



# Security Council

Eighty-first year

**10155<sup>th</sup>** meeting

Thursday, 21 May 2026, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>President:</i> | Mr. Fu Cong .....                                          | (China)               |
| <i>Members:</i>   | Bahrain .....                                              | Mr. Alrowaiei         |
|                   | Colombia .....                                             | Mrs. Zalabata Torres  |
|                   | Democratic Republic of the Congo .....                     | Mr. Mukongo           |
|                   | Denmark .....                                              | Ms. Lassen            |
|                   | France .....                                               | Mr. Bonnafont         |
|                   | Greece .....                                               | Mrs. Balta            |
|                   | Latvia .....                                               | Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes |
|                   | Liberia .....                                              | Mr. Brown II          |
|                   | Pakistan .....                                             | Mr. Ahmad             |
|                   | Panama .....                                               | Mr. Alfaro de Alba    |
|                   | Russian Federation .....                                   | Mr. Nebenzia          |
|                   | Somalia .....                                              | Mr. Mohamed Yusuf     |
|                   | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ..... | Mr. Kariuki           |
|                   | United States of America .....                             | Ms. Bruce             |

## Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Letter dated 15 May 2026 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2026/418)

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

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question**

#### **Letter dated 15 May 2026 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2026/418)**

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Israel 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: Mr. Ramiz Alakbarov, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator; Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, High Representative for Gaza, Board of Peace; and Mr. Rami Hijjo, Director of Humanitarian Projects in the Gaza Strip, Palestine Red Crescent Society.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2026/418, which contains a letter dated 15 May 2026 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Alakbarov.

**Mr. Alakbarov:** I would like first to acknowledge the presence of High Representative Mladenov and thank him for his tireless efforts to advance the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict.

As I brief Council members today, the situation across the Occupied Palestinian Territory is increasingly precarious. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, settlement expansion, settler-related violence and incitement continue to drive tensions. In Gaza, delays in the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025), alongside daily violence and a continuing humanitarian crisis, have replaced the early momentum following the ceasefire. As talks on advancing to phase two of the ceasefire continue, calls are emerging in some circles for a resumption of hostilities. This would have disastrous consequences for the population of Gaza. Let me be very clear: the people of Gaza cannot take more war. This scenario must be avoided at all costs.

The implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) cannot wait. All elements of the Comprehensive Plan are interconnected and must be implemented in full. These include the disarmament of Hamas and other armed groups, Israel's withdrawal and the deployment of the International Stabilization Force. The National Committee for the Administration of Gaza must be enabled to take up its transitional responsibilities in coordination with the Palestinian Authority.

As diplomatic efforts continue, people's lived reality in Gaza is marked by deep uncertainty. Israeli strikes continue on a near-daily basis, killing dozens during the

reporting period, alongside armed activity by Hamas and other Palestinian groups. Israeli authorities have said that strikes by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have targeted Hamas militants and related infrastructure. The Israeli Government said that it now controls 60 per cent of Gaza — up from 52 per cent since the ceasefire.

Humanitarian conditions remain acute, and the population remains dependent on daily aid delivery. The reopening of Zikim crossing in mid-April and the limited increase in the volume of aid are welcome improvements. However, humanitarian operations remain heavily constrained by limited operational crossings and restrictions on critical humanitarian items that Israel considers dual-use. In recent days, the entry of pest control chemicals has helped to facilitate the rodent control operation to improve hygiene conditions. However, critical shortages of fuel, engine oils, spare parts and pesticides are disrupting essential services, heightening public health risks. Funding equally remains highly constrained. As of today, the humanitarian response plan for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, estimated at \$4.06 billion, has received only \$540 million.

Last week during my visit to Gaza, I witnessed the impact of all these obstacles and much more. Yet, there were also signs of resilience and renewal. I visited a women-led household garden providing fresh food for the family and the local market. I spoke with women's organizations about their efforts to advance Gaza's recovery, and I heard from The Gaza We Want children's committee, whose message was clear: the children of Gaza deserve to live. They deserve to enjoy their basic rights. They deserve a Gaza free from violence and deprivation, where they can build a brighter future together with their families. We must do everything we can to make this a reality.

To do so, we must put in place the mechanisms to enable a sustainable recovery in line with resolution 2803 (2025). The United Nations will continue to provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance and lay the groundwork for early and long-term recovery. The recently published Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, carried out jointly with the European Union and the World Bank, detailed the scope of our collective task, and the recent meetings in Brussels of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of International Assistance to Palestinians and the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution helped to shape a coordinated approach to the formidable challenges ahead. The United Nations continues to engage with the mediators, the Board of Peace and others across the region working to improve the situation on the ground.

The United Nations early recovery trust fund, the Horizon Fund, established jointly with the Palestinian Authority, is a critical vehicle for our collective efforts to scale up recovery in an effective, accountable and transparent manner. I wish to express my deep appreciation to France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland for their commitment to the Fund.

Ultimately, recovery in Gaza must advance the long-established political objectives: the reunification of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, under a single, legitimate and sovereign Palestinian Government, and a restored political process that will end the unlawful occupation and realize a two-State solution, in line with relevant Security Council resolutions, international law and previous agreements.

Meanwhile, the situation in the West Bank continues to deteriorate. During the reporting period, Israeli planning authorities advanced two plans for more than 640 housing units in Area C of the West Bank. In East Jerusalem, the planning authorities advanced a plan for more than 1,620 housing units in the settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev.

During the reporting period, five Palestinians, including two children, were killed by Israeli forces in the West Bank, and 156 Palestinians, including 20 children, were injured by Israeli forces or settlers. According to Israeli sources, seven Israelis,

including one five-year-old child and two soldiers, were injured in Palestinian attacks against Israelis.

Throughout the West Bank, the frequency and severity of settler attacks have increased significantly in 2026, with some 220 Palestinian communities having faced attacks, which are increasingly leading to the displacement of entire communities.

On a recent visit to the Jordan Valley with members of the diplomatic community, I witnessed first-hand the devastating consequences of settler violence, the destruction of Palestinian property and increasing access restrictions.

I urge the Israeli authorities to take urgent and concrete steps to stop these intensifying attacks and hold perpetrators accountable.

In response to the mounting violence and rapidly expanding settlement footprint, on 11 May, the European Union announced sanctions on Israeli extremist settlers and entities and on leading Hamas figures.

In East Jerusalem, the annual Jerusalem Day flag march through the Old City was accompanied, as in previous years, by acts of violence and racist chants by Israeli participants towards Palestinian residents. There were also instances of senior Israeli officials and members of the Knesset appearing to violate the status quo at the holy sites. As in previous years, hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian activists organized teams to prevent violence and to protect Palestinians and their property from attacks.

Palestinian officials and political figures have also continued to use inflammatory language against Israel.

Separately, on 17 May, the Government of Israel approved plans to establish an Israel Defense Forces museum, a recruitment centre and an office for the Israeli Minister of Defence on the compound of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in Shaykh Jarrah, following its earlier seizure and partial demolition by Israeli authorities. The Secretary-General strongly condemned this decision.

On 25 April, Palestinian local elections were held across the West Bank, as well as in Dayr al-Balah in central Gaza. Despite the many challenges in the West Bank and the dire humanitarian conditions in Gaza, the Central Elections Commission delivered an orderly process, demonstrating notable institutional resilience. The United Nations stands ready to support future electoral processes in line with commitments made by the Palestinian Authority.

In recent months, my colleagues and I have briefed the Council about the potential for progress towards a sustainable political solution. Resolution 2803 (2025) created a crucial window of opportunity. We now have a collective responsibility to ensure its implementation. We cannot ignore the current alarming trends or their dire implications for Palestinians, Israelis and the entire region. This is the moment to take urgent steps to reverse those dangerous dynamics.

Many are still tirelessly pursuing peaceful solutions. On 30 April, thousands gathered in Tel Aviv for the People's Peace Summit, calling for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a political agreement. As the peace activists Aziz Abu Sarah and Maoz Inon reminded us in their book, *The Future Is Peace*, even those who have endured profound personal loss in this conflict can choose reconciliation over revenge and work to build peace from the ground up.

We must urgently work to return the parties to a path towards an end to the conflict in the context of a two-State solution. The United Nations will continue to support Palestinians and Israelis in achieving this goal.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Alakbarov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mladenov.

**Mr. Mladenov:** I am grateful for the opportunity to brief the Council for a second time. Before I begin, allow me to express my gratitude and appreciation to Deputy Special Coordinator Ramiz Alakbarov and his team for the excellent and tireless work that they are doing to help the people of Gaza through an extremely difficult period.

When I last appeared before the Council (see S/PV.10125), the framework for the decommissioning of weapons in Gaza had been agreed among the guarantors and presented to the parties, and I told members that the engagement was serious. The first written report of the Board of Peace on the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) (S/2026/418, annex) is now before the Council. It records what has been done. It records what the challenges ahead are. What I want to do today is something a report cannot do. I want to explain in plain language what we are actually asking of the parties and why we are asking it.

Let me begin where everything begins: with the people of Gaza. Some things have changed for the better, and we should be neither too proud nor too cautious to say so. The guns have largely fallen silent across the Gaza Strip for the first time in two years. Every hostage has been returned to their families. Before last autumn, around 1,300 trucks a week entered Gaza, and the overwhelming majority of that aid was being either looted or seized by armed groups before it reached its intended beneficiaries. Since the ceasefire, that figure has increased significantly, the hunger situation has improved meaningfully for the population, and humanitarian aid diversion has fallen to around 1 per cent. The number of people receiving food assistance has risen from 400,000 to roughly 2 million. None of this was inevitable. None of it should be taken for granted.

However, I will not stand before the Council and call this recovery, because there is no recovery in Gaza. Approximately 80 per cent of the buildings in the Gaza Strip are damaged or destroyed. Some 70 million tonnes of rubble still lie where homes, schools and hospitals used to stand, much of it mixed with unexploded ordnance. More than 1 million people have no permanent shelter. They are living, this morning, in tents and in the broken shells of buildings. Roughly 80 out of every 100 working-age Palestinians in Gaza have no work. Water is scarce. The health and education systems have not been rebuilt; they have been broken.

The ceasefire, the most important part, is holding, but it is holding in a way that is far from perfect. There are daily violations. Some of them are serious. They mean civilians are still being killed. They mean families still live in fear and uncertainty. They mean that movement restrictions on the ground and delays continue to obstruct humanitarian access and ordinary life. This is the sad reality of today, but the ceasefire is the foundation of the entire transition ahead of us. Every violation risks unravelling what has been painstakingly built, and the Council should accept nothing less than maximum restraint and the honouring of commitments already made by all sides.

I would ask the Council to hold two things in view at once, as I asked it the first time I sat in this meeting. The horror of 7 October 2023 does not lessen the suffering of the Palestinian people, and the suffering of the Palestinian people does not lessen the horror of 7 October. The entire purpose of what the Council authorized in resolution 2803 (2025) is to make certain that neither is ever repeated or perpetuated.

Let me explain to the Council how we arrived at the document that we refer to as the road map to complete the implementation of President Donald J. Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, which is now before the parties, because the manner of its making matters as much as its content.

Since December 2025, my office and the guarantors of the ceasefire — Egypt, Türkiye, Qatar and the United States of America — have worked together to design the next implementation steps of the 20-point Comprehensive Plan. In December, the principles of the civilian and security transition framework were agreed among the guarantors. From those principles, we built a detailed proposal for implementation. It has been put to the Palestinian factions in session after session. After rounds of consultations and based on feedback from the factions to the proposal, a 15-point road map, accompanied by a proposed implementation annex, was written in response to the questions and the concerns that the factions themselves raised.

This has never been a take-it-or-leave-it text, and I want the Council to hear that clearly. It is a serious instrument, built by the guarantors, revised in light of what the parties said to us.

The architecture of the road map rests on a single principle. The principle is reciprocity. Each step by one side triggers a step by the other. It is also built around a fact that none of us can wish away: the tragedy that trust between Israelis and Palestinians is below zero today. So the design introduces a verification mechanism. Each step is confirmed by an independent committee before the next is taken. If a step is missed, the next step is not taken.

Let me take the Council through the road map so that there is no mystery about what it offers. It opens with five important principles.

