We must preserve the land and the people of Palestine so that a two-state solution remains viable: UK statement at the UN Security Council

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Statement by Ambassador James Kariuki, UK Chargé d'Affaires to the UN, at the UN Security Council meeting on the Middle East.

The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned by the conflict in the Middle East and its impact upon civilians.

Together with partners, we continue to strive for a swift resolution to this crisis.

And we cannot let this current period of crisis in the region distract us from the need to make progress on the 20-point plan for Gaza, or from the deeply concerning trajectory in the West Bank.

So I will make three points.

First, the parties and this Council, through resolution 2803, have expressed their backing for President Trump's 20 Point Plan.

But Gaza today remains unacceptably divided.

Repeated violations of the ceasefire are costing lives and undermining progress for peace.

It is essential that swift progress is made to implement Phase 2.

Hamas has no future in the governance of Gaza. It and other militant groups must demilitarise.

And I welcome and fully support High Representative Mladenov's remarks on the importance of full decommissioning.

Swift progress also means the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza being given full support to lead the day-to-day administration of Gaza during the transition to Palestinian Authority governance, delivering for the Palestinian people's immediate needs and the crucial recovery efforts needed across the Gaza Strip.

Second, Resolution 2803 is clear on the need for the full resumption of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Yet for weeks, Israel has restricted the delivery of humanitarian aid to one single crossing.

Last week, 1,063 trucks were offloaded, just one quarter of the weekly target of 4,200 trucks.

And Israel's closure of the Rafah crossing on 28 February for 18 days delayed life-saving medical

evacuations for thousands.

This is wholly unacceptable.

A lack of essential goods is driving up commercial prices, while shelter materials, critical medical supplies, fuel, and repair equipment remain blocked by Israel under long-standing dual-use restrictions.

At the same time, the Government of Israel's de-registration measures are shrinking the space for international NGOs in Palestine

The UN and its partners, including UNRWA and International NGOs, must be able to operate unimpeded in Gaza, with access to all parts of the Strip and the supplies needed to deliver essential and lifesaving services.

Finally, we cannot successfully implement the 20-point plan without resolving the situation in the West Bank.

The UK has repeatedly and strongly condemned Israeli steps to expand control over the West Bank.

We have been clear. Israeli settlements in the West Bank are illegal under international law.

And the severe economic restrictions imposed by Israel are significantly undermining peace efforts.

The UK is appalled by recent killings, reports of sexual assault, torture, and degrading treatment of Palestinians at the hands of violent settlers.

We strongly condemn settler violence and terror, including the spate of attacks on West Bank villages over the weekend.

Since February 28, we have seen 6 Palestinians shot dead by settlers, as well as the killing of Palestinian children by Israeli forces.

This is completely unacceptable, as is the apparent lack of accountability for countless reports of human rights violations at the Sde Teiman facility.

The Israeli government must take concrete steps to prevent any such egregious actions and ensure accountability.

Impunity for such horrific actions is inconsistent with international law.

President, we still have the opportunity to end the cycle of violence and build a better future for the region, a better future for the next Israeli and Palestinian generations.

A two-state solution is the only way to achieve this. There is no alternative.

Together, and urgently, we must preserve the land and the people of Palestine so that a two-state solution remains viable.

To promote peace, security, and stability, the Israeli Government must reverse the Security Cabinet's decision to expand control over the West Bank and take urgent action to halt the escalating violence and hold perpetrators accountable.

https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/we-must-preserve-the-land-and-the-people-of-palestine-so-that-a-two-state-solution-remains-viable-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council