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**Ramallah, Palestinian Authority, 16 January 2009**  
**Secretary-General's press conference after meeting Prime Minister Salam Fayyad**

**SG:** It is a great pleasure to visit for the second time as Secretary-General of the United Nations while coming to this place I am impressed by what you have achieved in the last two years under the leadership of President Abbas and your leadership in the area of socio-economic and security fields. While I am very much impressed, I am standing here with a very heavy heart. You are experiencing a very difficult period. All Palestinian people are suffering from this fighting. All the international community is very much worried about what is happening, what we have seen. The last few weeks, as Secretary-General, I have been exerting all my efforts and time to bring this situation under control, to bring this fighting to an immediate stop. I don't have much to add to what Prime Minister Fayyad said. We had a very good, constructive, and useful meeting. He has now explained and briefed in much detail what we have discussed? We discussed many important elements. First of all an immediate stop to the fighting, then humanitarian assistance and reconstruction, and how to make this ceasefire durable and sustainable and respected by all the parties. He has also raised ideas of the international presence in Palestinian territory, and also how to make all the crossings open in a transparent and effective manner to prevent further smuggling. All these elements are now closely converging. We are very close to have an agreement to a ceasefire. I sincerely hope that over a couple of days we can agree on a ceasefire. There is no time to lose, as I have been repeatedly saying. If we wait one more day then there will be so many killings and destruction and displaced persons, the number of casualties, the situation which has brought us to day is just unbearable, just unacceptable situation. I again strongly urge the parties concerned, who are engaged in negotiations to conclude their negotiations as soon as possible. That is what I will continue to work on over the coming few days.

The Palestinian people and Authority should be supported. They are the internationally recognized, democratically elected leadership and I am going to continue to work very closely with the leadership of the Palestinian Authority, together with the Quarter members, together with the international community. Here I would like to emphasize, especially to the Palestinian people and the leadership of the Palestinian people, ceasefire with economic assistance and reconstruction, what the international community wants from you is unity of the Palestinian people. With divided Palestinians, it may only be a stopgap. There is no guarantee that you will not see a recurrence of this tragedy. You must have an inclusive dialogue, national unity, promote reconciliation among Palestinian people. This is what only you can do, only you can do, among the Palestinian people. The international community, the United Nations, can create a certain atmosphere. Political, social economic atmosphere. We are ready to provide all necessary technical assistance. This is my message, and my sincere and honest wish to the people of Palestine. Only on that basis we can assure a long lasting, durable, sustainable, permanent peace.

A two-state solution, so that Palestinians and Israelis can live side by side in peace and security. This is my message to you today. Thank you very much.

**Q:** Mr. Secretary-General, Al Arabiya has been reporting this morning that General Gilad has informed the Government that the talks have stalled in Cairo, and that he inaudible and you have been saying that there is no time to waste. And it seems like that to get a quick and fast ceasefire we really need a quick and unilateral Israeli Government to stop the killing in Gaza. Would you ask the Israeli government to declare a ceasefire?

**SG:** You heard me speaking yesterday with President Shimon Peres. It's too early to determine, to characterize the status of negotiation at this time we only hope that these negotiations will bring a ceasefire as soon as possible. As I said yesterday, there is no time to lose, I would even strongly urge Israeli government and leadership to declare unilaterally, so that there will be a relief for humanitarian workers and people of Gaza otherwise there will be serious limitations for United Nations and international donors to deliver this humanitarian assistance, therefore it is time now to even think about the unilateral declaration of ceasefire by the Israeli government. That's my message again, and finally, they should come out with durable and sustainable ceasefire. Thank you.

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