



## Communist Party of Swaziland's remarks at the International Anti-Terrorist Forum

*Delivered by General Secretary Cde Thokozane Kenneth Kunene, May 2026, Moscow.*

Distinguished delegates, esteemed comrades, and honoured participants.

The Communist Party of Swaziland respectfully submits this formal statement to the International Anti-Terrorist Forum convened by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. We acknowledge the significance of this gathering and the critical importance of the forum's central theme *"The Struggle Against International Terrorism, Arbitrariness and Aggression. For Peace and Security."*

The Communist Party of Swaziland expresses its solidarity with this initiative and recognises the necessity of international cooperation among progressive forces to address the multifaceted challenges posed by imperialism, state aggression, and the destabilisation of sovereign nations.

The contemporary international order is characterised by systematic patterns of intervention, economic coercion, and military aggression perpetrated by hegemonic powers against developing and non-aligned nations. These actions, often conducted under the guise of humanitarian intervention or counter-terrorism operations, constitute violations of international law and the principles of national sovereignty enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The destabilisation of regions across Africa, Asia, and Latin America demonstrates a coordinated strategy to maintain capitalist hegemony, secure access to natural resources, and prevent the emergence of alternative political and economic systems that prioritise the welfare of working populations over profit accumulation.

Swaziland operates under a system of absolute monarchy wherein executive, legislative, and judicial authority remain concentrated in the hands of



the reigning monarch. This governance structure presents substantial impediments to democratic participation and the realisation of fundamental human rights.

The existing political system is characterised by absence of universal suffrage. Citizens lack meaningful participation in electoral processes and governmental decision-making as political parties are banned. Restrictions on civil liberties. Freedom of assembly, expression, and association remain severely constrained.

**Labour rights violations.** Workers face systematic impediments to collective bargaining and union organisation.

**Land tenure inequities.** Approximately 60% of arable land remains under crown control, limiting agricultural opportunities for the general population.

**Resource allocation disparities.** Public expenditures disproportionately benefit state institutions while essential services in healthcare and education



remain underfunded

Of particular concern to the Communist Party of Swaziland is the increasing alignment of the absolute monarchy with imperialist structures and Western geopolitical objectives.

The Swazi regime has adopted International Monetary Fund and World Bank prescriptions, including privatisation of public utilities, reduction of state expenditures on social services, and liberalisation of trade policies. These measures disproportionately benefit foreign capital while constraining domestic development and worker welfare.

The Swazi security apparatus receives training, equipment, and strategic guidance from Western military establishments. This integration subordinates national security interests to broader imperialist strategic objectives and facilitates the suppression of internal dissent.

The absolute monarchy has entered into bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that privilege foreign investors and multinational corporations at the expense of domestic industries and workers. These arrangements compromise national economic sovereignty and perpetuate dependency relationships.

The regime maintains alignment with Western-dominated international institutions, including participation in frameworks that reinforce capitalist economic structures and undermine alternative development models.

The Communist Party of Swaziland submits that the systematic suppression of political opposition, labour organisation, and civil society constitutes a form of state violence that must be understood within the framework of international terrorism and arbitrariness outlined in this forum's theme.

### **Documented patterns of repression:**

- Arbitrary detention of underground political activists and labour organisers.
- banning on freedom of assembly and public demonstration.
- Suppression of independent media and civil society organisations.
- Intimidation and harassment of political opponents.
- Inadequate legal protections for vulnerable populations.

These practices, undertaken by a state apparatus increasingly aligned with imperialist powers, represent violations of international humanitarian law and fundamental human rights principles.

The Communist Party of Swaziland contends that the absolute monarchy's alignment with imperialist powers creates a mutually reinforcing system wherein:

- Imperialism provides external support for the maintenance of authoritarian structures that prevent democratic transformation.
- Absolute monarchy facilitates imperialist objectives by ensuring political stability favourable to foreign capital accumulation.
- Both systems employ violence and arbitrariness to suppress popular movements and maintain exploitative economic relationships.
- International terrorism and domestic repression become indistinguishable components of a unified system of domination.

