



28 March 2024

Statement

Welcoming Australian Senate Urgency Motion on Gaza

The General Delegation of Palestine welcomes the agreement of the Australian Senate on the urgency motion of 26 March 2024 by a vote of 29 in favour to 22 against. This motion supports and demands compliance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2728, passed on 25 March by a vote of 14 in favour and one abstention (the USA), demanding *inter alia* an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan and for international law to be upheld.

This timely and moral step by the Australian Senate aligns with international law and UN legitimacy, affirming as a matter of urgency *“that immediate action must be taken by Israel to comply with the UNSC’s demand that all barriers to the provision of humanitarian assistance at scale are removed”* and *“that all parties comply with their obligations under international law, including orders of the International Court of Justice which are binding.”*

This step also represents genuine progress in the Australian Government’s position towards the increasingly dire situation in Gaza, building on other recent advancements including the decision to reinstate humanitarian funding to UNRWA and the March 26 statement by Foreign Minister Senator the Honourable Penny Wong, expressing the following: *“People in Gaza are starving. Reports UNRWA is being denied access are unacceptable. Australia is pursuing this with the Netanyahu Government. We reiterate they must let humanitarian aid reach people in desperate need.”* It is our hope and expectation that the Australian Government will continue to make further advancements in its political stance, in particular by supporting a permanent ceasefire, stopping military cooperation with Israel, and recognising the State of Palestine without further delay.

The General Delegation of Palestine would like to thank the Australian Labor Party, the Australian Greens, and independent Senators David Pocock and Lidia Thorpe for their principled voting in support of this urgency motion, and reaffirm that upholding and ensuring adherence to international law is the only means by which peace and justice can be achieved. Equally, we express disappointment in the position taken by the Liberal-National Coalition against this moderately-worded motion on a matter that is foremostly a humanitarian issue. Noting that this stance is not supportive or useful for promoting or maintaining harmony and social cohesion within Australian society, the General Delegation of Palestine calls on the Opposition to adopt a position with regards to Gaza that aligns with international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

For more information, please contact the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific.