



**Secretary-General's speech  
at  
the UNSC meeting on  
Lebanon**

**2024/9/25**



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**25 September 2024**

**Mr. President,**

It has become evident to all of us that our worst fears have been realised. The fire ignited by the occupation in Gaza a year ago has now spread to Lebanon, whose people have endured indiscriminate and brutal strikes over the past two days—strikes unparalleled in intensity for the past two decades.

We now understand why the Israeli occupation rejected ceasefire proposals time and again in Gaza. Israel did not seek an end to the war; rather, it aimed to expand it, subjecting the entire region's populations to grave danger. This reckless gamble with people's lives jeopardises the future of peace that has been cultivated with some Arab nations over decades, casting aside all efforts to prevent this dangerous descent into chaos.

The path to de-escalation was clear. Halting the unjust, brutal, and bloody war on Gaza would have sufficed to calm the northern front with southern Lebanon and would have provided diplomacy with the opportunity to restore peace. However, Israel chose to widen the circle of fire and blood, launching an attack on a sovereign Arab state whose people now live in fear and terror.

Let me speak frankly: the inability to confront the atrocities in Gaza—including the inability of this Council, which is meant to embody the collective will of the international community—is what emboldened Israel's leaders to escalate further. They found the path open, paved by the absence of accountability, the absence of consequences, and the absence of any real pressure to alter their course.



Mr. President,

We understand all too well how wars are ignited, for we have lived through these painful experiences in the Middle East for decades. What Israel is doing today is a deliberate and reckless invitation to a storm—one from which no one will be spared its harm and dangers.

We have seen similar situations throughout the modern history of the Middle East, and we have learned valuable lessons. Yet, there are those who, in the arrogance of power, believe they can achieve their objectives by killing the greatest number of innocent lives. They mistakenly believe that peace can only be forged in blood, and that nations can survive solely by the sword.

If this madness is allowed to prevail, we will find ourselves trapped in an endless cycle of bloodshed and devastation.

Today, however, we have a genuine opportunity to step back from the precipice. President Biden remarked yesterday that there is an opening for a diplomatic solution, and I insist that this Council must shoulder its responsibilities to turn that solution into reality without delay. This war must end—today, this very hour—in Gaza, in the West Bank, and in Lebanon. We must act before it is too late.

Thank you, Mr. President.