

Statement by Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, on Gaza

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The past week offered us a glimpse of what can happen when the guns fall silent.

The situation in Khan Younis today is a shocking reminder of what happens when they don't.

Over the past seven days, hostages were released, families were reunited and more patients received some medical care.

The volume of aid into and across Gaza increased. And while it barely scratched the surface of what people need, it still allowed aid agencies to provide some basic supplies, reach areas which have been cut off for weeks, and offer some respite to deeply traumatized families.

Today, in a matter of hours, scores were reportedly killed and injured. Families were told to evacuate, again. Hopes were dashed.

Almost two months into the fighting, the children, women and men of Gaza are all terrified. They have nowhere safe to go and very little to survive on. They live surrounded by disease, destruction and death.

This is unacceptable.

We need to maintain – and build on – the progress in aid delivery.

We need civilians and the life-sustaining infrastructure they rely on to be protected.

We need the remaining hostages to be released immediately and unconditionally.

We need a humanitarian ceasefire.

We need the fighting to stop.