and reinforce respect for international law. The human cost, environmental damage and brutal economic instability of further escalation would be immense and long-lasting.

Finally, Sierra Leone urges all parties to pause, de-escalate and recommit to diplomacy. The eyes of the world are upon us, and history will measure us by the choices we make. Restraint, dialogue and adherence to the Charter remain the guiding principles for a safer and more secure world.

Mr. Bonnafont (France) (*spoke in French*): We listened attentively to the Secretary-General who forcefully reminded us of the seriousness of the situation, and we thank him. I would like to thank Ms. DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for their briefings, which gave us an idea of the reasons for our meeting today.

The strikes between Israel and Iran have been going on for a week now. Civilian casualties are multiplying on both sides. Yesterday, one of Israel's largest hospitals was hit by an Iranian missile. Israeli strikes have also targeted civilian infrastructure unrelated to Iran's nuclear and ballistic programmes, and the information transmitted by the IAEA Director General on the radiological situation of certain sites is on everyone's mind. There is an urgent need to put an end to those military operations, which pose a grave threat to regional security.

France calls for restraint and de-escalation. Civilian lives must be spared. We must return to the path of diplomacy.

As the Secretary-General underscored, the crux of the matter is the nuclear issue. France's position is clear: Iran cannot and must not acquire nuclear weapons. A nuclear Iran would first and foremost threaten the security of Israel and the region, which Iran has been destabilizing for years by supporting armed and terrorist groups.

A nuclear Iran would also pose a direct threat to the security interests of France and Europe. That threat is already very real: French State hostages are currently being held in Iran, and Iran is supplying Iranian ballistic missiles and drones to Russia for use in its war of aggression against Ukraine.

France takes this opportunity to reiterate its call for the immediate release of the two hostages who have been held in Iran for over three years in unacceptable conditions.

Iran's access to nuclear weapons would represent a flagrant violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It would lead to a serious weakening of the international non-proliferation regime, of which the Treaty is the cornerstone. It would encourage other States in the region and beyond to enter the nuclear arms race.

Yet Iran has chosen to dangerously escalate its nuclear programme, despite calls for it to respect its international commitments. Iran has accumulated a uranium stockpile that far exceeds the limits of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). It has produced highly enriched uranium at levels that have no credible civilian justification. It has installed thousands of advanced centrifuges that exceed the limits of the 2015 agreement, including at sites where such activities are prohibited by the JCPOA.

In a report published at the end of May, the Director General of the IAEA stated that he was unable to guarantee the peaceful nature of Iran's programme. In a

resolution adopted on 12 June, the IAEA Board of Governors noted Iran's failure to comply with its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We are grateful to the IAEA for its relentless efforts to assume its inspection and control responsibilities, despite Iran's obstruction and refusal. We respect the ethic of impartiality, independence and rigorous respect for treaties and their mandates, which the IAEA has once again demonstrated.

The Security Council's objective must therefore be for Iran to resume its cooperation with the IAEA and return to compliance with its international obligations. A decision by Iran to withdraw from the NPT would constitute an unprecedented escalation.

However, our responsibility towards the suffering civilian populations, our commitment to international law and the memory of recent crises in the Middle East require us to act. There can be no military solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. It is through negotiation that a lasting response to the proliferation threat posed by Iran's nuclear programme must be sought.

That is France's long-standing position, alongside its British and German partners. It is that approach that made possible the 2015 Vienna agreement, whose application we have always supported, despite the United States withdrawal in 2018 and Iran's cessation of compliance with its commitments in 2019. In 2020, the European members of the E3 triggered the dispute settlement mechanism provided for in the agreement and undertook tireless diplomatic efforts in that context. In 2021 and 2022, Iran was offered two revised agreement proposals, which would have allowed the United States to return to the agreement and Iran to resume its full implementation. Iran did not seize those opportunities.

This year again, France, together with its E3 partners, has continuously engaged with Iran and hopes that those exchanges will bear fruit.

In the absence of an agreement that reflects our security interests, France, together with its close European E3 partners, as they have announced, will shoulder its responsibilities under the provisions of resolution 2231 (2015).

France today solemnly calls on Iran to finally seize the opportunity for a negotiated diplomatic solution while there is still time. As several Council members have noted, a meeting of the E3 ministers, the High Representative of the European Union and their Iranian counterpart is being held today in Geneva to that end.

As time is ticking, France, together with its close European partners, stands ready to initiate, immediately, diplomatic negotiations with Iran to ensure that Iran never acquires nuclear weapons and to put an end to this conflict. We must agree on a robust, verifiable and sustained agreement, which is essential to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Iran must make clear and concrete commitments now to demonstrate to the international community that Tehran is committed to that path and that rapid results can be achieved.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I start by thanking the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their clear and sober briefings.

The United Kingdom reiterates its full support for the vital work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We thank the IAEA Director General and his staff for their continued professionalism, diligence and courage in these complex circumstances.

First, the United Kingdom is deeply concerned by the sharp escalation we have witnessed between Israel and Iran over the past week. This is a dangerous moment for the entire region and further escalation is in no one's interest. Civilians must never

be targeted, and we deplore the loss of civilian life and offer our condolences. All parties must protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, in line with international humanitarian law. Restraint is vital to prevent further regional escalation and loss of life. The United Kingdom supports Israel's need to protect its security and people. However, a return to diplomacy is urgent, and we have pressed that with both Israel and Iran. I also want to be clear that the United Kingdom did not participate and is not participating in Israel's strikes. We have deployed assets, including jets, to the region as a defensive and precautionary measure only.

