

Palestinian Authority should tackle crisis through reform, Annan says

21 July 2004 – The current turmoil in the Palestinian Authority should prompt reforms in the security sector and the political power structure, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said today.

"I really hope that as difficult and as complicated as the crisis is in Palestine that they will exploit this crisis positively and move ahead and really come out with some of the reform structures which are required, particularly in the security area," he told reporters at a [news conference](#) in New York.

Specifically, Mr. Annan called for consolidating the security structures, empowering the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior to "really take charge" and undertaking other reforms related to the Cabinet.

"I hope Chairman [Yasser] Arafat will seize the need in supporting this sort of reform at this stage and be able to move the process forward," he said.

The Secretary-General was also asked about the General Assembly's [adoption](#) of a resolution yesterday demanding that Israel comply with an [advisory opinion](#) issued earlier this month by the International Court of Justice ([ICJ](#)), which declared the construction of a separation barrier in and around the West Bank to be illegal.

He acknowledged that the Israeli Government did not like the General Assembly resolution. "But the Israeli court itself also came out with a decision on the route of the barrier and asked them to change it because of its impact on the Palestinians, so one cannot say that the International Court [of Justice] was entirely wrong," he said.

The Israeli court's decision, he added, was "courageous and bold."

The Secretary-General also stressed the need to "heed and pay attention to the Court's decision; even though it is not enforceable, it has some moral bearing on what they do."

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