

UNITY

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Compiled from Federal parliamentary and other sources relevant to Australia's obligations to the United Nations.

January 23 2009

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Unity and Supplement can also be accessed at: <http://www.unityunaa.info/>

Earlier editions of UNity 2004-05, 2006, 2007 and 2008 are on the

UNAA website: www.unaa.org.au or email the editor.

(It may be necessary to copy and paste links into your browser/address box)

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Radioactive waste, the inevitable product of nuclear energy, may no longer be dangerous to store, thanks to a team of QUT academics.

I. ARTICLES IN FOCUS

A. UNITED NATIONS & AGENCIES (UNity, UN AND UNAA Contacts)

UN CALLS FOR PROBE INTO ISRAELI ATTACKS ON UN BUILDINGS

UN humanitarian chief John Holmes called the number of casualties in the Gaza Strip shocking and said Israel should investigate the inadvertent shelling of UN buildings in the region. In an address that was described as grim, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon told the UN Security Council he expected a full report from Israel about the incidents. The UN Human Rights Council will send a fact-finding mission to Gaza and conduct an independent probe of the attacks. [Ha'aretz \(Tel Aviv, Israel\)](#) (22/1/09).

AN OUTRAGEOUS AND TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE ATTACK AGAINST THE UN

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's opening remarks at Gaza

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

It is particularly significant for me as Secretary-General of the United Nations to stand in front of this bombed site of the United Nations (UNRWA) compound. I am just appalled. I am not able to describe how I am feeling, having seen this site of the bombing of the United Nations compound (20/1/09).

Everyone is smelling this bombing still. It is still burning. It is an outrageous and totally unacceptable attack against the United Nations. I have protested many times, and am today protesting in the strongest terms, and am condemning it. I have asked for a full investigation and to make those responsible people accountable.

I have come to Gaza to see for myself the extent of the damage caused by the last three weeks of fighting and to demonstrate my solidarity to the population of Gaza, and to assure you of the United Nations and the international community's full support to help you overcome this difficulty.

I will try to mobilise all humanitarian resources, and I am going to dispatch a humanitarian needs assessment team on Thursday - the day after tomorrow - led by the UNSCO Director, Special Representative Mr. [Robert] Serry, and my Humanitarian Coordinator, John Holmes, to lead this mission.

I have also come to Gaza to express my deepest admiration and solidarity with the staff of the United Nations – UNRWA and UNSCO – for their bravery; for their dedicated commitment, to help you, the population of Gaza, during the past three weeks. I commend their leadership, their commitment.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have seen only a fraction of the damage. This is shocking and alarming. These are heartbreaking scenes. I am deeply grieved by what I have seen today.

To the people of Gaza I have this to say. I have seen only a fraction of the destruction and suffering caused to this tiny and crowded place by more than three weeks of heavy bombardment, shelling and street fighting on top of months and years of economic deprivation.

I will do all I can, as Secretary-General of the United Nations, to help in this time of need.

I have condemned from the outbreak of this conflict the excessive use of force by the Israeli forces in Gaza.

I view the rocket attacks into Israel as completely unacceptable.

We need to restore a basic respect for civilians. Where civilians have been killed, there has to be a thorough investigation, full explanations and, where it is required, accountability.

International humanitarian law must be upheld and respected by all. I am very worried by the potential long-term impact of the recent crisis on this entire society, and particularly young children. I am sobered by the extent of the damage, and by the extent of relief and recovery

challenges ahead. I promise the United Nations will do all we can.

I also want to make an appeal to the Palestinian people. We need Palestinian unity. I know that this is not [inaudible] but without unity we cannot succeed in achieving Palestinian self-determination.

Palestinian unity is the framework for international agreements to be restored, for crossings to be opened, for the whole world to help you build Gaza, for elections, for political negotiations with Israel.

I appeal to Fatah, Hamas, to all Palestinian factions, to reunite within the framework of the legitimate Palestinian Authority. The United Nations will work together with a united Palestinian Government encompassing Gaza and the West Bank.

To the staff of the United Nations, you have my deepest respect and thanks for your hard work. You have performed heroically. I know this is easy to say, but it is very difficult to act. Without you, many more people would have died. Without you, the suffering of thousands upon thousands of innocent people would have been all the more greater. To the world, I have this to say: The repeated violence felt by Palestinians and Israelis is a mark of collective political failure.

A genuine effort was made in 2008, but it was not enough. We all must do more. I will be speaking to many world leaders about what I have seen, including to the new president of the United States. As Secretary-General of the United Nations, I will uphold the need for an end of occupation, a just and lasting resolution of the refugee issue, and the creation of a Palestinian state in accordance with international law and resolutions of the Security Council. I believe a massive and united international effort is required to help Palestinians achieve statehood and Israel and Palestine to live side by side in peace and security. I am more determined than ever to see this achieved.

Thank you very much. *Shukran Jazeelan.*

UN Secretary-General's opening remarks at his press conference at UNRWA, Gaza (201/09). (Unofficial transcript).

THOUSANDS OF PALESTINIANS LEFT DESTITUTE

Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been left destitute by Israel's three-week offensive against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip, the UN estimates, the BBC reported (19/1/09). The UN said some 50,800 people were now homeless and 400,000 without running water. Correspondents in Gaza City say entire neighbourhoods have been flattened and bodies were still being recovered.

Israel said it would allow 143 trucks loaded with humanitarian aid into Gaza plus 60,000 litres of fuel. An International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) spokesman said on Monday evening that 10 ambulances carrying medical supplies had travelled into Gaza via the Kerem Shalom crossing in the south.

Earlier, Israeli spokesman Mark Regev told the BBC: "Medicines, foodstuffs, energy, all will be reaching the Gaza Strip in the volume that is required and in an expeditious manner." The BBC was unable to verify whether the food and fuel convoys reached Gaza. Palestinian medical sources said at least 1,300 Palestinians had been killed and 5,500 injured during the conflict. Thirteen Israelis were killed in the offensive which began on December 27.