The first binds every party to implement in full both resolution 2803 (2025) and the Comprehensive Plan, and it states the purpose plainly: to end the cycle of destruction, to restore civilian life, to enable Palestinian governance, reconstruction, security and economic recovery — and, through that, to open a credible path to Palestinian self-determination and statehood.

The second principle states that every outstanding obligation under the ceasefire agreement must be completed, in full and without delay, before the next stage. In plain terms, this means that the things promised to the people of Gaza at the start — aid, fuel, the crossings, shelter and the completion of all measures included in the Sharm el-Sheikh humanitarian protocol — are not forgotten and are not optional. They are to be delivered before anyone is asked to implement the next steps of the road map. This is a sequencing mechanism designed to ensure fair implementation. Let me be clear: we had secured guarantees from Israel that, once Hamas commits to this road map, Israel will move promptly to fulfil its remaining commitments under the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement. Hamas' agreement to the 15-point road map would have allowed the guarantors and my team to work with both parties on defining the next steps and the timelines of implementation of the road map. To date, despite our best efforts and the efforts of the guarantors, that has not happened.

The third principle is the gate itself. No stage begins until the obligations of the stage before it have been verified and certified by an Implementation Verification Committee, a body that should be composed of representatives of the guarantors, the International Stabilization Force and the Board of Peace. This is the reciprocity principle made operational. It means no party can be asked to move on the strength of a promise. It means progress is earned step by step.

The fourth principle sets out the chain of authority, and it is worth stating it precisely because it is so often misunderstood. The Board of Peace, established under the Plan and endorsed by the Council, oversees governance, reconstruction and redevelopment until a reformed Palestinian Authority can resume its responsibilities in Gaza. It acts through the Office of the High Representative, which connects the Board to the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) and holds the civilian and security tracks together. Under the same mandate, the Board and

cooperating States stand up the International Stabilization Force. This is a temporary, accountable, internationally mandated bridge, not a substitute for Palestinian government, but the scaffolding that allows Gaza to be rebuilt.

The fifth principle, as per the Comprehensive Plan, states that Hamas and the other factions will have no role in the governance of Gaza — not directly, not indirectly, not in any form. And it states in the same breath that every civil servant will be treated lawfully, fairly and with dignity, with their rights fully respected. I want the Council to note that these two sentences sit together deliberately. What ends is rule by the gun, not the livelihoods of public servants in Gaza.

The next group of provisions concerns security.

The sixth principle establishes the governing rule of the entire transition: one authority, one law, one weapon. Only personnel authorized by the National Committee may carry arms. All armed groups must cease military activity. This is not an international demand. It is a Palestinian principle supported by the international community. It is the formulation President Abbas himself has used many times, in public, for years. No society anywhere has ever recovered with armed structures operating in parallel to its governance — not one.

The seventh principle deals with the issue of the police. Newly trained officers are folded into the existing civil police structures. Every officer is vetted. Those who do not meet the standards are offered unarmed roles or compensation, not abandonment. And all police weapons pass to the National Committee's control as soon as the Committee enters Gaza. This is how you build law and order without a vacuum.

The eighth principle is critical. The decommissioning of weapons will be gradual, sequenced and time-bound, against an agreed timetable, monitored and supported. It will be Palestinian-led, with weapons transferred to the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza. All armed groups — and the text clearly says that explicitly, including the militias — take part, to decommission all weapons and all militant infrastructure. And then the sentence I want every person listening to this briefing to hear: no Palestinian armed group will be required to transfer weapons to Israel. This means weapons do not pass to an adversary; they pass to the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza. None of this can be done all at once or in the dark, but it can be done in stages, on a clock, overseen by international monitors. And it applies to everyone, because a rule that binds only one faction protects no one.

The ninth principle places personal weapons under Palestinian law, with the National Committee as the sole authority to register them, to license them and to collect what is unlicensed — through a phased process using buy-back, reintegration and social support, with the factions committing to cooperate.

The tenth principle is a guarantee. No one will be required to give up their personal weapon until appropriate security and implementation milestones are met and verified by the authorized bodies. This ensures that personal safety is protected throughout the transition.

The eleventh principle is very important. It is a social peace agreement — a binding commitment to stop internal killings and violence at once; to end shows of armed strength, parades and armed demonstrations; and a strict moratorium on reprisals of any kind. It is the promise that this transition does not become a settling of scores.

The next provisions concern the stabilization force and the withdrawal of Israeli forces, the other half of the reciprocal bargain.

The twelfth principle places the International Stabilization Force (ISF) between Israeli forces and NCAG-controlled areas. It is a buffer. It does not police Gaza. The Palestinian police police Gaza. It supports decommissioning, and it protects humanitarian operations.

The thirteenth principle commits Israel to a phased withdrawal of its forces to Gaza's perimeter, on an agreed timetable, tied to verified progress on decommissioning and the deployment of the ISF.

The fourteenth principle makes the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza responsible for addressing security violations in areas that are fully decommissioned and certified and under its control. Read together, these are the answers to what most people in Gaza are asking: When do Israeli forces leave? When does rule by the gun end? And the answer is clear. As decommissioning is verified, sector by sector, the Israel Defense Forces should withdraw, and Palestinians should take responsibility.

The fifteenth principle is short, and it is the engine of everything else: reconstruction can take place at scale in the areas that are certified as decommissioned and effectively administered by the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza. Ultimately, the National Committee and certified decommissioning are both critical to unlocking internationally backed, large-scale reconstruction. The faster this transition takes place, the faster Israeli forces withdraw and Gaza is rebuilt.

While I continue to call on Hamas and other Palestinian factions to come back to the table and engage constructively on the road map and the next steps to implement their commitments under the Comprehensive Plan, let me also say clearly that implementation cannot advance through Palestinian obligations alone. The continued killings, Israeli restrictions and delays affecting humanitarian flows are not abstract issues. They shape daily Palestinian perceptions of whether the war is over and if this process can genuinely deliver safety, dignity and recovery. These realities prolong humanitarian suffering, but they also weaken confidence in the ceasefire framework itself. Palestinians and Israelis must be able to see, in practical terms, that commitments made under the ceasefire and the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings are being implemented fully and in good faith. This is precisely why the road map was built around reciprocity and verification. Obligations apply to all parties.

Let me also be precise about what the road map does not ask. It does not ask Palestinians to surrender their weapons to Israel. It does not seek to erase political constituencies. It does not seek retribution. It offers conditional amnesty to those who decommission and live according to the law, reintegration and financial support to those who must step away from their positions and safe passage to those who choose to go. The questions of how things are done — the timing, the manner, the dignity of it — are precisely the implementation discussions that we should be focusing on.

Let me briefly speak about what a refusal to accept this road map means. If transition and decommissioning are delayed or refused, the Board of Peace will discuss meaningful and practical modalities to advance civilian stabilization, humanitarian relief and recovery, based on the architecture that the parties agreed to when the Comprehensive Plan was developed, approved by the Arab and Islamic States and endorsed by the Security Council. While the Board of Peace continues its work, I want to be clear about the risks of inaction by the parties. The risk is that the deteriorating status quo becomes permanent: a divided Gaza and Hamas holding military and administrative control over 2 million people across less than half the territory. Those people are likely to remain trapped in the rubble, dependent on aid, with no meaningful reconstruction, because reconstruction financing will not follow where weapons have not been laid down. There will be no investment, no movement, no horizon. And the



result? The result will be another generation of children growing up in tents, in fear, with despair as the most rational thing for them to feel, no security for Israel and no viable pathway to Palestinian self-determination. This is a version of the future that Israelis, Palestinians and the region should all fear and all mobilize to avoid.

And I will say one more hard thing. The discussions have now matured to the point where the core political choices are clear, and further delay will only deepen civilian suffering. The resources are ready to launch this next phase of implementation and the commitments to disburse as needed are firm. This is not an obstacle. Every day that passes is another day of a child in a tent without a school, a father without work, a family without a better future. That is the price of delay, and it is a price paid in Gaza, by Palestinians.

If President Trump's plan is allowed to succeed, Gaza will not merely be repaired. It can be rebuilt by Palestinians, for Palestinians. Goods can move through crossings instead of trickling under restrictions. A port can handle trade. Young people can queue for universities, not for rations, and can be free to travel with what they have learned. Electricity can come from a grid, not a generator. A child born next year can grow up in a house, not a tent, and can be taught in a school, not a shelter. Tens of thousands of public sector jobs can be created in the first year of reconstruction alone, a quarter of a million within five years. None of that is a dream.

Let me close with three final observations.

First, the road map that has been presented for the full implementation of the 20-point plan is credible, fair and balanced. It is built on reciprocity: no one is asked to trust, everything must be verified. It deserves the Council's clear, consistent and unequivocal support. Transition and decommissioning are not only required by resolution 2803 (2025), but are the only credible road to real reconstruction, to the withdrawal of Israeli forces and to a Palestinian horizon.

Secondly, I ask the Council to use every means at its disposal to urge Hamas to accept the road map without further delay and to urge Israel to uphold its obligations under the ceasefire. Diplomacy must continue, but it cannot be used as an excuse for delay while 2 million people wait in desperate conditions.

Thirdly and lastly, the choice before the parties has not changed since I first described it to the Council, and I will not soften it now. The choice is either a deteriorating status quo or a new beginning. There is no third option. There never was. And the people of Gaza should not be made to wait while some pretend that there is.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Mladenov for his briefing.

As we are not able to hear Mr. Hijjo owing to technical problems, I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Ms. Bruce** (United States of America): Let me thank our briefers Special Coordinator Alakbarov and of course High Representative Mladenov, as well as Mr. Hijjo, who will, I believe, be coming up with his briefing as well.

As we just heard today, there are still significant challenges to overcome in the reconstruction and rebuilding of Gaza and securing enduring safety, stability and prosperity. We know that by working together, we can overcome those challenges. A future of peace, freedom — personal and economic — in the Middle East is in all of our interests. We must work together to make it happen. The United States will continue to work with Israel, its neighbours and our partners on the Board of Peace to achieve that goal. We welcome the report of the Board of Peace submitted to the Council last week (S/2026/418, annex). As we have said before, and as has been said so clearly, Hamas must demilitarize, full stop. This is the next critical step to achieving lasting peace, as

outlined in President Donald J. Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, which the Council endorsed in resolution 2803 (2025). That includes the irreversible destruction of all military, terror and offensive infrastructure, including tunnels and weapon production facilities.

Thanks to President Trump's leadership and vision, the United States has the pleasure of applauding the accomplishments of the Board of Peace over the recent months and the steps towards establishing the Office of the High Representative, the International Stabilization Force and the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza. We are gratified to note the virtual elimination of aid diversion and the overall increase in humanitarian assistance flowing into Gaza, though there is still a pressing need, of course, for even more. We are working day and night, at all levels, with our Israeli Government and humanitarian colleagues to improve that flow of aid. This work has never stopped and has continued throughout Operation Epic Fury. That said, the key is for Hamas to demilitarize, thereby paving the way for the easing of necessary security restrictions that were enacted in response to the serious threat Hamas poses.

The United States is proud to be working together with the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza and its international partners as we rise to and overcome the challenge of rebuilding Gaza. We are proud to work with Egypt, Türkiye and Qatar as we develop a concrete road map to implement the peace plan and to put Gaza on the path to long-term, self-sustaining peace and prosperity. But make note, under this Plan, Gaza will be deradicalized — a terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbours. We again urge all Member States and United Nations entities to join us in this effort, which is key to global peace and touches every nation's commitment to provide a prosperous future for its own citizens.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): We will now try Mr. Hijjo again.

I give him the floor.

**Mr. Hijjo:** I address members today as a civilian and a humanitarian worker who lives in Gaza. I am speaking today to bear witness to a people for whom the ceasefire has yet to bring safety, aid has yet to bring relief and hope remains a luxury they cannot afford. This is officially in place, but the reality tells a different story. While the world exhaled after the declaration of the ceasefire, in Gaza the respite was short-lived, and the hopes that the ceasefire would bring an immediate end to suffering and urgent relief were dashed. Continued Israeli attacks have continued reaping souls indiscriminately. Many of those killed were in tents and displacement sites, people who had already fled, already lost everything, already been displaced multiple times and who thought they had survived all of it just to be killed after the ceasefire was announced. Those who remain alive survive under conditions that strip life of its most basic dignity. And yet we, humanitarian organizations, including the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), move mountains to sustain the life-saving services on which they so desperately rely.

