

---

**VIOLENCE IN OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES** (13/06/07)

Commenting on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Foreign Secretary said:

'Over the past week I have become increasingly concerned by the upsurge in violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The growing number of casualties is deeply worrying and I call on all sides to do everything in their power to bring stability to the streets.

'This fighting is a tragedy. It puts civilians at risk and with today's sad news of the death of two United Nations workers, it makes it harder for the international community to extend assistance to the people of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Over recent months the International Community, regional partners and the Palestinian Government have worked to move forward the peace process. This serious upsurge in violence puts this at risk.

'I am contacting President Abbas to express our concerns and to ask that he does everything possible to ensure that cool heads prevail, that we see an end to this senseless violence and a return to dialogue. Dialogue can be the only way forward for the Palestinians.

'We are also in touch with regional partners, including Cairo and Riyadh, to see how we can resolve the current crisis.

'I also would like to take the opportunity to press again for the immediate release of Alan Johnston. It is essential that the Palestinian Authority continue to work to secure his immediate and unconditional release'.