REPORT: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7838618.stm

BAN CALLS FOR 'MASSIVE' WORLD EFFORT OVER ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Having just returned from Gaza, where he saw first-hand the suffering and destruction wrought by Israel's three-week military offensive, including the still-smouldering ruins of a shelled United Nations compound, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today urged a "massive" international effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict (21/1/09).

"The violence, destruction and suffering before us have been a mark of collective political failure," Mr. Ban told a meeting of the Security Council, in a statement read out on his behalf by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe. "We must do more," he stated. "Nothing short of a massive international effort is now required to support, and insist on, a resolution of this conflict."

Although present at the meeting, Mr. Ban was unable to deliver the briefing, having lost his voice at the end of a whirlwind diplomatic mission that also took the UN chief to Cairo, Amman, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Ankara, Beirut, Damascus and Sharm el-Sheik. "A true end to violence, and lasting security for both Palestinians and Israelis, will only come through a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict," the Secretary-General stressed, adding that central to this effort is implementation of Security Council resolutions and the framework provided by the Arab Peace Initiative.

"We do not need new plans and processes. We have the tools we need. We need only political will and action," he stated.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29617&Cr=gaza&Cr1=>

BAN SEEKS ARAB SUPPORT FOR RECONSTRUCTION

Voicing relief at Israel's unilateral decision to halt its 22-day military offensive in Gaza and Hamas' announcement of a temporary ceasefire, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today stressed his determination to do everything possible to assist Gazans and being the reconstruction process.

He asked leaders gathered at the Arab Economic, Social and Development Summit underway in Kuwait to "do all possible to ensure that this tragedy does not occur again" and "to come together to prevent further violence, help the people of Gaza in this hour of desperate need and restore stability."

A lasting halt to the fighting was essential, he said, urging Hamas to cease firing rockets and on Israel to withdraw its forces from Gaza. A true end to violence, and lasting security for both Palestinians and Israelis, would only come through a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israel conflict.

"A durable ceasefire needs an open functioning system for the crossings in and out of Gaza, one that will immediately allow full access for humanitarian goods and personnel," the Secretary-General [stated](#).

"As well, the Palestinians themselves must face the challenge of reconciliation, and work to achieve a unified government under the leadership of President [Mahmoud] Abbas within the framework of the legitimate Palestinian Authority."

He issued a call to all Arab leaders for their support in this effort, adding that "we cannot rebuild Gaza without Palestinian unity."

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29583&Cr=Gaza&Cr1=>

UN OFFICIALS RAISE QUESTIONS OF WAR CRIMES

Prime Minister [Ehud Olmert](#) of [Israel](#) announced late on Saturday night that the Israeli military would begin a unilateral cease-fire in [Gaza](#) within hours while negotiations continued on how to stop the resupply of [Hamas](#) through smuggling from Egypt, the New York Times reported (17/1/09).

The announcement came on a day in which Israel was again criticised by the [United Nations](#) over civilian deaths in Gaza — this time after a tank fired at a UN school, killing two young brothers taking shelter there.

United Nations aid officials raised questions about whether the attack, and others like it, should be investigated as war crimes.

REPORT: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/18/world/middleeast/18mideast.html?_r=1&hp

THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

**MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION
IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST**

January 27 2009

Today we remember the millions of victims of the Nazis -- nearly one third of the Jewish people and countless other minorities -- who suffered atrocious acts of discrimination, deprivation, cruelty and murder

New initiatives in Holocaust remembrance and education have given us an authentic basis for hope. That hope is the theme of this year's observance.

But we can and must do more if we are to make that hope a reality.

We must continue to examine why the world failed to prevent the Holocaust and other atrocities since. That way, we will be better armed to defeat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance.

We must continue to teach our children the lessons of history's darkest chapters. That will help them do a better job than their elders in building a world of peaceful coexistence.

We must combat Holocaust denial, and speak out in the face of bigotry and hatred.

And we must uphold the standards and laws that the United Nations has put in place to protect people and fight impunity for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Our world continues to be plagued by ruthless violence, utter disregard for human rights and the targeting of people solely for who they are.

On this fourth International Day of Commemoration, let us remember the victims of the Holocaust by reaffirming our faith in the dignity and equal rights of all members of the human family. And let us pledge to work together to turn today's hope into tomorrow's better future.

Thank you very much.

- **Ban Ki-moon**

BAN CONGRATULATES US PRESIDENT ON INAUGURATION

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, "with great optimism," congratulated Barack Obama on his inauguration as the new president of the United States, stressing that America and the Organisation share a number of common goals, the UN News reported (21/1/09).

Challenges – such as economic turmoil, climate change, peace and security issues such as disarmament and non-proliferation, and the food, energy and development crises – are global in scope and "require strong and collective responses," Mr Ban said in a statement.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29613&Cr=barack+obama&Cr1=>

UN ADVISER PRAISES GUANTÁNAMO DECISION

The Secretary-General's top adviser on children and armed conflict has welcomed United States President Barack Obama's decision to suspend continuing trials at Guantánamo Bay, including those of Omar Khadr and Mohammed Jawad who are being charged with war crimes committed when they were under the age of 18.

Special Representative Radhika Coomaraswamy reiterated her concerns over the creation of a global precedent where individuals are tried for war crimes with regards to acts allegedly committed when there were children.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29616&Cr=coomaraswamy&Cr1=>

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL LAW FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM 2009

Applications for the 2009 United Nations International Law Fellowship Program, scheduled to be held at the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, from July 6 to August 14 2009, are now being accepted. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, February 25. The Fellowship Program will be conducted in English.

APPLICATION FORMS: Direct from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) on. 011-41-22-917-8578; fax 011-41-22-917-8993; ilp@unitar.org); www2.unitar.org/diplomacy/fell_applicationforms.htm.

MORE INFORMATION: UNITAR website at: www2.unitar.org/diplomacy/fell_internationallaw_E2.htm.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century'
Commission on the Status of Women 53rd Session report

The report of the Secretary-General has been issued in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century': gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS.

The report was prepared in response to Resolution 52/4 of the commission on the Status of Women on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS. It focuses on activities undertaken by member states and United Nations entities to implement the resolution. It concludes with recommendations for consideration by the commission.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=E/CN.6/2009/6>

NEW WEBSITES WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM

The United Nations Information Centre for Australia, New Zealand & South Pacific 7 National Circuit, Canberra, has made available: New Websites within the UN system.