We call upon this forum to recognise that absolute monarchy, when integrated with imperialist structures, constitutes a system of organised violence against working populations and represents a threat to regional and international peace and security.

We advocate for international support for democratic movements in Swaziland that seek to estab-



We affirm the necessity of strengthened international cooperation among progressive forces to support liberation movements and resist imperialist domination across the African continent and the Global South.

We call for the development of alternative economic frameworks that prioritise the welfare of working populations, support South-South cooperation, and reduce dependency on imperialist-dominated international institutions.

The Communist Party of Swaziland recognises that the struggle against international terrorism, arbitrariness, and aggression is fundamentally interconnected with the struggle against absolute monarchy and its imperialist collaborators. Genuine peace and security can be achieved only through the establishment of democratic governance, economic justice, and national sovereignty.

We respectfully propose that this forum consider the situation in Swaziland as a case study in the intersection of domestic authoritarianism and international imperialism, and that the forum's conclusions and recommendations address the necessity of supporting democratic and progressive movements in nations subjected to both forms of domination.

lish:

- Universal adult suffrage and representative democracy
- Constitutional protections for fundamental rights and freedoms
- Independent judiciary and rule of law
- Genuine labour rights and worker protections
- Equitable land distribution and agrarian reform

We oppose any attempt by Western powers to instrumentalise democracy promotion or human rights rhetoric to justify intervention while simultaneously supporting absolute monarchies and authoritarian regimes elsewhere.

The Communist Party of Swaziland expresses its commitment to international cooperation and solidarity in the pursuit of peace, security, and social justice. The establishment of genuine peace requires the elimination of all forms of domination and the construction of equitable international relations based upon respect for national sovereignty and the aspirations of working peoples.

**Down with Imperialism!**

**Down with USA and allied forces aggression!**

**Forward to World Peace!**

**Forward to Multilateralism!**

**Forward to International Solidarity!**

## Beyond fragile truces

# Stalled negotiations in Gaza, escalation in Lebanon, and the rise of Iran



**Fouad Baker**

**A**midst the rapid transformations unfolding across the region, the crises in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran are no longer isolated events. Instead, they manifest a complex, structural regional conflict where military, political, and economic dimensions intersect simultaneously. The negotiating tracks in Gaza, the field escalation in Lebanon, and the rebuilding of comprehensive power in Iran represent interconnected links within a geopolitical landscape being reshaped by the disruption of traditional balances of power and the declining efficacy of classical diplomatic tools.

The significance of this article lies in its attempt to analyse these intertwined dynamics from a perspective that transcends a purely descriptive reading of events. It aims to dismantle the deep structures governing actor behaviour and forecast potential trajectories of the conflict. Collectively, these issues reveal a structural crisis in the conflict management system, characterised by a waning commitment to agreements and a widening trust gap between parties, while military and economic instruments transform into alternative tools for negotiation leverage.

Accordingly, this article seeks to provide an analytical and forward-looking reading of three primary tracks: negotiation dynamics in Gaza amid stalled implementation, the escalation in Lebanon as a test of deterrence equations, and the strategic shifts in Iran as a central actor in reshaping the regional order.

### **Negotiation dynamics in Gaza: between stalled implementation and political landscape reshaping**

The situation in the Gaza Strip currently witnesses a complex intersection of negotiating, military, and humanitarian tracks. This reflects a structural instability within the ceasefire agreement framework and raises fundamental questions regarding the future of political and administrative arrangements in the Strip. In this context, indicators have emerged pointing to the resumption of negotiation

rounds after the Eid al-Adha holiday, with expectations that a Hamas delegation will return to Cairo to finalise discussions on outstanding issues, particularly regarding the implementation of the first phase of the agreement.

*Economically, the failure of the Gaza Peace Council Fund highlights the international deadlock in supporting reconstruction. No actual funds have been deposited despite massive pledges reaching tens of billions of dollars.*

Data indicates that the core of the dispute centres around mechanisms to compel the Israeli occupation to implement the terms of the first phase as a prerequisite for transitioning to the second phase. Hamas maintains its adherence to this phased sequencing, contrasting with repeated accusations against the occupation of evading its obligations and escalating military operations. This friction has negatively impacted the prospects of achieving a negotiating breakthrough, as seen in the Cairo round on 15 April, which yielded no tangible results despite international participation.

