
Secretary-General to attend Middle East peace conference next week

21 November 2007 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today announced plans to attend next week's Middle East peace conference in Annapolis, United States, voicing hope that the talks will provide the impetus for final status negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

But in a briefing to an informal meeting of the General Assembly at UN Headquarters in New York, Mr. Ban said he remained concerned by the prevailing humanitarian situation inside the Gaza Strip, where the economy has deteriorated since many border crossings into Israel were closed earlier this year in response to intra-Palestinian fighting.

The Secretary-General also plans to participate in a meeting in Washington on Monday of the Middle East Quartet, the diplomatic grouping that comprises the UN as well as the European Union, Russia and the US, his spokesperson Michele Montas said.

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