

OFF-THE-CUFF**Secretary-General's remarks to press with Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh of Jordan [Scroll down for Q&A]**

Amman, Jordan, 23 July 2014
Assalamalaikum

Ramadan kareem,

It is a great pleasure to visit Jordan again. I have been visiting Jordan many, many times-- at least three times during the last five years. I have been here for urgent mission with a very heavy heart. This is the same case with me; I am standing here with a very heavy heart. Knowing that even at this time many people are being killed, civilians [inaudible] more than 600 have been killed already, 3,600 people have been wounded. They are [mostly] Palestinian civilians, women and children. Every hour, at least one child has been killed during the last two days, at least two days, but much more, much more. This is an unacceptable situation.

While I'm very happy to be back to Jordan and get always inspiring guidance and wisdom from his Majesty for his commitment for peace in the region, I'm very much saddened that -- it really pains me to travel in the region all the time like this periodically. I hope this will be the last time for such a mission. I'd like to be here on a more lighter and more pleasant mission.

I really thank my good friend Minister Judeh for his instrumental role in facilitating the Middle East peace process, we've been working very closely and I count heavily [on him]. Much more so for his Majesty, King Abdullah, he has been a source of wisdom and inspiration and guidance for the United Nations and also for peace and stability in this region.

I just had a very good meeting with His Majesty, I really thank the Jordanian government and people's strong support for the people, humanitarian assistance for the people in Gaza including food and medicine, all sanitation support. His Majesty assured me that to make sure that this humanitarian support will be delivered to the people in need.

At this time I'm in the middle of touring all these important countries, meeting all important leaders who can play a very key role in helping putting an end to this intolerable situation and violence, particularly killing people. Now I have been in Qatar, Kuwait and Palestine, Israel, Cairo, Jordan. From here I'm going to Saudi Arabia. I have been meeting all these leaders [inaudible] The Charter of the United Nations states that peace and security is a very important pillar of the United Nations Charter. My message has always been consistent and strong. This violence must stop; it must stop now. And the parties must return to dialogue, put all the pending issues on the table. I think they have identified all the problems and tackled all the root causes -- why the Palestinian people have been suffering, and why the people of Israel have been living under fear or threat of rocket attack.

Then there is the question of serious proportionality. While I appreciate [that] Israelis should live in peace and security without fear, then excessive military operations and assaults have killed thousands and thousands of people up until now. Just during the last weeks more than 600 people have been killed. This is really an unacceptable situation.

That is why I have been consulting with all the leaders and sincerely hope that both parties will agree to a ceasefire. There was such an attempt, a proposal, by Cairo, the Egyptian Government. The Egyptian Government provided a very good proposal, and we are working around that Cairo proposal. There are many parties who are really working together to promote this ceasefire. The United Nations and I, as Secretary-General, [are] here and travelling and meeting with world leaders to add my voice and to add my strength as Secretary-General of the United Nations, so that peace will come to the people of Palestine and to the people of Israel and to all the people in this region.

Peace and stability and security in the Middle East has regional and global implications. That is why a lot of the United Nations agenda, particularly the Security Council, are about the peace and security in the Middle East, and particularly peace and stability between Israel and Palestine. That is one of the core issues. I sincerely hope that we will be able to resolve this issue this time.

I met Prime Minister [Benjamin] Netanyahu yesterday and today, and I am also working very closely with US Secretary of State John Kerry. And I met President [Abdel Fattah] Al Sisi, and even I have spoken to President Al Sisi of Egypt while coming from the airport to this place, over the phone. I am constantly in touch with world leaders to help this. Now, we are very much working hard. Mr. Minister, allow me to thank you again for your strong political and humanitarian commitment. I really count on your continuing support.

If I may say to you about humanitarian issues -- the United Nations in Geneva has made a flash appeal recently in the amount of \$115 million dollars, to help the people in Gaza and Palestine. This is an emergency support for the people. At this time \$70 million is urgently needed for food, shelter, health, water, sanitation, protection and other crucial needs. I appeal to all the countries to generously provide the resources for this vital appeal.

Once again Mr. Minister, thank you very much for your leadership and your strong commitment. I am ready to work with you. Thank you very much. Shukran Jazeelan.

Q: Today it was mentioned in the media that you had [Mr. Judeh] talked to Mr. [Steffan] De Mistura. Are there any talks about Syria and things happening there? The second question, about having a ceasefire in Gaza, are there any connections, communications with Iran, because it has some influence on many parties there?

SG: On this occasion, I would like to convey my deepest thanks on behalf of the United Nations to the people and Government of Jordan for their very, very generous support for Syrian refugees. I myself have visited Za'atari camp. It was the most moving experience I ever had, seeing all these very unfortunate refugees who had to flee their country. I know that the number is almost reaching one million people. It is almost, I understand, an uncontrollable, unbearable burden to the Jordanian Government. In that regard, you are a people with very broad, big, magnanimous heart. I really appreciate this. We are working very hard to mobilize the necessary humanitarian resources to help your people and Government to continue. I also hope that the Jordanian Government will open its border so that people will -- whoever wants to avoid all this persecution and difficulties, they can find some place for safety.

On the second part of your question, there are many countries and people who may have influence on other parts. At this time, I think that everybody should work together with one goal, one goal. That is to bring this violence to an immediate end, immediate end. I really urge -- the parties must stop now. It is time to stop now. Then discuss all the issues. These have been longstanding issues. But military solutions do not give any sustainable solution, and this is what we have been learning from this conflict, from the lessons. I am working very hard. Thank you.

Off-the-Cuff on 23 July 2014

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