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Secretary-General

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CONCERNED ABOUT ESCALATING FIGHTING IN SYRIA, SECRETARY-GENERAL CONDEMNS INDISCRIMINATE USE OF HEAVY WEAPONS AGAINST CIVILIAN AREA

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

The Secretary-General is gravely concerned about escalating fighting in Syria in recent days, particularly in Aleppo, where reports indicate that civilians are among hundreds of people killed and injured. He condemns the continued and indiscriminate use of heavy weapons and mortar shelling against areas with civilian populations. He reiterates his utter condemnation of the use of “barrel bombs” by Government forces, most recently in Aleppo. All parties to the conflict must adhere to international humanitarian and human rights law. All civilians must be protected in any situation.

The Secretary-General is particularly concerned that, as efforts to bring the Syrian sides to a negotiating table intensify, further escalation of violence will only serve the agendas of those who see military means as the only way forward, at the expense of the Syrian people who have suffered enough already. He appeals to the warring sides to free all persons detained or abducted, end the sieges and allow unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need. Most importantly, all must start to work immediately on reducing the levels of violence and focusing instead on a peaceful, political solution to the conflict.

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