In parallel, international attempts are underway to re-engineer the political landscape in Gaza through proposals to transfer control to a new government or a technocratic committee – a prospect referenced by Tony Blair regarding upcoming talks with Hamas. However, these proposals collide with the movement's vision, which considers any political discussion secondary to ongoing Israeli violations. These violations include the targeting of Palestinian leadership and the escalation of military operations, representing a flagrant breach of the ceasefire agreement.

### *Combatting Israeli regime's assassination drive*

Developments on the ground reveal an escalation in the policy of assassinations as a political pressure tool. Recent times have witnessed the assassination of several military commanders in an attempt to push the resistance toward accepting the arrangements of the second phase under the Israeli vision. However, according to Hamas leadership estimates, this strate-

gy has failed to achieve its political goals; instead, it has deepened the trust gap and further complicated the negotiating landscape.

On the humanitarian front, data analysis points to a vast gap between theoretical commitments and actual implementation. Only a limited percentage of humanitarian aid has entered, and the movement of patients and travellers remains heavily restricted. Statistics record more than 3,005 violations of the ceasefire agreement over 227 days, resulting in hundreds of casualties, which reflects the fragility of the agreement and the absence of effective monitoring mechanisms.

### *Gaza reconstruction obstacles*

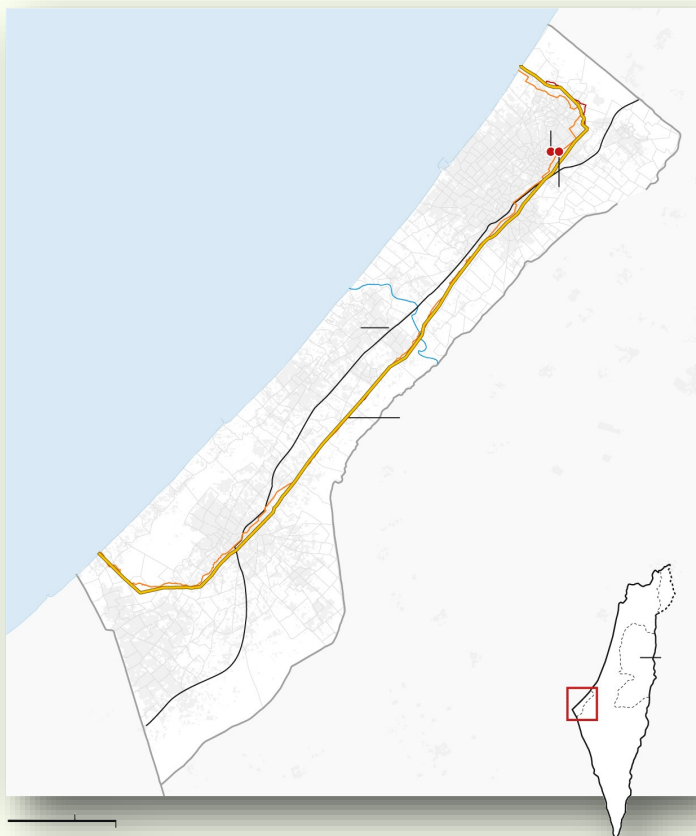
Economically, the failure of the Gaza Peace Council Fund highlights the international deadlock in supporting reconstruction. No actual funds have been deposited despite massive pledges reaching tens of billions of dollars. This failure is attributed to legal and political complexities, alongside a lack of transparency in fund management, particularly given the reliance on alternative financial channels outside traditional international frameworks.

Furthermore, the delay in launching reconstruction projects reflects their linkage to political conditionalities, such as the disarmament of Hamas, making funding an additional leverage tool in the conflict.

