



Press Release

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Français

SECRETARY-GENERAL STRONGLY DEPLORES ACTS OF VIOLENCE

IN OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

Also Expresses Grave Concern about Israeli Supreme Court Decisions Authorizing Transfer of Relatives of Palestinians Accused of Organizing Attacks

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesman for Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

The Secretary-General strongly deplores the acts of violence in the occupied Palestinian territory. He is especially concerned at the recent killing of a number of Palestinian civilians, including several children, as a result of Israeli military attacks. It is particularly distressing that these incidents have occurred during a period of relative calm and while efforts are made to implement a security agreement and to strengthen international assistance to a peaceful settlement. The Secretary-General wishes to remind the Government of Israel of its obligations under international humanitarian law to protect civilians. He welcomes the investigation announced by the Israeli Defence Minister and hopes that those responsible for these acts will be held accountable.

The Secretary-General is also gravely concerned about the Israel Supreme Court's decisions authorizing the transfer of two relatives of a Palestinian accused of organizing attacks against Israel. Such transfers are strictly prohibited by international humanitarian law and could have very serious political and security implications.

While the Secretary-General has consistently condemned suicide bombings and upheld Israel's right to defend itself, he wishes to stress that self-defence cannot justify measures that amount to collective punishments.

He once again calls on the Government of Israel to adhere to its obligations under the [Fourth Geneva Convention \(1949\)](#) and not to take actions that are inconsistent with international humanitarian law.

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