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MESSAGE FROM UNRWA COMMISSIONER GENERAL PHILIPPE LAZZARINI

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[From Philippe Lazzarini, the UNRWA Commissioner-General as posted on his official X account \(previously known as Twitter\)](#)

One year on the horrendous massacre carried out by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups on southern Israel, killing more than 1,250 people and taking 250 hostages.

Since that day, the Middle East is sinking deeper into conflict, killing and sheer horrors.

Twelve months of unspeakable suffering for the hostages in Gaza, their families left in limbo and a society deeply traumatized.

Twelve months of brutal war have transformed the Gaza Strip into an unrecognizable sea of rubble, and a graveyard for tens of thousands of people, among them far too many children.

One year has passed and not a day goes by without families in Gaza being subjected to unspeakable suffering, as forced displacement, disease, hunger, and death have become the daily norm for 2 million people trapped in a bombed- out and besieged enclave.

A year of profound loss, grief and suffering.

A year of dehumanization and disregard of international law; a free fall descent into barbarism.

In Gaza, civilians continue to bear the brunt of the war. More than 220 UNRWA team members have been killed: the highest death toll in the history of the United Nations.

Children have been the first and most to suffer. Beyond the killing and injury, every child in Gaza is traumatized many with life-long invisible scars. More than 650,000 children are losing another year of learning. Instead of being in classrooms, they are sifting through the rubble in despair and fear.

The destruction of essential infrastructure has reached catastrophic levels.

More than two thirds of UNRWA buildings have been hit and deemed unusable, the vast majority while sheltering displaced people under the UN flag.

In the West Bank, civilians continued to endure destruction, fear and anxiety amid an escalation and increase in operations by the Israeli military and clashes with Palestinian armed groups. Poverty is deepening as people lose income and as movement restrictions are reinforced.

The expansion of the war into Lebanon is wreaking havoc on civilians, many forced to relive traumas of the past.

It is time for courage: a deal that would finally bring a ceasefire and respite to people in Gaza, Lebanon, Israel and the wider region.

It is time to put the guns down after decades of killing and immense pain.

It is time to release all hostages safely to their families, who are living through unbearable uncertainty.

It is time to bring a standard flow of basic humanitarian supplies including to the hungry and sick in Gaza.

There are no winners in wars. The only way out is through a diplomatic and peaceful solution.

It's time to heal the wounds. It's time to choose peace!