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Friday 13 November 2026

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

Thank you, Madam President.

I thank ASG Khiari for his briefing. I warmly welcome H.E. Mr. Jasem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council to the Council and thank him for his contribution.

Madam President,

Greece remains deeply concerned by the situation in the Gulf region. More than eight months into this crisis, strikes against civilians and critical infrastructure, attacks on commercial shipping, and continued military activity demonstrate just how fragile regional security remains. Recent diplomatic efforts offer an opportunity for de-escalation. However, the risk of renewed hostilities is real.

Allow me to make the following points.

First, maritime security must be restored immediately. The continuing incidents involving commercial vessels in and around the Strait of Hormuz are unacceptable. For Greece, as a leading maritime nation, safe and unimpeded passage remains a fundamental priority.

International law, as reflected in UNCLOS, guarantees the right of transit passage through straits used for international navigation. Such passage must not be impeded. No vessel should be subjected to intimidation, mining, unlawful tolls or arbitrary restrictions. Freedom of navigation is a public good and a fundamental principle of international law. It cannot be held hostage to the present conflict or used as a bargaining chip.

We reiterate our call for an immediate and unconditional return to the status quo ante in the Strait of Hormuz, and for the full protection of navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait. These disruptions profoundly affect global trade, energy supplies, food security and the delivery of essential commodities, particularly to vulnerable countries around the world.

Second, there is no sustainable military solution to this crisis. We support all credible efforts towards de-escalation, including the mediation undertaken by Qatar and other regional partners.

An immediate cessation of hostilities must create space for substantive negotiations with a view to reaching a comprehensive agreement. Not merely another temporary pause before a renewed confrontation.

Any durable settlement must also address the legitimate security concerns of the Gulf States. Their participation in negotiations is essential to lasting stability. So is a stronger regional security architecture, based on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, good neighbourly relations and international law.

Third, Iran's nuclear program remains inseparable from the wider crisis of trust in the region. The recent IAEA findings and their transmission to this Council underscore the urgency of: Iran's full cooperation with the Agency; its compliance with safeguards obligations; and the need for reliable, independent verification. Only a negotiated and verifiable solution can restore confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities.

Finally, we unequivocally condemn attacks against civilians and critical infrastructure in the region. We condemn the Houthis' continuing attacks against Saudi Arabia and their threats against commercial shipping in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait. We stand in solidarity with our Gulf partners and countries in the region and reaffirm our unwavering support for their sovereignty and territorial integrity in accordance with the UN Charter. We call for full respect for Resolution 2817.

Madam President,

At this critical juncture, the Council must send a clear and united message: attacks against neighboring States, civilians and civilian infrastructure must stop; freedom of navigation must be fully restored in all critical maritime waterways; and all parties must demonstrate a genuine commitment to de-escalation and diplomacy.

Greece stands ready to support all constructive efforts towards a peaceful, credible and lasting settlement.

I thank you.