

# **SECRETARY-GENERAL ‘STRONGLY CONDEMNS’ KILLING OF PALESTINIAN DEMONSTRATORS IN SOUTHERN GAZA**

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesman for Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

The Secretary-General strongly condemns the killing and injury of Palestinian demonstrators in southern Gaza today. He calls on Israel to immediately halt the military operations. The killing of peaceful demonstrators, many of them women and children, has distressed the Secretary-General, who sends his deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims. The Secretary-General has repeatedly warned Israel, including yesterday via his Middle East envoy, that it must abide by its obligations as an occupying power, which include protecting the civilian population and eschewing the disproportionate or indiscriminate use of force.

Link: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2004/sgsm9316.doc.htm>