

## STATEMENT

Media Section

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### **Statement By UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman Regarding the Humanitarian Operation In Gaza**

*Jan. 8, 2009*

“UNICEF is deeply concerned that the ongoing violence has forced UNRWA to suspend its humanitarian operation in Gaza. This can only deepen an already critical humanitarian situation and put children at even greater risk of death or permanent damage. The distribution of food, water, fuel and medicine should not be impeded.

“The physical and psychological damage that this conflict is inflicting on children on both sides must end. Children are being killed and injured on a daily basis as a result of the current military operation. This is unacceptable and every effort must be made by all concerned to ensure that children receive the protection that is their right and our collective duty.

“UNICEF calls on all parties to the conflict to take every measure to protect children.

“It is only with an end to the conflict that children’s rights can be fully respected.

“In the interim, safe spaces and unimpeded humanitarian access must be established in Gaza urgently to ensure that children have access to regular life-saving supplies and support.”

New York