

## **Secretary-General deeply concerned by escalation in Middle East violence**

21 August 2003 – The United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today voiced deep concern at the sharp escalation in violence in the Middle East, and calling on both sides to curb their actions he reaffirmed the importance of sticking to the Road Map peace plan.

“While recognizing the right of Israel to live in security, Israel does not have the right to resort to extra-judicial measures, as it used today in the Gaza Strip,” said a [statement](#) issued by a spokesman for Mr. Annan in New York. “The Secretary-General calls upon the Government of Israel to exercise restraint and to halt its current military actions, so as to enable the Palestinian Authority to take the necessary steps to bring extremist groups under control and ensure the truce continues.”

Mr. Annan also “urges the Government of Abu Mazen to act rapidly to that end and expresses his strong concern at the announcement that Hamas has renounced the truce,” the statement added.

“The Secretary-General continues to believe that security and stability for both Israelis and Palestinians can best be achieved through the political process set out in the Quartet’s Road Map,” the statement concluded, referring to the plan by the UN, United States, European Union and Russian Federation that calls for Israel and the Palestinians to take a series of parallel and reciprocal steps culminating in the achievement of two states living side by side in peace by 2005.

Link: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=8041&Cr=middle&Cr1=east>