I am one of the guardians who carry the message of humanity, not only to the communities we serve but to my own team, my colleagues and most deeply to my wife, my son and my two daughters. For more than two years, I have carried pain that never leaves me, watching my wife suffer from a severe autoimmune disease that is gradually robbing her body of its ability to function, while knowing that the treatment she desperately needs exists beyond the walls of this siege yet remains completely out of reach as she waits alongside thousands of other patients for her turn to be medically evacuated. Every single day is a battle for basic survival, searching for clean drinking water, securing enough food, finding a power source to charge a phone. I have been displaced at least six times, losing my belongings, my savings and the life I had built piece by piece.

In Gaza, the PRCS has lost 56 staff members over the past three years, 30 of them while on duty, giving everything they had to alleviate the suffering of civilians. One of our colleagues, Hussein Al-Samiri, was killed as recently as February, after the ceasefire was declared. Yet despite the fear, the grief and the shock, our staff and volunteers have remained resilient. They have continued their humanitarian work without losing faith in the humanitarian mission, in the red emblem and in the conscience of the international community.

In March 2025, 15 humanitarian personnel, including 8 PRCS medics, were killed by the Israeli occupation forces in Rafah while on duty. After one week, PRCS recovered their bodies with difficulty as they were buried in a mass grave in the sand, in their uniforms and marked ambulances.

Today, I have a message to share with the Council from the sole survivor of this massacre, my colleague, Asaad Al-Nasasra. He calls on the entire world to provide protection and immunity to all humanitarian medical relief institutions, including PRCS, so that they can fulfil their humanitarian duty and reach out to affected communities and return home to their families safe and unharmed. Asaad still cannot believe that he managed to return to his family and children. Asaad remains deeply traumatized, haunted by a moment no human being should ever have to carry — the moment his colleague Mohammed Al-Heila held onto him, looked him in the eyes and took his last breath. Asaad could not save him, and that helplessness weighs on him every single day. The lack of any concrete accountability or action for violations committed in Gaza remains a profound failure of the international community and a great breach of global, legal and moral obligations. These are not isolated incidents. They are documented, repeated and deliberate acts that demand urgent and decisive response. The international community and Member States must fulfil their legal obligations by conducting independent investigations, ensuring individual criminal responsibility. Impunity is not an option. It is a catalyst for further atrocities.

In this harsh reality, PRCS has developed flexible and adaptive response models to reach every affected community, wherever they may be. Yet even human ingenuity has its limits. No amount of creativity can fully overcome the occupation's systematic and deliberate restrictions, designed to make life unbearable for all civilians and all those trying to help them, including PRCS.

We are operating under extremely harsh and complex conditions. The prolonged closure of border crossings, with imposed limits, along with strict restrictions on the entry of humanitarian aid, including medical and food supplies, fuel oil, generators and spare parts, have severely disrupted supply chains and constrained most of PRCS' vital operational sectors, depriving the population of life-saving assistance. For example, PRCS has 12 ambulances in the West Bank that remain unable to enter Gaza due to restrictions. Humanitarian assistance received by PRCS since the beginning of 2026 remains far below actual needs, significantly limiting the expansion of humanitarian operations.

As the restrictions on aid entry continue, PRCS has been forced to suspend relief distribution assistance, which served as a lifeline for thousands of families. Cardiac surgeries have also been suspended due to the depletion of required supplies. PRCS does not maintain a stable fuel reserve as available quantities are consumed weekly, based on operational priorities, threatening the continuity of critical services, including emergency medical services and hospitals. Rehabilitation services are also not fully functioning because restrictions on the entry of physical and hearing assistive devices continue to deprive thousands of people of essential daily living support.

Families across Gaza are living through a compounded emergency that rarely reaches the headlines. My close neighbour, for example, lives in a torn plastic tent with

four children and a diabetic mother exposed to both winter cold and extreme summer heat. What was meant to be a temporary shelter has become a permanent reality due to restrictions on construction material, and the absence of sustainable housing solutions has stripped families of basic human dignity. The children divide their days between attending makeshift classes in tents and waiting in a long queue to secure clean water for their family. Like countless others across Gaza, the family is also facing a severe rodent infestation, spreading through rubble and damaged sewage infrastructure, turning neighbourhoods into a breeding ground for disease and fear. One night, a rodent bit the elderly mother while she slept. Because of her diabetes, she felt no pain and only discovered the wound after waking up bleeding. The incident led to serious health complications that conditions of displacement, overwhelmed clinics and fractured healthcare systems were unable to adequately address, placing her life at great risk.

And while Gaza endures hell, the West Bank is not spared, with over 900 check points and gates. Expanding illegal settlement activity fragments communities and territory, and intensifying settler attacks lead to fatalities, destruction of properties and displacement, all compounded by attacks and violations carried out by the occupation army, which has killed two of our medics since 2023 in the West Bank.

PRCS emergency medical teams regularly face attacks and mistreatment, sometimes causing injury and often preventing them from reaching people in need of medical care. From the start of this year, 2026, PRCS documented six attacks on ambulances and personnel, including shooting and other physical assaults, resulting in at least two injuries among staff and volunteers.

In addition, PRCS has documented more than 15 cases in which ambulance teams have been delayed while transporting patients or injured persons, in addition to six cases in which the teams were not allowed to reach patients, including cases of women in labour.

In this restricted and unsafe environment, PRCS teams continue providing their emergency medical services, medical relief, psychosocial support and health services across the West Bank. The challenges we face are primarily related to disrespect of our Red Crescent emblem, our humanitarian mission and our humanitarian access.

As the leading national humanitarian actor in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in order to enable an effective response commensurate with the scale of humanitarian needs, particularly in Gaza, PRCS calls for immediate and urgent actions to ensure full respect for the ceasefire and an end to all attacks against people and infrastructure; the opening of all crossing points to allow the rapid and sustained flow of assistance; the lifting of restrictions on critical material required for the humanitarian response; an effective, transparent and clear process for the entry of aid that enables the large-scale flow of aid commensurate with the needs of the people of Gaza; effective protection for medical and relief teams and for the healthcare services of humanitarian facilities; respect, protection and support for the vital and central role of PRCS in delivering its services without impediment; the swift removal of debris and immediate restoration of basic services; the facilitation and acceleration of urgent medical evacuation from Gaza, including the transfer of patients to hospitals in the West Bank and occupied Jerusalem; and permission for PRCS to rotate staff from the West Bank to Gaza to alleviate pressure on personnel who have been working continuously without rest.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Hijjo for his briefing.

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

**Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes** (Latvia): I will start by thanking Deputy Special Coordinator Ramiz Alakbarov for his informative briefing. I thank the Board of Peace High Representative for Gaza, Nikolay Mladenov, for his comprehensive contribution to the discussion and for delivering the first written report by the Board of Peace on the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) (S/2026/418, annex) and for all his efforts. I also thank the Director of Humanitarian Projects in the Gaza Strip at the Palestine Red Crescent Society, Rami Hijjo, for his testimony.

After two years of devastating hostilities, the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict and resolution 2803 (2025) which endorses it brought a glimmer of hope. We welcome the endeavours of the guarantors — Egypt, Qatar, Türkiye and the United States — and their ongoing efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region. The release of hostages and the exchange of detainees increased optimism about the prospects for the planned steps. However, six months after the adoption of resolution 2803 (2025), recovery has not begun and the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan has yet to yield the expected results. We encourage continued international engagement to consolidate the gains and prevent a resurgence of violence in Gaza.

While the full-scale bombardment of Gaza has ceased, the fragile ceasefire is being violated on a daily basis. We note with deep concern that since the announcement of the cessation of hostilities, more than 800 Palestinians have been killed and over 2,400 injured. The moving and fluctuating yellow line further exposes Palestinian civilians to the risk of life-threatening incidents. We call on all parties to adhere to the United States-brokered ceasefire agreement and to abide by international humanitarian law, respecting and protecting civilians, journalists and humanitarian personnel.

Meanwhile, Hamas has not disarmed. The road map for monitored and verified Hamas disarmament is a key part of the full implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and resolution 2803 (2025). We condemn Hamas for continuing to reject the disarmament plan. There is no future for non-State armed groups and terror in Gaza. We are awaiting the deployment of the international stabilization force and internationally trained Palestinian police to take over responsibility for the security situation and the subsequent withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza continues to be at a level of deprivation that demands urgent and sustained international attention. Food insecurity is a daily reality for civilians, with repeated disruptions to supply chains and limited humanitarian access. At the same time, the health sector continues to operate under immense strain. Hospitals face shortages of medicine and equipment, overcrowding, malnutrition, damaged water and sanitation infrastructure, raising concerns of communicable diseases and long-term public health deterioration, as we heard just now. Concerns regarding dual-use items must be addressed so as to ensure that restrictions do not impede access to objects indispensable for the survival of the civilian population or the rehabilitation of essential civilian infrastructure. Behind every statistic there are civilians — children and patients whose dignity and survival depend on our collective ability to uphold international humanitarian law and facilitate meaningful humanitarian access without delay. In this regard, the humiliating and degrading treatment of activists by Israel as seen in the footage from Ashdod is unacceptable and violates human rights and international legal standards. In addition, such actions harm Israel's own interests.

With the support of the international community, the work of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza and its deployment to Gaza are indispensable for restoring dignified living conditions to the people of Gaza. The implementation of its mandate is no less important in terms of creating a social and political environment conducive to reunified Palestinian self-governance in Gaza and the West Bank.

In the light of the international efforts to achieve sustainable peace and stability in the region, a rapidly deteriorating situation in the West Bank is profoundly alarming. Increased settler attacks and harassment, movement restrictions and demolition of property and infrastructure lead to the forced displacement of Palestinians and fuel the vicious circle of violence and radicalization. The extension of the European Union sanctions regime against Israeli extremist settlers and entities has recently been adopted. This is in addition to new sanctions on leading Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad figures. We call on Israel to address the situation, while ensuring accountability and fully implementing its obligations under international law.

The reform agenda of the Palestinian Authority, conditioned on the release of the withheld tax revenues, must continue to ensure transparent and improved administration of services.

Lastly, a political solution is the only way to address the security concerns and the legitimate aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians. Peaceful coexistence requires meaningful investment in promoting the two-State solution, as defined by Security Council resolutions and the New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. Latvia reaffirms its commitment to this aim.

In closing, let me underscore that urgent progress is needed towards the full implementation of the Comprehensive Plan through the steps outlined by Mr. Mladenov. That includes efforts to alleviate the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza. Advancing the next steps entails engagement and commitment from all parties. We are looking forward to the Board of Peace's continued reporting on the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) and this Council's continued active involvement.

**Mr. Brown II (Liberia):** Liberia thanks the presidency for convening this briefing and thanks the Deputy Special Coordinator, the High Representative of the Board of Peace and the civil society briefer for their briefings and the candour with which they delivered them. Their message, delivered through multiple lenses and from various perspectives, is very clear: the Middle East is not short of speeches and good intentions. It is short of decisions implemented, monitored and enforced by the Council.

We just heard about the unfortunate price of delay from the High Representative of the Board of Peace, for both Gaza and the broader Middle East. The ceasefire in Gaza must lead to peace rather than delay the next outbreak of war. Since the ceasefire of October 2025, aid inflows to Gaza have declined 37 per cent between the first and second three-month periods; they are deteriorating, not improving. The Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment of 20 April by the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank finds that Gaza's economy has contracted by 84 per cent, human development has been set back 77 years, and reconstruction will require \$71.4 billion over the next decade.

In the West Bank, 2026 has recorded the highest monthly average of displacement from demolitions in more than 17 years of available United Nations records. And just this morning, the Secretary-General condemned in the strongest terms the reported decision to establish military facilities at the seized compound of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in Sheikh Jarrah, calling it wholly unacceptable and a breach of the inviolability of United Nations premises. These statistics are not only nuggets to embellish statements and speeches. They represent families discovering that being alive is not the same as living.

Liberia recognizes progress vis-à-vis resolution 2803 (2025), as has been reported, especially by the High Representative of the Board of Peace. It includes the return of hostages, transitional arrangements, the workings of the Board of Peace and reconstruction pledges. These are all commendable steps, and we thank all of the partner

countries involved in these important efforts for the steps taken and the progress made thus far. But as we all know, pledges, while a good start, do not automatically guarantee security or peaceful coexistence in that troubled part of the world. Of this we were reminded by the High Representative again. Road maps that point to a better future, however good, do not automatically change existing realities of hopelessness. Reconstruction cannot begin where weapons remain the local constitution and where peace cannot begin when aid is treated like contraband.