Secondly, Iran's nuclear programme is a significant concern. My Prime Minister has been clear: Iran must never acquire a nuclear weapon. The IAEA's reports show that Iran's high enriched uranium stockpile has grown to alarming levels. Iran's stockpile of 60 per cent high enriched uranium has no credible civilian justification. It is essential that Iran cooperate with the IAEA and bridge the trust gap of which the Secretary-General spoke. The IAEA and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are key pillars of international security. For many years, the United Kingdom, alongside our E3 partners, has sought a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear programme. That commitment stands and has never been more urgent. Alongside E3 colleagues and the European Union, we are engaging with Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi in Geneva today and using this window of opportunity to support a return to diplomacy and a peaceful resolution. Any further escalation — such as restricting IAEA access, diverting nuclear material or increasing the production of high enriched uranium — would intensify the threat to international peace and security posed by Iran's nuclear programme.

Thirdly, military action cannot put an end to Iran's nuclear capabilities. We have strongly supported and continue to support diplomatic efforts to come to a deal. That is the only way to resolve the nuclear issue for the long term.

Our objective remains stability in the Middle East. A diplomatic solution is in the interests of all concerned. Even now, it is not out of reach. Now is the time for restraint, calm and a return to diplomacy and dialogue.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): I thank the Secretary-General for his introductory remarks and I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi very much for their updates and appraisal of the situation on the ground.

As we heard from the briefers, the situation continues to deteriorate rapidly and risks pushing the region towards a point of no return. We are deeply concerned with the Israeli strikes on Iran, as well as with Iran's retaliatory strikes on Israel. Slovenia condemns that military escalation and the unnecessary loss of civilian lives. We call on both sides to respect the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law.

We echo the Secretary-General's urgent appeal to avoid the internationalization of the conflict. Slovenia calls on both sides to immediately de-escalate and agree to a full and unconditional ceasefire.

Slovenia remains concerned about the size and unclear nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Those concerns are aggravated by the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency, after many years, still cannot confirm or deny the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. However, no amount of precision strikes will make those concerns go away.

We have no tolerance for the proliferation of nuclear weapons, nor for attacks against civilian nuclear infrastructure, whether it happens in Eastern Europe, the Middle East or anywhere else.

Issues pertaining to Iran's nuclear programme have always required a tailored, diplomatic solution. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was a necessity and,

when it expires, it will need to be replaced. With that in mind, we urge all parties to prioritize diplomacy and remain committed to a political process. We welcome the talks between the E3 and Iran taking place today in Geneva. They represent a much-needed stabilizing factor.

In conclusion, the death and destruction in both Israel and Iran in recent days are raising the stakes, escalating the fighting and inflaming rhetoric in a region that has already endured more than its share of suffering. Our thoughts remain with civilians under siege in Gaza and the hostages who need to be released immediately and unconditionally.

In such a volatile situation, it takes courage to de-escalate and commit to peace. I appeal to both sides to show that courage, to spare their own civilians and the Middle East as a whole from further bloodshed and destruction.

Mr. Sekeris (Greece): Let me start by thanking the Secretary-General for his very important remarks. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their informative and timely briefings.

Since last Friday's emergency meeting (see S/PV.9936), there has been a significant deterioration in the situation in the Middle East. Once a dreaded possibility, military escalation is now a reality. In this dangerous moment, allow me to make the following three points.

First, we reiterate our call for immediate de-escalation and utmost restraint, so as to end the vicious cycle of military action and violence. The international community must be urgently engaged in order to provide the necessary security assurances and a sustainable diplomatic endgame, so as to avoid a regional — or worse still, a global — conflagration. We fully support the Secretary-General's appeal to all to avoid any further widening of the conflict, and we stress our commitment to regional security and stability and our support for any diplomatic initiative that will lead to a sustainable ceasefire.

Secondly, Greece has repeatedly expressed — and again expresses — its strong concern about the Iranian nuclear programme. It is imperative to preserve the global non-proliferation regime as enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and Iran must comply with its legally binding safeguards obligations and can never be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon.

Thirdly and lastly, Greece has consistently supported Israel's right to protect itself. We also echo the Secretary-General's condemnation of the tragic and unnecessary loss of life and injuries to civilians and damage to homes and critical civilian infrastructure. A week into yet another conflict, it is now more important than ever to ensure that civilians do not keep finding themselves in the crossfire, especially given the nuclear aspect of the evolving crisis. We recall the obligation of the States Members of the United Nations to act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We consider respect for international law and international humanitarian law to be an absolute priority. It is essential to uphold the United Nations Charter as regards the use of force and the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate that de-escalation and a full and immediate ceasefire are now urgently needed as a first step towards a sustainable peace. The international community and countries with influence must step in and offer both parties a diplomatic way out. We are looking forward to a positive outcome of the meeting taking place today in Geneva among the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the E3 — namely, the United Kingdom, France and Germany — the High Representative of the European Union and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iran. The stakes are simply too high for regional and world security, and failure is not an option.

Mr. Dhakkar (Somalia): I thank you, Madam President, for your timely leadership in convening this meeting. We appreciate the remarks of the Secretary-General and the briefings provided by Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi on the rapidly evolving situation in the Middle East.

The situation arising from the reported Israeli air strikes against the Islamic Republic of Iran on 13 June and Iran's subsequent response is a matter of great concern. Those actions represent a perilous escalation that threatens to engulf the entire region in an uncontrollable cycle of violence, suffering and pain. We strongly condemn any acts of aggression that violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States. Such actions are in clear contravention of the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly Article 2, paragraph 4, which unequivocally prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. We believe that all Member States share a responsibility to act in accordance with those commitments. We emphasize the necessity of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, adhering to the principles of good neighbourliness and settling disputes through peaceful means.

