

Secretary-General's statement - on a deal to secure a ceasefire and hostage release in Gaza

15 January 2025

I welcome the announcement of a deal to secure a ceasefire and hostage release in Gaza.

I commend the mediators — Egypt, Qatar, and the United States of America — for their dedicated efforts in brokering this deal. Their unwavering commitment to finding a diplomatic solution has been critical in achieving this breakthrough. I call on all relevant parties to uphold their commitments and ensure that this deal is fully implemented.

From the outset of the violence, I have called for an immediate ceasefire and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

Our priority must be to ease the tremendous suffering caused by this conflict. The United Nations stands ready to support the implementation of this deal and scale up the delivery of sustained humanitarian relief to the countless Palestinians who continue to suffer. It is imperative that this ceasefire removes the significant security and political obstacles to delivering aid across Gaza so that we can support a major increase in urgent lifesaving humanitarian support. The humanitarian situation is at catastrophic levels.

I call on all parties to facilitate the rapid, unhindered, and safe humanitarian relief for all civilians in need. From our side, we will do whatever is humanly possible, aware of the serious challenges and constraints that we will be facing. We expect our efforts to be matched by other humanitarian actors, the private sector and bilateral initiatives.

This deal is a critical first step, but we must mobilize all efforts to also advance broader goals, including the preservation of the unity, contiguity, and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Palestinian unity is essential for achieving lasting peace and stability, and I emphasize that unified Palestinian governance must remain a top priority.

I urge the parties and all relevant partners to seize this opportunity to establish a credible political path to a better future for Palestinians, Israelis, and the broader region. Ending the occupation and achieving a negotiated two-state solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security, in line with international law, relevant UN resolutions, and previous agreements remain an urgent priority. Only through a viable two-state solution can the aspirations of both peoples be fulfilled.

I pay tribute to the civilians who have lost their lives, including UN personnel and humanitarian workers.

The United Nations is steadfast in its commitment to supporting all efforts that promote peace, stability, and a more hopeful future for the people of Palestine and Israel, and across the region.