SEE: [UNity Supplement](#).

B. CLIMATE CHANGE

ANTARCTICA HEATING UP MORE THAN SCIENTISTS THOUGHT

A large part of West Antarctica, not just the peninsula area, had warmed during the past 50 years, a study shows, the Sydney Morning Herald reported (22/1/09).

The issue of climate change on the frozen continent has been controversial because East Antarctica has been cooling and temperature records are sparse. Eric Steig, of the University of Washington, said his research showed that, overall, warming had outweighed cooling.

"The thing you hear all the time is that Antarctica is cooling. But it's more complex than that," Professor Steig said. "Antarctica isn't warming at the same rate everywhere and, while some areas have been cooling for a long time, the evidence shows the continent as a whole is getting warmer."

REPORT: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2009/01/22/1232471439866.html>

AFRICAN HARBOUR CITIES AT RISK FROM RISING SEA: SCIENTISTS

Africa's harbour cities of Cape Town, Lagos and Alexandria are under threat from rising sea levels which could displace millions and cause massive economic losses, scientists said. Speaking at an international [climate change](#) conference in Cape Town, Geoff Brundrit, of the Global Ocean Observing System in Africa, said even a slight increase in sea levels could wreak havoc on some countries, Environment News reported (15/1/09).

"Disaster risk is high when the chance of occurrence of a hazard is high, when the vulnerability to damage from that hazard is high and when the capacity to cope with the consequences of the occurrence is low," he said.

Mr Brundrit told AFP that many African countries had "no resilience" to increasingly damaging storms as a result of the changing [climate](#), and were often hit by the next before properly recovering from the last.

Rising sea levels posed a direct threat to Africa's coastal cities. Catastrophic storms combined with rising sea levels could potentially displace millions from their homes, scientists from the Global Ocean Observing System in Africa said.

REPORT: <http://www.enn.com/climate/article/39086>

GOVERNMENT AND RESEARCH GROUPS AT HOBART COASTAL INQUIRY

The House of Representatives Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts Committee will be in Hobart for a public hearing on January 28 to hear from a range of organisations as part of its inquiry into climate change and environmental impacts on Australia's coastal zone.

The committee will hear from scientists from CSIRO and the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems CRC undertaking leading research on sea level rise, as well as from a coastal mapping expert from the University of Tasmania.

"The committee will be seeking an update on the latest science concerning sea level rise, and how this information can be used by coastal decision-makers to inform the development of adaptation responses", Committee Chairperson Jennie George said. The committee will also hear from representatives from the state and local government.

"As the Tasmanian Local Government Association submission notes, 'Tasmania has more coastlines per unit of land area than any other state in Australia and no place in Tasmania is more than 115 kilometres from the sea'. The potential impact of sea level rise on local coastal communities is therefore of great concern", Ms George said.

VENUE: Hobart Function and Conference Centre (Marina Room), 1 Elizabeth Street Pier, Hobart from 1pm. **DETAILS:** <http://www.apf.gov.au/ccwea>.

C. HUMAN RIGHTS

UNHCR CONCERN FOR MYANMAR REFUGEES IN THAI CUSTODY

Fearing for the well-being of some 126 boat people in Thai custody, the United Nations refugee agency has requested access to the group of stateless Muslims who fled Myanmar to determine their need for international protection, the UN News reported.

Last week the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) voiced strong concern over allegations that the government had intercepted a large number of incoming Rohingya boat people in Thai waters, towed them back out to sea, and left them to die.

The agency has information that 80 of the Rohingya refugees are held on Koh Sai Daeng, an island off the coast of Thailand in the Andaman Sea, but the whereabouts of the other 46 who the Thai military reportedly set adrift at sea last Friday are unknown.

UNHCR noted the new Government's commitment to human rights and said that it was eager to quickly find a resolution to the crisis with Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya.

The agency also stressed that the Thai Government should take all measures to make sure the lives of the Rohingya boat people are not put at risk, adding that it welcomed local media reports announcing Government investigations into accusations of maltreatment.

There are 28,000 Rohingya refugees in two UNHCR camps in Bangladesh, which shares its south-east border with Myanmar, and some 200,000 living outside the camps there.

For several years at this time of year, many of these Rohingya refugees have been desperate enough to risk their lives at sea in small boats sailing from Bangladesh or Myanmar, often turning up in Thailand, Malaysia or as far away as Indonesia.

THAIS ACCUSED OF TOWING MIGRANTS BACK OUT TO SEA

Thai armed forces have been accused of towing hundreds of migrants out to sea last month and leaving them to their fate with inadequate food and water and only paddles as a means to reach land, the Washington Post reported (19/1/09).

The migrants allegedly arrived off Thailand's Andaman coast after setting sail from Bangladesh. Most of them are from the Rohingya ethnic minority, thousands of whom have fled to Bangladesh to escape repression and economic hardship in their homeland in western Myanmar (Burma). **REPORT:** <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/18/AR2009011802159.html>

OBAMA ORDERS GUANTANAMO CLOSURE

US President Barack Obama has ordered the closure of the Guantanamo Bay prison camp as well as all overseas CIA detention centres for terror suspects, the BBC reported (22/1/09). Signing the orders, Mr Obama said the US would continue to fight terror, but would maintain "our values and our ideals". He also ordered a review of military trials for terror suspects and a ban on harsh interrogation methods.

He also named his envoys to the Middle East, Afghanistan and Pakistan. At Mr Obama's request, military judges have suspended several trials at Guantanamo so that the legal process could be reviewed.

REPORT: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7845585.stm>

FECCA CONDEMNS 'SHAMEFUL' HIJAB BAN PROPOSAL

The Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia has slammed a Retailers Association for stating that people wearing face covering religious attire should be banned from shops (16/1/09).

"These are appalling statements from the Retailers Association which amounts to discrimination of the worst kind. Australia is a free, democratic and culturally diverse society where people have the absolute right to dress as they choose", said Acting FECCA Chairperson Beryl Mulder.

