



IRELAND

Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. Paul Kavanagh
Permanent Representative**

**At the Tenth Emergency Special Session
of the
United Nations General Assembly**

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I wish to associate myself with the remarks made by the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D., warmly welcomed the adoption by the UN Security Council of Resolution 1860 calling for an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire, and I quote:

“It is extremely important that the UN Security Council, as the body tasked with the maintenance of international peace and security, has now acted and asserted its wish to see an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire implemented in Gaza”.

Regrettably however, the tragic events of recent weeks have been further compounded by the failure until now of the protagonists to respond to the will of the international community, so clearly expressed in Resolution 1860. We urge both Israel and Hamas to immediately respond to this call and agree to cease all hostilities in Gaza or directed against the people of southern Israel. The appalling humanitarian situation now prevailing on the ground in Gaza demands no less.

We commend the other diplomatic initiatives underway, particularly those undertaken by the Governments of Egypt and France, aimed at ending the violence and ensuring a sustainable ceasefire. Ireland particularly welcomes the leadership which the Secretary-General has provided throughout the crisis and again at this critical juncture, through his current Mission to the region.

Our Minister for Foreign Affairs has also made clear Ireland's grave concern at actions of the Israeli military which has now compelled UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency) twice to suspend its operations in Gaza. Ireland deplores the loss of life among United Nations and other relief workers in Gaza. We would remind all sides to the conflict in Gaza of their obligations to comply fully with international humanitarian law, including as regards facilitation of humanitarian operations and not impeding those humanitarian actors seeking to assist the injured and dying. It is also important that incidents such as the shelling of UN facilities in Gaza and the killing of medical and ambulance personnel during the performance of their duties should be fully investigated by the international community.

Speaking yesterday in the region, the Secretary-General rightly pointed out that it is intolerable that the civilian populations – in Gaza and in southern Israel – bear the brunt of this conflict. The civilian population of Gaza has suffered to an appalling degree. Their welfare, through the urgent and unimpeded provision of all necessary humanitarian supplies and an end to the violence, must be the priority now in ensuring that the ceasefire provided for in Resolution 1860 is put in place as speedily as possible. My Government has announced an initial emergency contribution of €500,000 as an immediate contribution to the latest UN Humanitarian Response Fund to alleviate the consequences of the current critical humanitarian situation in Gaza.

We know from our own history that violence serves only to exacerbate conflict and that there can be no military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in Gaza or elsewhere. The tragic events of recent weeks remind us that only a vigorous political process can hope to

achieve progress toward lasting peace and stability in the Middle East on the basis of a negotiated two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this context, Palestinian unity remains an essential goal, not only in order to reunite Gaza with the West Bank but also to provide a solid and realistic basis for efforts to achieve a final status agreement.

The Council and the international community have spoken in the clearest terms of the need for both sides to step back from the precipice and desist from further violence. Together with our partners in the EU, we stand ready to assist the other members of the Quartet and the countries of the region as they seek to ensure the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1860. The terrible and continuing violence of the last week makes this task a more difficult but still more urgent one.

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