

Statement by the Regional Directors of the INGOs in the Middle East Region

We, the Regional Directors of 14 INGOs, express our profound concern at the accelerating military escalation across the Middle East and the wider region. What we are witnessing is a dangerous expansion of violence with devastating consequences for civilians.

There must be an immediate end to this spiral of military violence, to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and a return to the pursuit of diplomatic solutions. The continued exchange of attacks across borders is deepening instability, heightening tensions, and placing entire populations at unacceptable risks. Every new strike increases the broader regional crisis that will be borne primarily by civilians, especially children and women who have already been disproportionately impacted.

We are gravely concerned by the ongoing and repeated possible violations of international humanitarian law, which demand independent and impartial review. In situations of international armed conflict, the full body of international humanitarian law applies. These rules exist to limit suffering and to protect those who are not, or are no longer, participating in hostilities.

This violence is the foreseeable consequence of years in which violations of international law have gone insufficiently checked. At a time when international humanitarian law is already undermined, all parties should fully return to and uphold their obligations under it.

Our humanitarian workers across the region are responding to urgent humanitarian needs wherever access is possible and until funds are available, in close coordination with our partners. However, humanitarian assistance alone cannot keep pace with the scale and speed of suffering generated by ongoing hostilities. Aid cannot substitute for political solutions.

What is urgently required is decisive political will to de-escalate tensions, uphold international law, protect civilians, and commit to meaningful pathways toward peace. Without immediate action, the human cost will continue to rise, and the consequences of inaction will reverberate across generations.

We call on all parties to prioritize the protection of civilians, humanitarian workers, and civilian infrastructures, in particular health facilities, schools and water infrastructure, adhere strictly to international humanitarian law, and take immediate steps to end the violence across the Middle East.

Signed:

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2. Laure Baudin, MENA Regional Director, Terre des hommes Foundation
3. Myriam Abord-Hugon, Mashreq Regional Director, Humanity&Inclusion-Handicap International
4. Lilu Thapa, MEAE Executive Director, DRC
5. Flutra Gorana, Middle East Regional Director, War Child Alliance Foundation
6. Angelita Caredda, MENA Regional Director NRC
7. Carlo Gherardi, EurAsia Regional Director NRC
8. Ahmad Alhendawi, Regional Director for the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe, Save the Children

9. Arnaud Quemin, Vice-President for MENA, Europe, and Asia, Mercy Corps
10. Sally Abi Khalil, Regional Director MENA, Oxfam
11. Fiona Gannon, Regional Director - Middle East, Concern Worldwide
12. Stephanie Yousef, Senior Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, CIVIC
13. Benjamin Thiberge, Emergencies and oPt Coordinator, Médicos del Mundo/Doctors of the World
14. Eleanor Monbiot, Regional Leader at World Vision Middle East and Eastern Europe