



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council Meeting on
the Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question
Tuesday 24 March 2026**

Greece's Statement delivered
by H.E. Ms. Aglaia Balta
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations

Thank you, Madame President,

I would like to thank Deputy Special Coordinator Alakbarov for his thorough briefing. And I welcome the High Representative for Gaza to the Board of Peace, Mr. Mladenov to today's meeting and I thank him for his very clear messages for the way ahead.

Turmoil has once again engulfed the Middle East, with Lebanon and the Gulf States being the starkest examples of the current conflict's spillover. Our unwavering support and solidarity go toward Lebanon and the GCC Countries. The severity of the situation notwithstanding, we cannot afford to divert our focus from the Palestinian Question, which requires our continued vigilance and attention.

Madame President,

Greece was among the first to support the Comprehensive Plan for Gaza, endorsed by Security Council Resolution 2803 because we believed that the 20-point plan was the only way to stop the catastrophe. And we see the implementation of the first phase of the Plan has yielded significant results. It allowed for the release of Israeli hostages, for a ceasefire—which must be consolidated and sustained—as well as for humanitarian aid to flow into Gaza once more. It is imperative now that we collectively follow through on its implementation. Hamas and armed groups must urgently and fully disarm and I welcome Mr. Mladenov's calling on full decommissioning.

Humanitarian aid at scale must increase and the implementation of early recovery projects in the entire Gaza Strip must follow. On this point, I wish to highlight the added value of initiatives such as the Cyprus Maritime Humanitarian Corridor, as well as the indispensable role of UNRWA. Reconstruction projects, at a later stage, should be clearly embedded in a political horizon leading to a two-state solution.

Governance arrangements in Gaza must be legitimate, durable and ensuring full Palestinian ownership. Having welcomed the nomination of a Palestinian National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, we stress that any transitional framework must ultimately lead to a strengthening of the role of the Palestinian Authority. The PA is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Authorizing the International Stabilization Force and defining its operational mandate is another milestone along our path. In the midst of rising challenges and additional restraints imposed on the flow of the humanitarian aid, we welcome the reopening of the Rafah crossing -even though partly restored- and the deployment of the EUBAM Rafah Mission. We encourage the full reopening of additional crossings, which can greatly facilitate humanitarian access. Greece will allocate a substantial financial contribution toward hospital units in East Jerusalem, through the PEGASE EU mechanism.

Madame President,

Let me turn to the deteriorating situation in the West Bank, as it is cause for grave concern. We oppose any plans to increase control over and annex parts of the West Bank. These include the construction of new settler units —especially in the E1 area— land confiscation, demolition of Palestinian homes and forcible displacement of civilian populations. Such actions run against international law, contravene Resolution 2334 and undermine the prospects of a negotiated Two-State Solution.

We strongly condemn the increasing and unprecedented settler violence targeting the Palestinian population, including Christian communities. The damage provoked by settler violence is also recognized by senior Israeli security officials. Civilians must be protected at all times and in accordance with international humanitarian law. The fact that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Al-Aqsa Mosque remain inaccessible is highly concerning. And this, in view of major religious festivities as the recent Eid-al-Fitr and the upcoming Easter celebrations.

The preservation and respect of the Status Quo of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem is of paramount importance. As our Foreign Minister has stressed, Gaza and the West Bank are a single, indivisible territorial unit for a future Palestinian state. An empowered and reformed Palestinian Authority would be a credible partner for Peace. We acknowledge the PA's ongoing reform efforts, including the drafting of a Palestinian Constitution. A fiscal collapse of the Palestinian Authority would have dire consequences —reaching well beyond the West Bank— and must be avoided at all costs. We therefore repeat our call for the release of its withheld tax revenues.

In closing, Mr. President, the Middle East Peace Question can only be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy. Greece will remain committed to a negotiated, just, and lasting peace based on the two-State solution, the New York Declaration and the relevant UNSC

Resolutions. Towards realizing a vision where Israel and a viable and sovereign Palestine coexist side by side, in peace, mutual recognition and security.

I thank you