

Mr President,

I speak on behalf of Brazil and Switzerland, co-penholders of the Syrian humanitarian file. We thank Special Envoy Geir Pedersen and the Director of OCHA's Operations and Advocacy Division, Edem Wosornu, for their briefings. We also acknowledge the presence of representatives from Syria, Türkiye and Iran at today's meeting.

Brazil and Switzerland remain deeply concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Syria and the increase in hostilities across the country.

According to OCHA, the escalation of violence in the Northwest has damaged several health facilities and schools and displaced more than 120,000 people across Idlib and Western Aleppo. Unsurprisingly, with the lack of security and safety, aid operations have temporarily been disrupted and, sadly, three humanitarian aid workers have been killed, as have been dozens of civilians.

The Northeast has been also affected by the increased hostilities. Civilian infrastructure, including water and power stations, farms, sites in direct vicinity of civilian villages and IDP camps, have been targeted. The attacks, including on infrastructures that are indispensable to the survival of the population, have caused displacement, both within the Northeast as well as to the government-controlled areas of Syria.

Repeated strikes on Aleppo and Damascus airports have also disrupted UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flights more than once. Moreover, across the country, the escalations of hostilities have impacted aid delivery, as organizations are forced to suspend activities due to security concerns.

Any further escalation of hostilities will inevitably obstruct the delivery of life-saving assistance and pose immediate threats to the safety of aid workers and communities alike. It will increase the plight of the civilian population that already faces a humanitarian crisis that is worse than ever in Syria's 12-year history of conflict. A long-lasting ceasefire across the country is the only way to prevent further deaths, injury and human suffering.

We call on all parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in particular:

- to allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need across all Syria.
- to follow the rules related to the conduct of hostilities, in particular the prohibition of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructures.
- to guarantee the safety and well-being of the people living in Syria.

Mr. President,

It is worrisome that the Humanitarian Response Plan remains heavily underfunded, with only one third of the requested funds covered. The lack of resources is limiting the UN's and its partners' ability to support the affected population. All modalities of aid – including cross-border and cross-line – must be kept available for humanitarian organisations to be able to keep offering their much-needed assistance across Syria.

We appreciate that deliveries of essential humanitarian aid continue to pass through the Bab al-Hawa, Bab al-Salam and Al-Rai border crossings. Given the large scale of needs, ensuring humanitarian access remains crucial. We trust that the authorization for Bab al-Salam and Al-Rai border crossings – due to expire on 13 November – will be renewed. We also reiterate the necessity of predictable arrangements to respond to those ever-increasing humanitarian needs on the ground, which would be facilitated by open-ended or longer durations of permissions.

In closing, the humanitarian situation in Syria is dire and it risks to keep getting worse. It is important to ensure that recent developments in the region do not contribute to a further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria.

In the midst of conflict and crisis in the Near East, let us not forget the people in Syria.

Thank you.