Regarding administrative arrangements, Hamas agreed to the introduction of a technocratic committee to manage the Strip. However, the occupation obstructed this step, revealing a contradiction between international discourse supporting transitional solutions and the field reality that restricts their implementation. Within this framework, the "roadmap" presented by Nickolay Mladenov emphasised the principle of "one authority, one law, one weapon." Nonetheless, the application of this principle remains contingent upon the balance of power on the ground.

### *Israel's quest for total occupation undermining progress*

Militarily, statements from the Israeli leadership indicate a trajectory toward expanding field control to encompass up to 70% of the Strip's total area, in contrast to what was supposed to be a gradual withdrawal under the agreement. Additionally, manipulation of the so-called "Yellow Line" reflects an attempt to unilaterally redraw field boundaries, thereby reducing the space available to the Palestinian population and imposing a new geographic reality.



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Looking ahead, the future of Gaza appears to head toward one of three primary scenarios:

1. Continued stagnation: characterised by intermittent military escalation.
2. Partial transitional arrangements: imposed without a fundamental resolution.
3. Comprehensive reshaping: a total overhaul of the political landscape, contingent upon a genuine international will to compel the parties to implement the agreement.

Current indicators, however, suggest persistent gridlock due to the absence of effective enforcement mechanisms, conflicting international agendas, and the continued utilisation of military and economic tools as leverage in the negotiating process.

Consequently, the crisis in Gaza is no longer merely a military or humanitarian dispute. It has evolved into a complex, multidimensional conflict model where politics, economics, and security intertwine, rendering any sustainable solution dependent on redefining the rules of the negotiating game and guar-

anteeing the fulfilment of commitments away from selectivity and political exploitation.

## Escalation in Lebanon: between field shifts and diplomatic tests

The Lebanese arena is witnessing an accelerating military and political escalation that reflects a qualitative shift in the nature of the conflict with Israel. Field operations intersect with intensive international diplomatic activity in an attempt to contain the fallout of the war. In this context, France's request for an emergency UN Security Council meeting holds particular significance, serving as an indicator of growing international anxiety over the expansion of Israeli military operations inside Lebanese territory, especially following the Israeli army's seizure of the strategic Beaufort Castle (*Qal'at al-Shaqif*) in southern Lebanon.

The capture of Beaufort Castle represents a striking field transformation given its strategic and historical importance. Overlooking the Litani River and vast swaths of southern Lebanon, it provides the controlling faction with a clear military advantage in dominating supply lines and movements.

The castle, which dates back to the Roman era and underwent expansions during the Crusader periods, was previously utilised as a military base during the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon until 2000, before returning today to the forefront of the conflict within advanced ground operations.

This development coincided with statements from the Israeli leadership declaring its intention to expand the scope of military operations. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu deemed the control over the castle a "decisive shift," while Defence Minister Israel Katz confirmed that this step falls within the establishment of a security zone in the south. Furthermore, Israeli statements indicated a crossing of the Litani River and an advance toward new areas, including the outskirts of Nabatieh, constituting a breach of the ceasefire agreement and redrawing the rules of engagement on the ground.

### *Lebanon forces continue to fight despite adversity*

Conversely, field data confirms Hezbollah's continued expansion of operations, whether through launching rockets toward settlements in the Galilee or developing the use of drones, including those equipped with night-vision technologies. This relatively diminishes the traditional importance of controlling high altitudes and redefines the balance



*The remains of the ancient Beaufort Castle (The Beautiful Castle) also known locally as Qal'at Al-Shaqif in Arnoun, Lebanon. Wikipedia.*

of power on the battlefield.

Diplomatically, the emergency UN Security Council meeting reflects an international attempt to recalibrate the escalation track, particularly in light of the French position, which labelled the expansion of Israeli operations a "grave mistake" that contradicts international law. However, this momentum collides with a complex political reality marked by the absence of effective enforcement tools to mandate compliance with the ceasefire agreement, alongside persistent divergence in the positions of international actors.

### *Lebanon prefers genuine negotiation against Israel's violence*

Internally, negotiation emerges as a primary path adopted by the Lebanese government. Prime Minister Nawaf Salam stated that negotiating with Israel is the "least costly" option, despite acknowledging that its results are not guaranteed. This track aims to achieve complete Israeli withdrawal, the release of prisoners, and reconstruction. Nevertheless, it faces profound challenges given ongoing Israeli military operations and its refusal to fully withdraw or implement a complete ceasefire.

