Statement

UNICEF calls for the protection of children in the Gaza Strip

Statement attributable to Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa

AMMAN, 10 April 2018 - “In the last 10 days, three children were killed and dozens more were seriously injured in the recent tragic events in the Gaza Strip. UNICEF deplores all acts of violence against children.

“Children in Gaza have been living in extremely dire circumstances for many years.

“It is imperative that all actors on all sides put the protection of children first. Children should never be the target of violence and must not be put at risk of violence nor encouraged to participate in violence.

“These latest developments compound an already acute crisis in the Gaza Strip, where families have been coping with less than five hours of electricity per day for almost a year. Among young people, who have experienced three major rounds of armed conflict in the last decade, unemployment is above 60 per cent. Only 10 per cent of families in the Gaza Strip have regular direct access to drinking water. One in four children (250,000) are in need of psychosocial support due to past trauma and more than half of children depend on some form of assistance for their daily survival.

“UNICEF was able today to deliver long-awaited critical health supplies into Gaza. UNICEF is also advising parents on how to seek psychosocial support and trauma counselling for their children, and continues to support health, water, sanitation and hygiene, education and protection services.”

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