

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

on the situation in Gaza and southern Israel

The Secretary-General is deeply alarmed by today's heavy violence and bloodshed in Gaza, and the continuation of violence in southern Israel. He appeals for an immediate halt to all violence.

While recognizing Israel's security concerns regarding the continued firing of rockets from Gaza, he firmly reiterates Israel's obligation to uphold international humanitarian and human rights law and condemns excessive use of force leading to the killing and injuring of civilians. He condemns the ongoing rocket attacks by Palestinian militants and is deeply distressed that repeated calls on Hamas for these attacks to end have gone unheeded.

The Secretary-General reiterates his previous calls for humanitarian supplies to be allowed into Gaza to aid the distressed civilian population. He is making immediate contact with regional and international leaders, including Quartet principals, in an effort to bring a swift end to the violence.

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