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Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the occupied West Bank

Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General is deeply concerned by the latest developments in the occupied West Bank, including Israel's launch today of large-scale military operations in Jenin, Tulkarm and Tubas governorates, involving the use of airstrikes, which resulted in casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure. He strongly condemns the loss of lives, including of children.

The Secretary-General calls for an immediate cessation of these operations.

He calls on Israel to comply with its relevant obligations under international humanitarian law and to take measures to protect civilians and ensure their safety. He urges security forces to exercise maximum restraint and use lethal force only when it is strictly unavoidable to protect life.

All those injured must have access to medical care, and humanitarian workers must be able to reach everyone in need.

These dangerous developments are fueling an already explosive situation in the occupied West Bank and further undermining the Palestinian Authority.

The Secretary-General is also deeply concerned by the recent dangerous and provocative acts and statements by an Israeli Minister at the Holy Sites in Jerusalem. He stresses the importance of maintaining the status quo at the Sites.

Ultimately, only an end to the occupation and a return to a meaningful political process that will establish a two-state solution will bring an end to the violence. The United Nations will continue to work with all parties towards this end, to seek a de-escalation of the current situation and promote stability in the region.

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