"If the Retailers Association persist with this grossly irresponsible, disrespectful and hurtful if not hateful policy, FECCA suggests that Australians who support cultural diversity and the right of people of different religious faiths to wear religious attire boycott both the retailers association and any companies associated with them.

FECCA recognises that these statements were in no way associated with the larger Australian Retailers Association which had shown strong moral leadership in responding to this issue.

DETAILS: FECCA: 02 6282 5755.

'DISTRESSING AND OUTRAGEOUS'

The Courier Mail reported (17/1/09) that the Australian Retailers Association executive director Richard Evans said the suggestion the Muslim face covering was a security threat was distressing and outrageous.

"What these folks have done in Brisbane is to promote uncertainty and suspicion about everyone who wears a burqa," he said. "It sends the wrong message to the whole community."

REPORT: <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,24921905-952,00.html>

NIGERIAN WOMEN'S RALLY PLAN 'AN EMBARRASSMENT': SAY SHARIA POLICE

Calling a planned protest by divorced women an "embarrassment" and "un-Islamic," the director of the Sharia police in Kano, Nigeria, called for organisers to cancel the event. "Never in the history of Islam have women taken to the street to press for their demands," he said. Organisers agreed to postpone the Jan. 29 rally, the BBC reported (19/1/09).

TALIBAN BOMBS FOUR SCHOOLS

Taliban militants who virtually control Pakistan's Swat valley destroyed four schools there in response to the government's vow to reopen the facilities. Teachers are reluctant to return to schools, which have been closed for a winter break, following the violence. "If they're

destroying schools during a curfew, they can do anything," said the president of the Swat teachers association. [Reuters](#) (19/1/09).

COMMITTEE HEARS ALTERNATIVES TO MIGRANT DETENTION

The International Detention Coalition, due to give evidence to the Migration Committee in Melbourne on January 22, has urged the federal parliamentary committee to consider alternatives to immigration detention, such as supervised release, regular reporting requirements or posting bail.

"If there are no health, character or public interest concerns, then bridging visa release options with community-based holistic care should be made available as the priority option", says the coalition in its submission to the inquiry into immigration detention in Australia, arguing that this would be more humane and in line with international law.

The coalition also recommends that some existing facilities be converted to European-style open accommodation centres from which people could come and go.

After tabling its first inquiry report in December, the committee is now considering community-based alternatives to immigration detention.

"We will be looking at the options currently available in Australia, how they are working, what other countries are doing, and whether there are other things that could work in the Australian context," said Chairman Michael Danby.

"We will also be looking at the relative cost-effectiveness of alternatives, knowing as we do that immigration detention costs the Australian taxpayer a lot of money – some \$220 million in 2006-07."

The following day (January 23), the committee was scheduled to hear from local service providers and community groups at Brisbane's Parliament House. In particular, a roundtable of local organisations was expected to discuss housing issues for immigration clients in the Brisbane community.

"We have already taken evidence that there are significant housing issues for people released from immigration detention into the community, or placed on bridging visas as an alternative to immigration detention," said Mr Danby.

"If we are thinking about putting an increased number of people in the community after brief periods in immigration detention then the committee is interested to learn about the ramifications of this for clients and for local groups providing assistance."

BACKGROUND: <http://www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/mig/reports.htm>;
or Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 4560 or jscm@apf.gov.au.

D. PEACE & SECURITY

GAZA

APPALLED, BAN DEMANDS THOSE RESPONSIBLE BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he was appalled by Israeli attacks on a UN compound in Gaza after seeing the destruction for himself, the BBC reported (20/1/09). Mr Ban said that those responsible should be held accountable and demanded a "full investigation" through proper judiciary systems.

Mr Ban, who said he would do all he could to help the population of Gaza, is the first international leader to visit Gaza for several years, entering through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing and driving through the bomb-damaged northern suburbs to Gaza City.

He later visited the southern Israeli town of Sderot, which has been one of the main targets of Palestinian rocket attacks in recent years. He described the rockets as indiscriminate weapons and said the attacks by Hamas are violations of basic humanitarian law.

REPORT: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7839863.stm

MASSIVE DEVASTATION CALLS FOR VAST HUMANITARIAN EFFORT

Since the ceasefire took effect in the Gaza Strip, the scale of the devastation and the need for humanitarian aid had become ever more apparent, the International Committee of the Red Cross reported (21/1/09). Entire families had lost everything and required urgent help meeting such basic needs as shelter, food, water and medical care

"The level of destruction is absolutely overwhelming," said ICRC delegate Jérôme Giraud. "Most people have not been able to move back to their houses. Many checked on their homes, but then decided to return to the UNRWA shelters. They had no other choice."

People are assessing the damage sustained by their homes, neighbourhoods and fields. "It is as if they were waking from a nightmare," said Antoine Grand, head of the ICRC office in Gaza. "They are sharing their stories of hardship and survival with the family members and friends they were separated from during this ordeal."

Tel Al-Hawa, in the centre of Gaza City, was one of the areas hardest hit. This is where Al-Quds Hospital and the main office of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, both damaged on January 14 by shelling, are located. Several public buildings suffered direct hits, turning entire blocks into rubble and wrecking thousands of private houses.

"We expect the needs of the population to be even greater in the southern and northern outskirts of the city, as they are among the areas that bore the brunt of the bombardments," said Mr Giraud. "The population there is generally poorer. Some people have been left with absolutely nothing."

Over the coming weeks, the ICRC plan to provide about 80,000 people with everything from mattresses and blankets to kitchen utensils, hygiene kits and thick plastic sheeting as temporary roof

Over the past two days ICRC has provided about 3,500 people in the Tel Al-Hawa area of Gaza City with tarpaulins to cover roofs or set up tents and plastic sheeting for shattered windows. The ICRC helped bring 10 ambulances, donated by the Swedish Red Cross, into Gaza for delivery to Palestine Red Crescent.

DETAILS: Sydney Support Office to the Regional Delegation for the Pacific: Pauline Wall on 61 (0) 2 9388 9039/mob 61 (0)2 418 485 120.

ISRAEL MAY FACE WAR-CRIMES CASE FOR ALLEGED ATROCITIES

The sight of her dead four-year-old son's blood splashed on a breeze-block wall was enough to start Zinad Samouni sobbing, the Sydney Morning Herald/ reported (21/1/09).