Somalia urges all parties to work towards de-escalation, to achieve a comprehensive ceasefire and to restore calm and hope. Our delegation expresses deep concern about this dangerous escalation, which threatens grave consequences for regional peace and stability. The spillover of the hostilities imperils countless lives and threatens to deepen existing crises. Somalia strongly reaffirms the urgent necessity of establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction applicable to all States in the region without exception, in accordance with the relevant international resolutions. We also stress the need for all Middle Eastern countries to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a step towards regional and global security.

We emphasize the paramount importance of protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure and of refraining from targeting nuclear facilities that are under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, in line with Security Council resolutions and decisions. Such acts constitute a violation of international law and international humanitarian law, including the 1949 Geneva Convention, and pose unacceptable risks to civilian populations and the environment.

At this critical stage, Somalia calls for a swift return to the path of negotiations as the only viable means of reaching a sustainable agreement regarding the Iranian nuclear programme. We further emphasize the importance of safeguarding the freedom of navigation in international waters, in accordance with international law, and we urge all parties to refrain from actions that undermine maritime security.

The complex challenges before us demand a collective and measured response that is grounded in dialogue, mutual respect and the search for common ground. Our delegation reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and the principles of the United Nations Charter. We urge all parties to act with responsibility and wisdom, placing the well-being of the region's peoples above all other considerations. It is important to seize this moment, to redouble our efforts to bring about de-escalation and to support a diplomatic process that can deliver peace, stability and security for all States in the Middle East.

Finally, my delegation stands ready to engage constructively with the international community to advance those shared goals.

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): I thank the Secretary-General for his important introductory remarks and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their detailed briefings and urgent messages here this morning.

As underlined by the Secretary-General, the recent escalation in the Middle East has once again brought the region dangerously close to the brink of a region-wide conflict. The repeated attacks between Israel and Iran are cause for great concern and pose a grave risk to international peace and security. We must do our utmost, individually and collectively, to respond to that threat and to prevent further destabilization. Together with the European Union and many others, we join the call for maximum restraint and immediate de-escalation.

We urge all parties to abide by their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to ensure the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, in line with international humanitarian law. We deplore the loss of civilian lives and the unacceptable attacks on civilian targets, including the recent attack on a hospital. Furthermore, every action should be taken and the necessary restraint shown to reduce the risk of nuclear accidents.

Denmark's view is clear: diplomatic engagement and a negotiated solution, with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) playing a vital role, remain the only viable paths towards lasting peace in the region. Denmark supports all diplomatic efforts to restore stability and return to the negotiating table to seek a solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We welcome the E3 Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the European Union's meeting with the Foreign Minister of Iran in Geneva today.

We have been clear that Iran must never be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon. Denmark has repeatedly expressed its concern about Iran's escalating nuclear trajectory. The fact that the IAEA is unable to provide assurances that the Iranian nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful is deeply disturbing. We are further alarmed at the fact that Iran is non-compliant with legally binding nuclear safeguards obligations, as recently determined by the IAEA Board of Governors. There is no plausible civilian reason for Iran's production and stockpiling of highly enriched uranium. We strongly urge Iran to cooperate with the IAEA on the outstanding safeguards issues and to return to the negotiating table to secure an agreement with the international community that ensures that Iran's nuclear activities are exclusively peaceful — an agreement that upholds the global non-proliferation norms and fosters lasting stability in the Middle East and beyond.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Denmark's urgent call for de-escalation and for all sides to refrain from steps that could lead to serious regional consequences. In the face of mounting civilian suffering and with the risk of a spark igniting a wider conflict, that is an imperative.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Guyana.

I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks and for his untiring efforts for peace. I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for the very important updates provided.

The recent escalation between Israel and Iran poses an immediate threat to the security and stability of an already volatile region. The effects of that conflict could extend far beyond its immediate borders, exacerbated by non-compliance with international law. Sadly, regional and international peace and security are now both under threat.

Guyana took note of Israel's letter of 17 June 2025 (S/2025/390), in which the Council was informed of Operation Rising Lion, aimed at "neutraliz[ing] the existential and imminent threat from Iran's nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs." We also took note of Iran's letter of 18 June 2025 (S/2025/391), in which it "reserves its [...] right [...] to self-defence to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity, the Iranian people and its vital national interests". While acknowledging

those letters, we urge both Iran and Israel to exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid plunging the region into deeper crisis and dangerously close to a nuclear catastrophe. We also urge both parties to adhere to their obligations under international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Security Council resolutions. We emphasize that a State's right to self-defence does not absolve them of their responsibilities and obligations under international law, including human rights and humanitarian law.

The Middle East has long endured a fragile stability, constantly threatened by geopolitical tensions and unresolved conflicts. As the war in Gaza continues, this new escalation threatens to shatter the delicate balance, igniting a wider regional conflagration with unimaginable consequences. It risks drawing in more actors, further entrenching cycles of violence and making a peaceful resolution increasingly elusive. Like the Secretary-General, Guyana firmly believes that dialogue, diplomacy and adherence to international law are the only pathways to sustainable peace in the region. We call on all parties to immediately cease hostilities, de-escalate tensions and return to the path of diplomacy. The root causes of that escalation must be addressed with urgency, and the parties must work towards a comprehensive and lasting political solution that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region.

Guyana is also concerned about the possible humanitarian consequences and reiterates its call for all parties to respect international humanitarian law, in particular the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, and to ensure the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. Media reports indicate that more than 200 persons have already been killed in Iran and at least 24 in Israel as a result of the escalation. It is important to ensure that more civilian lives are not lost.

Lastly, Guyana takes positive note of the meeting in Geneva today among the E3 — the United Kingdom, France and Germany — the European Union and Iran. We also reaffirm our commitment to supporting any Council measure aimed at preserving international peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Iravani (Islamic Republic of Iran): We express our sincere appreciation to you, Madam President, for convening this urgent meeting at our request. We welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this meeting and thank him for his introductory remarks. We also extend our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her valuable briefing. We thank Algeria, Pakistan, China and the Russian Federation for supporting this meeting and for their clear condemnation of Israel's brutal attacks.