The immediate priorities must be clear to us by now if we truly wish to build the trust referred to by the High Representative of the Board of Peace, which is required for the advancement of much-needed progress in that troubled part of our world. The first priority is to sustain and verify humanitarian access at scale; the second is to monitor the ceasefire compliance mechanism; and the third is to employ a sequenced disarmament process tied to reconstruction benchmarks.

As the High Representative and other briefers have asked of us, the Council must now insist that all parties implement the proposed road map, including the principle of one authority, one law and one weapon in Gaza. Hamas and all armed factions must accept that no society can be rebuilt under the shadow of private armies. Israel must facilitate unimpeded humanitarian access and take steps that make withdrawal, reconstruction and civilian recovery truly possible. This requires clear timelines, unhindered crossings operating at full capacity and an independent mechanism to verify compliance. The weapons must be laid down. The crossings must be opened. The people must be allowed to breathe. Hope for peace is truly the only path to building the trust required for peace to be sustained in the Middle East. Restoring the right to life with security and dignity is the only avenue for enduring peace.

As we have heard, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is becoming the quieter front of a louder failure. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has recorded more than 800 settler attacks, causing casualties or property damage since early 2026, and 47 Palestinians had been killed in the West Bank by 11 May. Movement obstacles, demolitions, displacement, settlement expansion and fiscal pressure on the Palestinian Authority are not minor administrative footnotes. They are the slow machinery by which hope is evicted before people are. Unchecked, these dynamics risk irreversible fragmentation, making a two-State solution not only distant but structurally unattainable.

Liberia notes the Secretary-General's 20 May condemnation of the decision to establish military facilities at the seized compound of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Shaykh Jarrah in occupied East Jerusalem, described as wholly unacceptable and a breach of the inviolability of United Nations premises. Such actions must have consequences, including full accountability and immediate reversal.

That warning must not be placed in the Council's archive of ignored alarms. United Nations premises are not spaces for conflict. UNRWA is not a bureaucratic inconvenience; for 1.18 million registered persons in the West Bank, including 48,000 children in its schools, it is often the thin line between dignity and abandonment.

The crises in the Middle East are no longer contained by geography. Three steps are now essential: first, full and verifiable implementation of resolution 2803 (2025), which remains the only path for peace; secondly, immediate protection of civilians and humanitarian access at scale; and thirdly, irreversible measures to preserve the political horizon, including halting settlement expansion and safeguarding UNRWA.

In conclusion, the Middle East does not need another elegant paragraph from the Council. It needs decisions implemented and law applied without selectivity, and it

definitely needs leaders brave enough to choose an imperfect peace over a perfect war. Liberia stands ready to work for that necessary peace.

**Mrs. Balta** (Greece): Let me thank the Deputy Special Coordinator, Mr. Alakbarov, and the High Representative for Gaza to the Board of Peace, Mr. Mladenov, for their comprehensive briefings, and Mr. Hijjo for his testimony.

President Donald J. Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, as endorsed by resolution 2803 (2025) just a few months ago, offered genuine hope for the gradual recovery of the Strip. We welcome the progress outlined in the report of the Board of Peace (S/2026/418, annex), as the Council needs to remain apprised of developments on the ground. The ceasefire holds despite considerable challenges and violations; humanitarian assistance has been scaled up; and all hostages have been released. These are notable achievements, unthinkable seven or eight months ago.

Nevertheless, peace will remain incomplete and may be endangered without further steps, including on the humanitarian front. Hamas and all other armed groups must urgently and fully disarm, with the aim of addressing the legitimate security concerns of Israel and paving the way towards reconstruction. Moreover, as Hamas' decommissioning is expected to be a lengthy process, early recovery initiatives and projects should be undertaken in parallel, in order not to lose momentum and to avoid a stalemate.

We anticipate the timely establishment of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza and the eventual deployment of the newly vetted Palestinian police force in Gaza. Hamas and all armed factions can have no role in the governance of Gaza, under the principle of one authority, one law and one weapon. Governance arrangements must be legitimate and durable, while transitional structures should harmoniously complement existing institutions, avoiding parallel structures or the undermining of the Palestinian Authority.

The clear improvement of conditions notwithstanding, serious humanitarian challenges persist. Infectious diseases, malnutrition, limited medical evacuations and constraints on the entry of critical equipment constitute only part of the humanitarian challenges in the Gaza Strip. A steady pace of humanitarian and commercial flows must thus be fully maintained and further increased. Humanitarian actors, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and aid initiatives, such as the Cyprus maritime humanitarian corridor, can play a significant role in this regard.

We urge all parties to seize this momentum and work together towards a collective vision for regional peace and prosperity — a vision that must, however, also include the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which brings me to my next point. A mere two weeks ago, at an Arria-formula meeting, the Council heard from briefers on the alarming situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The increasing and unprecedented settler violence targeting the Palestinian population, including Christian communities, is condemnable and must cease immediately. The European Union recently sanctioned extremists responsible for human rights abuses in the West Bank.

Similarly deplorable are the continuous restrictions on movement, the illegal settlement expansion and the forced displacement of Palestinians. In line with its recent positive statements, Israel must ensure accountability for incidents of settler violence. We stress the importance of consistent investigations, follow-up and implementation of relevant decisions to that effect. Furthermore, we reiterate once again our call for the release of withheld Palestinian tax revenues — a key requirement for the implementation of important reforms and for avoiding the fiscal collapse of the Palestinian Authority.



The health sector must also be supported through expedited international assistance. Greece is ready, as we have stated in previous statements, to contribute financially through the Palestinian-European Mechanism for Management of Socio-Economic Aid, to support the East Jerusalem hospital network, while also calling for an end to all restrictions imposed on its operations. Finally, we call for the preservation of and respect for the status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem, which is of paramount importance.

A peaceful path ahead is possible only through the reinvigoration of a credible political process and a clear political horizon for the Palestinians, leading to a two-State solution, in line with all relevant Security Council resolutions and the New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution — a solution consistently supported by the international community, allowing both Israelis and Palestinians to live side by side in peace, mutual recognition and security.

In closing, let me add a few remarks on Lebanon, a key partner for peace and stability in the Middle East. We warmly welcome the extension of the ceasefire and call for the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). We support the continuation of the historical, political talks between Lebanon and Israel, under United States auspices, and we hope that the eventual progress and conditions on the ground will pave the way towards a comprehensive peace agreement.

**Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan): We thank Deputy Special Coordinator Ramiz Alakbarov and Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, High Representative for Gaza, for their briefings, including on the report of the Board of Peace (S/2026/418, annex). I also thank Mr. Rami Hijjo for his testimony.

As we have heard, the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remains fragile. Two years of devastating conflict have exacted an unbearable toll, and fragile gains since the October 2025 ceasefire now hang in the balance. A delicate regional situation is the focus of our attention, but the West Bank and Gaza must not fall off our radar.

Pakistan welcomes the ongoing work of the Board of Peace, and we commend the sustained efforts of the guarantors and mediators — Egypt, Qatar, Türkiye and the United States — in preserving dialogue and preventing further deterioration of the situation. Pakistan remains actively engaged as part of the group of eight Arab and Islamic countries, in full alignment with the State of Palestine and the broader Arab consensus. In this regard, the faithful implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) in all its aspects remains critical.

As noted in the Board's report, the establishment of the Office of the High Representative, the formation of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, progress in training civil servants, the appointment of commissioners for key governance portfolios, advancements in establishing civilian police forces and the creation of a liaison office with the Palestinian Authority are all important and welcome developments. We hope that the National Committee will assume responsibility as the transitional governance authority at the earliest, in coordination with the Palestinian Authority.

One would have expected that such appreciable steps would be accompanied by an improvement of the situation on the ground. Unfortunately, however, that is not the case. Continued ceasefire violations by Israeli forces and illegal impediments to humanitarian access persist. In Gaza, more than 880 Palestinians have been killed by Israel since the ceasefire took effect. The Board's report rightly warns that violations risk unravelling painstaking gains. All ceasefire violations must therefore end

immediately. The verification and reciprocity of actions, a point highlighted by Mr. Mladenov, must ensure full compliance with the ceasefire.

On the humanitarian situation, the report notes that basic food needs have stabilized. Aid volumes have increased by over 70 per cent and most bakeries have resumed operations, yet the overall situation remains deeply precarious. People are surviving in makeshift tents with poor hygiene and limited access to clean water. Only half of Gaza's hospitals are partially functional. Food prices remain roughly 300 per cent above pre-war levels, and available food is often nutritionally insufficient. Waterborne diseases are rampant due to collapsed sanitation, and outbreak risks remain high.

Noting the \$17 billion pledged for reconstruction, the Board has rightly underscored the urgent need to bridge commitments and disbursements. In this regard, the establishment of the Gaza Reconstruction and Development Fund is a positive step, as is the growing United Nations cooperation with the Board on financial and reconstruction matters. The important thing is that humanitarian access be completely unhindered and facilitated, as per the Comprehensive Plan to end the Gaza Conflict.

We must not forget that behind this dire humanitarian situation in Gaza is also the inhumane blockade to which the people of Gaza had been subjected for years. The international community has been rightly concerned about that situation and has been mobilizing humanitarian assistance for the besieged people of Gaza.

Pakistan strongly condemns the unlawful interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla by the Israeli forces in international waters, as well as the arbitrary detention and reported mistreatment of humanitarian workers on board. Those detained reportedly also include Pakistani humanitarian worker Mr. Saad Edhi. We demand the immediate release of all illegally detained activists and call on the international community to ensure their safety, dignity and fundamental rights.

I now turn to the West Bank, where annexation, settler violence and settlement expansion continue, all with the aim of extinguishing the prospects of a two-State solution. During April alone, settlers attempted to establish 21 new outposts. Since October 2023, more than 1,100 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank, and settler violence has displaced more than 40,000 people. We strongly condemn the recent provocative storming of the Aqsa Mosque compound by hundreds of settlers, led by senior Israeli officials, under heavy police protection. Likewise, the Israeli Government's plan to build a defence complex on the site of the former headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in East Jerusalem is illegal under international law and unconscionable. These actions are undermining ongoing peace efforts and must be unequivocally condemned.

The Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict and resolution 2803 (2025), which Mr. Alakbarov rightly termed a crucial window of opportunity and Mr. Mladenov described as the choice between conflict and the status quo on the one hand and a new beginning on the other, must be fully implemented. But as we have heard, there are a host of complex issues that await resolution. Pakistan strongly supports the ongoing negotiations led by the guarantors and hopes that there will be tangible results. For that, all parties must cooperate in good faith. Lopsided commitments or attempts to force outcomes will not yield sustainable progress. Critical elements of recovery and reconstruction that overlap with humanitarian imperatives must not be conditional on other factors. Moreover, any viable framework must offer meaningful incentives for all parties, including a credible, time-bound pathway to statehood and self-determination. That was also the promise of the peace plan.

That is our shared, ultimate goal: the establishment of an independent, sovereign, contiguous State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, in line with Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy.

**Mr. Bonnafont** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking the Deputy Special Coordinator, Mr. Ramiz Alakbarov, the High Representative for Gaza of the Board of Peace, Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, and the representative of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, Mr. Rami Hijjo, for their briefings.

The Council is meeting today at a critical juncture, six months after the adoption of resolution 2803 (2025). Since then, we have had the chance to hear from Mr. Mladenov on two occasions, and we received the first report of the Board of Peace. We have taken note of that report and of Mr. Mladenov's observations regarding the deliberately phased nature of the plan's implementation. We will continue to work diligently to ensure that the Council is very regularly kept informed of developments regarding resolution 2803 (2025) and the Board of Peace.

There has been some noteworthy progress: the ceasefire, the release of hostages and the resumption of humanitarian aid. These developments bring relief to Palestinians, Israelis and the entire world. France once again thanks the United States, Egypt, Qatar and Türkiye for their efforts in this regard.

However, this progress remains insufficient, given the urgency of the situation and the scale of the needs. The ceasefire is subject to daily violations, 850 Gazans have been killed since it came into force, and restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid and at crossing points persist. The objective of 4,200 trucks of humanitarian aid per week has not been reached, and many essential goods remain excluded. The population is mired in a severe health crisis. Hamas obstinately refuses to disarm. The Israeli armed forces continue to occupy a large part of the territory of Gaza, which is nonetheless an integral part of Palestine.

