



## Security Council briefing on the situation in Middle East, 2 October 2024

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

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Thank you, President. At the outset allow me to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Council, and thank Slovenia for its leadership in steering our work in September.

I also thank the Secretary-General for his remarks. I reiterate our continued and unwavering support to him, and thank him for his continued leadership and moral compass whilst guiding this organisation through such difficult times. Malta echoes the Secretary-General in condemning the continued and escalatory hostilities across the Middle East.

This vicious cycle of violence in the Middle East, inevitably leading to a regional conflict, is extremely concerning. It must be brought to an end.



Repeated strikes across Lebanon, an Israeli operation across the Blue Line; continued rocket fire into Israel by Hezbollah and the latest Iranian missile attacks on Israel; together with continued rhetoric and threats by relevant parties to continue escalating hostilities, are only paving the way towards a bleak and desolate future for the entire region.

Amid the worst displacement crisis in the country's history, we are witnessing yet another man-made humanitarian catastrophe. We cannot be silent in light of this deterioration.

Furthermore, we strongly condemn yesterday's missile attack by Iran on Israel. We call on Tehran to immediately halt such actions, which only contribute towards expanding a complex web of tensions, and push the entire region closer to the precipice.

We also condemn the terror attack in Jaffa yesterday, which killed six Israeli civilians and wounded nine others.

President

The Israel-Hamas war, the resulting humanitarian crisis in Gaza and situations elsewhere in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are the core of the explosive situation we now find ourselves in.



These are the devastating consequences of unchecked conflict. This human suffering is the high price that the people across the Middle East are paying on a daily basis.

We stress that indiscriminate bombings, destruction of civilian infrastructure, and mass displacement are violations of international law. All parties must abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, and prioritise the protection of civilians.

Furthermore, we emphasise once again that Security Council Resolutions are legally binding. They must be respected and implemented.

Along the Blue Line, it is only through the full implementation of resolution 1701 that the displaced residents of Israel and Lebanon can be able to return to their homes in peace and security.

Furthermore, Lebanon must be free of weapons held by militant groups outside the authority of the Lebanese state. We stress the need to establish an area free of armed weapons, other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL, between the Blue Line and the Litani River.



Violations of Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty, including through Israeli airstrikes and overflights across Lebanon, must cease. A dramatic escalation in Lebanon will only move us further from this goal.

In the current crisis, UNIFIL also assumes a fundamental stabilisation role. The safety and security of UN peacekeepers is paramount. Also, as a troop-contributing country, we call on all parties to protect and support the important mission of UNIFIL.

In Gaza, we reiterate our call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, the safe return of hostages to Israel, and the full implementation of relevant Security Council Resolutions.

We continue to support all diplomatic initiatives aimed at de-escalation across the region, including the efforts of the members of this Council.

In conclusion, President, the region is witnessing a descent into all-out war, despite months of warnings.



The narrative for war must end, and the narrative for peace must begin. Most importantly, this Council must act in a united and decisive manner. Now is the time to speak with one voice, and unequivocally call for an end to all hostilities. The people of the Middle East are waiting for us. The world is waiting for us.

I thank you.