

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

The shocking violence of recent days in Gaza, much of which has involved violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, has caused great alarm and sadness around the world. The Secretary-General is deeply concerned for the welfare of ordinary Palestinians and calls for full respect for their human rights.

The ongoing crisis is of deep concern to the United Nations, particularly in view of the work of UNRWA, WFP and other agencies in delivering humanitarian assistance to a large majority of the population in Gaza. The United Nations is determined to ensure the safety and security of the large number of United Nations employees working in Gaza, and to ensure that they can continue their vital work to assist a large section of the Palestinian population in Gaza, many of whom are dependent on emergency aid for daily sustenance. This will require the cooperation of all parties to ensure appropriate security and access conditions for the passage of humanitarian goods and personnel both within the Gaza Strip and at key crossing points.

The Secretary-General is deeply disappointed at the failure of the National Unity Government, and the violence, destruction and fragmentation that has brought about its demise. This must end immediately and calm must be restored. The Secretary-General renews his support to President Abbas as he moves to discharge his responsibilities under the Palestinian Basic Law. The Secretary-General remains in close consultation with the parties and regional and Quartet partners about the way ahead.

New York, 15 June 2007