On 13 June, Israel launched a large-scale unprovoked military attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Civilian cities, including Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz and Kermanshah, were deliberately targeted. The strikes were planned and systematic, killing senior military officials, scientists, professors, students, doctors, artists, athletes, rescue workers and ordinary civilians, including women, children and infants. Many died in their sleep. Those children were killed in their beds. Hundreds of civilians have been killed and thousands injured.

The aggression continues. On 16 June, Israel attacked Hakim Children's Hospital in Tehran, Farabi Rehabilitation Hospital in Kermanshah and the Iranian Red Crescent Society's building and ambulances. Those are only a few instances of the brutality and gross violations of international humanitarian law by the Israeli regime. At least two pregnant women and their unborn children were killed on the same day that Israel struck the national broadcaster, the Islamic Republic of Iran

Broadcasting, during a live broadcast, killing journalists and humanitarian workers. Just today, the Israeli regime inflicted damage on two other hospitals in Iran, endangering the lives of patients and medical personnel. Until now, five hospitals have suffered heinous attacks by the Israeli regime, along with physicians and humanitarian personnel who were killed or injured. They were not accidents. They were not collateral damage. They were deliberate war crimes — acts of State terror and examples of barbaric warfare.

Israel also attacked Iran's peaceful, safeguarded nuclear site and facilities. On 13 June, it struck the uranium conversion facility and the fuel pellet fabrication plant. On 18 June, it targeted centrifuge production sites in Tehran and Karaj, both under the monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). On 19 June, it attacked the Arak heavy water research reactor, built under the terms of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and IAEA safeguards, with no proliferation risk. Those attacks violated the Charter of the United Nations, international law, the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency and resolutions 2231 (2015) and 487 (1981).

Israeli strikes are an assault on the global non-proliferation regime. Resolution 487 (1981), which was adopted unanimously, clearly states that any military attack on safeguarded nuclear facilities is an attack on the entire IAEA safeguard system and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) itself.

The Security Council must implement its resolutions. If the Council fails to act now, it will send a message that international law and resolutions apply selectively. If the non-proliferation regime collapses, the Council will share the responsibility with the Israeli regime.

Despite Iran's repeated warning about the threats to our peaceful nuclear sites and facilities, the IAEA Director General has failed to act. His silence undermines the Agency's authority, neutrality and credibility. The IAEA cannot remain silent while safeguarded facilities are attacked. That inaction must end.

Israel openly declared that it would continue the strike for as many days as it takes. We are alarmed by credible reports that the United States, a depository of the NPT, may be joining the war. Any such support violates the NPT and undermines global security.

The selective invocation of international law by the United States and France, using it when convenient and discarding it when it constrains their allies, is a form of institutional hypocrisy which gravely undermines the credibility of the Security Council and international law.

Let me be clear, Iran's nuclear programme is peaceful and under the world's most extensive IAEA inspections. Iran has long advocated for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Israel is the only possessor of undeclared nuclear weapons in the region. It refused to accede to the NPT and blocked regional disarmament efforts.

Israel's aggression violates the Charter of the United Nations. It breaches the basic principle of the prohibition of the use of force. It violates Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It violates international human rights law and targets innocent civilians and threatens the right to life and security of our people. That regime has committed war crimes, crimes against humanity and State terrorism. Its attacks on safeguarded nuclear facilities set a dangerous precedent for global security.

The already dire situation has been exacerbated by mounting and irrefutable evidence of direct involvement by the United States in that illegal war of aggression. The United States has publicly threatened to strike Iran's safeguarded nuclear facilities. Such acts constitute a flagrant violation of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations and a breach of the sovereign equality of States.

Those reckless statements and actions emanate from the Head of a State that is a permanent member of the Council and entrusted with the primary responsibility for international peace and security and responsible behaviour.

Iran has exercised its inherent right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Our response has complied fully with international law, including humanitarian law. We have taken all necessary precautions to protect civilians. Iran will continue to exercise that right as long as the Security Council fails to discharge its primary responsibility under the Charter and until the Israeli aggression is fully and unequivocally terminated.

The Security Council must act now. We reiterate our call on the Security Council to determine that the Israeli illegal use of force and armed attacks against Iran are a breach of peace and an act of aggression, adopt binding enforcement measures under Chapter VII to halt the aggression and prevent its recurrence, clearly condemn the violation of Iran's sovereignty and the targeting of our safeguarded nuclear facilities and address the risk of wider regional war, especially the unlawful involvement of a third country.

The lies and fabrication used by the representative of the Israeli regime and its Western allies to whitewash and justify its horrendous crimes do not work anymore. International law is clear: Israel has no right to commit that act of aggression; no right to attack and target civilians, civilian infrastructure or safeguarded nuclear facilities; and no legal or moral cover for war crimes. The so-called pre-emptive attack and existential threat claims used by that terrorist regime and its allies to justify aggression, conduct acts of aggression, kill innocent people and violate the territorial integrity of States have no basis in international law. Those are false excuses for Israeli aggression. Iran has never initiated any war, while Israel, as an occupying and terrorist regime, has a long and dark history of illegal use of force, violation of all legal international norms, assassination and nuclear secrecy which has destabilized the entire region.

The selective use of international law by a certain member of the Council exposes dangerous double standards that endanger international peace and security and undermine the credibility of this body. Without the support and protection of certain Western States, especially the United States, Israel would not have been able to commit that aggression with such impunity. That complicity must be recorded by history.

Finally, the Council's failure to act at this critical juncture would constitute a profound abdication of the Council's responsibilities and a grave betrayal of the fundamental principles of the United Nations. Inaction will embolden the aggressor, undermine international law and send a message of dangerous impunity to the world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Danon (Israel): I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their remarks.

