



The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, 22 December 2023

Explanation of Vote [after the vote]

Thank you, President.

Malta thanks the United Arab Emirates for taking the initiative to work on this resolution. I express our appreciation to Ambassador Nusseibeh and her team for their efforts.

Malta has consistently expressed grave concern and sought to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. Over the past three months, this humanitarian crisis has been severely aggravated by the obstruction of adequate emergency humanitarian aid, personnel, and food and water into Gaza. This untenable situation required our urgent attention.

This is why we have voted in favour of this text.

However, we remain firm in our belief that an immediate ceasefire is the only tangible and realistic measure that can ease the suffering and extreme hardships of the Gazan people.



We reiterate that all parties must comply with their obligations under international law, including those regarding the protection of civilians and civilian sites, with accountability for those who violate them.

Medical and humanitarian personnel and their assets must be protected to allow the population safety, reprieve, and dignity in times of acute crisis and anguish. We are already much too late.

We welcome the establishment of an aid monitoring mechanism for Gaza as outlined in this resolution. However, its implementation must not add an additional barrier or slow down the principled delivery of humanitarian assistance. On the contrary, it should rapidly and efficiently facilitate it.

We expect that the technical expertise and vast experience of the UN will direct the implementation of this mechanism in coordination with relevant states. Without this, the desperately needed UN humanitarian response will be placed in jeopardy and UN and humanitarian staff be placed at great risk.



In closing, President, the end of hostilities must also be accompanied with a political urgency to build a durable foundation for peace. We welcome this resolution's clear and unwavering commitment to the two-State solution, where two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, live side-by-side in peace and security, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions and internationally agreed parameters.

I thank you.