

## Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué

### **Conflict in Gaza** [*segment from larger communiqué*]

We reiterate our strongest condemnation of the brutal terrorist attacks conducted by Hamas and other terrorist groups against Israel on 7 October 2023. We express our full solidarity and support to Israel and its people and reaffirm our unwavering commitment towards its security. In exercising its right to defend itself, Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international law in all circumstances, including international humanitarian law. We condemn Hamas for its continuing use of civilian infrastructure for its military activities and failure to separate and distinguish itself from civilians in Gaza. We deplore all losses of civilian lives equally, and note with great concern the unacceptable number of civilian casualties especially women and children. We call on all parties to take every feasible step to protect civilian lives.

We fully endorse and will stand behind the comprehensive deal outlined by President Biden that would lead to an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all hostages, a significant and sustained increase in the flow of humanitarian assistance throughout Gaza, and an enduring end to the crisis, with Israel's security interests and safety for Palestinian civilians in Gaza assured. In this regard, we welcome UNSC Resolution S/RES/2735 (2024). We reiterate our call on Hamas to fully and unequivocally accept and implement the ceasefire proposal, as outlined in Resolution 2735, and urge countries with influence over Hamas to help ensure that it does so. We welcome Israel's acceptance of the proposal and readiness to move forward with it.

We urge all parties to facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need, in particular women and children. Securing full, rapid, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access in all its forms, consistent with international humanitarian law, and through all relevant land crossing points, including the Rafah crossing, through maritime delivery routes, including through Ashdod Port, and throughout all of Gaza remains an absolute priority. We agree it is critical that UNRWA and other UN organizations and agencies' distribution networks be fully able to deliver aid to those who need it most, fulfilling their mandate effectively.

We are deeply concerned by the consequences on the civilian population of the ongoing ground operations in Rafah, and the possibility of a full-scale military offensive that would have further dire consequences for civilians. We call on the Government of Israel to refrain from such an offensive.

We welcome the appointment of the new Palestinian Authority's cabinet and remain ready to support the Palestinian Authority as it undertakes the reforms that are indispensable to enable it to discharge its responsibilities in the West Bank and, in the aftermath of the conflict, in Gaza. Actions that weaken the Palestinian Authority must stop, including the withholding of clearance revenues by the Israeli Government. Maintaining economic stability in the West Bank is critical for regional security. We call on Israel to take the necessary measures to ensure that correspondent banking services between Israeli and Palestinian banks remain in place, so that vital financial transactions and critical trade in services continue; to release withheld clearance revenues to the Palestinian authority, in view of its urgent fiscal needs; and to remove or relax other measures to avoid further exacerbating the economic situation in the West Bank.

We reiterate our unwavering commitment to the vision of the two-state solution where two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders, consistent with international law and relevant UN resolutions, and in this regard stress the importance of unifying the Gaza strip with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority. We note that mutual recognition, to include the recognition of a Palestinian state, at the appropriate time, would be a crucial component of that political process.

**We affirm our commitment to working together – and with other international partners – to closely coordinate and institutionalize our support for civil society peacebuilding efforts, ensuring that they are part of a larger strategy to build the foundation necessary for a negotiated and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace.**

All parties must refrain from any unilateral actions that undermine the prospect of a two-state solution, including Israeli expansion of settlements and the “legalization” of settlement outposts. We condemn the rise in extremist settler violence committed against Palestinians, which undermines security and stability in the West Bank, and threatens prospects for a lasting peace. We encourage support for the Palestinian Authority Security Services to make sure the West Bank remains stable and conducive to the ultimate establishment of a Palestinian state.

We are deeply engaged – along with partners in the region – in preventing the conflict from escalating further. We reiterate our firm condemnation of Iran's attack against Israel of 13-14 April, which marked an unacceptable escalation, and we reaffirm our commitment towards Israel's security. We call on all parties to lower tensions and contribute in a constructive way to deescalation.

We are particularly concerned by the situation along the Blue Line. We recognize the essential



stabilizing role played by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in mitigating that risk. We urge all involved actors to exercise restraint to avoid further escalation, consistent with UNSCR 1701.

You can read the full communiqué [here](#).