In Gaza, the path towards full implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) is therefore still a long one. The disarmament of Hamas is vital. This terrorist movement cannot play any role in the future governance of Gaza. Its refusal to disarm is unacceptable and reprehensible for the Palestinian population, for Israel's security and for regional stability. Nevertheless, we cannot accept the restoration of decent living conditions being made contingent upon the completion of the disarmament process, as this would amount to handing Hamas the key to Palestine's future and forcing the civilian population to bear the brunt of the blockade.

It is essential for recovery and reconstruction efforts to begin without delay throughout Gaza. To this end, France has made a contribution to the United Nations Horizon Fund for Palestine. We call upon our partners to support this Fund as well.

For its part, the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza must be able to deploy rapidly, along with the International Stabilization Force and the Palestinian police, with a view to the return of a reformed Palestinian Authority. We invite the Board of Peace, which is working resolutely towards this end, to specify the proposed timeline in this regard.

Israel's failings are numerous. They must not be overlooked. We call upon the Israeli Government to lift all restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid and to allow the United Nations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and international non-governmental organizations to operate freely. Not only is international humanitarian law clear on this matter and binding on all, but the professionalism, impartiality and effectiveness of the United Nations and its agencies provide unparalleled support for the people of Gaza in need.

I would also like to address the deeply concerning situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, in view of the increasing pace of the settlement policy and the resurgence of unacceptable settler violence against Palestinian civilians. France welcomes the European Union's adoption of sanctions targeting major Israeli organizations involved in violent settlement activity in the West Bank and their leaders. It has also imposed sanctions on the main leaders of Hamas, who are responsible for the worst anti-Semitic massacre since the Holocaust.

In East Jerusalem, we strongly condemn Israel's approval of the construction of military infrastructure on the site of UNRWA headquarters. This is an unacceptable decision that violates the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. We further reiterate that no measure aimed at de facto or de jure annexation can have any validity under international law or with regard to the rights of the Palestinians.

We must finally restore a credible political horizon towards a two-State solution, with both States recognized and their rights respected, in the spirit of the New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. We hope that the dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, as provided by resolution 2803 (2025), can resume soon. It is with this objective in mind that, on 12 June, France will host a gathering of Israeli and Palestinian civil societies committed to the implementation of the two-State solution and to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Ramiz Alakbarov, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, for his briefing on the situation in the Middle East. We listened attentively to Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, High Representative for Gaza of the Board of Peace, and to Mr. Rami Hijjo. Frankly speaking, we were somewhat surprised to hear various members of the Council extolling what is happening now.

Today's meeting is more than another routine Security Council briefing on the Middle East. Recently, Council members were presented with the first semi-annual report of the Board of Peace, pursuant to resolution 2803 (2025). Let me recall that Russia abstained during that vote, as the resolution failed to mention Israel's obligations, the role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem or the universally recognized two-State solution. We only chose not to block the document then in response to numerous requests, primarily from countries in the region, to allow the United States blueprint for Gaza a chance to succeed.

Regrettably, our fears have been borne out. The Board of Peace's report echoes the language of paragraph 33 about the difference between a framework that exists on paper and one that delivers on the ground for the people of Gaza. Six months after the vote on resolution 2803 (2025), the so-called "Trump plan" remains largely a dead letter, with declarative successes only serving as a smokescreen to conceal the grim reality in the Gaza Strip.

Israel's demands for the release of all hostages and the return of the bodies of the deceased were fully accommodated. Several Palestinians were also released. At the same time, the plan contained many other provisions, namely those regarding a ceasefire, the delivery of full-scale humanitarian aid to the Strip, the handover of control over the Strip to a Palestinian technocratic committee, the deployment of the International Stabilization Force, not to mention the promises to transform Gaza into the "Riviera of the Middle East" with "miracle cities", "breathe new life into it" and "create a special economic zone". All these promises have turned out to be hollow words.

In fact, since the ceasefire was announced on 10 October 2025, Israeli strikes have been killing Palestinian civilians literally every day. More than 880 people have died, and more than 2,600 have been wounded. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), most of them died as a result of sniper fire or explosions of tripwire bombs positioned at access points to water sources. There is a genuine manhunt under way targeting Palestinian law enforcement officers. Incidentally, the issue of accountability and the number of ceasefire violations are elegantly skirted in the report of the Board of Peace. On the whole, since 7 October 2023, the number of Palestinian casualties, according to the most modest estimates, amounts to approximately 73,000 dead and 173,000 injured, with tens of thousands still missing and buried under the rubble.

Those who survived in Gaza continue to suffer from acute shortages of food and basic necessities as well as communicable diseases, and they are being forced to relocate en masse owing to the bans and restrictions imposed and being tightened by the Israelis. As mentioned at a recent OHCHR briefing, sanitary conditions in the Strip are catastrophic, which is compounded by acute shortages of clean drinking water. According to the available information, the United Nations emergency humanitarian appeal for \$4 billion is financed to the tune of a meagre 12 per cent. In essence, suffocation and blockade have become the alternatives to large-scale bloodletting and starvation in the Strip.

Those who read the report by the Board of Peace might come under the impression that Hamas alone is to blame for all the misfortunes plaguing Gaza. Essentially, it is being proposed that we accept the premise whereby blocking humanitarian aid, investment and development assistance can be made contingent on political demands. We are explicitly being told in writing that until Palestinian groups disarm, we better forget about the provisions of the Trump plan stipulating that “Israel will not occupy or annex the Gaza Strip” and that the people of the Strip will be given “the opportunity to build a better Gaza”. At the same time, it is being proposed that the Security Council members exert pressure on Hamas and Palestinian factions for them to accept a “road map” and a framework document on disarmament, which have not even been shown to the Security Council. However, such ploys in a poke no longer surprise us.

The United States plan for Gaza contains no specific political commitments vis-à-vis the Palestinians themselves. The Palestinians, who have been tormented by a decades-long brutal war, are cynically being lured with idyllic depictions of beach resorts, skyscrapers and promises of jobs, but this will be in exchange for their own State, which was promised to them by the international community more than 70 years ago.

But these promises of a bright future no longer inspire faith. Although Israel is bound by international obligations to assist UNRWA, it is now not only blatantly violating them but also taking further provocative steps. On 17 May, the Israeli Government declared plans to build an Israel Defense Forces museum and an enlistment office on the site of the recently demolished UNRWA headquarters in East Jerusalem. We align ourselves with the statement of the Secretary-General, which firmly condemned this decision and called for the return of the former UNRWA compound in East Jerusalem to the United Nations.

There is also information about the reconsideration of the plan’s provisions stipulating that Gaza is to come under the control of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza during the transitional phase. Allegedly, 65 per cent of the Strip’s territory is to be handed over to the full control of West Jerusalem, while the National Committee is supposed to control only 35 per cent. At the same time, entry into the Israeli-controlled part will be subject to quotas and require permission from

Israel. We would appreciate it if the distinguished briefer representing the Board of Peace would comment on this matter.

By way of conclusion, we wish to reaffirm that we see no alternative to returning to the comprehensive peace process based on a universally recognized international legal framework with the two-State solution as its core principle, which entails respect for the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinians to have their own State, coexisting in peace and security with Israel. Rather than calling the membership of the Security Council to help to address tasks that are pointedly counterproductive, we should gear international efforts towards ensuring the implementation of fundamental decisions concerning the Middle East settlement process.

**Mr. Alfaro de Alba** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Panama thanks the briefers, Ramiz Alakbarov, Nickolay Mladenov and Rami Hijjo, for their presentations, which once again highlight the profound, prolonged and regrettable deterioration of the situation in Gaza and the West Bank. We welcome the delegations of the Observer State of Palestine and Israel, who honour us with their participation.

The figures we see month after month reflect how entire generations continue to grow up scarred by the cruelty of war in a region in which, sadly, peace remains more fragile than destruction. The ceasefire reached in October 2025 thanks to the efforts spearheaded by the United States, Qatar, Egypt and Türkiye and endorsed by the Council through resolution 2803 (2025) opened a window of opportunity that facilitated the release of hostages, expanded humanitarian assistance and began to build a new phase for the civilian population of Gaza.

Panama commends the work carried out by the Gaza Board of Peace, under the encouraging coordination of Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, aimed at facilitating humanitarian assistance, supporting early recovery and moving towards more dignified conditions for the population. We welcome the comprehensive, detailed and clear explanation of the architecture of the road map provided by High Representative Mladenov, which allows us to better understand the interconnected steps the parties must take gradually, with reciprocal compliance, in an incremental manner, to move towards peace and the reconstruction of Palestine as well as the obstacles involved. While we acknowledge some partial progress made in these efforts regarding the situation on the ground, we must admit that seven months on, the fragility of the situation demonstrates that the relief achieved remains insufficient given the speed at which conditions on the ground continue to deteriorate.

Since October, around 870 people have been killed and more than 2,500 injured in Gaza — equivalent to nearly four dead and more than 11 injured every day — while hundreds of bodies continue to be recovered from the rubble. Around 76 per cent of homes in Gaza have been damaged or destroyed, while hundreds of thousands of people are surviving in makeshift shelters or severely damaged buildings. More than 637,000 children remain without sustained access to education, and thousands of patients are still in need of urgent medical evacuation, which has not yet arrived.

Panama reiterates its call for full, safe, sustained and unimpeded humanitarian access throughout the Gaza Strip, as well as for all parties to strengthen mechanisms to protect the civilian population at all times, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Panama stresses that the full recovery of Gaza and a sustainable, dignified and just peace are incompatible with Hamas' control or militarization of the territory. Despite the terror inflicted on the people of Israel and Palestine, the peace plan offers them an opportunity to lay down their arms on a conditional and gradual basis, with security guarantees. We urge Hamas to take this opportunity, to allow the phased process of reciprocal commitments between the parties — as set out in the road map of the

Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict — to proceed unhindered, and thereby to contribute to a dignified and safe life for the people of Gaza, who deserve no less, by avoiding the devastating impact on living conditions that any delay might cause.

Meanwhile, in the West Bank, the expansion of settlements, violence against civilians, forced displacement and demolitions continue apace — actions that continue to systematically erode the foundations of a possible two-State political solution, as mandated by the Council's resolutions. These actions, which only serve to accentuate differences and undermine the minimum conditions for a comprehensive, dignified and fair solution, must cease.

The future of Gaza and the West Bank must be built on a reformed, legitimate and unified Palestinian leadership, capable of ensuring good governance, security and dignity, both for the Palestinian people and for the security of Israel and other neighbouring peoples. In this regard, we acknowledge the reform efforts promoted by the Palestinian Authority and consider it essential to continue strengthening its institutional and financial capacities as part of a political transition, such as the one currently under way.

Any peace initiative, such as the one currently being pursued and those to come in the future in Gaza and the West Bank, shows that United Nations support remains indispensable. Panama reiterates its firm support for the work of the humanitarian agencies of the United Nations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as the non-governmental organizations whose staff continue to operate under extremely difficult conditions to provide vital assistance, protect the civilian population and uphold a minimum standard of human dignity.

We owe the victims of this protracted conflict, as well as present and future generations of Israelis and Palestinians, dignity, justice and a peace that must not be further delayed. We reiterate that the path to a just, dignified and sustainable peace between Israelis and Palestinians does not need to be reinvented — it requires the political will to implement it.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I thank Deputy Special Coordinator Alakbarov, High Representative Mladenov and Director Hijjo for their briefings. Let me express our condolences for the brave Red Crescent colleagues who have been tragically killed.

Six months ago, the Council adopted resolution 2803 (2025), which offered an opportunity to turn the page on years of bloodshed and move towards peace. Thanks to the efforts of the United States, Türkiye, Egypt and Qatar, we have seen important progress, including the return of all hostages and a significant reduction in violence.

However, the promise of the 20-point plan has yet to be fully realized, and the parties must do much more. Over 850 civilians have been killed since the ceasefire in October, the humanitarian situation in Gaza remains catastrophic and the implementation of the 20-point plan is being undermined by the trajectory in the West Bank.

I will highlight three priority areas to unlock progress.

