

# **Global and regional reactions to the war between the Gaza Strip and Israeli occupation**

International and Arab reactions varied in response to the attack carried out by the Palestinian resistance movement ( Hamas ) on Israel on 7 October 2023.

Some Western Countries, including France and the United States labelled Hamas' operation as "terrorism." They affirmed Israel's right to defend itself, emphasising the characterisation of Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, called for an end to the escalation and urged for calm. The US is seeking to negotiate with Saudi Arabia to strike a normalisation deal between the latter and Tel Aviv.

## **The United States:**

In response to the Hamas attack on Israel, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that there is no justification for terrorism. He expressed solidarity with the government and people of Israel, offering condolences to the families of the Israelis who lost their lives. Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin, in a related statement, pledged that the US Department of Defence would collaborate to ensure Israel has the necessary resources to defend itself and protect civilians from violence and terrorism. Additionally, CNN

reported on 8 October 2023 that the United States was considering announcing new aid to Israel, reflecting the Biden administration's efforts to strengthen its ally in the aftermath of an unprecedented attack by Hamas.

### **Ukraine:**

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry strongly denounced what it characterised as "continuous terrorist attacks" on Israel following the significant assault by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas). In a statement on X social media platform (formerly Twitter), the ministry expressed its condemnation of ongoing terrorist attacks against Israel, specifically mentioning rocket attacks on the civilian populations of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Ukraine affirmed its support for Israel's right to defend itself and its people in the face of these attacks.

### **France:**

French President Emmanuel Macron strongly condemned what he labelled as "terrorist attacks on Israel." In a statement on the X platform, he expressed his firm disapproval of the ongoing terrorist attacks targeting Israel. Macron conveyed his full solidarity with the victims, their families, and those closely connected to them.

### **Spain:**

Jose Manuel Alvarez, Acting Spanish Foreign Minister, denounced the attacks on Israel from Gaza through a statement on the X social media platform. He expressed strong condemnation, stating, "We strongly condemn the extremely dangerous terrorist attacks launched from Gaza against Israel."

### **Russia:**

Russia has called upon the Israelis and Palestinians to exercise restraint and avoid hostilities. Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov, quoted by the Interfax news agency on 7 October 2023, emphasised Moscow's appeal for restraint following a Hamas attack on Israeli targets near the Gaza Strip. He stated, "We are in contact with everyone – with the Israelis, the Palestinians, and the Arabs," highlighting Russia's commitment to engaging with all parties involved in the conflict.

### **Turkey:**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called upon both Israelis and Palestinians to refrain from engaging in hostilities that escalate the situation. Speaking during a conference of the ruling Justice and Development Party in Ankara, he emphasised the importance of exercising restraint, stating, "We call on all parties to exercise restraint." Erdogan's plea reflects Turkey's stance in urging moderation and a de-escalation of tensions in the region.

### **Germany:**

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, in a statement on the X platform, strongly condemned the terrorist attacks on Israel from Gaza. She emphasised the imperative for an immediate cessation of violence and rocket attacks targeting innocent civilians. Baerbock affirmed Germany's full solidarity with Israel, acknowledging its right under international law to defend itself against terrorism. The Foreign Minister also expressed the view that the escalation of violence by Hamas underscores the need for a political solution, emphasising that only through such a solution can the populations in both Israel and the Palestinian territories achieve a life of peace and dignity.

### **Austria:**

On 8 October 2023, Austria announced the suspension of its aid to the Palestinians in response to the deadly Hamas attack on Israel. Germany also made a similar decision, stating that no aid would be provided at this time.

### **The United Kingdom:**

The United Kingdom unequivocally condemned the horrific attacks on Israeli civilians carried out by Hamas, stated a press release on 7 October 2023 by Foreign Secretary James Cleverley. Cleverley reiterated the UK's

steadfast support for Israel's right to self-defence in a message posted on the X platform.

### **China:**

"The Chinese Foreign Ministry has called on both sides of the conflict to exercise restraint and immediately cease hostilities in order to safeguard civilians. In a statement published on its official website, the Ministry expressed, 'The fundamental resolution to the conflict lies in the implementation of a two-state solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state,' as reported by the Chinese Global Times network.

In contrast, Yuval Waks, a representative from the Israeli embassy in China, stated on 7 October 2023: Tel Aviv anticipates a robust condemnation of the Palestinian resistance from Beijing, a nation it considers a friend.

Waks further remarked to reporters: During times when lives are lost and chaos ensues in the streets, it is not the opportune moment to advocate for a two-state solution, according to the Reuters news agency.

### **Brazil:**

Brazil has strongly condemned the series of bombings and ground attacks that took place on 7 October 2023 in Israel from the Gaza Strip. In an official statement, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and conveyed solidarity with the people of Israel.

The statement underscored, "There is no justification for resorting to violence, particularly against civilians." The Brazilian government urged all parties involved to exercise maximum restraint to prevent the situation from escalating further.

