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## **Ceasefire Announced in Gaza:**

### **A Rare Moment of Hope Amid Devastation**

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Kuala Lumpur, 16 January 2025 – A ceasefire has been announced in Gaza, bringing a glimmer of hope after more than 15 months of atrocities that have claimed over 46,000 lives since October 7, 2023. This pivotal agreement represents a critical step toward ending the devastating conflict, delivering much-needed humanitarian aid, and reuniting hostages with their families after enduring prolonged captivity.

The ceasefire is set to unfold in three stages: an immediate cessation of violence to ensure the safe flow of humanitarian assistance, the exchange of hostages and prisoners, and a sustained delivery of essential aid to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people. The framework, based on the consensus reached on May 27, 2024, seeks to halt the violence and lay the groundwork for long-term recovery and peace.

While the ceasefire offers a chance to address immediate needs, the humanitarian crisis remains dire. Malnutrition, disease, and the widespread destruction of infrastructure have left millions at risk, even in the absence of active hostilities. Hospitals, schools, and water supplies have been decimated, and countless families remain displaced. Without urgent intervention, the humanitarian toll will continue to rise.

Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus, President of MERCY Malaysia, emphasized the urgent need for action, "Now is the time to ensure full humanitarian access for all civilians in need of lifesaving assistance. This includes opening access for both essential aid items and humanitarian personnel, as well as securing safe and reliable routes to affected areas. Our collective focus must now shift towards these critical humanitarian efforts. The scale of the crisis demands a swift and comprehensive response to alleviate the suffering of those affected.

He also underscored the challenges that lie ahead, "We should be under no illusions about how tough it will still be to get support to civilians. The stakes could not be higher. We urge all parties to adhere fully to international humanitarian law. This means protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure, allowing aid workers safe, unfettered access to people in need—whoever and wherever they are—and removing all obstacles to the entry of essential aid."

MERCY Malaysia remains steadfast in its commitment to the Palestine relief effort. We will continue to deliver essential aid, monitoring the humanitarian impact, and exploring every avenue to support those in need. This ceasefire, while a significant milestone, is only the beginning of a long journey toward rebuilding lives and restoring dignity.

The hope now is that this agreement will hold and evolve into a permanent resolution, bringing lasting peace, humanitarian relief, and renewed hope for the people of Gaza. This ceasefire is not just a pause in violence; it is a call to action for the global community to rally behind those who have suffered and work together toward a sustainable future for Gaza.

For the latest updates and further information, please follow our social media channels at @mercymalaysia or reach out to us directly at [info@mercy.org.my](mailto:info@mercy.org.my).

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