



**PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



**Security Council Open Briefing on
the Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question
(Humanitarian Situation in Gaza)
18 March 2025**

**Statement delivered by
H.E. Ambassador Evangelos Sekeris
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, New York**

Thank you Madame President for responding to this urgent meeting request and USG Tom Fletcher for his sobering briefing.

Colleagues,

Middle East currently stands at a turning point and the long-awaited ceasefire and hostage release agreement in Gaza was a great example of what could be achieved through political will.

We are seriously alarmed by the resumption of hostilities in Gaza and the new huge death toll and we call on all parties to show restraint and resume the ceasefire talks.

Following the profound shock of October 7, 2023, Greece maintained a principled stance. We express our condemnation of Hamas' terrorist attack and the ongoing detention and cruel treatment of the hostages and we reiterated our demand for their immediate and unconditional release.

The people of Gaza have endured a second winter under extremely difficult circumstances.

Tom Fletcher today and other briefers who have preceded him in this Chamber have tried to describe living conditions almost beyond our comprehension.

We echo the calls for the humanitarian aid to flow back to Gaza immediately and the crossings to open as soon as possible. Reports by OCHA and the World Food Programme of the inability to transport food supplies into Gaza due to the closure of all border crossing points is of utmost concern.

The suffering of the civilian population must come to an end.

We call on Israel to allow and facilitate the safe, unconditional, massive and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid at scale and restore access to electricity and water, as well as to ensure the protection of civilians and other protected persons, including humanitarian workers in line with international humanitarian law.

Millions are in urgent need of primary health services, education and shelter, as Gaza's territory has been reduced to rubble. Thousands of children were left dead, injured, separated from their families and internally displaced.

Hence, the unhindered and continuous flow of aid into all parts of Gaza should remain a priority. UNRWA's role remains pivotal and indispensable.

We support all efforts to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches Gaza, and have consistently supported the Cypriot "Amalthea" maritime corridor and other initiatives in this regard.

Within the EU, we took an initiative so that EU member states can assume the treatment of injured and sick children from Gaza. In this context, we welcomed ten children and their families from Gaza, who are currently receiving treatment in Greek hospitals.

OCHA warnings of increased settler violence across the West Bank is also alarming, as is the displacement of people, the unfolding security situation in Jenin, following the intensification of operations and terrorist attacks in the West Bank.

Madame President,

We need a permanent ceasefire that can pave the way for the release of all remaining hostages and for the reconstruction of Gaza.

In this vein, we welcome regional efforts to cohere around a single plan for the next phase in Gaza and we stand ready to support and develop these ideas further.

The Arab plan put forth by Egypt is a constructive proposal on the table.

We are clear that any plan must have no role for Hamas, must ensure Israel's security, must not displace Palestinians from Gaza.

Any scenario of displacement would jeopardize regional stability and security and it would undermine the prospect of achieving the two-state solution.

Reconstruction efforts should also include governance and security arrangements, while ensuring the leading role of an empowered and reformed PA in this process, capable of exerting effective governance over the West Bank and Gaza. It should also be ensured that Hamas will be excluded from any planning on the day after in Gaza and that it will never pose a threat to Israel's security.

For this to happen though, the Palestinian Authority needs to be supported financially and institutionally and Greece remains committed to providing assistance in this direction.

Madame President,

The political process must remain as a core objective of our collective efforts. We support the creation of a sovereign Palestinian State on the basis of a two-state solution according to the relevant Security Council Resolutions.

I thank you