But the 35-year-old Palestinian mother of eight then composed herself to give the most complete allegation yet of atrocities by Israeli forces when they occupied the village of Zeitoun on the outskirts of Gaza City.

She alleged the cold-blooded shooting of her 46-year-old husband, Atiyeh, and her son, Ahmed, in an incident that could form the core of a war crimes investigation against Israel.

The United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has already said Israel should be investigated for what happened in Zeitoun on January 4 and 5.

So far dozens of bodies, mostly women, children and elderly, have been recovered, almost all from the same extended family. The 48th corpse was found on Monday but there are fears others lie under the rubble.

<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2009/01/20/1232213646924.html>

ISRAEL HOPES GAZA SENT STERN MESSAGE TO IRAN AND HEZBOLLAH

With its tough campaign against Hamas in Gaza, Israel hopes it has accomplished a secondary goal and telegraphed to Iran and Hezbollah a stern message of deterrence, the Los Angeles times reported (18/1/09). Israeli authorities recognise the possibility that the war

could spin out further and spark other conflicts. Israeli authorities also fear retribution for the assassination of Hezbollah warlord Imad Mughniyah in advance of the anniversary of his killing. **REPORT:** <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-gaza-assess18-2009jan18,0,4212860.story>

ARAB LEAGUE DOES NOT CONVENE OVER GAZA WAR

Despite concern from all corners, there has been no effort to convene a meeting of the Arab League, the New York Times reported (17/1/09). Saudi Arabia and Egypt remain opposed to a meeting. Arab nations are split on two underlying currents in the Gaza conflict: They are fearful of the power of Islamist movements and also do not wish to court the anger of Israel and the United States.

REPORT: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/18/weekinreview/18worth.html?_r=1&ref=world

ARAB ISRAELIS ANGUISH OVER PALESTINIAN CIVILIANS

Israel's military assault on the Gaza Strip has angered Israel's Arab population, alienating them from the government and Israeli population. Arab Israeli leaders say the killing of innocents is driving mistrust of Israel to a level not seen in a decade, reported [The Washington Post](#) (20/1/09).

UN AID HEAD ALLEGES USE OF PHOSPHOROUS

The head of the UN aid agency in Gaza has accused the Israeli military of firing what was believed to be white phosphorus shells at its compound, the BBC reported (15/1/09). John Ging told the BBC that in spite of discussions with the Israeli liaison, "three rounds that emitted phosphorus" hit a corner of the Gaza City facility.

Israel's military said all weapons it used complied with international law. Phosphorus shells are legal to use as a battlefield obscurant, but are banned from use where civilians may be harmed.

Human Rights Watch says it has observed "dozens and dozens" of white phosphorus shells being fired by Israel at the Gaza Strip - a heavily populated civilian area where its use is prohibited. Palestinian medical officials said they had treated large numbers of casualties with unusual burns that were extremely painful to treat and could be consistent with exposure to white phosphorus (WP).

The Israeli military has declined to comment on specific munitions used during the 20-day offensive, but said any its weapons were used in compliance with international law.

REPORT: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7831424.stm

PROTESTERS MARCH ON PM'S OFFICE

About 40 protesters, chanting "Free, free Palestine," marched on the Prime Minister's office in Morningside, Brisbane, to deliver almost 2000 letters and petitions demanding the Australian Government take a stronger stance against Israel's actions in Gaza, the Courier Mail reported (15/1/09). In addition to the pictures of dead Palestinian children, demonstrators waved signs reading "USA-Israel Axis of Evil" and "Stop Israel's massacre in Gaza".

Justice for Palestine spokesman Mr Abdalla said, "We're asking the Prime Minister to adhere to United Nations resolutions towards Palestine, to stop Israeli terrorism, to stop what Israel is doing to the Palestinians and speak up against it."

REPORT: <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,24916856-3102,00.html>

AFGHANISTAN

NATO CHIEF BLAMES GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS INSURGENTS

NATO's secretary general has said corrupt and inefficient government in Afghanistan is as much to blame as insurgents for the chronic instability.

In the Washington Post newspaper, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said the international community had paid enough, in blood and money, to demand government action. He said Afghans

needed a government that deserved their loyalty and trust. An Afghan government spokesman conceded corruption was a problem, calling for a "shared approach" in tackling it.
REPORT: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7836422.stm

AFGHANS 'CAUTIOUSLY HOPEFUL'

Many Afghan citizens are cautiously hopeful the incoming US administration will be able to improve upon the security and living situation. While US President Barack Obama has pledged to send more troops, Afghan authorities are seeking clearer guidelines on the activities of international troops inside Afghanistan. [Google/The Associated Press](#) and [Reuters](#) (20/1/09).

UN TO OBAMA: DON'T RETHINK AFGHANISTAN

Kai Eide, the top UN official in Afghanistan, called on Barack Obama to stay the course in Afghanistan. He said that rather than revise the grand strategy for rebuilding Afghanistan, Mr Obama should focus on implementing the many aspects of it that have been neglected under the Bush administration. Some aspects of the new US plan for Afghanistan -- which includes doubling the troop presence there -- have caused international unease, in particular the organisation of village defence forces and renewed aerial campaigns.

REPORT: [Seattle Post-Intelligencer/The Associated Press](#) (16/1/09).

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

BAN PUSHES MOMENTUM ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on nations to build on the momentum generated by recent progress made towards disarmament to rid the world of nuclear weapons, the UN News reported (20/1/09).

"From conventional weapons and small arms to weapons of mass destruction, the risks are clear," Mr. Ban said in a message to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. He stressed the need to revitalize the international disarmament agenda and boost the United Nations' effectiveness in the field. "I remain committed to using every opportunity, in my meetings with government leaders and my outreach to civil society, to forge partnerships and mobilize action."

Given the current global financial turmoil, "advancing the disarmament agenda could produce a tangible peace dividend when the world needs it most," the Secretary-General said in an address delivered by Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director General of the UN Office at Geneva and the Secretary-General of the Conference.

He pointed to "promising signs" in the past few months, including initiatives by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, China, Russia, the European Union, non-aligned countries and other governments.

