



Tuesday 5 August 2014

Excellences,

The 120,000 staff of the United Nations Common System have watched with horror the unfolding humanitarian tragedy in Gaza. Amid the deaths of innocent civilians on all sides of the conflict have been those of eleven colleagues, killed while attending to their work on UN premises. These are premises whose sanctity foreseen under international law has been violated by all warring parties; to date nine schools have been attacked and caches of weapons have been found in three others.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has qualified these acts against UN premises and staff as violations of international law. Human Rights High Commissioner, Navi Pillay has said they may "amount to a war crime".

Our colleagues are there to help the most vulnerable in their time of need. They should not work in fear of their lives. They should be protected. We therefore welcome these strong statements of support for our colleagues and all victims in this conflict. However, we believe that actions speak louder than words.

As UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl has stated, "insufficient measures of precaution and control and protection are being taken" by the warring parties. He has also called for accountability and for the international community "to take deliberate international political action to put an immediate end to the continuing carnage."

We therefore call on the UN Secretariat, the General Assembly and the Security Council to take all measures necessary to ensure accountability for the actions committed by all parties to this conflict and ensure no further colleagues are killed.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration, and in solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Richards'.

Ian Richards
President
CCISUA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diab El-Tabari'.

Diab El-Tabari
President
FICSA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dimitri Samaras'.

Dimitri Samaras
President
UNISERV

Mr. Ban Ki-moon
United Nations Secretary General

His Excellency, Mr. John William Ashe
President of the General Assembly

His Excellency, Mr. Mark Lyall Grant
President of the Security Council