

## **UN chief calls for maximum calm and restraint after reported Israeli air strikes in Syria**

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UN News Centre

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**Secretary-General** Ban Ki-moon is gravely concerned about reports of air strikes in Syria by the Israeli Air Force, according to a statement from his spokesperson, which stressed that the United Nations does not have details of the reported incidents nor is in a position to independently verify that they took place.

“The Secretary-General calls on all sides to exercise maximum calm and restraint, and to act with a sense of responsibility to prevent an escalation of what is already a devastating and highly dangerous conflict,” Mr. Ban's spokesperson **said** in the statement.

“The Secretary-General urges respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region, and adherence to all relevant Security Council resolutions,” he continued.

A series of powerful explosions rocked the outskirts of Damascus early this morning, which Syrian state television attributed to Israeli missile attacks on a Syrian military installation, according to media reports.

Mr. Ban's spokesperson underscored that “at this time, the United Nations does not have details of the reported incidents. Nor is the United Nations in a position to independently verify what has occurred.”

Top UN officials, including Mr. Ban and his political chief, Jeffrey Feltman, have said on numerous occasions that a political solution is the only answer for long-term in the country and the region.

Since the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad began in March 2011, more than 70,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed and some three million displaced.

Also today, Mr. Ban spoke by phone with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Nabil ElAraby. According to the UN spokesperson, the two leaders shared their grave concern about the reported air strikes in

Syria and the risks for regional security.

They agreed that Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson would follow up with Mr. ElAraby on the sidelines of the international conference on Somalia set to begin on 7 July in London.