



Children stand in front of a house demolished by a bombardment in the city of Rafah, south of the Gaza Strip. Photo: UNICEF/Eyad El Baba

Gaza ceasefire offers hope, stakes remain high, says UN Relief Chief

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Statement by United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher

(Kyiv, 15 January 2025) Today's ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas offers much-needed hope to millions of people whose lives have been devastated by this conflict.

I welcome this agreement and urge the parties to uphold it.

In preparation, humanitarian agencies have been mobilizing supplies to scale up aid delivery across Gaza, where Palestinians have endured more than 15 months of trauma, destruction and – for over 46,000 people – death, and where scores of Israeli hostages are still held.

We will do our utmost to respond with the ambition, creativity, and urgency this moment demands, despite the significant security and political challenges to our work. To help us save lives, we urge all parties to adhere fully to international humanitarian law. This means protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure; allowing aid workers safe, unfettered access to people in need wherever they are; and removing all obstacles to the entry of essential aid. It will also be critical to enable entry of commercial supplies.

We urge the Security Council to use its collective voice and weight to insist the ceasefire is sustained, international law respected, and that obstacles to saving lives are removed.

We urge Member States to ensure that our humanitarian operations are funded to meet the overwhelming needs.

And we call for accountability for the atrocities committed.

This is a moment of hope and opportunity, but we should be under no illusions how tough it will still be to get support to survivors. The stakes could not be higher.

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