Before I begin my remarks, I must address the representative of the Islamic regime in Iran.

How dare Mr. Iravani write five letters in the past week, come before the Security Council, demand a meeting and ask the international community for sympathy? How dare he ask the international community to protect him from the consequences of his own genocidal agenda? Has he no shame?

For years his Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has publicly and repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel and the United States. In May 2024, he declared that: "The divine promise to eliminate the Zionist entity will be fulfilled." In

May 2025, he said: “The Zionist regime, which is a lethal, dangerous, cancerous tumour, should certainly be eradicated, and it will be.” Those statements are his regime’s policies.

The Government of Iran attempted the assassination of Prime Minister Netanyahu. It attempted the assassination of President Trump. Its operatives have plotted to attack Jewish communities and kill Israeli civilians across the world.

Now, with innocent blood still dripping from his hands, Mr. Iravani comes here asking for sympathy. He demands protection from the Council while plotting the extermination of my people. Enough with the performances! Enough with the theatre!

How can the Council allow the representative of a regime that funds, arms and orchestrates terror across the world to come here and play victim? It is like a wolf complaining when the shepherd fights back to protect his flock. He is so innocent. I would like Mr. Iravani to clarify for us if he supports the destruction of Israel, a United Nations Member State? Does he support the assassination of our elected leaders? If he does not say so, we will all be here waiting. The Council should put an end to this charade, once and for all. Mr. Iravani is not a victim. He is not even a diplomat. He is a wolf pretending to be a diplomat. And we are done pretending otherwise.

On Wednesday night, Iran launched a ballistic missile directly at a hospital. By the way, I listened to his words. Mr. Iravani mentioned that we attacked hospitals. I would like to ask him to provide a list of the hospitals that Israel attacked in Iran. We know what we are doing. If we attacked hospitals, he should show us the locations, the names and the list. The hospital, Soroka Medical Centre in Be’er Sheva, is the largest hospital in southern Israel. It was struck by a precision guided missile fired by the Islamic Republic of Iran. That hospital serves more than 1 million people — Jews, Muslims, Christians, Druze and Bedouin. It is a vital provider of emergency and trauma care. Iran did it on purpose. There were no military bases nearby. There were no mistakes. It left those 1 million people with severely reduced access to medical service. That was not a misfire. That was not a mistake. Iran has proven its ability to strike strategic targets with accuracy. That was a deliberate act. It is a blatant violation of international law, a war crime and a calculated attempt to murder the most vulnerable.

Let the Council understand what that missile really signified — that no one is safe; that if Iran will target a hospital with a ballistic missile, it will target anyone, anywhere, with anything they have.

Today it was Be’er Sheva. Tomorrow it could be Brussels. Soon it could be Boston. Iran is rapidly expanding its ballistic missile arsenal. Today, its longest-range missiles can travel more than 2,000 kilometres. That already puts Eastern Europe in range. But Iran is not stopping there. Iran is developing missiles with a range of more than 4,000 kilometres. That would place every European capital — London, Paris, Berlin, Rome — within striking distance. And when that milestone is reached, what comes next — New York, Washington, the entire United States east coast? Before Israel took action, that reality was approaching faster than Council members could imagine.

Do Council members believe that such a regime will hesitate to threaten entire populations with nuclear armed missiles? Can they guarantee that, especially for a regime that chants death to America, death to England, death to Israel and so many others, because that is where the world was heading. Israel is stopping that.

Iran has already enriched uranium to near weapons-grade levels. It cannot be denied. We saw the reports. It has built deep underground facilities designed to survive bunker-busting bombs. It has advanced missile delivery systems and it has lied to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the world at every step.

There must finally be an acknowledgment that there is no greater threat to international peace and security than a nuclear Iran. The Soroka hospital strike should end any illusion that that threat is theoretical. Iran is not just building the capability — it is using it. We will never allow those capabilities to go nuclear.

While the ayatollahs shout death to America and death to Israel, many on the Council dismiss the threats. While Iranian missiles fly, the United Nations urges restraint and de-escalation while ignoring Iran's nuclear ambitions altogether. That weakness, that detachment from reality, that hypocrisy is what allowed Iran to get as far in its nuclear programme as it did. It is what allowed Iran to sow chaos across the world.

Let us analyse it for a minute. The Iranian regime has exported thousands of drones which have killed many civilians. It has armed Hizbullah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, the Houthis in Yemen, Shia militias in Iraq, extremist groups in Syria and Africa and criminal networks in Latin America and Europe. It is a war machine, stretched all around the world. Its reach is not limited by borders, its hatred is not limited by reason and its ambition is not limited by geography.

We have already seen the consequences — terror attacks in Argentina, Iranian agents uncovered in European capitals, proxy missile strikes on Gulf States — that is Iran's vision for the world and it is happening in real time.

Right now, Israel is a focus point for that murderous vision. Just yesterday, Iran launched another ballistic missile, this time carrying cluster munitions, at a densely populated civilian area in central Israel. Cluster munitions are designed to spread multiple explosions over a wide area. It deliberately fired those munitions at civilians. Iran's intentions could not be clearer — bloody murder. Twenty-nine civilians have been killed and almost 900 wounded by Iranian missiles. The only reason the number is not higher is because of Israel's advanced defensive capabilities.

Yes, Israel acted, because we understand the cost of waiting. We will not wait for another threat, whether it is rockets, missiles, terrorists or an atomic bomb. Israel acted as a last resort. It was the final window of opportunity to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and it came only after diplomacy had been exhausted. Israel cannot and will not accept this situation. Operation Rising Lion was launched to neutralize an imminent and existential threat, and we are doing so in full compliance with international law. Israel is strictly following the law of armed conflict, including the rules of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attacks. That is why I am waiting for the report about the hospitals. Our strikes are aimed at military objectives, on the basis of reliable intelligence. Every measure is taken to minimize harm to civilians.