First, maintaining momentum on the security transition in Gaza is vital. The United Kingdom supports a phased and verified decommissioning process, deployment of an international stabilization force and the training of a Palestinian police force, alongside a sequenced Israel Defense Forces withdrawal. Under the 20-point plan, Hamas has agreed to decommission its weapons and destroy military and terror infrastructure. It must now make good on that commitment and engage constructively in negotiations, as set out by Mr. Mladenov.

Secondly, urgent steps must be taken by Israel to address the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Children are living amid sewage, parasites and disease. We are horrified by the images of newborn babies with rat bites on their faces. The United Nations reports widespread infestations are now affecting almost 1.5 million people. The Israeli Government's indefensible restrictions on the entry of essential humanitarian equipment and supplies are making it impossible to provide minimum sanitation and water standards. Resolution 2803 (2025) is absolutely clear. There must be a full resumption of humanitarian aid, including rehabilitation of civilian infrastructure. This must take place now and must never be used as a political lever. The United Nations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), as well as international non-governmental organizations, must be able to operate with unrestricted humanitarian access in all of Gaza, in line with Israel's obligations under international law. I also recall my Foreign Secretary's condemnation of the video posted by Israeli Minister Ben-Gvir, taunting those involved in the Global Sumud Flotilla. This violates the most basic standards of respect and dignity in the way people should be treated.

Thirdly, we need to invest in Palestinian-led recovery and reconstruction across all of Gaza, with cooperation between the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations to help the people of Gaza rebuild after two devastating years of conflict.

Finally, we must not lose sight of the West Bank. We condemn Minister Smotrich's orders to forcefully evict Khan al-Ahmar and we oppose any such attempts to remove Palestinians from their land. Settlement expansion, including the E1 plan, must stop. This will do nothing for Israel's security or for long-term peace. We also reject Israel's unacceptable plans to build on the UNRWA site in East Jerusalem, and we remind Israel of its obligation to respect the inviolability of United Nations premises.

The United Kingdom has acted in defence of the two-State solution before, and we will not hesitate to do so again. It is now for the parties with the support of the international community to seize this historic opportunity to agree a political horizon that overcomes the suffering of the past and delivers a better future for Palestinians and Israelis. This means upholding the ceasefire and taking concrete action to implement the 20-point plan in full and at pace.

**Mrs. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Coordinator Ramiz Alakbarov, representative of the Board of Peace Nickolay Mladenov and representative of the Palestine Red Crescent Society Rami Hijjo for their briefings.

Colombia welcomes the fact that the first phase of the Gaza peace plan has allowed all the hostages to be released, including Colombian-Israeli citizen Elkana Bohbot, and it acknowledges the drop in the intensity of the hostilities and the relative improvement in the humanitarian situation. Nonetheless, six months on, the second phase remains but a hope, while millions of Palestinians continue to live without a minimum of decent conditions. Colombia has been clear about the principles that must inform the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025).

The first principle is full respect for the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including their right to freely decide on their governance. My delegation rejects the idea of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the exercise of the Palestinian right to self-determination being presented as conditional or negotiable measures. The International Court of Justice and the Council have been clear: the occupation is unlawful and must end forthwith. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination is unconditional and a founding principle that the Organization has reaffirmed ever since resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 1974 and in all subsequent resolutions.



The second is that any demographic or territorial alteration of the Occupied Palestinian Territory is intolerable. Over the past six months, Israel has continued to expand its territorial control in the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian population is living under the constant uncertainty of imposed and constantly shifting borders. The so-called yellow and orange lines continue to drive the population into increasingly smaller and fragmented areas. The ceasefire continues to be repeatedly violated, and more than 850 Palestinians have been killed since October 2025.

The third is the obligation to guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access at scale in accordance with the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence and to commence the prompt and unconditional reconstruction of Gaza. Reconstruction and humanitarian access are not political concessions. Nor can conditions be attached to them. They are legal obligations that flow from international humanitarian law and Israel's responsibilities as an occupying Power. Nothing in resolution 2803 (2025) makes access to food, healthcare, housing, sanitation and reconstruction conditional upon the fulfilment of political or military criteria.

We must not lose sight of the conditions that gave rise to the humanitarian catastrophe being endured by the survivors of the genocide in Gaza. Israel destroyed the civilian infrastructure of the Strip and continues to restrict the entry of essential goods and humanitarian aid. The report (S/2026/418, annex) acknowledges the severity of the humanitarian crisis but neglects to identify those responsible. Moreover, it also portrays governance and reconstruction arrangements as progress, even though they have yet to materialize, while the population is still displaced and has no access to water, sanitation, education or medical care. The Occupied Palestinian Territory remains the deadliest place in the world for humanitarian and medical personnel and journalists.

The coalition of States required for peace is one consisting of those willing to uphold international law and fulfil their legal obligations. Colombia will continue to call for accountability and will not continue to recognize situations that are unlawful and to render aid or assistance to maintain them. It is encouraging to see an increasing number of countries and even subnational governments heading in this direction and taking concrete measures to avoid being complicit in grave violations of international law. President Petro has been crystal clear: Colombia will not be an accomplice to genocide.

The main impediment to peace continues to be the policy of the Israeli Government, which denies Palestinian self-determination, entrenches territorial fragmentation and deliberately deprives the population of decent living conditions. That policy is now manifest in the occupation, the forward march of annexation, the forced displacement and the systematic denial of the Palestinian people's rights and continues to destabilize the entire region. Peace and stability can be built only on the principles of justice, accountability, an end to the occupation and the full recognition of the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination. The only just and sustainable way out remains the two-State solution and the establishment of a viable, sovereign Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Before closing, Colombia condemns Israel's unlawful attack on the Global Sumud Flotilla. The world has witnessed how cruelly Israel treats a group of civilians whose sole intention is to ease the humanitarian situation of millions in Gaza. We demand their immediate release.

**Ms. Lassen** (Denmark): Let me thank Deputy Special Coordinator Alakbarov, High Representative Mladenov and Director Hijo for their detailed, informative and, at times, very concerning briefings.

Six months ago, the Council adopted resolution 2803 (2025) with one clear objective: to bring an end to the two years of devastating war in Gaza. We welcome the report on the implementation of the resolution by the Board of Peace (S/2026/418, annex) and recognize the progress made under these immensely difficult circumstances. However, as is also clear from the report and this morning's briefings, the past six months have not brought lasting peace to Gaza. Rather, we continue to see immense humanitarian suffering and a level of conflict that is neither war nor peace. As a result, the full promise of resolution 2803 (2025) has not yet come to fruition, in particular with respect to the implementation of the humanitarian provisions of the resolution.

The people of Gaza continue to suffer a humanitarian catastrophe. More than 850 people have been killed, and more than 2,400 have been injured in Gaza since the start of the ceasefire. Israeli forces have expanded territorial control in Gaza, confining Gaza's population to approximately 40 per cent of the territory. Many families continue to live on only one meal per day in deplorable conditions. At the same time, we have seen no movement or willingness from Hamas to end its regime and lay down arms, as stipulated in resolution 2803 (2025).

As we reflect on the past six months and look to the next, it remains our urgent responsibility to reverse this trend, to make resolution 2803 (2025) succeed and to preserve the prospects of lasting peace. To do this, we should be guided by several core points, many of which were also contained in the road map described by Mr. Mladenov.

First, all parties must fully respect the ceasefire and cease all attacks. With more than 200 children killed since the beginning of the ceasefire, it is clear that civilians are still not sufficiently protected. This week's focus on the protection of civilians reminds us of that obligation and of how far we are from fulfilling it.

Secondly, Israel must lift restrictions on humanitarian aid and respect international humanitarian law. All crossings into Gaza must be opened fully and consistently, humanitarian personnel must be protected, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East must be allowed to operate freely, and arbitrary restrictions on international non-governmental organizations and on the type of goods allowed in must end.

Thirdly, Hamas must hand over its weapons, as an essential part of the peace plan. Hamas can play no role in the future of Gaza.

Fourthly, the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza must be allowed in as a transitional body until the Palestinian Authority can return. The Board of Peace and the National Committee should also work with the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations-led humanitarian system from the outset.

Fifthly, the International Stabilization Force must be deployed in Gaza, and Israel must withdraw from the Strip.

And finally, the rebuilding of Gaza must commence as soon as conditions allow and in line with international law. It is not only a matter of clearing rubble but a question of restoring the foundations of human dignity and of ensuring that people have a roof over their heads and access to proper hygiene and that basic infrastructure, such as sewers, is functioning.

Progress on these aspects should be achieved as soon as possible, in parallel and without delay. Equally important for the prospect of a lasting peace is a reversal of the current trajectory in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. As the Security Council Arria formula meeting held two weeks ago demonstrated, the situation in the West Bank is approaching a point of no return, with the expansion of settlements, the violence of extremist settlers and administrative changes, which undermine the viability of a Palestinian State. In this context, we condemn the evacuation orders issued for the Khan

Al-Ahmar community earlier this week. All such steps undermine the two-State solution and the implementation of the 20-point plan. We reiterate that Gaza and the West Bank must be reunited under a reformed Palestinian Authority, governing a Palestinian State that stands alongside Israel in peaceful coexistence.

In closing, the moment for peace is not lost but must be seized with urgency. Our responsibility is not simply to end the violence, but to create the conditions that prevent the resurgence of violence. The frameworks are there: *inter alia*, resolutions 2334 (2016) and 2803 (2025) and the New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. What is needed, as ever, is political will and action.

**Mr. Alrowaiei** (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Ramiz Alakbarov, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Peace Process, for his valuable briefing. I also thank Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Director-General of the Board of Peace and High Representative for Gaza, for his briefing, and Mr. Rami Hajjo, Director of Humanitarian Projects in the Gaza Strip of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, for his valuable briefing.

I would like to address the following three points.

First, the Kingdom of Bahrain expresses its deep concern about the extremely difficult humanitarian conditions that 2 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are enduring as a result of the deteriorating health and environmental conditions, the continuing waste and sanitation crisis and the resulting diseases, as the World Health Organization pointed out in its report, which documented thousands of cases of illness linked to those conditions this year. This bleak picture underscores the need for immediate action, without delay, to address the humanitarian situation and to secure the necessary immediate assistance, in particular adequate medical and therapeutic assistance, in accordance with resolution 2803 (2025) and all relevant United Nations resolutions.

Furthermore, most students in Gaza receive three hours or less of instruction per day, three days a week. In this context, we warn of the consequences of continuing to deprive children in Gaza of the opportunity to live in decent conditions fit for human beings, as their peers worldwide do. In this context, we recall the initiatives issued by the Arab summit held in 2024 —the Bahrain summit— which emphasized the need to provide educational and health services in conflict and crisis zones.

Secondly, the repeated violations and provocations targeting Islamic and Christian holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are cause for grave concern, given that they constitute an infringement they represent on freedom of religion and belief and pose the threat of exacerbating tensions in the region. The Kingdom of Bahrain also reaffirms the importance of preserving the historical and legal status quo at the blessed Aqsa Mosque and rejects any practices or measures that violate the sanctity of religious holy sites in East Jerusalem. Such practices are in clear contravention of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and run counter to the values of peaceful coexistence, respect for human dignity and freedom of religion and contribute to fuelling tensions and undermining the prospects of peace and stability in the region. Furthermore, these practices, alongside settlement expansion, settler violence, continued restrictions on Palestinians, the displacement of more than 40,000 Palestinians in the northern West Bank and the deprivation of freedom of movement and access to natural resources and water, are among the causes of tensions and unrest in the West Bank. We call for those practices to be addressed immediately in order to prevent an explosion that would undermine peace efforts in the region.

Thirdly, the Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes the contents of the report of the Board of Peace issued on 15 May and submitted pursuant to resolution 2803 (2025), in particular its reference to the continuation of the ceasefire, the relative improvement in

the humanitarian corridor and the efforts made in support of recovery and reconstruction in the Gaza Strip, despite the continuing challenges, protests and acute humanitarian needs. The Kingdom also stresses the importance of continuing efforts to empower legitimate Palestinian institutions and improving civil administration, in a manner that ensures the security and stability of the Gaza Strip and preserves the unity of the Palestinian territories. We also reaffirm the need to ensure the success of the first phase of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict so that we can move on to the second phase. The Kingdom of Bahrain also reaffirms the need for integration of regional and international efforts and initiatives in support of the Palestinian cause in order to increase their effectiveness, equip the Palestinian Government to carry out its responsibilities, contribute to the protection of civilians and guarantee the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain reaffirms its firm and consistent position in support of the legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people, above all the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent sovereign State alongside the State of Israel, along the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the two-State solution, the Arab Peace Initiative and the relevant Council resolutions.

