



Permanent Mission of Greece
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

9th Special Session of the Human Rights Council
Geneva, 9 January 2009

Statement by
H.E. the Permanent Representative of Greece
Ambassador Franciscos Verros

Mr. President,
Madame High Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

-Greece fully associates herself with the statement delivered by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

-The Greek delegation expresses its deep concern for the Israeli ground operations in Gaza as well as for the rocket attacks against Israel and the disastrous humanitarian consequences of the actions of the parties involved on the civilian population. This situation must stop now; there must be an unconditional halt to rocket attacks by Hamas on Israel and an end to Israeli military action in the Gaza Strip. In this spirit, we welcome Security Council resolution 1860 on an immediate ceasefire.

-We are happy to note that humanitarian aid has gone through to areas in need. Greece managed to send humanitarian aid -2 planes loaded with medical supplies and blood for transfusions- right from the start. More aid, coming from the Hellenic Parliament as well as from Hellenic Aid will soon be on the way. The European Union aid as a whole as well as other EU member states' bilateral aid is going through, under E.U. coordination. But sending aid is not enough; there is a need for unhindered access of humanitarian workers, too. Humanitarian corridors should be open and so maintained.

-There can be no military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; these actions only bring more suffering and more violence.

-We join others in strongly calling for the end of violence and the re-launching of the peace process.

Thank you