



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of the Secretary-General on the situation in the State of Palestine

Addis Ababa, 13 October 2023 – The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Southern Cooperation (OSC) expresses his complete and unwavering solidarity with the State of Palestine, a founding Member State of the OSC, and in particular with the People of Gaza who are suffering indiscriminate bombardment from the Israeli army.

The Secretary-General condemns unequivocally actions targeting innocent civilians, both Israeli and Palestinian, and wishes to stress that the continuation and expansion of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, the inhumane blockade of Gaza, and the consistent denial of the basic rights of the Palestinians are at the root of past and present escalations of violence, with tragic human consequences.

The Secretary-General further condemns in the strongest terms the ongoing bombardment of Gaza – including that of critical social infrastructure, such as schools, residential buildings, and health facilities –, the Israeli order for the evacuation of over 1.2 million people – with no place of safety for them to reach –, and Israel's policy of collective punishment – in flagrant violation of international law.

The Secretary-General also joins his voice to the calls made by a number of other international organisations for the immediate establishment and maintenance of a humanitarian corridor and for the immediate cessation of hostilities and violence.

The Secretary-General reiterates the unalienable right of the Palestinian People to their independent and sovereign State, which is the best and only guarantee of peace in the region, and calls on the international community to assume its responsibility in ensuring this right.

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