



# The situation in Gaza

**Taler**

Jonas Gahr Støre

**Dato**

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**Sted**

FNs sikkerhetsråd, New York

1 President,

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Security Council on the critical situation in Gaza.

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As Norwegian Foreign Minister, I add my voice to all those who demand an immediate effective and viable cease fire and cessation of hostilities.

The Hamas launching of rockets targeting civilians inside Israel must stop.

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The Israeli shelling of Gaza from air, sea and land must stop.

Norway condemns the heavy ground operations exposing thousands and thousands of civilians; killing innocent women, men and children.

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This escalation does not lead to peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians. It is the dreadful road to death, destruction, hatred and more desperation. It is the recipe for revenge and more terror.

20 Political goals, as legitimate as they may be, will not be reached through war, military onslaught and destruction.

There will come a day after this war. And on that day people in Gaza and Israel will still live next to each other.

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Palestinians will still be deprived of their unity and of their state and Israelis will still be deprived of security.

The Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for maintenance of

international peace and security, has so far been incapable of making any decision in the matter. This is a fact that I have a hard time trying to explain to the people of my country, who together with hundreds of millions around the world see the flickering TV images of grave human suffering day in day out.

35 Today, the news of the shelling of the school, where people had sought refuge, shocked us even more.

I therefore place hope in the French-Egyptian initiative for an immediate ceasefire. As that initiative takes shape, I would hope that the details be  
40 confirmed by a Security Council resolution.

A ceasefire, Mr President, must not be a return to the status quo ante, and therefore, a ceasefire and a political process must address the critical outstanding issues:

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A stop to the smuggling and clandestine imports of arms and their accessories, the opening of border crossings, immediately, for urgent humanitarian needs, followed by the presence of international monitors.

50 Then - and - soon, we need to address the challenge of new and urgent human needs caused by the current violence.

That is also why I would like to take the opportunity tonight to address the Security Council as Chair of the donor support group to the Palestinian  
55 Authority, the AHLC.

As you will remember, just one year ago, Norway and France, together with the European Commission and the Quartet Representative Tony Blair, hosted the donor conference for the Palestinians in Paris.

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This was a successful undertaking. The donor community made significant pledges, both to the running of the PA institutions and to projects that could help boost the Palestinian economy.

65 In May last year, in London, the AHLC reviewed the progress made by both the PA and the donors. Four months later we noted further progress as we convened the AHLC here in New York, despite the numerous obstacles created by the occupation, the limits to access and movement and the growing number

70 of settlements on Palestinian land.

Throughout the last years Gaza has been a major concern, not least as a result of internal Palestinian strife and division but also as a result of the Israeli siege of the enclave.

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Before the outbreak of war, the isolation of Gaza had devastated the private sector, increased poverty and malnutrition, and undermined the social and economic fabric of Gaza.

80 The civilian population has been caged and severely traumatized. As this ongoing war escalates, the already insufficient supplies of water and energy have more or less completely stopped. The main sewage plant in the North of Gaza is on the verge of collapse.

85 We urgently need to address this humanitarian disaster.

Two days ago I received a letter from PA Prime Minister Fayyad outlining the budgetary outlook for the PA in 2009. Despite of some limited progress, deplorably, the Palestinian economy will continue to depend on donors for a  
90 long time to come.

Now we need to add the consequences of the devastation in Gaza, and the dire consequences war is having for the people, for the infrastructure and for the economy.

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In consultation with Prime Minister Fayyad and the co-chairs of the AHLC, Norway originally planned to convene the AHLC sometimes during the first half of 2009. Under the presence circumstances I propose that the AHLC is convened as soon as we can.

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The situation is new and requires urgent action. The humanitarian needs demand relief. I ask for your support to hold a special donor conference for Gaza in conjunction with the AHLC meeting as soon as possible.

105 Mr President,

When hostilities cease, we need to start assessing the needs, both immediate and

110 long term. These will have to be determined by a World Bank and UN-led fact finding and assessment mission.

Before then, immediately, we must ease the suffering of the civilian population.

115 International Humanitarian Law is crystal clear: Civilians should be protected.

It is unacceptable that Hamas exposes civilians by taking their military arsenal and their fighting to densely populated areas.

120 We call on Israel to comply with its obligations under the Geneva Conventions to allow unhindered access of humanitarian supplies to Gaza.

We urgently call on Israel to secure that food, water and medicines gain access and unhindered distribution to the civilian population inside Gaza.

125 We must empower the most effective providers of humanitarian assistance to conduct their activities. UNWRA is critical in this context.

130 And let me add: Since the beginning of hostilities, independent reporters have been denied access to the war zone. This is regrettable and unacceptable. We demand of Israel that reporters are allowed to do their regular work inside Gaza.

Mr President,

135 The division among Palestinians is a tragedy. Let me commend President Mubarak and Egypt for their steadfast efforts to heal this division; a division for which the citizens of Gaza already have paid a high price.

140 The question of governance of Gaza must be addressed. The people of Gaza deserve stable, democratic and peaceful governance. A power vacuum in Gaza after the end of hostilities will further plunge the civilian population into misery. In this context I welcome President Abbas' call for a national unity government and the holding of elections.

145 Thank you, Mr President.

**Kilde**  
www.regjeringen.no

150    **URI**  
https://www.virksommeord.no/tale/the-situation-in-gaza

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