

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

**on violence in Gaza and southern Israel**

The Secretary-General is gravely concerned at the escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel today. He condemns the reported civilian casualties among Palestinians, including children, during Israeli military operations, and calls on Israel to abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law. The Secretary-General also reiterates his condemnation of rocket fire against Israeli civilian targets. He urges all parties to exercise restraint.

New York, 16 April 2008