**Mr. Mohamed Yusuf** (Somalia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow to begin by thanking the briefers: Mr. Alakbarov, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, for his valuable briefing; Mr. Mladenov, High Representative for Gaza, for the first report on the implementation of resolution 2803 (2025) (S/2026/418); and Mr. Hijjo, Director of Humanitarian Projects in the Gaza Strip for the Palestine Red Crescent Society, for his valuable briefing shedding light on the dire humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Somalia is following with grave concern the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where the suffering of civilians is on the rise and humanitarian needs are becoming more dire as violations threatening the life and dignity of the inhabitants continue. Although several months have passed since the adoption of resolution 2803 (2025), the humanitarian situation of Palestinians in Gaza continues to worsen. Humanitarian organizations report ongoing restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian assistance and essential items such as medical equipment, water, sanitary needs, shelter materials and fuel. Restrictions on so-called dual-use goods are severely undermining the ability of agencies to meet the increasing needs of the inhabitants. Somalia condemns the Zionist regime's systematic targeting of medical and humanitarian personnel. Protecting such personnel and allowing them to carry out their tasks safely is an obligation that cannot be disregarded under any circumstances. We also express our concern over deteriorating health and environmental conditions, including waste accumulation, the deterioration of water and sanitation infrastructure and the absence of requirements for a decent life, especially for children, women and the most vulnerable groups.

The Federal Republic of Somalia condemns in the strongest terms the attacks and violations against the blessed Aqsa Mosque, including incursions by Israeli officials and settlers under the protection of occupation forces and access restrictions on worshippers in a flagrant violation of the status quo and a dangerous provocation of the sentiments of Muslims worldwide. We condemn reports of plans by a splinter separatist group in northern Somalia to open a diplomatic office in occupied Jerusalem in cooperation with the Zionist occupation regime. We categorically reject any steps that undermine the unity, independence or territorial integrity of Somalia or confer legitimacy on entities that are not recognized internationally. Any measure to change the legal, historic or demographic status quo of Jerusalem is null and void under international law and the relevant resolutions. Somalia reaffirms the need to respect Hashemite custodianship of

Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. We reject all measures to alter the identity of the city or its holy places. We warn of the risks of any escalation in East Jerusalem that could jeopardize security and stability in the region.

Somalia condemns attacks on aid vessels heading towards Gaza. It stresses that targeting or obstructing humanitarian assistance is unacceptable and runs counter to international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles. We insist on the need to respect and ensure the safety of humanitarian personnel and guarantee the delivery of humanitarian assistance without obstacles or politicization. In that connection, Somalia reaffirms the need for accountability and compliance with international law, including the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, guaranteeing the protection of civilians and preventing grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights.

Resolution 2803 (2025) laid out a path for protecting civilians, restoring basic services and enabling humanitarian assistance. It must not be held hostage to political or security considerations. It should be implemented fully and in a balanced manner. The immediate, safe and sustainable delivery of humanitarian assistance is a moral and legal obligation that cannot be deferred or limited. We reaffirm the importance of allowing the United Nations and its agencies, especially the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to carry out its functions without hindrance. Humanitarian crossings should be opened completely and on a regular basis to meet the needs of the population.

In conclusion, a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East requires full implementation of the Council's resolutions, including resolution 2803 (2025) in all its dimensions, ensuring a ceasefire, protecting civilians, expanding the humanitarian response and creating conditions conducive to a credible political process based on the international resolutions and the two-State solution that guarantees an end to the ongoing occupation and ensures the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of an independent sovereign State along the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital. Somalia reiterates its staunch support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We will continue to stand behind all efforts to achieve peace, stability and human dignity in the region.

**Mr. Mukongo** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): The Democratic Republic of Congo wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for holding this meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. My delegation also wishes to thank Mr. Ramiz Alakbarov, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; Mr. Nikolay Mladenov, High Representative for Gaza of the Board of Peace; and Mr. Rami Hijjo, Director of Humanitarian Projects in the Gaza Strip of the Palestine Red Crescent Society for their relevant briefings.

Seven months after the entry into force of the Gaza ceasefire, the relative calm been observed on the ground is a development that must be nurtured with the utmost caution. After nearly two years of unabated violence, the situation remains fragile and calls for sustained efforts to shore it up. In that connection, the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the role played by the United States of America, Egypt, Qatar and Türkiye in mediation efforts and maintenance of the ceasefire, as well as initiatives undertaken to accelerate implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict.

At the same time, my delegation remains deeply concerned by the ongoing deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, specifically in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and including East Jerusalem. In Gaza, reports document ceasefire violations that continue to exacerbate an extremely troubling humanitarian situation. The Democratic Republic of the Congo calls for measures to be relaxed to

speed up humanitarian assistance delivery and optimize the international community's capacity to meet the urgent needs of the civilian population. Secure and rapid humanitarian access must be guaranteed in accordance with international humanitarian law. In the West Bank, the resurgence of violence continues to fuel tensions on the ground, creating a real risk of further compromising prospects for a lasting peace.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo takes note of efforts undertaken in implementation of resolution 2803 (2025), especially with regard to establishing transitional governance mechanisms in Gaza and stepping up humanitarian aid delivery. While these developments are encouraging, we nonetheless note that major challenges persist, specifically with regard to implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, meaningful compliance with the ceasefire and the removal of obstacles to humanitarian access. In that connection, my delegation recalls the importance of balanced, credible and inclusive implementation of ongoing initiatives in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the relevant Council resolutions. We urge all parties to refrain from any measures likely to exacerbate tensions. The Democratic Republic of the Congo also recalls that the protection of civilians under international humanitarian law and international human rights law remains an overriding obligation in times of conflict. Combating impunity remains vital, in this respect, to preventing future violations.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo reaffirms that no military solution can be a substitute for a credible, just and lasting political resolution to the conflict for the benefit of both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and the relevant Council resolutions. In that connection, we support a pragmatic approach that would allow a reformed Palestinian Authority to fully shoulder its governance responsibilities through a comprehensive and inclusive political process.

To conclude, the Democratic Republic of the Congo would like to reiterate its readiness to remain engaged, to work with its Council peers and international partners to uphold political, humanitarian and financial commitments to affected populations and to support efforts to create conditions for a lasting, just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

I thank Deputy Special Coordinator Alakbarov and Mr. Mladenov for their briefings. I also thank Mr. Hijjo for his moving statement.

In October 2025, the Gaza ceasefire agreement was reached. In November 2025, the Security Council adopted resolution 2803 (2025). The international community as a whole hopes that Gaza will emerge from conflict and catastrophe and usher in peace and tranquility. We take note of the first report submitted to the Council by the Board of Peace (S/2026/418, annex) and of some improvement in the situation in Gaza. However, there is still a long way to go before the guns are silenced once and for all and the suffering is ended completely. The ceasefire has not yet brought peace. Attacks and casualties continue. More than 2 million people still struggle to survive amid the ruins. Faced with the grave situation, it is all the more imperative for the international community to build a broader consensus and make more proactive efforts.

I will make three points.

First, a lasting ceasefire must be achieved in Gaza, and violent attacks must be stopped. Since the ceasefire agreement was reached, Israel has been carrying out almost daily bombings and attacks, which have already killed more than 870 people. Any breach of the ceasefire will undermine the already fragile situation and lead to renewed

fighting. Any deliberate provocation or risky behaviour will jeopardize the negotiation process and serve neither party's interests. We call upon all parties concerned, especially Israel, to fully abide by the ceasefire agreement and achieve a truly lasting ceasefire in Gaza. The guarantors of the ceasefire agreement and relevant parties with important influence should take more active steps to uphold the ceasefire.

Secondly, the humanitarian situation in Gaza must be improved without delay to ease the suffering of the people. The increased flow of humanitarian supplies into Gaza is a positive and welcome development. However, the quantity of supplies is not the only criterion for assessing the humanitarian situation. At present, the humanitarian situation in Gaza remains dire. Drinking water, medical supplies, fuel and other basic items continue to be in short supply and massive numbers of people lack shelter. The public health issue in Gaza must be given serious attention. Sewage, rubble and overcrowding are highly conducive to the spread of infectious disease. The recent surge in cases of parasite and rodent infestations could trigger a severe crisis. Israel must fulfil its obligations under international humanitarian law as the occupying Power, lift humanitarian access restrictions and allow urgently needed medicine, fuel and shelter materials to enter Gaza. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is the backbone of humanitarian operations in Gaza. For some time now, Israel has continued to suppress and restrict UNRWA's work and recently even announced plans to build military facilities on UNRWA's East Jerusalem premises. We express grave concern over this and urge Israel to earnestly guarantee UNRWA's privileges, immunities and capacity to carry out its mandate.

Thirdly, it is important to stay committed to the two-State solution and steadily move the post-war arrangement for Gaza in that direction. The two-State solution is the only viable way forward for the settlement of the Palestinian question. Any arrangements or new mechanisms must adhere to the principle of Palestinians governing Palestine, respect the will of the Palestinian people and promote rather than undermine the two-State solution. The international community must unite in greater efforts to revitalize prospects for the two-State solution, reject unilateral actions that erode the foundation of the two-State solution and oppose attempts to alter Gaza's demographic or territorial composition. As the body with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council should continue to pay close attention to the situation and post-war arrangements in Gaza and play its appropriate role. Gaza and the West Bank are both integral parts of Palestine. Tensions in the West Bank must not be overlooked. Israel must abide by international law and resolution 2334 (2016), halt its settlement activities, curb settler violence and ensure genuine accountability.

China stands ready to work with the international community for the realization of a comprehensive and lasting ceasefire in Gaza, the easing of the humanitarian crisis and the implementation of the two-State solution and for the early realization of a comprehensive just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

**Mr. Mansour** (State of Palestine): Allow me at the outset to thank China for convening this timely meeting and to thank Deputy Special Coordinator Ramiz Alakbarov and High Representative Mladenov for their reports. The Palestinian Prime Minister met with both Mr. Alakhbarov and Mr. Mladenov in recent weeks to coordinate efforts, and we look forward to continued cooperation for the benefit of our people in the Gaza Strip. Allow me to express our appreciation to Rami Hijjo for his powerful and heartbreaking testimony and for all the work he and the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the humanitarian community are doing.

Let me start by stating once again that we welcomed President Donald J. Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, together with the group of eight Arab and Muslim countries and the broader international community, for a clear purpose: stopping the bloodshed, ending the suffering of families separated from their loved ones, ending the famine and the humanitarian catastrophe, and reversing the attempts at forcible displacement and annexation. All these requirements are explicitly stated in the Plan.

Let me be absolutely clear. Nothing can justify the collective punishment of more than 2 million Palestinians. Humanitarian aid is neither conditional, nor can it serve as leverage or be utilized as a weapon of war. The crossings must be and remain open and aid must flow at scale, including desperately needed shelters, medicine and food, as well as the necessary equipment to remove debris and restore basic services. Delays must not be tolerated, and the obstacles must be lifted. And humanitarian actors, whether from the United Nations, the Palestine Red Crescent Society or non-governmental organizations, must be allowed to operate, and to do so safely. This is critical when you know that 77 per cent of the Palestinian population in Gaza continues to face high levels of acute food insecurity and is largely dependent on aid to survive and when families continue to live amid ruins, in makeshift tents and facing the spread of rodents and diseases, lacking the most basic services, including when it comes to health, water, sanitation and education.

Forcible displacement, including by creating unbearable conditions of life, is a crime and must be combatted. Annexation is unlawful and remains so under any circumstances. Let me quote Netanyahu in this regard: "We brought back all our hostages, up to the last one" — he should thank President Trump for that — "and we did it without ceding territories... Today we control 60 per cent of Gaza. Tomorrow we shall see." Such a blatant confession of Israel's annexation policies in Gaza, which mirror its policies in the West Bank, where Israel also controls 60 per cent of Palestinian land, warrants a proper, decisive, unequivocal response in words and in actions. We must see the entire picture, not just a small corner or a section of it.

