

Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on Gaza

The Secretary-General has learned with concern that leaflets are reportedly being dropped by the Israeli Defence Forces in the northern Gaza Strip this evening, warning tens of thousands of residents to leave their homes and evacuate to Gaza City.

If true, this would have a further devastating humanitarian impact on the beleaguered civilians of those areas of the Gaza strip, who have already undergone immense suffering in recent days. The United Nations agencies present in Gaza do not have the resources on the ground to cope with, or provide assistance to, an enormous extra influx of desperate people.

The Secretary-General strongly urges all sides to avoid any further escalation at this time. He notes that all sides must meet all obligations under international humanitarian law, both towards civilians ahead of impending attacks, as well as maintaining proportionality in any kind of military response.

The Secretary-General reiterates his condemnation of the firing of rockets and the building of tunnels into Israel from Gaza. Once again, the Secretary-General underlines the critical importance of ending hostilities.

New York, 28 July 2014