Iran launches indiscriminate, barbaric missile attacks. They deliberately target population centres. That is the difference between a democracy acting in defence of its people and a brutal regime targeting civilians.

It is Israeli civilians running for shelter now, every day. But something many Council members also seem not to understand is that when Israel acts, we are not only defending our own people — we are defending theirs as well. As German Chancellor Merz said, "Israel is doing the world's dirty work". We are the first target, but we will not be the last. We are holding the line between civilization and genocidal jihadist imperialism. Iran does not just want to destroy Israel. It wants to make the world order, one missile, one terror proxy, one destroyed hospital at a time. Therefore, we do not apologize for defending ourselves. We do not apologize for striking Iran's nuclear facilities. We do not apologize for neutralizing the threat, because while some here raise their voices when Israel strikes a ballistic missile site, they fall silent when Iran strikes a surgical wing. Some condemn us for destroying

a drone factory, but say nothing when Iran hits a residential building. That is not balanced. That is moral collapse.

We are doing what the Council should have done long ago. We are acting when the international community hesitated. We are stopping a threat that endangered the entire world. Though our homes, our families and our children are under threat, we will not stop, not until Iran's nuclear strength is dismantled, not until its war machine is disarmed, not until our people and others are safe. That is not just Israel's fight. It is the world's fight, and if no one else will to fight it, we will.

The President: I wish to take this opportunity to remind all speakers that this is a formal meeting of the Council, and as such, there is a need to ensure the proper decorum and proper language. We should always aim to refrain from personal attacks.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Al-Fatlawi (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): We express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his presence at this meeting, for his demands underscoring the importance of containing this crisis, for calling for a return to negotiations and for recognizing the implications of the crisis. I also thank the Under-Secretary-General and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for their briefings.

I would like to express the appreciation of the Republic of Iraq for the efforts of the Security Council in following up on the dangerous developments in the Middle East region, which is witnessing an unprecedented escalation as a result of the continued Israeli aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran and its repercussions for regional and international security.

Iraq condemns in the strongest terms the unjustified Israeli attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran and the repeated Israeli violations of the sovereignty of States, in particular the violations of Iraqi airspace for the purpose of launching aggression against neighbouring Iran, an act that constitutes a flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, a blatant breach and illegal use and violation of the airspace of a sovereign State to launch hostile acts against another neighbouring State Member of the United Nations and the repercussions thereof, which have exacerbated instability in the region and put its security at grave risk. It forced Iraq to take the decision to close its airspace as a precaution, inflicting economic losses on the transport and tourism sectors, in addition to humanitarian harm as a result of travellers being stranded and airports closing. We reiterate here our categorical rejection of any violation of Iraqi sovereignty, and we call for the immediate cessation of those unacceptable violations. We will not allow Iraq to be a theatre for settling regional or international scores.

In that regard, the Government of the Republic of Iraq sent an official letter of complaint to the President of the Security Council on 13 June, in which we explained the details of that violation.

Today, shortly before this meeting began, 50 Israeli warplanes violated Iraqi airspace, territorial integrity and sovereignty, coming from the Syrian-Jordanian border in two waves, the first wave comprising 20 aircraft and the second comprising 30 aircraft, in the direction of southern Iraq. They flew over the cities of Basra, Nasiriyah, Najaf and Karbala. In addition to constituting a violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the sovereignty of Iraq, those actions constitute a threat against holy sites, eliciting reactions among the populace, owing to the global status of those sites.

Since the war on the Gaza Strip began, Iraq has repeatedly warned of the repercussions of continuing this war, expanding the conflict, fuelling regional tensions and endangering regional and international peace and security. No measures

were taken at the time or have been taken to date to stop the war and end the suffering of the Palestinian people, emboldening the Israeli occupation forces to commit more crimes and attempt to expand the war, escalate it and drag the region into a regional conflict, as we previously warned. We stress here today that the continuation of the Israeli aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran threatens to turn the region into an arena of all-out conflict, with catastrophic consequences for the peoples of the region, for international waterways, leading to their closure, and for energy markets and the global economic situation. The continuation of the war and the expansion of its geographical scope or the entry of new actors into it threatens to turn it into a full-scale regional conflict that threatens the stability of the entire region and will have dire consequences for all the peoples of the region, including countries that were not parties to the immediate conflict.

What makes the situation even more serious is that this is not the first time that the Security Council has met to discuss the military actions taken by the Israeli entity against sovereign States and their nuclear facilities. We all clearly remember resolution 487 (1981) and the report of the IAEA Board of Governors. At the time, the Israeli action was described as a blow to the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system and the non-proliferation regime. Israel must place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards system and accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, with the aim of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Moreover, the ongoing violations coincide with the existence of ongoing diplomatic negotiation tracks, as the current military escalation constitutes a fatal blow to all political efforts and returns the region to a posture of confrontation, at a time when we desperately need to promote the language of dialogue and ensure that reason prevails. We encourage the IAEA to carry out its technical mandate.

In its capacity as Chair of the Arab Summit, Iraq continues its regional and international diplomatic efforts and has called for an emergency meeting of Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs to coordinate positions. We are also working closely with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to unify visions and positions in order to defuse and contain this dangerous crisis, save lives, ensure that the region does not descend into a devastating all-out war and forestall the consequences of the crisis, especially in the light of the repeated targeting of nuclear facilities, which may lead to catastrophic radiation leaks beyond the borders of the targeted country and pose a direct long-term threat to human life and the environment in neighbouring countries, including Iraq.

In conclusion, Iraq calls on the Security Council to exercise its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security and to do the following.