We recognize and appreciate the mobilization of the United States Administration, including at the highest levels, and of the other guarantors, as well as regional and international players and the Board of Peace. We need the current international efforts in Gaza towards recovery and reconstruction to succeed because our people's lives depend on it. We want them to succeed. Our people have the most to benefit from their success. Therefore, we will spare no effort in helping ensure that success. That is the only acceptable Palestinian attitude, and that is a moral obligation towards our people whose suffering remains unbearable.

The measure of our success will be the developments on the ground in Gaza and our ability to save Palestinian lives and restore dignified life in Gaza, as well as ensuring that all transitional arrangements are conducive to and respectful of the unity and territorial integrity of the Palestinian people and its right to self-determination.

All parties must fully abide by their commitments under the ceasefire agreement, without delays or excuses, starting with actually respecting the ceasefire.

We recognize that the ceasefire agreement has saved thousands of lives. But Israel killing more than 850 Palestinians, as you, Mr. President, indicated in your statement, and injuring thousands since the ceasefire entered into force is not a footnote or a secondary matter. It is one that deserves the utmost attention to bring these attacks to an end. Imagine if 800 Israelis had been killed, or, for that matter, if 80 had been killed, what would the reactions be? Would anyone still think that we had been successful in upholding the ceasefire agreement? We have a duty to ensure the world does not get



accustomed to seeing Palestinians killed. That is an obligation. We are not irrelevant, while others are extremely relevant. Such hypocrisy should not be tolerated.

Our vision is clear, and it is aligned with the terms of the Plan and endorsed by the international community as a whole. Gaza is an integral part of Palestine. It must be reunified with the West Bank, under the Palestinian National Authority. The principle of One State, One Government, One Law and One Gun must be fully upheld. And Israel must fully withdraw from the Gaza Strip: no occupation, no displacement and no annexation.

We are sparing no effort in upholding our own obligations and commitments, but it is critical that all parties are held to the same standard. While we are engaging with the United States on the steps undertaken by the Palestinian National Authority in the context of our commitment to non-violence, the two-State solution and reforms, Israel continues to unleash, incite and enable violence against Palestinian civilians, whether by its occupation forces or by Israeli settlers, and to take blatant steps towards the destruction of the Palestinian State and the two-State solution, including policies designed to induce the collapse of the Palestinian Authority.

The Israeli Government got so used to getting away with its crimes against the Palestinian people that it eventually attacked and killed humanitarian personnel from other countries — the flotilla comes to mind. It killed and maimed United Nations peacekeepers. It subjected citizens from other countries to ill and degrading treatment. Make no mistake, Ben-Gvir is the tip of the iceberg. The problem is the iceberg, not only the part visible above the surface.

Netanyahu was dismayed not by Ben-Gvir's actions but by the fact Ben Gvir filmed and broadcasted them to appeal to his electorate ahead of the upcoming elections. Netanyahu himself, like Ben-Gvir, called the members of the Gaza flotilla terrorist supporters. The term terrorist has now been used to characterize the entire Palestinian population, United Nations personnel, humanitarian personnel and activists from around the globe. Its ever-expanding grasp enables the dehumanization, demonization, killing and harming of anyone.

Countries were correctly outraged by how Ben-Gvir treated their nationals. Please think of how he treats ours. Ben-Gvir gave barely a glimpse of the treatment reserved to Palestinian prisoners, more than 100 of whom died in custody under torture or due to starvation and medical neglect over the past two years. They are being subjected to inhumane and degrading treatment, assault, sexual abuse and rape. There are hundreds, maybe thousands, of Palestinians who have been detained and disappeared, and their families ache every day not knowing their fate. The evidence of these horrors is undeniable, the perpetrators known and shielded.

In the same vein, Smotrich has ordered publicly the forcible displacement of the Palestinian community in Khan al-Ahmar. Katz declared transforming the United Nations compound into military facilities for the Ministry of Defense. Netanyahu declared steps to entrench Israel's de facto annexation of the Jordan Valley. All this happened in the last couple of days.

The so-called flag march across occupied East Jerusalem, endorsed by the Israeli Government, and the aggressions and racism that accompanies it, together with the assault on people and holy sites, has highlighted once again the urgent need for deradicalization efforts in Israel before it is too late — especially as it is clear that Israel will spare no effort to obstruct the prospect of Palestinian self-determination and the independence of our State promised by President Donald J. Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict.

There is no world in which the current fate of the millions of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip or in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, can be deemed acceptable. After all that has happened before, during and after 7 October 2023, we must seize the opportunity offered by the ceasefire agreement to take decisive steps to end the suffering, the occupation and the conflict and ensure freedom for the Palestinian people, and peace, security and prosperity for Palestinians, Israelis and the wider region.

We have an obligation to seize this historical moment and prevent the recurrence of tragedies that can be avoided if we make the right decisions. This should not be left to the whims of any party. International law is not optional. There should be only one path: compliance or enforcement. All countries must do all they can so that we have no choice but to make the right decisions.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

**Mr. Miller** (Israel): We wish to thank today's briefers.

There is a dangerous illusion taking hold in the Chamber — the illusion that diplomacy can succeed while terrorist organizations are allowed to hold diplomacy hostage. Israel's position should not be misunderstood. We continue to believe in diplomacy, and we want diplomatic efforts to succeed because they remain the best path towards a more stable and secure future for Israelis, Palestinians and the wider region. But diplomacy can only work when the parties involved are prepared to treat it as a path to implementation rather than as a mechanism for delay. When terrorist organizations use each round of talks to obstruct progress, preserve their weapons and strengthen their position on the ground, the international community must be careful not to confuse process with progress. Hamas, Hizbullah and Iran's proxies have repeatedly demonstrated that they do not treat diplomacy as a path to compromise, but rather as a means of delaying implementation, preserving their weapons and strengthening their position on the ground. When the international community allows this pattern to continue, it risks turning diplomacy into a shield for the very actors who are obstructing it.

That is exactly what Hamas is doing today in Gaza. For months, the ceasefire framework has remained trapped in deadlock, not because there is no path forward, no international plan or no humanitarian mechanism, but because there is one central obstacle: Hamas refuses to disarm. The 11-page report submitted to the Council by the Board of Peace (S/2026/418, annex) makes this reality quite clear. It states that the principal obstacles to full implementation remain Hamas' refusal to accept verified decommissioning, relinquish coercive control and permit a genuine civilian transition in Gaza. The report also makes clear that reconstruction cannot begin where weapons have not been laid down and that the single factor that unlocks every other element of the plan is a road map that includes the full decommissioning of Hamas and all armed groups in Gaza.

Disarmament cannot be treated as a secondary or symbolic issue, because it is the very condition on which any sustainable future in Gaza depends. As long as Hamas remains armed, the current situation will continue to harm Israelis, Palestinians and the wider region alike. While diplomatic discussions continue, Hamas is using the delay to consolidate control, rebuild its capabilities and strengthen its grip over the civilian population. In the territory that Hamas controls in Gaza, it continues to tax civilians, intimidate communities, obstruct contractors and prevent the establishment of normal civilian governance. This is not a movement preparing for peace. Hamas remains heavily armed. It still possesses rockets, anti-tank missiles, assault rifles and tunnel infrastructure across Gaza. This is not a political organization transitioning towards diplomacy. It is a terrorist army preserving its capacity for the next war. Hamas itself has said as much. On 5 April, Hamas spokesman Abu Obeida publicly rejected

disarmament, saying that the disarmament demands were, “something we will not accept under any circumstances”.

The question for the Council is simple: What exactly are we waiting for? The reconstruction of Gaza cannot succeed while armed militias continue to control its streets, and any serious effort to establish stability, civilian governance and a better future for the Palestinians will fail unless Hamas is disarmed and its rule of fear is brought to an end. Despite Hamas’ obstruction, humanitarian assistance continues to enter Gaza at scale. Since the ceasefire arrangements began, the volume of humanitarian aid entering Gaza has increased significantly, with 1.6 million tons of food having entered the Strip. Most bakeries have resumed operations, and basic food conditions have stabilized for the first time since 2023. Approximately 600 trucks are entering Gaza every day — around 4,200 a week — and all crossings are open, with 70 to 80 per cent of that cargo dedicated to food, together with sanitation and medical supplies.

But humanitarian aid alone cannot solve Gaza’s future. While Hamas remains armed, resolution 2803 (2025) does not separate reconstruction from demilitarization; they are inseparable. Nor can we stop there. If we are serious about Gaza’s future, we must also confront the deeper root cause: radicalization. Gaza cannot be rebuilt only with cement and electricity. It must also be rebuilt with a different education system, a different civil culture and a different future for its children. The next generation in Gaza must not be taught to glorify martyrdom, murder Jews or see terrorism as a path to dignity. Disarmament must be treated as the immediate security requirement, while deradicalization must be understood as the longer-term political and moral challenge. And the international community has a responsibility to address both if it is serious about Gaza’s future.

The same principle applies in Lebanon. Israel prefers diplomacy. For the first time in decades, Israel has entered direct negotiations with Lebanon, and we are grateful to the United States for helping advance these efforts. Israel wants a stable, sovereign and successful Lebanon. We want to see a Lebanese Government capable of enforcing its authority across all of its territory. But diplomacy cannot stand alone. While negotiations continue, Hizbullah continues to threaten Israeli civilians. Hizbullah remains heavily armed, continues to violate Security Council resolutions and continues to operate as an Iranian terror army inside Lebanon. As long as Hizbullah threatens our people, Israel will defend its citizens. Declarations of intent cannot be treated as sufficient. If the international community truly wants to support a sovereign Lebanon, support must be linked to measurable results, with clear benchmarks, credible evidence and consistent monitoring.

The world cannot ignore the nature of the organizations with which it is dealing. Last month, Israel spoke in the chamber (see S/PV.10146) about reports emerging directly from Gazans describing blackmail, abuse and sexual violence carried out by Hamas operatives against their own people. Since then, the Dinah Project report, released on 12 May, following years of investigation, concluded that sexual violence during the 7 October 2023 attacks and their aftermath was systematic, widespread and tactical. Its findings are based on survivor testimony, witness accounts, forensic evidence and extensive documentation. The evidence points not to isolated acts of violence, but to a broader pattern in which terror was used deliberately as a tool of brutality, intimidation and control. Yet many of those who speak with certainty when accusing Israel are far less willing to confront Hamas’ crimes when they are documented and exposed.

Some speakers have referred today to Judea and Samaria. Israel condemns all violence against Israelis and Palestinian civilians, and when extremists act, Israel acts. Israel has implemented measures to combat nationalist crimes, including strengthened operational presence, enhanced monitoring tools, improved reporting with mechanisms

and a dedicated police force with expanded resources. But the Council should also be honest about the way this issue is often discussed. Some recent forums, including the recent Arria-formula discussion, have not enabled serious discussion. They have created an echo chamber that entrenches division while avoiding the broader context of terrorism, incitement and attacks against Israeli civilians.

With reference to comments made about activists on the flotilla to Gaza, as Prime Minister Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Saar made quite clear, Mr. Ben-Gvir's conduct towards the flotilla activists was not representative of Israeli Government policy, nor was it consistent with Israel's values and norms. Israel has every right to prevent a provocative flotilla of Hamas supporters from reaching Gaza, and those involved were properly detained in accordance with international law. All foreign activists from this public stunt have now already been deported from Israel. Israel will not permit any breach of the lawful naval blockade on Gaza. It will enforce the law, and it will do so in a way that reflects the standards and values of the State of Israel.

Israel will continue to defend its citizens against those who seek our destruction. No country represented in the Chamber would behave differently. At the same time, Israel remains open to genuine opportunities for peace and continues to support diplomatic efforts that can produce real security and stability. But those efforts cannot succeed if they are built on illusions about the intentions of terrorist organizations or if armed groups are allowed to remain empowered while using delay as a strategy to preserve their position.

The choice before the Council is clear. Will the international community continue enabling endless delay, or will it demand that Hamas choose between terror and Gaza's future? Will it continue treating armed extremists as unavoidable political facts or will it confront the root causes that have trapped generations in war, radicalization, incitement and the glorification of terror? Every day that Hamas remains armed is another day that Israelis and Palestinians both are denied the future they deserve. Every day that Hizbullah remains as an army inside Lebanon is another day that Lebanese sovereignty is denied. And every day that Iran's proxies are allowed to hold diplomacy hostage is another day that the region is denied peace.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*