Brazil, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expressed regret that in 2023, the 30th anniversary of the Oslo Peace Accords, there has been a serious and escalating deterioration in the security situation between Israel and Palestine. Additionally, Brazil announced its call for an emergency meeting of the Security Council, assuming the rotating presidency in October.

### **European Union:**

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen stated on X, "I unequivocally condemn the attack carried out by Hamas terrorists on Israel. It is terrorism in its ugliest form. Israel has the right to defend itself in the face of such heinous attacks."

### **The African Union:**

"The denial of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, particularly their right to an independent, sovereign state, stands as the primary cause of the enduring tension between Israel and the Palestinians," asserted Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. He added, "I urgently call on both parties to cease military hostilities and, without conditions, return to the negotiating table."

## **Japan:**

" Hamas and other Palestinian militants initiated an attack on Israel from Gaza," stated Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. He added, "There are reports of gunmen kidnapping individuals, and Japan strongly condemns such actions, urging their immediate release. Japan also expresses deep concern about the deaths and injuries in Gaza, emphasising that all parties involved should exercise the utmost restraint."

On 7 October 2023, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed Japan's strong condemnation of the launching of rockets and cross-border attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups inside Israeli territory.

## **India:**

On 7 October 2023, Shri V. Muraleedharan, the Federal Minister of State for External Affairs in India, urged Indians stranded in Israel to prioritise their security and encouraged them to reach out to the Indian embassy if they require assistance. He emphasised India's solidarity with the people of Israel.

Addressing reporters, Muraleedharan said that the Indian embassy has issued guidance for Indians in Israel to stay safe, according to the Press Trust of India. He added, "Indians in Israel can visit the Indian embassy at any time. The embassy is committed to providing all necessary assistance to stranded Indians."

In response to a question about India's stance on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, Minister Muraleedharan stated that the Prime Minister has made India's position clear, expressing shock at the "terrorist attack" on Israel.

### **Jordan:**

The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi is actively engaging with regional and international counterparts to initiate immediate international efforts aimed at halting the escalation in Gaza and its surroundings. The objective is to safeguard the region from the repercussions of a new wave of violence and establish a genuine political pathway to end the occupation.

As per the Ministry's statement on 7 October 2023, Al-Safadi said that "the persistence of violence and escalation will only lead to further deterioration, with significant consequences for the region. This is especially concerning given the ongoing decline in the Palestinian territories and the absence of a tangible political horizon for achieving a just and comprehensive peace."

His discussions included talks with the foreign ministers of Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Morocco, as well as Hussein Al-Sheikh, the Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and other organisations.

Al-Safadi also reached out to several European foreign ministers, such as the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Policy, and Security in the European Union, Josep Borrell, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union, and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain, José Manuel



Alvarez, whose country currently holds the presidency of the European Union. Contacts were also made with the Republic's Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Catherine Colonna. According to the statement, Al-Safadi plans to continue both international and regional engagements to explore avenues for launching international efforts to halt all forms of escalation and violence."

### **The UAE:**

The UAE has expressed deep concern about the escalating violence between Israelis and Palestinians, stressing the necessity to halt the escalation and protect civilian lives. The country extends sincere condolences to all victims and calls for maximum restraint and an immediate ceasefire to prevent further repercussions. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, the UAE advocates for reactivating the international Quartet to revive the Arab-Israeli peace process. Additionally, the UAE urges the international community to intensify efforts for a comprehensive and just peace, preventing the region from descending into heightened levels of violence, tension, and instability.

In a statement on the evening of 7 October 2023, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised the immediate priority of ending violence and protecting civilians. The ministry expressed dissatisfaction over Hamas' attacks on Israeli cities and villages near the Gaza Strip, considering them a dangerous and gross escalation. The UAE strongly condemned reports of Israeli civilians being kidnapped from their homes as hostages and stressed the need for civilians on both sides to be fully protected under

international humanitarian law, emphasising that they should not be targets of the conflict. The UAE extended condolences to the families of the victims and called for diplomatic efforts to prevent a broader regional confrontation.

### **Algeria:**

The Algerian National Assembly has declared its deep concern over the renewed "brutal aggression of the Zionist occupation against the Palestinians" in the Gaza Strip. The Assembly denounces what it perceives as the persistence of international hypocrisy and double standards against the just cause of the Palestinians.

In a statement on 8 October 2023, the National Assembly office highlighted that the Gaza Strip has become a stage for "shameful international humiliation" in the face of escalating colonial arrogance. The Assembly strongly condemned these attacks, expressing its disapproval of ongoing international hypocrisy that, according to the statement, employs intentional procrastination, blatant bias, and shameful justification for Zionist bloodshed and crimes against humanity.

