

Statement by
ROBERT H. SERRY

**UN SPECIAL COORDINATOR
FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS
AND PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE PLO AND THE PA
ON THE SITUATION IN HEBRON**

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For Immediate release

"I welcome the evacuation by Israeli security forces of approximately 200 settlers from a house in Hebron yesterday.

I condemn the ensuing violence and attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and the destruction and desecration of Palestinian property, mosques and graves, as well as settler attacks on Israeli security forces. As the occupying power, the Government of Israel is under obligation to protect Palestinian civilians, property and holy sites.

I remain concerned about the potential for a further escalation of a tense situation. I call for an immediate end to settler attacks and restraint and calm from all parties, and urge vigilance from the Israeli authorities to ensure that the events of yesterday are not repeated.

Actions of extremists continue to pose a threat to the peace process, and further underline the need for action to fulfill Roadmap commitments.

The United Nations will continue to closely monitor developments."