

Urging all parties to ensure the ceasefire in Gaza is durable and prevents further violence: UK statement to UN Security Council

Thank you President, and my thanks go to the representatives from the UAE and others who called this important Council session.

The United Kingdom joins fellow Council Members in welcoming the ceasefire in Gaza announced last night. We express our thanks to Egypt, Qatar and the office of UN Special Coordinator, Tor Wennesland, for their mediation efforts. We now urge all parties to do their utmost to ensure the ceasefire is durable and prevents further violence.

These last few days we have once again seen tragic scenes in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

We strongly condemn the firing of over 1,100 rockets at civilians by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the ongoing campaign of terror attacks by the group, which has resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians, Israelis and Palestinians alike.

As my Foreign Secretary has been clear, the UK stands by Israel and its right to defend itself in the face of such terrorism and violence.

The United Kingdom expresses its deepest condolences to the families of innocent Palestinian civilians killed over the past three days, particularly the tragic deaths of children. The UK supports a timely and thorough investigation into all of these reports. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the cycle of violence, have taken too many lives.

We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including lack of movement and access, damage to civilian infrastructure, and critical supplies, such as fuel for power plants to supply electricity, including for hospitals. We welcome Israel's announcement that it is allowing humanitarian aid through to Gaza. Immediate access for humanitarian relief is essential, and we expect that the ceasefire agreement will now allow for prompt restoration of movement and access for people and goods via the Erez and Kerem Shalom crossings.

This escalation is yet another reminder of the urgent need for progress towards a Two State solution that ensures a safe and secure Israel, living alongside a Palestinian state based on 1967 lines, with Jerusalem the shared capital of both states.