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## UNICEF concerned over the impact of violence on children in Gaza and Southern Israel

**JERUSALEM, 12 March 2012** – UNICEF expressed today deep concern over the impact on children of the recent escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip and Israel.

On Monday, a 15-year-old Palestinian boy was killed and another four children were reported injured in an explosion in the Gaza Strip. On Sunday, a 12-year-old Palestinian boy was killed in an airstrike on Gaza. So far, 14 Palestinian children aged from one to 17 years have been reported injured in airstrikes. Two schools suffered minor damage in Gaza City.

On Sunday in Israel, a rocket hit a school that was empty at the time. Classes had to be cancelled in the south of the country, affecting over 200,000 Israeli students.

"Everything must be done to protect the safety and the lives of innocent children," said Ms. Jean Gough, UNICEF Special Representative to the occupied Palestinian territory. "We call upon all parties to do everything in their power to protect children and to put an end to violence."

Since Friday, violence has escalated as Israeli aircraft struck Gaza and Palestinian militants launched rockets towards southern Israel. Last year, 20 Palestinian children and five Israeli children were killed in incidents related to the conflict; another 448 Palestinian children and two Israeli children were injured.

# # #

### About UNICEF

UNICEF works in 190 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. For more information about UNICEF and its work visit: [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

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