

# *United Nations Secretary General Slams Israel for Suffering of Gaza Children*

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United Nations, June 19 (RHC)-- United Nations chief has hit out at the Tel Aviv regime over its aggressive policies toward the Palestinian children, who bore the brunt of the 2014 Israeli war on the besieged Gaza Strip. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said on Thursday that he was "deeply alarmed at the suffering of so many children as a result of Israeli military operations in Gaza last year."

Ban emphasized that more than 500 children lost their lives during the last summer's Israeli aggression against the Palestinian enclave, demanding that Tel Aviv review its aggressive policies toward Palestinian kids.

"I urge Israel to take concrete and immediate steps, including by reviewing existing policies and practices, to protect and prevent the killing and maiming of children, and to respect the special protections afforded to schools and hospitals," Ban said.

The remarks come just days after the UN chief came under fire by the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas and human rights groups for his decision to exclude the Israeli regime from its list of children's rights violators.

Fawzi Barhoum, a Hamas spokesman, has described the move by the world body to keep the Tel Aviv regime off the list as a "shameful." The Human Rights Watch had also earlier urged the UN chief to add the Israeli regime to the annual "List of Shame," saying Ban "can strengthen child protection in war by compiling his list based on facts, not political pressure."

Israel and its allies in Washington had been lobbying against the inclusion of Israel in the list, pressuring Ban to leave Israel out.

Meanwhile, a recent UN report has accused the Israeli military of being responsible for strikes on civilian buildings and UN-run schools during the 2014 war. Thousands of displaced Palestinians were sheltering in more than 90 UN schools, several of which were hit by Israeli shelling and aerial attacks.

Over 2,100 Palestinians, mostly civilians and 540 children were killed during the latest Israeli war on Gaza, which took place in the summer of 2014. In addition, thousands of Palestinian children have been arrested and prosecuted in Israeli military courts over the past years.

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