

**The speech of His Excellency  
Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit  
Secretary-General of the League of Arab States  
At the emergency ministerial meeting on  
developments in Gaza  
The General Secretariat headquarters**

**Cairo, 11 October 2023**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Expatriates**

**Your Excellency,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Our Council is convening today under challenging circumstances. The ongoing escalation between Hamas and the Israelis is unparalleled in its intensity and impact.**

**There is a genuine concern that the situation may worsen, leading to an expansion of confrontations. These potential outcomes, which I sincerely hope will not materialise, have the potential to plunge the entire region into an unprecedented state of uncertainty.**

**This perilous moment necessitates the exercise of utmost restraint by all parties involved and careful consideration of the consequences that may ensue.**

**The retaliatory actions planned and executed by the Israeli occupation forces will not bring about stability. Instead, they will perpetuate a vicious cycle of violence and bloodshed. The collective punishments imposed on the residents of Gaza are in clear violation of international law, and we vehemently reject and condemn these actions. We stand in solidarity with the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip who are currently facing a massacre that must be halted immediately and condemned unequivocally.**

**None of us desired this escalation. I categorically and unreservedly reject any violence against civilians. The killing of innocent civilians and the instilling of fear among the defenseless are unacceptable methods to achieve lofty political goals such as attaining independence.**

**I urgently call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to this dangerous escalation, in order to prevent further descent into a more hazardous situation that poses a grave threat to the stability of the entire region.**

**Your esteemed council has consistently expressed clear positions in recent years, warning that the situation in occupied Palestine is reaching a breaking point. The current escalation is not a sudden development but rather has deep-rooted causes that are known to everyone. These causes include the denial of Palestinian rights and the characterisation of Palestinians, regardless of their political affiliations in the West Bank or Gaza, as a mere security problem. Moreover, the occupation regime, as witnessed by all, is based on an apartheid system. Furthermore, the continuous settlement expansion and land annexation erode the prospects of a two-state solution on a daily basis. All these factors have extinguished hope for any political resolution and have brought us to the unfortunate and dangerous juncture at which we now find ourselves.**

**In addition, Arab countries have consistently advocated for resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict based on the Arab Peace Initiative and the two-state solution. This is the only framework that ensures security, peace, and stability for all parties involved. Unfortunately, Israel prioritises settlement activities over peace and values land preservation above securing a better future for future generations. Its government persists in oppressing and provoking the Palestinians, while some of its representatives engage in hate speech and incitement.**

**To put it succinctly, there is a viable path that can safeguard the lives of all civilians. It is the only rational course of action that upholds the well-being, security, and future of both peoples: ending the occupation and establishing an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.**

**I earnestly hope that the voice of reason prevails over calls for revenge. The cycle of violence must cease immediately, as it will only lead to further tragedies and suffering. The situation may spiral out of control for any party involved, with unforeseeable consequences affecting everyone.**

**I yearn for the day when both Palestine and Israel enjoy security, dignity, and freedom as two states coexisting peacefully and securely side by side. The future generations deserve to live free from the cycles of hatred and violence. Perhaps this moment can serve as a reminder, despite the fears and pain it carries, that there is no alternative to pursuing peace. Blocking the political horizon will only perpetuate recurring rounds of violence and instability.**

**Thank you.**