

Statement by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Lynn Hastings, on the protection of all civilians in Gaza

26 Oct 2023

The IDF continues to notify people in Gaza City that those who stay in their homes will put themselves in danger. In some cases, the notification urges people to go to a humanitarian area in Al Mawasi. While the United Nations is aware of references to a “humanitarian area in Al-Mawasi”, the United Nations intends to deliver aid wherever people in need are located.

For people who can’t evacuate – because they have nowhere to go or are unable to move – advance warnings make no difference. When the evacuation routes are bombed, when people north as well as south are caught up in hostilities, when the essentials for survival are lacking, and when there are no assurances for return, people are left with nothing but impossible choices. Nowhere is safe in Gaza.

The conduct of armed conflict, anywhere, is governed by international humanitarian law. This means that civilians must be protected and have the essentials to survive, wherever they are and whether they choose to move or stay.

It also means that hostages – all hostages – must be released, immediately and unconditionally.