

## **It is time for a confidence-building Operational Mechanism for the Strait of Hormuz**

**From Jorge Moreira Da Silva, UN Under-Secretary-General, UNOPS Executive Director and coordinator of the UN Strait of Hormuz Task Force**

**COPENHAGEN, 24 July 2026.**– “The ongoing escalation in the Middle East is alarming. Civilians across the region are living with fear, uncertainty and growing disruption to services and systems on which their daily lives depend.

“The effects extend far beyond the immediate area of conflict. Disruption to trade through the Strait of Hormuz is placing livelihoods, supply chains and access to essential commodities under increasing pressure, with the heaviest burden falling on fragile countries and the poorest households.

“According to latest United Nations analysis, transits through the Strait of Hormuz have fallen to an average of approximately five ships per day over the past week, compared with nearly 130 per day before the war, a reduction of more than 95 per cent. Brent crude prices are approximately 40 per cent higher since the beginning of July and exceeded US\$100 per barrel as of this morning.

“The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world’s most critical trade chokepoints and is essential to global economic stability and food security. Continued disruption to the movement of energy, fertilizers and other essential goods has far-reaching consequences.

“Fertilizer prices have increased by nearly 25-30 per cent since the start of the war at the end of February. These are not abstract market movements. Higher fertilizer, energy and transport costs are reducing farmers’ access to essential inputs, constrain future harvest and ultimately increase the price of food for families already struggling to meet their basic needs. WFP estimates that almost 45 million people could fall into acute food insecurity due to the disruption in the Strait of Hormuz.

“The effects are particularly severe in fragile and import-dependent economies, where higher global prices are compounded by currency pressures, limited fiscal space and elevated transport costs.

“Civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected, in accordance with international humanitarian law. Water and energy systems, roads, bridges, ports and other basic

infrastructure supporting essential civilian services are indispensable to communities and to the safe movement of food, medicine and other basic supplies. The applicable obligations must be respected at all times by all Parties.

“At the beginning, the disruption on the Strait of Hormuz was a consequence of the conflict. Now, the disruption on the Strait of Hormuz is fueling the conflict. Therefore, it is even more crucial now to find an operational solution to the Strait.

“In March 2026, the UN Secretary-General established a UN Task Force to develop and propose technical mechanisms specifically designed to meet humanitarian needs in the Strait of Hormuz, drawing inspiration from relevant UN initiatives, including the UN Verification, Inspection and Monitoring Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM), the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI), and the UN2720 Mechanism for Gaza.

“This UN Task-force for the Strait of Hormuz – which I have the honor to coordinate (which includes UNOPS, UNCTAD, IMO and ICC) – has developed, in consultation with relevant parties, a practical confidence-building Mechanism to facilitate safe, orderly and predictable maritime transit through the Strait, with a specific focus on fertilizers and related raw materials to prevent a massive food crisis.

“Built on trust, transparency and accountability, the Mechanism provides a structured process for the registration, deconfliction, prioritisation, facilitation, monitoring, verification and reporting of vessel movements. The Mechanism is time bound, exceptional and limited. It does not alter the rights and obligations of states under international law, nor does it transfer sovereign authority to any participating party.

“In the last four months we consulted extensively with Member States and it has received overwhelming support, particularly from the most vulnerable countries.

“The Mechanism is ready to become operational, subject to the will of all Parties in the conflict and in the region.

“It is time to give a chance to an operational mechanism to build confidence and trust.

“I continue to engage with all parties through the Task Force, while reiterating the Secretary-General’s calls for restraint and de-escalation.

“There is no peaceful path through further escalation. The immediate priority must be to reduce risks, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, build trust and confidence and restore safe and predictable movement through the Strait.

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**About the UN Strait of Hormuz Task Force**

The [UN Strait of Hormuz](#) Task Force includes UNOPS, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Maritime Organization, and the International Chamber of Commerce, with co-operation from other United Nations agencies.