"The United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament should seize this moment and be in the vanguard of efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons," Mr. Ban stated. Established in 1979 as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, the Conference currently has over 60 member states.

AFRICA

UN ENVOY SEES HOPE FOR SOMALIA

The top UN envoy for Somalia has voiced hope that talks in Djibouti aimed at forming a unity government will succeed and bring stability to the strife-torn nation that has not had a functioning central government since 1991 (20/1/09).

"This is a key moment for Somalia and it is extremely important to get it right, after almost two decades of violence," **said** the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, as the High-level Committee, comprising delegates from the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS), continue discussions.

"The committee members are working responsibly to ensure there is a fair process which should lead to the election of a new head of state," he said. Violence has continued in Somalia in recent months despite the signing in June 2008 of the UN-facilitated Djibouti Agreement by the TFG and the ARS, in which they agreed to end their conflict.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29596&Cr=Somali&Cr1=>

RWANDAN TROOPS CROSS INTO DRC

Rwandan troops crossed into the Democratic Republic of Congo on Tuesday to launch a major joint operation to hunt down Rwandan Hutu militia leaders who fled after the country's 1994 genocide. The militia leaders' presence has helped drive a decade of conflict in the DRC that has simultaneously put significant strain in the neighbors' relations.

REPORT: [The Washington Post](#) (20/1/09).

DARFUR PEACEKEEPERS 'SOON UP TO STRENGTH'

A joint peacekeeping mission for the Darfur region of Sudan will expand to its full strength of 26,000 soldiers and police by June, a top African Union official said, according to the Toronto Star (19/1/09).

The increase would nearly double its present strength, said Ramtane Lamamra, the AU's peace and Security Council commissioner. A report by a UN panel last year said the peacekeepers were unable to monitor an arms embargo, defend themselves or protect civilians. A shortage of manpower and equipment was partly to blame.

Mr Lamamra's announcement was the first to set a month for the force's expansion to full strength. However, UN officials said that having adequate troop numbers would only be the first step. Peacekeepers desperately need logistical help, like helicopters and improvements in roads and airports. Even more critical was getting a peace deal in place, said UN spokesperson Nouredine al-Mezni.

REPORT: [The Toronto Star/The Associated Press](#) (19/1/09).

MUGABE AND TSVANGIRAI TALKS BREAK DOWN

Power-sharing talks between President Robert Mugabe and opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai on Monday ended without agreement, effectively paralysing Zimbabwe's political system ahead of parliament's first session of the year. Mr Tsvangirai called the failure to progress "the darkest day of our lives," reported the [BBC](#) (20/1/09).

LETTER

A 'growing disquiet'

From the Hon Doug. Everingham

Dear US Ambassador and staff,

Public opinion in this country, yours and Israel has moved in recent years towards more empathy with the dispossessed, militarily controlled and financially indebted communities that have suffered from the selfish policies of our governments.

As one who values the humane traditions struggled for by our ancestors I ask you to convey to your government the growing disquiet of Australians like me at the undeserved poverty and suffering inflicted by the richer regimes on the least empowered communities and sectors of humanity.

I hope you agree that governments in the long run prosper better when they spend more time and effort on peace making, peace building and peace keeping than on national military and diplomatic power outside the control of UN legal, democratically transparent and responsible global relations. With best wishes for an open, fair, sustainable new era for the United States,

Doug. Everingham
(Former Federal Labor Minister)
Middle Park. QLD 4074 (10/1/09)

E. HEALTH & MEANS

GAZA: UNEXPLODED MUNITIONS THREAT TO CIVILIANS AND AID WORKERS

On the fourth day of the ceasefire, emergency assistance operations continued in Gaza amid sporadic shelling and rocket firing, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported (22/1/09).

As the ICRC assessed the extent of the damage caused by three weeks of fighting, it was becoming clear that unexploded munitions scattered in civilian areas represent another major new danger.

On January 20, two children were killed by unexploded ordnance in the Shaaf area, near Jabaliya, east of Gaza City. "Most children stayed at home during the past three weeks because there was no let-up in hostilities. Now that the fighting is over and they are venturing out into the streets again, they run the risk of being killed or maimed by these remnants of war," explained ICRC staff member Imad Abou Hasirah.

"The fact that Gaza is one of the most densely populated areas in the world makes the problem of unexploded munitions even more acute," said Antoine Grand, head of the ICRC office in Gaza. "The contamination represents a major threat for the population and for rescue teams now working in the field. It could hold back the pace of humanitarian work."

The presence of unexploded ordnance was also likely to slow down the economic recovery and reconstruction in the Gaza Strip. The economic situation was critical even before the latest conflict owing to closures and restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities, ICRC said.

The ICRC is providing homeless families with mattresses, blankets, kitchen utensils and hygiene kits. On the morning of January 21, over 18,600 people were still accommodated in 33 UNRWA shelters throughout the Strip.

Over 100 Palestine Red Crescent volunteers are participating, together with ICRC staff, in daily distributions of emergency aid. Red Crescent personnel have continued to search for bodies amid the rubble.

On Sunday, ICRC teams and ambulances of the Palestine Red Crescent Society rushed to areas previously difficult or impossible to reach because of fighting. By midday, approximately 100 badly decayed bodies had been retrieved; no survivors were found. It was reported that a number of areas, including parts of Beit Lahiya, looked like the aftermath of a strong earthquake – entire neighbourhoods were beyond recognition.

DETAILS: ICRC Sydney Support Office to the Regional Delegation for the Pacific, Pauline Wall, on 61 (0)2 9388 9039/mob 61(0) 2 418 485 120.

WHO FEARS DISEASE OUTBREAK IN GAZA

WHO Director-General Margaret Chan said she was "deeply concerned" about an interruption of immunisations and other life-saving care in the densely populated territory.

There are now only 2,000 hospital beds for 1.5 million people in Gaza, and many hospitals and primary care clinics serving civilians were badly damaged or destroyed.

"Right now, we very sadly see ideal conditions for outbreaks of disease," she told WHO executive board, citing health and sanitary risks from broken sewerage pipes, scarce drinking water, and garbage piling up in the streets.

