



SIXTH COMMITTEE

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by

Mr. Noam Cappon
Legal Advisor
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations

Protection of persons in the event of disasters

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Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Israel continues to welcome and support the efforts of the General Assembly to protect persons affected by disasters. Israel remains at the forefront of numerous relief missions around the world, demonstrating its commitment to mutual assistance and cooperation during times of crisis.

As Israel has learned first-hand, regional and international cooperation during times of disaster deepens ties between nations and peoples. Large-scale disasters such as droughts, floods, and heatwaves are increasingly frequent and intense, a trend that is not expected to diminish in the near future.

Cooperation and assistance at all levels are vital to saving lives and protecting property. While Israel remains committed to improving the protection of persons affected by disasters, it reiterates its view expressed in previous sessions of this committee, that engagement in disaster relief should not be framed in terms of legal rights and duties. It is therefore Israel's view that the International Law Commission's draft articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters should remain as guidelines or guiding principles for international cooperation

undertaken on a voluntary rather than binding basis. This approach would provide the flexibility required for effective disaster relief that reflects particular circumstances and local needs.

Mr. Chair,

In the recent years Israel continues its efforts to provide assistance during time of disasters. The Jewish term “Pikuach nefesh” embodies the Jewish obligation to save lives. Jews are obligated to do everything possible to save a life. Preserving a life takes precedence over almost all other Jewish laws. It is thus an integral part of our culture and heritage, and we will continue preserving this tradition always.

In September 2023, Israel sent a medical aid delegation that established a field hospital in Türkiye to provide medical assistance in the areas impacted by the devastating earthquake that struck the southern area of the country. Additionally, Israel dispatched over 60 tons of humanitarian aid to help alleviate the situation for earthquake survivors. Earlier that year, Israel donated emergency kits to Ecuador following a deadly landslide caused by heavy rains in Alausí. In 2022, crucial supplies such as first aid kits and food for children were donated to Tonga after the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and resulting tsunami.

Mr. Chair,

Israel will continue to provide assistance to persons in time of disasters around the world regardless of any international obligations, but because it is part of our culture and heritage to provide such assistance to whoever finds themselves in a situation of need. At the same time Israel encourages member states to continue discussing whether a binding legal instrument is necessary to govern this area of law.

Thank you, Chair.