



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

5 February 2009

Your Highness,


I would like to thank you for your letters dated 4 January 2009 and 13 January 2009, in which you expressed your concern regarding the developments in Gaza and the destruction of educational institutions, and in which you called for investigations into the attacks on the schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Much like you, I was deeply concerned over the situation in Gaza and the heavy price being paid by the civilian populations. I repeatedly called for an immediate end to the violence, and I expressed my condemnation of both the excessive use of force by Israel and the indiscriminate rocket and mortar attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian militants. I called on all concerned parties to comply fully with international human rights and humanitarian law.

As you know, I travelled to the region on 13 January 2009 to underscore the urgent need to reach an immediate ceasefire and to implement Security Council resolution 1860 (2009). During my trip, I held talks in Egypt, Jordan, Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories, Turkey, Lebanon and Syria, as well as with regional and international leaders at a meeting convened by Egyptian President Mubarak in Sharm el-Sheikh and at the Arab Economic Summit in Kuwait.

On 20 January 2009, I visited Gaza, to show my solidarity with the civilian population there, inspect the extent of destruction, pledge the support of the United Nations and its commitment to the continued provision of humanitarian assistance and a concerted early reconstruction effort, and to personally visit United Nations staff who worked steadfastly during these past weeks, in great danger.

Her Highness
Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Misnad
Consort of His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar
Doha

SG letter to Qatar Sheikha
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I have already dispatched a high-level rapid humanitarian needs assessment mission, and the United Nations will work, in concert with other concerned actors, to ensure that humanitarian needs in Gaza are addressed fully and rapidly, and that a coordinated early reconstruction effort begins soon, with the full support of the international community.

I also made clear that attacks such as the repeated shelling and destruction of United Nations facilities are unacceptable. I protested such attacks in the strongest possible terms and demanded a thorough investigation into these incidents. I expect to receive a full explanation of each incident and that those responsible will be held accountable for their actions. Meanwhile, I am initiating a United Nations investigation into the casualties and damage at the Gaza facilities of UNRWA and of the United Nations Special Coordinator Office for the Middle East. I have also raised with the Security Council the issue of an enquiry into the broader question relating to the conduct of the parties to this conflict during the hostilities.

I wish to assure you that the United Nations will continue its efforts to help bring about a durable ceasefire arrangement, and to contribute to the **achievement** of our ultimate goals: the ending of the occupation that began in 1967, the establishment of a Palestinian state and its coexistence in peace and security alongside Israel, with the attainment of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and all its Arab neighbours, based on relevant Security Council resolutions.

Please accept, Your Highness, the assurances of my highest consideration.



BAN Ki-moon