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**DAILY NEWS BULLETIN**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**In Relation to the Exacerbation of the Confrontation in the Gaza Strip**

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Moscow expresses serious concern over yet another spiral of force-based confrontation in the Gaza Strip. Over the last few days, according to media reports, it has already led to the death of 11 Israeli servicemen and more than 20 Palestinians, about 200 people, including women and children received wounds.

It is obvious that force options, whoever may resort to them, will not bring the solution of the problems in relations between the Israelis and the Palestinians any nearer. A durable peace can only be achieved on the basis of a political process, of negotiations between the parties on a generally recognized international legal basis, in accordance with the Road Map for Middle East settlement accepted by the parties, as is stressed in the final document of the Quartet's ministerial meeting on May 4 in New York.

Now it is necessary to lead matters to a mutual cease-fire and the resumption of security cooperation by the parties, which would open the way to a political dialogue and the implementation of the Road Map's other provisions.

Russia in close coordination with the Quartet members and other concerned parties will actively help to find ways for overcoming the present crisis. In the next few days the Russian Foreign Minister's special Middle East envoy, Ambassador at Large Alexander Kalugin, is leaving for the Middle East for consultations with the regional parties and the Quartet members within the framework of the implementation of the Quartet New York decisions.

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