First, urgent action should be taken to demand an immediate ceasefire, prevent any further escalation and spare the region further destruction and instability.

Secondly, violations of airspace and of sovereignty, especially those committed against Iraq and neighbouring countries, must be condemned.

Thirdly, there is a need to support the diplomatic track with a view to ending the crisis and preventing any action that could lead to a further deterioration of the situation, and to back a return to the negotiating table and the activation of international mediation mechanisms.

Fourthly, nuclear installations and civilian infrastructure must be protected. Warnings against using them in conflict must be issued.

Fifthly, any escalation that could disrupt international maritime navigation, air transportation and energy supply lines must be prevented so as to avert a global energy crisis.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kuwait.

Mr. Alenezi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to welcome the participation of the Secretary-General and United Nations officials in this meeting.

I have returned today to speak again on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), namely the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Qatar, the Sultanate of Oman, and my country, the State of Kuwait, reiterating our consistent and clear position regarding the dangerous developments taking place in our region.

Our Group reiterates its condemnation of Israel's attacks on the Islamic Republic of Iran and its nuclear facilities and underscores the grave repercussions that those attacks hold for the security and stability of the region. We regard them as a blatant violation of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and as undermining international efforts for peace and de-escalation. The GCC countries are stepping up diplomatic efforts at the highest level to avert escalation, in the belief that diplomacy and dialogue are the only option and alternative to confrontation and escalation.

As we follow the dangerous developments in the region, we underscore that a continued deterioration could have catastrophic consequences and fuel tensions, thereby scuppering the prospects of a diplomatic solution and the peace sought. In the light of that thorny and sensitive situation, which calls for vigilance and wisdom from us all, the GCC countries call for the utmost restraint, for an immediate cessation of hostilities to avoid an extension and spillover of the conflict and for a return to the path of dialogue and negotiations as the optimal and sole way of overcoming the current crisis and sustaining regional and international security and stability.

The GCC countries further underline how important it is for the Security Council and the international community to shoulder their responsibilities and secure an immediate end to the war, prevent escalation and push for a continuation of United States-Iran negotiations on the Iranian nuclear issue, mediated by the Sultanate of Oman. Furthermore, the GCC countries reaffirm the need to respect State sovereignty and abide by the fundamental principles and standards enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference in internal affairs and the prohibition on the use or threat of force. We underscore the important role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in bolstering preventive security and preventing nuclear facilities from being targeted, given the grave humanitarian and environmental risks entailed and the threat to safety and to the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards system. Such targeting also violates international law, including international humanitarian law, in every respect.

In that connection, the GCC countries stress the need to protect maritime security and maritime corridors in the region and tackle activities that threaten the security and stability of the region and the world at large, including the targeting of commercial ships and threats to shipping lanes, international trade and oil installations in GCC countries.

In conclusion, we urge the international community, and the Security Council in particular, to take swift and effective measures to contain the crisis and to support diplomatic dialogue efforts in a way that preserves the security and safety of the peoples of the region and averts the risk of further escalation.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has the honour of speaking on behalf of the Group

of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, with respect to the mandate entrusted to the Council, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations and renewing its unwavering solidarity with the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran at these difficult times.

In response to Israel's heinous attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran, launched on 13 June 2025, the member States of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations issued a special communiqué on 14 June 2025, wherein they conveyed their categorical condemnation and denunciation in the strongest of terms of those large-scale, coordinated attacks. These attacks are continuing to this day against multiple sites in Iran and have claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians, including women and children, and Iranian scientists, university professors and senior military officers, some of whom were at home with family members.

The members the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations roundly condemn Israel's deliberate attacks on civilians and population centres with millions of inhabitants. They underscore that Israel's persistent, systematic and widespread attacks against women and children, the infliction of serious bodily injury and the military attacks against residential areas and civilian goods and property throughout the region, including its recent attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran, once again speak to Israel's utter disregard for any law or norm whatsoever and the premeditated nature of the brutal crimes committed.

Likewise, they condemn the deliberate attacks against senior Iranian officials and scientists and denounce Israel's attacks on the Natanz nuclear facility — one of the Iranian sites operating under the safeguards and full oversight of the International Atomic Energy Agency. They express their profound concern at the fact that those brutal attacks and the resulting damage pose a considerable risk of radioactive material being released, entailing grave threats to the civilian population and the environment. They also voice their concern at the fact that Israel's attacks continue to endanger civil aviation in the region.

The Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations stresses that those reprehensible attacks constitute a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and the fundamental principles of international law — including sovereignty, territorial integrity and the prohibition on the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of States — and international human rights law, as they are a grave violation of fundamental rights, in particular the right to life and the right to health. What is more, those heinous attacks constitute a flagrant violation of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations, among other provisions.

We caution against acquiescence and omission on the part of the United Nations and the international community in the face of Israel's relentless and brutal attacks in the region. And we recall that a lack of action and failure to take measures against such serious violations committed by Israel will erode the international rule of law and undermine the credibility of the multilateral system, while normalizing the commission of further heinous crimes, which is clearly unacceptable. We stress that such flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the continued brutal attacks by Israel, which constitute grave threats to regional and international peace and security, must be unequivocally condemned by all, including by the Security Council.

We also stress that the application of double standards and selectivity in upholding the principles of international law, including the prohibition of the use or threat of use of force, would only undermine the integrity and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations by setting a dangerous precedent of illegality.

The Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations further stresses the responsibility of the Secretary-General in defending the purposes

and principles of the Charter by rejecting the deliberate and flagrant use of force against the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as that of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency in promoting the safety and security of nuclear facilities and preserving the integrity of the Agency's mandate by denouncing the Israeli attacks on peaceful Iranian nuclear facilities.