REPORT: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LJ67246.htm> (19/1/09).

WFP PLANS MASSIVE FOOD PROGRAM IN GAZA

Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the UN World Food Program (WFP) announced that Operation Lifeline Gaza, a campaign launched one week ago at Egypt's border with Gaza to raise awareness and resources for the victims of the conflict, had already helped WFP deliver urgently needed nutritious food in Khan (south), Der el Balah (centre) and Gaza City.

Alert News said her announcement came during the opening session of the Private Sector and Civil Society Forum, which is the pre-event to the Arab League of States first Economic, Social and Development Summit that brings together leaders of private sector, government civil organisations and UN agencies to discuss key issues affecting the region (17/1/09).

'We need to scale up a massive global effort to ensure that the people in Gaza have secure access to food, water and electricity' she said. Operation Lifeline Gaza is an \$US81 million appeal for critically needed food and logistics for 365,000 people in peril.

REPORT: <http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=3041>

CHILDREN TO REMAIN AFFECTED LONG-TERM

Post-traumatic stress disorder is expected to affect many of the nearly one million Gazans who survived Israel's all-out war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, which ended with Israel's unilateral cease-fire this year. Children in particular are expected to remain affected long after the war's end. [Newsweek](#) (17/1/09).

ACID ATTACKS ON RISE IN RURAL PAKISTAN

"One of the hardest things has been the decision to leave Pakistan," says the 23-year-old Rhodes scholar, of Sydney, who described her work with the UN Children's Fund's juvenile justice program as a "jail tour" of Pakistan, in the Sydney Morning Herald (17/1/09).

She arrived in Pakistan last January and spent three months as an intern with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees before she took up a paid position with UNICEF, reporting on jail conditions and working to reform child protection laws.

She says how after a friend sent her a story from the Herald about the work of the Acid Survivors Foundation in Pakistan, she visited the premises and heard how acid attacks are on the rise in rural Pakistan, particularly in the cotton-growing Seraiki belt in southern Punjab and northern Sindh. More men are using highly caustic acid against their wives in horrific domestic violence attacks. Usually the woman has refused sex or been accused of an affair. In some cases a second wife is attacked by the family of a jealous first wife.

SEE ALSO: [Articles in Focus](#).

DETAILS: www.acidsurvivorspakistan.org/; <http://www.asti.org.uk/index.php?mainnav=1>

SRI LANKAN MILITARY PUSH RESULTS IN MORE REFUGEES

The International Committee of the Red Cross says that fighting in Sri Lanka - where the government has embarked upon a campaign to finally crush the rebel Tamil Tigers force - has created a refugee crisis, displacing many civilians and forcing more to move repeatedly. The ICRC is one of few organisations permitted to operate in rebel-controlled territory.

REPORT: [BBC](#) (16/1/09).

ECONOMIC CRISIS AFFECTS MIGRANT WORKERS

The world's 200 million migrant workers are feeling the pinch of the global economic crisis, finding it harder to provide for themselves while families back home slip deeper into poverty and suffer a more urgent need for their income. The resulting fall in remittances further threatens to disable cash-strapped developing economies, exacerbating already precarious economic conditions. **REPORT:** [The Economist](#) (15/1/09).

GOVERNMENT 'DENIES CHOICE TO WOMEN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES'

Writing in the Sydney Morning Herald (19/1/09), Stephanie Peatling says abortion is a much more political issue in America than in Australia but there is one thing the countries have in common - both have banned spending government aid money on reproductive health.

This included abortions but also some forms of contraception, resulting in many organisations funded by the Federal Government being too scared to run basic family planning programs.

Barack Obama has promised to do away with the ban but in Australia, all the Federal Government will say is that it is considering the issue. MPs agitating for change argue that giving women in developing countries the same choices about fertility as those available in

Australia would help them to get an education and work, vital to lifting individuals and countries out of poverty.

REPORT: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2009/01/18/1232213445531.html>

RAIDS CREATE FLOOD OF REFUGEES IN CONGO

The flood of Congolese civilians fleeing raids by the Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) were in dire need of food, shelter, medicines, clothes and other aid items, and UN relief had begun reaching them despite immense logistical challenges, the organisation's refugee agency said (20/1/09).

"This remote and increasingly unstable area poses immense logistical challenges for aid agencies due to the lack of roads or their poor condition," Ron Redmond, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (**UNHCR**) said, following renewed assaults in the north-east Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) over the past week.

The estimated number of people displaced since the attacks began last September now stands at 135,000, according to UNHCR. More than 560 Congolese people have been killed by the LRA, a Ugandan rebel group notorious for abducting children for troops and sex slaves, over the past four months, the agency said.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Security Council last week voiced its grave concern at the scale of the atrocities and emphasised that those responsible must be brought to justice.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29601&Cr=lra&Cr1=>

UNICEF CHIEF TOURS ZIMBABWE AS CHOLERA DEATHS REACH 2225

UNICEF Executive Director Ann Veneman toured a hospital and met with Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe as the nation's death toll from cholera reached 2,225, with 1,550 new cases reported each day. Economic collapse has damaged the Zimbabwean infrastructure, making it difficult to deliver clean water and prompt medical care, which is also leading to re-infection after treatment, [Google/The Associated Press](#) reported (17/1/09).

JOBLESS, CORRUPTION AND FOOD CRISIS THREATEN WEST AFRICA

Challenges – including youth unemployment, corruption and the food crisis – threaten to roll back positive gains made in West Africa, the UN Secretary-General's envoy to the 15-nation region told the Security Council (21/1/09).

"Many of the root causes of conflict in a number of West African countries have yet to be addressed in an effective and durable manner," Special Representative Said Djinnit said, briefing the 15-member body on the latest report by the Secretary-General on the region.

As West Africa had been heavily affected by soaring food prices and food insecurity, coupled with the threat of a global recession, many of its nations might not achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a series of anti-poverty targets with a 2015 deadline, he said.

"It is expected that food insecurity will remain a special challenge to the region over the next few years," Mr Djinnit, who heads the UN Office for West Africa (**UNOWA**), said.

