



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council Briefing on the situation in the Middle East
3 January 2025**

Greece's Statement delivered

by HE Ambassador Evangelos Sekeris,

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Thank you Mr. President,

Firstly, let me congratulate you on assuming your duties and wish you a very productive Presidency and I thank colleagues of fellow member states for welcoming us to the Council. I would also like to thank the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights, **Mr. Volker Türk**, the WHO Representative for the Occupied Palestinian Territories, **Dr. Rik Peepkorn**, and **Dr. Tanya Haj Hassan** for their detailed briefings. Their participation here sheds valuable insight on the issue at hand.

Mr. President,

It has been 14 enormously difficult months for the people of Gaza.

The briefers today, and those who have preceded them in this Chamber over the past year, have tried to describe a situation in the Gaza Strip, almost beyond comprehension.

This is a grave situation that has been in a downward spiral for the past year, while the recent attacks on hospitals have pushed an already inadequate healthcare system to the brink of total collapse.

Greece is extremely concerned that after more than a year of ongoing conflict in Gaza, an end to the human suffering remains elusive.

While we recognize Israel's right to self-defense and the shock that the Israeli society has been through following the death of 1200 citizens and the continuous captivity of 100 hostages for 14 months, we have to remind ourselves that when all else fails, the international law and international humanitarian law is the compass to our humanity.

We join our fellow member states in calling for full respect to the provisions of International Humanitarian Law, the compass and the framework for all operations in Gaza.

IHL tells us that hospitals should not be used improperly for any military use, nor any operations against those facilities be made under vague allegations.

The destruction of the healthcare system, in combination with the killing of patients, humanitarian workers, medical staff and other civilians, constitute severe violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

Mr. President,

The suffering and dehumanization of civilians must come to an end. All crossings should be open for aid delivery, and sanctuaries should be protected and not turned into death traps for those who were forced to flee.

At the same time, it is important for the humanitarian aid to be delivered without being pillaged by criminal elements ravaging the area.

UNRWA's operations remain vital for the civilian population.

Mr. President,

The current humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip cannot be dealt without dialogue and diplomacy. Military pressure alone is insufficient to defeat terrorism and extremist ideologies.

Since the October 7th, 2023 horrific attacks and the pain they have inflicted on Israeli society, hostages remain in captivity, while death, destruction and disease reign over Gaza.

It is beyond any doubt that a ceasefire, the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and the urgent, unhindered distribution of aid at scale is the only way to stem the tide.

The only long-term solution for the region is to revitalize the political process, to pave the way for a political horizon for a two state solution, according to the relevant Security Council Resolution, while recognizing the right of Israel to exist in peace and security.

Mr. President,

Only two days ago, we all rang the New Year, most of us with a New Year's resolution.

Ours was to represent our country with dignity to this august Body.

This time of the year, I cannot help but think of the people in Gaza and the families of hostages in Israel, and I do believe that **Peace** is their demand and their hope for this year; and it is a gift worth trying to give.

I thank you.