

**Security Council**

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Identical letters dated 9 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you of a series of incidents in southern Israel and the Gaza Strip that threaten peace and stability. On the very same day on which Israel's Government expanded the flow of exports leaving the Gaza Strip, we witnessed a number of serious terrorist attacks emanating from this area that were targeted at the Israeli civilian population.

At approximately 11 p.m. on 8 December 2010, some five mortar shells were fired from the Gaza Strip into the area of Eshkol in southern Israel, injuring an Israeli civilian. Earlier in the day on 8 December, a mortar was launched from the Gaza Strip into the Shaar Hanegev area of southern Israel, causing damage to a residence.

These incidents followed the launch of two rockets and one mortar shell from Gaza into southern Israel over the last three days, along with the launch of a missile at IDF forces operating near the Karni Crossing in southern Israel on 6 December. Since the beginning of September we have witnessed some 20 rockets and 31 mortars launched from the Gaza Strip into Israel.

This escalation of attacks, carried out in clear violation of international law, is of the utmost seriousness. It highlights the very real security challenges emanating from the Gaza Strip that Israel faces on a daily basis. While Israel takes measures to improve life for the population in Gaza that remains captive to Hamas rule, terrorist organizations in the area continue to launch attacks against Israeli towns and civilians.

These rocket attacks reflect the continued buildup of arms and munitions by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. Hamas cynically places military infrastructure and installations in and around civilian populations, and continues to jeopardize innocent lives by experimenting with its rocket arsenal in the vicinity of Gazan civilians, as was reported by Under-Secretary-General Pascoe in his briefing to the Security Council on 23 November 2010.

In response to these attacks from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, Israel has exercised and will continue to exercise its right to self-defence, as appropriate, and will take all necessary measures to protect its citizens.

Israel expects firm condemnation of this attack by the Security Council, the Secretary-General, and the international community. With a view to preventing



further escalation of this conflict, the international community must send a clear and resolute message that such attacks are unacceptable.

The Security Council must also give appropriate attention to the smuggling of arms into Gaza, which continues to fuel violence and instability in our region, in clear violation of numerous Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1860 (2009).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Meron **Reuben**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations
