

Joint stakeout: Protecting the protectors

I'm very honored to deliver this statement on behalf of 117 delegations committed to upholding humanity and safeguarding civilian lives.

Let me begin by paying tribute to all humanitarian and UN personnel, from the frontline to this very building. Whether you are working for a local NGO, or for a major international organization, locally recruited or deployed as an international staff: your work and your dedication is essential to save lives and to alleviate the suffering of millions of people around the world.

You serve tirelessly and courageously under extremely challenging conditions. Today, there are over 120 armed conflicts around the world. Humanitarian needs are on the rise. And so is violence against humanitarian and UN personnel. This is unacceptable.

In 2023, more than 500 humanitarian workers were killed, injured, detained or kidnapped, around the world. National staff constitute the vast majority, more than 90%, of those affected.

And the developments in 2024 are even more alarming. Gaza and the West Bank are the most dangerous places on earth to be an aid worker, with over 150 humanitarian personnel killed since the start of the year. Other contexts having recorded the highest number of casualties are Sudan, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan.

These alarming trends coincide with the year where we mark the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions and the 25th anniversary of the Security Council recognizing the protection of civilians as part of its agenda. These milestones must serve as a call to action. As members of the United Nations and of the international community at large, we must join our forces to ensure respect for international humanitarian law.

And we heeded the call: Six months ago, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2730 on the protection of humanitarian personnel and UN and associated personnel, including national and locally recruited personnel, and their premises and assets.

We reiterate our support for this resolution and call for its immediate implementation by all actors. We welcome the recommendations of the Secretary-General on measures to prevent and respond to incidents of violence against humanitarian and UN personnel, to ensure accountability in these cases and to enhance their protection. These recommendations add to the toolbox that allows us to translate political will into action.

Because there is no time to waste. We stand together – 117 delegations – to reaffirm our commitment:

- 1) To respect and protect humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, including national and locally recruited personnel, in accordance with our obligations under international law;
- 2) To allow and facilitate, as required by international humanitarian law, full, safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all civilians in need;
- 3) To hold accountable those who compromise the safety and security of UN and humanitarian personnel, in violation of international law.

We will repeat it as long as it is needed: Civilians, and those who assist them, must be respected and protected. They are not a target.

I thank you.

Signatories

1. Albania
2. Algeria
3. Andorra
4. Australia
5. Austria
6. Bahamas
7. Bahrain
8. Bangladesh
9. Belgium
10. Bosnia and Herzegovina
11. Brazil
12. Bulgaria
13. Burundi
14. Canada
15. Chad
16. Chile
17. China
18. Colombia
19. Costa Rica
20. Côte d'Ivoire
21. Croatia
22. Cyprus
23. Czech Republic
24. Denmark
25. Djibouti
26. Dominican Republic
27. Ecuador
28. Egypt
29. El Salvador
30. Estonia
31. European Union
32. Fiji
33. Finland
34. France
35. Gabon
36. Georgia
37. Germany
38. Ghana
39. Greece
40. Guatemala
41. Guinea-Bissau
42. Guyana
43. Honduras
44. Hungary
45. Iceland

46. India
47. Indonesia
48. Ireland
49. Italy
50. Jamaica
51. Japan
52. Jordan
53. Kenya
54. Kuwait
55. Latvia
56. Lebanon
57. Lesotho
58. Libya
59. Liechtenstein
60. Lithuania
61. Luxembourg
62. Malaysia
63. Malta
64. Marshall Islands
65. Mauritania
66. Mexico
67. Monaco
68. Mongolia
69. Montenegro
70. Morocco
71. Mozambique
72. Myanmar
73. Namibia
74. Nepal
75. Netherlands
76. New Zealand
77. North Macedonia
78. Norway
79. Oman
80. Pakistan
81. Palestine
82. Panama
83. Paraguay
84. Peru
85. Philippines
86. Poland
87. Portugal
88. Qatar
89. Republic of Korea
90. Republic of Moldova
91. Romania
92. Rwanda
93. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

94. San Marino
95. Saudi Arabia
96. Senegal
97. Serbia
98. Sierra Leone
99. Singapore
100. Slovakia
101. Slovenia
102. Spain
103. Sri Lanka
104. Sweden
105. Switzerland
106. Thailand
107. Timor-Leste
108. Trinidad and Tobago
109. Tunisia
110. Ukraine
111. United Arab Emirates
112. United Kingdom
113. United States of America
114. Uruguay
115. Viet Nam
116. Yemen
117. Zimbabwe