



Security Council briefing on the situation in the Middle East, 14 April 2024

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

I will now make a statement in my national capacity.

I begin by thanking the SG for his briefing.

The Middle East is experiencing one of the bleakest and most volatile periods in modern history, which risks spiralling out of control if all sides do not take a step back.

This was a point that Malta stressed on 2 April following the deplorable attack by Israel on the Iranian diplomatic premises in Damascus on 1 April.

We had stressed the need for de-escalation, and for maximum restraint to be exercised by all actors in the region.

Regrettably, these calls for caution have been disregarded given recent developments.



We emphasise our deep concern about the significant escalation posed by the large-scale attack consisting of drones and various missiles, launched by the Islamic Republic of Iran against Israel.

We are also concerned with Iran's seizure of the container ship MSC Aries. The vessel, along with all its crew, must be immediately and unconditionally released.

At a time when our focus should be on defusing tensions and reducing conflict, including by advocating for an immediate and permanent ceasefire to the war in Gaza, facilitating the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, and ensuring the delivery of sustained humanitarian aid throughout Gaza, all we are witnessing are steps in the opposite.

Iran's direct targeting of the State of Israel risks regional catastrophe, with innocent lives bearing the brunt of all hostilities.

We stress that international law, including international humanitarian law, must be respected at all times.



Once again, we reiterate our call on all parties to exercise restraint, including in their messaging, to de-escalate and pursue peaceful and diplomatic solutions to all disputes.

Let us be clear: the region that finds itself in turmoil and stands on the precipice of unimaginable hostilities and suffering. As the Secretary General outlined, and I quote, *'neither the region nor the world can afford another war'*.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.