

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson
for the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General is deeply concerned at the loss of civilian life in Southern Israel and Gaza, and at the escalation of violence that has taken place today.

The Secretary-General condemns rocket fire against Israel by Hamas, which intensified today and killed an Israeli civilian in Sederot. He calls on Hamas and other militant groups to cease such acts of terrorism.

The Secretary-General also condemns the killing of four Palestinian children, including an infant, in Gaza in IDF strikes. He calls on Israel to exercise maximum restraint and ensure respect for international humanitarian law so as not to endanger civilians.

These events underscore the urgent need for a calming of violence, and must not be allowed to deter the continuation of the political process.

New York, 27 February 2008