



Press Release

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Français

SECRETARY-GENERAL, ALARMED BY MIDDLE EAST VIOLENCE, APPEALS FOR RESTRAINT

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

The Secretary-General is alarmed by the situation on the ground in the Middle East, where the violence in the occupied territories between Palestinians and Israelis has spread to the border between Israel and Lebanon and the Shaba farms area of the Golan Heights.

Acutely conscious of the dangers of a further deterioration, the Secretary-General has spent the day in intensive contacts with leaders in the region. He has also been working with other statesmen with influence with the parties to try to calm the situation. In his view, the most urgent task is to break the current cycle of violence and to stop the senseless killing which have brought tragedy to so many families.

To this end, the Secretary-General appeals to the parties to show the utmost restraint and rein in their forces and supporters, so as to give the ongoing efforts to restore the peace process the best chance of success, and to respect relevant Security Council resolutions as well as humanitarian norms. He also urges each side to maintain the inviolability of religious sites of importance to other faiths, since all must understand that true faith demands respect for the beliefs of others.

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