The member States of the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations express their deep concern over the continuous crimes committed by Israel to provoke and trigger conflicts in the Middle East region, as evidenced by its repeated serious violations of international law together with its provocations and violations against the countries of the region. Those events demonstrate its intention to aggravate tensions on the ground and its responsibility for the resulting consequences.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize the obligations of all States under international law to refrain from deliberately aiding or assisting Israel in the brutal commission of heinous crimes against the Islamic Republic of Iran or any other nation in the region, while stressing, on the one hand, the inherent right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to self-defence under international law and, on the other, the urgent need for the international community to hold Israel accountable for all its crimes against the Palestinian people and the region as a whole.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Lambrinidis.

Mr. Lambrinidis: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

We expressed from the first day our deepest concern at the dangerous escalation that threatens to destabilize the Middle East following Israeli strikes on Iran and Iran's response.

Today we reiterate our strong commitment to regional security, including the security of the State of Israel, and call on all sides to abide by international law, show restraint and refrain from taking further steps, which could lead to serious consequences such as potential radioactive release.

The European Union has always been clear that Iran must never be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon and is concerned about the recent report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), based on which the IAEA Board of Governors found Iran in non-compliance with its legally binding nuclear safeguards obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. But lasting security is built through diplomacy, not military action. We believe that diplomacy must prevail. The EU is sparing no effort to reduce tensions and find a lasting solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, which can be achieved only through a negotiated deal.

We, both EU member State Ministers and the EU High Representative, have had numerous bilateral contacts since the start of the conflict with all stakeholders, including phone conversations with our Iranian counterparts, to call on Iran to take decisive steps to return to negotiations and pave the way for a diplomatic solution. In that vein, the High Representative and the Ministers of the E3 — Germany, France and the United Kingdom — are meeting as we speak in Geneva with the Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The meeting began this afternoon, and it is ongoing. We will continue to engage with a view to de-escalation and a lasting solution, which is the only solution that can bring peace and hope to the region.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Türkiye.

Mr. Yıldız (Türkiye): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his sincere and instructive statement. I also thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo and Director General Grossi for their briefings.

Türkiye condemns in the strongest terms the recent attacks conducted by Israel against Iran. Those strikes constitute a manifest violation of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the fundamental obligation of all Member States to refrain from the use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State.

We view the rapid escalation now unfolding across the Middle East with profound concern. Hundreds of lives have already been lost, and the risk of further bloodshed is alarming. Moreover, a wider regional collision would aggravate the risk of nuclear or radiological spillover and mass displacement, disrupt global trade and transportation routes, and imperil energy security at a moment of acute volatility.

As a neighbour of Iran, Türkiye reiterates the imperative of de-escalation leading to an immediate ceasefire and a return to diplomacy. In that regard, we fully support the Secretary-General's call for maximum restraint and stand ready to assist all efforts aimed at halting the violence.

Israel's deliberate strikes against safeguarded nuclear facilities in Iran are unprecedented. They contravene international law, the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency, relevant resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a Security Council resolution. Those attacks must immediately stop.

By targeting such installations, Israel has consciously placed nuclear safety and security at grave risk, with possible radiological dispersion which would endanger human health, biodiversity and the environment far beyond Iran's borders for decades to come.

The IAEA's verification activities inside Iran have already been impeded.

It is also deeply troubling that a State that is not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which maintains deliberate opacity regarding its own nuclear capabilities, is attacking the nuclear infrastructure under safeguards of a State party to the NPT. That recklessness strikes at the heart of the global non-proliferation regime, compelling all of us to reflect upon its wider repercussions.

The international community, especially this body, must therefore unite in urging Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to accept robust IAEA verification.

At the same time, concerns regarding aspects of Iran's nuclear programme should be resolved through dialogue and strengthened cooperation between Iran and the Agency.

Türkiye has consistently underscored that a diplomatic process remains the only viable route to settle the nuclear dispute and has supported and facilitated efforts towards that end. We continue to believe that diplomacy is the sole sensible path forward, and we call on all actors in a position to do so to exert their utmost efforts in this direction.

Beyond the immediate nuclear risks, the security ramifications of this conflict are extensive. Energy security, which is inseparable from national security, is now under severe threat. Strikes in one of the world's most sensitive regions for the oil trade risk supply shortages and extreme price volatility, while the resulting uncertainties undermine long-term investments in vital infrastructure in the region. Hostilities have already disrupted sustainable transport, pushing up container and shipping costs and straining global supply chains. The destruction of urban areas and the natural environment further threatens biodiversity and jeopardizes regional and global sustainable development objectives.

We must not allow the crisis in Gaza to fade from the international agenda in the shadow of these latest events. Israel's assault on Iran cannot obscure the ongoing crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Indeed, Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territory remains the root cause of many conflicts across the region. A just, lasting and comprehensive peace is attainable only through the recognition of an independent, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The international community must therefore press with urgency for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Gaza and Iran alike and redouble efforts to implement the two-State solution. Imposing peace is no longer a mere option; it is an imperative to preserve the credibility of the United Nations system and to safeguard international law. Failure to do so will only fuel a vicious cycle of violence and war.

The Council must act collectively and decisively to prevent further escalation. The risk of wider conflict, forced displacement on a massive scale and irreversible environmental harm demands our immediate attention. Türkiye stands ready to contribute constructively toward any initiative that will de-escalate tension, restore the ceasefire and relaunch credible, meaningful diplomacy. Let us seize this moment to reaffirm our shared commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, to the global non-proliferation regime and to the principles of peaceful dispute settlement. Only by resolute adherence to these norms can we hope to avert catastrophic consequences for the Middle East, for the international community and for coming generations.

I would like to touch on the spillover effects and displacement in Iran. Of course United Nations staff are not immune from that. To the Council's knowledge, 45 United Nations staff members have been evacuated to Türkiye from Iran. This too shows that the Council must act.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.