The Algerian National Assembly further remarked, "The Office of the National Assembly commends the steadfastness, cohesion, and unity of the Palestinian people in their confrontation with systematic Zionist settlement oppression." It called on the international community to fulfil its responsibilities by protecting and empowering the Palestinians with their legitimate right to establish an independent state on the 1967 borders, with Holy Jerusalem as its capital."

## **Saudi Arabia:**

The Saudi Foreign Ministry has issued a statement expressing concern about the evolving and unprecedented situation involving various Palestinian factions and Israeli occupation forces, resulting in heightened violence across multiple fronts. The Kingdom urged an immediate cessation of the escalation between the two parties, highlighting the need to protect civilians and exercise restraint. The statement underscored the Kingdom's reiterated warnings about the dangers arising from the ongoing occupation, the denial of legitimate rights to the Palestinian people, and the recurrence of systematic provocations against their sacred sites.

Saudi Arabia reiterated its call on the international community to fulfil its responsibilities and activate a credible peace process. The objective is to achieve a two-state solution that guarantees security and peace in the region while safeguarding civilians. The Kingdom emphasised the importance of a sustainable resolution that addresses the root causes of the conflict and works towards a comprehensive and lasting peace.

## **Iraq:**

On 7 October 2023, the Presidency of the Iraqi Republic issued a call to the international community to safeguard "the rights of the Palestinians," reaffirming Iraq's steadfast stance on the Palestinian issue.

In a statement on 7 October 2023, government spokesman Bassem Al-Awadi emphasised that Iraq "reaffirms its unwavering position, both as a people and a government, regarding the Palestinian issue. It stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people in their pursuit of aspirations and the attainment of their full legitimate rights. Injustice and the usurpation of these rights cannot lead to sustainable peace." He further noted, "The actions undertaken by the Palestinian people today are a natural outcome of the systematic oppression they have endured historically at the hands of the Zionist occupation authority, which has consistently disregarded international resolutions. Therefore, we call on the international community to take decisive action to halt serious violations and restore the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, who continue to suffer from occupation, policies of racial discrimination, siege, desecration of sacred sites, and violations of humanitarian values and principles."

Al-Awadi cautioned against the "ongoing escalation within the Palestinian territories," stating that it could jeopardise regional stability. He called on the League of Arab States to convene urgently and address the developments in the perilous situation unfolding in the Palestinian territories.

### **Qatar:**

The State of Qatar has expressed deep concern regarding the evolving situation in the Gaza Strip and has called on all parties involved to cease the escalation, maintain calm, and exercise utmost restraint. The Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs attributes the current escalation solely to Israel,

holding it responsible for ongoing violations against the rights of the Palestinian people. The latest transgressions cited include repeated raids on Al-Aqsa Mosque, which is under the protection of the Israeli police.

The Ministry emphasises the urgent need for the international community to compel Israel to halt its blatant violations of international law, urging compliance with resolutions of international legitimacy and the historical rights of the Palestinian people. Qatar urges preventative action to avoid using these events as a pretext for igniting a new, unequal war against Palestinian civilians in Gaza.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterates the State of Qatar's unwavering stance on the justice of the Palestinian issue, advocating for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the establishment of their independent state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

#### Kuwait:

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expressed deep concern about the recent events and escalating situation in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. The ministry attributes these developments to the continued violations and blatant attacks by the Israeli occupation authorities against the brotherly Palestinian people.

In a statement, Kuwait urges the international community, particularly the Security Council, to fulfil its responsibilities by putting an end to the ongoing violence, providing protection for the Palestinian people, and ceasing the provocative actions of the occupation authorities. The statement specifically

addresses the ongoing violations of the sanctity of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque and the policy of settlement expansion.

The ministry reiterates "the firm and principled position of the State of Kuwait in standing by the brotherly Palestinian people and supporting them until they obtain all their rights." This includes emphasising the importance of their independent state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Kuwait also issues a warning against the continuation of the cycle of violence, calling for its immediate cessation and the deterrence of those responsible for causing it.

### **Egypt:**

Egypt has issued a warning about the "serious consequences" of escalating tensions between Israel and the Palestinians. Published by the official news agency, the statement from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised the need for "exercising the utmost levels of restraint and avoiding exposing civilians to further risks." Ahmed Abu Zeid, the spokesman for the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, added that Egypt is actively engaged in intensive contacts at all levels to contain the current crisis.

In its statement, Egypt called on international actors involved in supporting efforts to resume the peace process to intervene immediately and halt the ongoing escalation. Egypt further urges Israel to cease attacks and provocative actions against the Palestinian people and to adhere to the rules of international humanitarian law concerning the responsibilities of the occupying state.

### **Morocco:**

The Kingdom of Morocco has expressed deep concern over the deteriorating situation and the outbreak of military actions in the Gaza Strip. In a statement, Morocco strongly condemned the targeting of civilians by any party involved. The kingdom called for "an immediate cessation of all acts of violence, a return to calm, and the avoidance of all forms of escalation that would undermine the chances of peace in the region."