



## Security Council briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, 5 January 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier  
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

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President

I begin by thanking you ASG Khalid for your timely briefing at this delicate juncture.

We express our concern about the political climate in the region, and the potential for the recent actions in and around the Holy Sites to further exacerbate tensions.

Our first and foremost priority must be to avoid any form of new escalation and help restore calm.

We urge those in a position of influence and power, especially political and religious leaders, to use their influence in a positive and constructive manner, and refrain from provocative unilateral actions that only serve to make an already volatile situation even more unstable.

The integrity of the Holy Sites and the legal and historic status quo must be upheld and fully respected at all times. Any act that violates this is unacceptable.



In this context, we also acknowledge the important role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as the Custodian of the Holy Sites, which we fully respect.

We also take note of the statement issued by the Prime Minister Netanyahu's Bureau that his administration is '*committed to strictly maintaining the status quo*' in the Holy Sites. Malta hopes that this will be fully implemented and adhered to by all.

Furthermore, we are also deeply concerned about attempts to take over the property of Christian Churches. Such actions pose a serious threat to the peaceful coexistence of all three monotheistic religions in Jerusalem, and must be halted.

President

More broadly, while addressing this immediate challenge, we should not lose sight of the root causes of tension and conflict. This week's developments underlined once again the need to further expand dialogue, and pursue paths to peace and long-term solutions.

Malta reaffirms its commitment to a just and comprehensive resolution of the Middle East conflict based on a two-State Solution along the pre-1967 borders, addressing the legitimate aspirations of both sides, with Jerusalem as the future Capital of two states living side-by-side in peace and security, in line with the relevant UNSC resolutions and internationally agreed



parameters. We stand convinced that this remains the only viable path to peace.

President

Finally, we condemn any targeting of civilians, particularly children in the strongest possible terms, and reiterate that the killing of children is deplorable and reprehensible.

Children must never be the target of violence or put in harm's way, and those responsible for such acts must be held accountable.

I thank you.