



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council Briefing on the situation in the Middle East,
including the Palestinian Question
21 March 2025**

Greece's Statement delivered
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Thank you, Madam President.

I would like to thank Ms. Sigrid Kaag for her briefing today. We share in the grief for the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and UNRWA staff members who died these past days and express our sincere condolences to their families and the UN. We hope for the speedy recovery of the other five UN personnel who were seriously injured.

Madam President,

The world craves for peace in Gaza. This is the main takeaway from our discussions this week. Israelis deserve peace. Palestinians deserve peace. The ceasefire and hostage release agreement in Gaza demonstrated during its short but crucial lifespan that progress **is** possible when the parties are bold enough to commit to it.

The flow of humanitarian aid was greatly improved and Israel also allowed the return of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to northern Gaza, while the guns were widely silenced. However, the resumption of hostilities and the alarming death toll on civilians that has ensued is cause for grave concern.

Greece has repeatedly condemned the October 7 terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas, as well as the ongoing detention and cruel and inhumane treatment of its hostages. We reiterate our demand for the

immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, unequivocally condemning Hamas's terror.

It is the people of Gaza that suffer in the face of Hamas' intransigence and Israel's relaunch of operations. We echo the calls for the crossings to open as soon as possible and for humanitarian aid to flow again at scale and unhindered in Gaza. The suffering of civilians must end. At this critical juncture, we call for the immediate and full implementation of the ceasefire agreement.

In the meantime, we urge for the unconditional, massive and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid at scale and the restoration of access to electricity and water. While the unhindered and continuous flow of aid into all parts of Gaza should remain a priority, UNRWA's role still remains pivotal and indispensable.

Madam President,

Greece is a staunch proponent of international law, which frames and guides its foreign policy. In line with its principles, we call for the respect of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War of 1949. We recall that, as outlined in Security Council Resolution 2334, acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible by international law.

We deplore the increase of settlement activity in the West Bank. Such attempts are contrary to international law and the relevant Security Council Resolutions have no legal validity. The cessation of settlement activity is essential for salvaging the two-State solution.

We are particularly concerned about reported escalation of violence in the West Bank and the displacement of some 40.000 people, particularly from refugee camps in the north. Attacks on civilians, including children, as well as on civilian infrastructure, constitute violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. The reported demolition and seizure of Palestine-owned structures is also concerning.

As this is the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, soon to be followed by Easter for all Christian denominations, we are reminded of the importance of the special Status Quo of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem. Considering the universal importance of the Holy Sites, Greece reaffirms its deep interest in the preservation of the Status Quo.

Madame la Présidente,

Pour n'importe quelle partie, choisir l'escalade serait dangereux; surtout dans cette région instable. Alors que le Liban tente de se relever et que la situation sécuritaire en Syrie demeure volatile, la stabilité régionale semble précaire. Dans ce contexte, les efforts louables des États-Unis, de l'Égypte et du Qatar pour ramener les parties à la table des négociations doivent être couronnés de succès.

Le processus politique doit être revitalisé afin de parvenir à une solution à deux États, conformément aux résolutions pertinentes du Conseil de sécurité, tout en reconnaissant le droit d'Israël à exister en paix et en sécurité. Nous attendons donc avec beaucoup d'intérêt la conférence internationale qui se tiendra à New York cet été, sous la coprésidence de la France et de l'Arabie saoudite.

Dans le même esprit, le plan arabe pour la récupération et la reconstruction de Gaza présenté par l'Égypte est une proposition constructive, et la Grèce se réjouit de participer au développement de telles activités – entre autres dans le cadre de la prochaine Conférence internationale sur la reconstruction qui se tiendra au Caire ce printemps.

Madame la Présidente,

Une Autorité palestinienne renforcée et réformée, capable d'exercer sa gouvernance effective en Cisjordanie et éventuellement à Gaza, doit être au cœur de nos efforts pour l'après-guerre.

Pour les otages israéliens et pour le peuple palestinien, qui espèrent tous rentrer chez eux sains et saufs, il faut que nous redoublions nos efforts pour la paix. Que nous remplacions leur désespoir par l'espoir, toute en luttant contre les causes profondes de la radicalisation. Car l'espoir peut renaître, à condition que nous ayons le courage d'emprunter le chemin de la paix.

Je vous remercie.