The outcomes of security meetings held in Washington between the Lebanese and Israeli delegations reveal limited progress. Israel insists on continuing its operations and establishing a buffer zone in the

south, while the Lebanese side adheres to the priority of a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli forces as a fundamental condition for any subsequent arrangements. Additionally, international support for the Lebanese Army emerges as a crucial element in its ability to enforce control, especially given the continuous targeting of its positions by Israel.

#### *Israeli military adventures threatening critical infrastructure*

On another front, the conflict takes on an additional dimension through the targeting of infrastructure and vital facilities, as seen with the Qaraoun Dam, which represents a cornerstone of water and energy security in Lebanon. Israeli threats have prompted the declaration of the area surrounding the dam as a closed military zone in an attempt to protect it from any potential targeting, given the catastrophic risks it could pose to the population and infrastructure.

#### *Protecting critical sites from destruction by Israel*

The legal and humanitarian dimension also surfaces in this context through Lebanese efforts to document Israeli violations and submit them to international bodies, aiming to hold those responsible for breaching international humanitarian law accountable.

This approach gains particular importance amidst the rising targeting of archaeological sites, such as Beaufort Castle, which is classified under enhanced protection according to the Hague Convention, raising questions about the effectiveness of international mechanisms in protecting cultural heritage during conflicts.

#### *Weighting prospects for peace amid continuing instability*

Looking ahead, three potential scenarios can be identified for the future situation in Lebanon:

1. Continued military escalation: marked by the expansion of ground operations.
2. Stabilisation of a fragile truce: established without a root resolution.
3. A phased political settlement: achieved un-

der international sponsorship.

Current indicators, however, point to a continuation of instability, given each party's adherence to its strategic goals and the absence of a decisive international consensus.

Accordingly, the escalation in Lebanon reflects a transformation in the nature of the conflict from a limited confrontation to a multidimensional struggle where military, political, economic, and legal considerations intersect. This makes any sustainable solution contingent upon reshaping regional and international balances and activating more effective mechanisms to enforce compliance with international law and UN resolutions.

Iran between rebuilding comprehensive power and regional system shifts: between geography and technology

*The Strait of Hormuz holds a central position in Iranian strategy, transforming from an international waterway into an effective instrument of power used by Tehran to reshape deterrence equations... Iran appears to be consolidating a multidimensional "Resistance State" model that integrates economic resilience, military agility, and political adaptability.*

The Islamic Republic of Iran is currently undergoing a strategic reshaping across political, military, and economic dimensions, within a regional and international context characterised by accelerating shifts and intensifying geopolitical competition. Alongside realities on the ground, official Iranian discourse reflects a clear trajectory toward strengthening self-reliance and redefining national power tools to counter external pressures.

Domestically, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasises the necessity of transitioning from theoretical approaches to executive field action, maintaining that solving the country's problems requires mobilising scientific capacities and linking knowledge to practical application.

Within this framework, a clear shift is emerging to redefine the role of universities – moving away from traditional educational institutions to become direct actors in addressing development challenges by adopting the "problem-solving universities" model. This approach stresses the importance of tying academic performance to socio-economic output and enhancing student participation in practical fields, reflecting an effort to cultivate scientific elites with applied competence and social responsibility.

#### *Iran's economy and international trade*

Concurrently, indicators of a restructuring Iranian



economy are surfacing amidst ongoing sanctions and blockades. Tehran is actively seeking to diversify its trade channels and bolster its role as a regional transit hub. Transit volume through Iranian territory reached over 20.5 million tons, leveraging its strategic geopolitical position bridging Asia and Europe, alongside its transport and energy infrastructure. Economic policies are leaning heavily toward activating land and rail corridors as alternatives to maritime blockades, focusing on securing essential commodities and boosting value-added exports.

