



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



**Security Council Briefing
on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 2474
15 May 2025**

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

Let me start by thanking ASG Khaled Khiari and our two briefers for their powerful testimonies.

In a few days, the Security Council will hold its annual Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict and we feel that today's discussion is very timely.

Resolution 2474, adopted unanimously in 2019, constitutes a landmark in our collective efforts to address the plight of missing persons in armed conflict; underscoring inter alia that States must address the issue holistically, effectively and in a credible manner.

However, our collective efforts to achieve these standards seem to fall short. Greece is deeply concerned of the increasing number of cases of missing persons; these cases hardly constitute mere statistics, but individual stories of severe hardship and distress.

Finding every missing person is more than a legal obligation; it is a moral imperative which contributes to the alleviation of suffering and to reconciliation and peace-building efforts in conflict and post-conflict zones.

Customary international law applicable to both international and non-international armed conflicts, proclaims that all feasible measures must be taken to account for persons reported missing as a result of the armed conflict. Equally, their families deserve information on their fate. When the families of missing persons are denied information, this amounts to inhumane treatment.

The right of families to know of the fate of missing relatives is central and strictly connected with the obligation for the Parties to the conflict to gather information about the persons reported missing, but equally to their obligations regarding the treatment of the remains of the dead.

I welcome the Representatives of the Member States, who requested to participate in our discussion today and will elaborate on the cases their countries have been dealing with;

As a matter of principle, Greece fully supports the work of the United Nations, among others, through the establishment of Commissions for Missing Persons, as part of existing international practice. The role of such Commissions in tracing the fate of the missing cannot be overstated. They are crucial in stressing to the parties their clear obligation to cooperate in good faith, with each other and with the Commission and this because such cooperation is critical for their mandate and success.

It is crucial for the international community not to lose sight in a number of cases, such as Kuwait, Syria, Ukraine, or in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, where the horrendous terrorist attack on October 7, followed by the extensive hostilities in the Gaza Strip, has left neither side untouched.

I wish to refer specifically to the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, recalled in UNSC Resolution 2723 which commends the Committee's ongoing work, that should be supported in order to bring an end to the suffering of the families of the missing persons.

I also seize this opportunity to praise the vital role of the ICRC and express our support to the work of its Central Tracing Agency striving to locate and identify missing persons, prevent loss of contact with loved ones, support families and restore family links.

Colleagues,

For Resolution 2474 to have a tangible impact, political will must be reinforced, by prioritizing certain areas;

Among others, we should prioritize registration, identification and facilitation of family reunion. Equally, we must demonstrate respect for the rights of families to know about their relatives reported missing in connection with armed conflicts, particularly children reported missing, through the establishment of data collection and information-sharing systems on best practices.

Last but not least, we must leverage new and emerging technologies to redouble our efforts in terms of a victim-centered approach, with utmost care for the necessary psychosocial and economic support.

In conclusion, the implementation of Resolution 2474 is imperative for the mitigation of the grave humanitarian consequences of armed conflict. In our collective effort to implement it, we must not lose sight of the human rights component that goes hand in hand with that of international humanitarian law. In times of increased volatility and turbulence, we must do our utmost to preserve our common humanity.

I thank you.