

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:224

ANSWERED ON:18.02.2009

ISRAELI AGGRESSION IN GAZA

Chakraborty Shri Swadesh;Chandrappan Shri C.K.;Das Gupta Shri Gurudas

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of Palestinians including civilians especially children were reportedly killed in the latest Israeli-Palestinians armed clashes;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the efforts begin made by the Government to restore peace in the region?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) Yes.

(b) In the period 26.12.2008 to 18.1.2009, over 1200 Palestinians, including civilians and children, were reportedly killed. 13 Israelis are also said to have been killed.

The Government of India closely followed the above developments. On 27.12.2008, 29.12.2008, 2.1.2009, 4.1.2009 and 9.1.2009, the Official Spokesperson made statements on this matter calling, inter alia, for an immediate end to the disproportionate and condemnable use of force, particularly against civilians, and for the restoration of peace.

(c) India has consistently supported the peaceful resolution of the conflict in West Asia resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side by side and at peace with Israel. India has also supported United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397 and 1515. India has also supported the Arab Peace Initiative. India had also called for an end to the expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories and for an early and significant easing of restrictions on the free movement of persons and goods within Palestine. Over the past year, the Government of India has been in consultations with countries in the West Asian region on the matter. India has consistently supported the Palestinian cause at various international fora including the United Nations and the Non-Alignment Movement.

During the recent conflict, in response to a 'Flash Appeal' from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), on 2.1.2009 the Government of India announced an assistance of US Dollars one million to the UNRWA to provide shelters, cash assistance, essential household items, etc. This amount, which has since been transferred, is in addition to on-going Government of India assistance to the Palestinian National Authority including the construction of the Palestinian Chancery-cum-Residences complex in New Delhi as a gift of the Government of India, and the contribution made by the Government of India to the UNRWA each year.