Within this context, economic cooperation with international partners is strengthening:

1. Trade with Moscow: registered a growth rate exceeding 20%.
2. Trade with Kazakhstan: active efforts are underway to raise bilateral trade volume to \$3 billion.
3. The financial sector: a notable development is the integration of Iranian banking systems with their Russian counterparts, which has accelerated transfers and mitigated the impact of international financial restrictions.

In the energy sector, despite infrastructure damages sustained during conflict, Iran has managed to restart several gas platforms in the South Pars field, while reconstruction efforts continue to offset the loss of nearly one-third of its production capacity. Concurrently, oil export revenues to China hit a record high of approximately \$5.3 billion

in March 2026, driven by surging global prices and rising Asian demand. This underscores the Iranian economy's capacity to adapt to external pressures.

*Iran's flexible military strategies and shifts in regional order*

On the military front, Iran demonstrates continuous advancement in its defence capabilities. This is evident through the unveiling of the "Rajab 27" fast attack craft, which reflects a shift in naval doctrine toward speed, manoeuvrability, and precision, as well as through bolstering air defence systems (as seen in the downing of a U.S. drone). Estimates also point to Iran's ability to reactivate its underground missile infrastructure, reinforcing its sustainability in any future confrontation.

The Strait of Hormuz holds a central position in Iranian strategy, transforming from an international waterway into an effective instrument of power used by Tehran to reshape deterrence equations. Iran has imposed new conditions on maritime traffic and asserted control over the strait, through which approximately 20% of global energy supplies pass.

Furthermore, proposals for introducing transit fees in cooperation with regional states reflect a drive to redefine the governance rules of this vital corridor.

In the same context, regional shifts indicate a relative decline in reliance on the US security umbrella, particularly following what has been perceived as a failure to achieve the objectives of the recent war. This has prompted several regional nations to reas-

sess their security strategies and seek more autonomous regional cooperation frameworks, thereby boosting the prospects of a new regional order built on localised balances.

This transformation manifests in Iran's expanding role in regional security management, achieved both through controlling vital corridors and developing low-cost, highly effective unconventional military capabilities. This is accompanied by a political discourse proclaiming the end of the era where wills are imposed via conventional military might and economic sanctions, giving way to a new landscape characterised by multiple centres of power.

Looking forward, Iran appears to be consolidating a multidimensional "Resistance State" model that integrates economic resilience, military agility, and political adaptability. However, this path faces persistent challenges – most notably enduring international pressure, the complexities of post-war reconstruction, and the critical need to balance security with development.

Ultimately, the current Iranian experience reflects a profound shift in the concept of national power, transitioning from reliance on conventional resources to leveraging knowledge, flexibility, and geopolitics, positioning it to play a pivotal role in shaping the contours of the emerging regional order in West Asia.

### **Urgent need to rebuild a regional governance framework**

In light of the above, it is clear that the regional landscape is no longer governed by the logic of isolated crises. Instead, it reflects a state of structural interconnectedness among various flash-points, where the dynamics of each arena directly or indirectly influence the others. The deadlock in Gaza negotiations cannot be separated from the military balance of power; similarly, the escalation in Lebanon transcends its geographic borders to form part of broader deterrence equations, while

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transformations within Iran stand as a decisive factor in redefining the regional rules of the game.

These realities reveal a gradual transition from *managing* conflict to *reshaping* it. The capacity of global actors to impose comprehensive settlements is waning, contrasted by the rising influence of regional actors and their increasing reliance on a simultaneous blend of hard and soft power tools.

Consequently, future scenarios remain open to multiple possibilities, ranging from:

A continuous state of mutual attrition.

The imposition of fragile, transitional arrangements.

The crystallisation of a new regional order, provided there is an international political will capable of resetting the rules of engagement.

Therefore, the fundamental challenge lies not merely in ending current crises, but in rebuilding a regional governance framework capable of balancing the requirements of security and stability on one hand, with the imperatives of political justice and development on the other. Without this, the region will remain a hostage to cyclical escalations, and agreements will remain prone to erosion in the absence of genuine guarantees for their implementation—free from selectivity and political exploitation.

***Cde Fouad Baker is a Palestinian politician and a legal expert.***

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