



**Statement by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,
Tor Wennesland, on the situation in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip**

Jerusalem, 5 August 2022

“I am deeply concerned by the ongoing escalation between Palestinian militants and Israel, including the targeted killing today of a Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader inside Gaza. This takes place amidst mounting tensions across the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in recent weeks.

In the past few hours, at least 10 Palestinians were killed by Israeli airstrikes. I am deeply saddened by reports that a five-year-old child has been killed in these strikes. There can be no justification for any attacks against civilians.

The continuing escalation is very dangerous. The launching of rockets must cease immediately, and I call on all sides to avoid further escalation.

The progress made in gradually opening Gaza since the end of the May escalation risks being undone, leading to even greater humanitarian needs at a time when global resources are stretched and international financial support for a renewed humanitarian effort in Gaza will not be easily available.

The UN is fully engaged with all concerned in an attempt to avoid a further conflict which would have devastating consequences, mainly for civilians.

The responsibility is with the parties to avoid this from happening.”

[ENDS]