REPORT: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29620&Cr=west+africa&Cr1=>

TWO DIE FROM BIRD-FLU IN CHINA

China's state media reported the death of a 27-year-old woman in the eastern Shandong province from bird flu -- the second death in two weeks. The Agriculture Ministry said it faces a "grim situation" in preventing further outbreaks following the hospitalisation of a third victim of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza in the Shanxi province and outbreaks in neighbouring countries, the [BBC](#) reported (19/1/09).

WHO AND UNICEF TACKLE LACK OF 'CHILD SIZE' MEDICINES

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has received a \$US 9.7 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to work with UNICEF to conduct crucial research in children's medicines, with the aim of increasing the number of 'child size' medicines designed and formulated specifically for children (21/1/09).

Currently, many medicines are only designed for adults. More than 50 per cent of medicines prescribed for children have either not been developed specifically for children or have not been proved effective and safe. Therefore many children lack access to essential treatment because no suitable paediatric dosage or formulation of necessary medicine exists, or those that do exist are not available, or are too expensive.

"We must take the guesswork out of medicines for children," said Carissa Etienne, WHO Assistant Director-General. "Children are suffering and dying from diseases we can treat, and yet we lack the critical evidence needed to deliver appropriate, effective, affordable medicines that might save them."

"Some progress has been made on children's medicines but too many medicines are still given to children that have never been properly tested for them," said Dr Hans Hogerzeil, Director of Essential Medicines and Pharmaceutical Policies, WHO. "This work is an excellent example of coordination of United Nations agencies and key experts in the world to address this urgent problem." **DETAILS:** <http://www.who.int/childmedicines/en>

WHO PACIFIC DIRECTORS NAMED

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Executive Board, at its 124th session in Geneva, appointed Dr Shin Young-soo as Regional Director for the Western Pacific region, and reappointed Dr Samlee Plianbangchang for a second term as Regional Director for the South-East Asia Region.

DETAILS: Daniel Epstein on + 41 22 791 1492; mob: + 41 79 475 5534; epsteinda@who.int; www.who.int

F. MEDIA MATTERS

CONTEMPT RULING AGAINST NEWSPAPER IN FIJI

A hefty fine and suspended jail sentences was imposed on a Fiji newspaper chief editor and publisher in a contempt of court ruling by Fiji's High Court, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reports (22/1/09)..

The court fined the Fiji Times \$FJ100, 000 (about \$US54, 000) over its publication in October 2008 of a letter to the editor which criticised a High Court ruling upholding the legality of Fiji's 2006 military coup.

The newspaper has been given 27 days to pay, according to local media reports.

The paper's editor in chief, Netani Rika, was reportedly sentenced to three months' jail, suspended for two years. Publisher Rex Gardner was discharged on condition he entered into a good behaviour bond without surety for 12 months.

The case was pursued despite the newspaper printing a front-page article in early November 2008 admitting responsibility for contempt and offering to pay costs.

It was reported similar charges had been laid against the Daily Post for publishing the same letter. The case is set for an April hearing. **DETAILS:** IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919.

NEWSPAPER EDITOR ASSAULTED IN VANUATU

Publisher and editor of the Vanuatu Daily Post in Port Vila, Marc Neil-Jones was attacked in his office on January 17 by a group of men he alleged were members of the Vanuatu Correctional Services Department, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reported (201/09). The men were said to be angry about a report in the Daily Post about the country's prisons. Mr Neil-Jones' injuries included a broken nose and substantial facial bruising.

Mr Neil-Jones said the newspaper's investigative reports on an internal management crisis at a Port Vila prison, which led to the dismissal of the Correctional Services Department Acting Director, had served the public interest.

It was reported that this was the latest incident following a series of confrontations between Mr Neil-Jones and members of the Vanuatu Government and police force. Mr Neil-Jones was deported from Vanuatu in January 2001 after a dispute with the then prime minister, Barak Sope, for publishing alleged "state secrets". In March 2006, Mr Neil-Jones was arrested and briefly imprisoned after publishing a report about an alleged assault on one of his reporters by a police officer. **DETAILS:** IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919.

EDITOR FACES CRIMINAL DEFAMATION CHARGES IN TIMOR LESTE

In Timor Leste (East Timor) a local newspaper editor faced a possible prison sentence on charges of criminal defamation, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reported (21/1/09).

According to local reports, the editor of [Tempo Semanal](#), Jose Belo, was issued with a notification of defamation charges on December 12, 2008, in relation to a series of news reports published on October 12, 2008. The reports investigated alleged corruption by the Justice Minister.

The IFJ has expressed concern about the application of fair judicial process, in view of claims that Mr Belo and Tempo Semanal had been denied access to documentation pertaining to the charges by the Office of the Prosecutor-General.

IFJ Asia -Pacific Director Jacqueline Park said the situation highlighted a two-fold problem for independent media in Timor Leste – the targeting of journalists who report in the public interest and the need for a constitutionally recognised media law which did not criminalise defamation.

In October 2008, the Timor Leste Government released the draft of a new penal code which decriminalises defamation. The code was awaiting Parliamentary approval.

Legal actions relating to the media in Timor Leste, which was previously occupied by Indonesia, continued to refer to Indonesian law in which defamation may be dealt with as a criminal offence, she said.

The IFJ called on the Timor Leste Government to honour its commitment to enact a media law in which defamation would be dealt with under a civil code rather than a criminal code in the interests of the principles of plurality and freedom of expression.

PAKISTANI EDITOR WINS 2009 GOLDEN PEN OF FREEDOM AWARD

Najam Sethi, Editor-in-Chief of Friday Times and Daily Times, published from Lahore in Pakistan, has been awarded the 2009 Golden Pen of Freedom Award. The annual award bestowed by the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) recognises significant contributions to press freedom. The award will be formally presented at the next WAN world conference at Hyderabad, India, in March.

DETAILS: <http://www.wan-press.org/article4489.html>.

'CULTURE OF IMPUNITY AND INDIFFERENCE IN SRI LANKA' CONDEMNED

The International Press Freedom Mission has condemned a "culture of impunity and indifference" over killings and attacks on journalists in Sri Lanka (21/1/09). It reported that since the beginning of 2009, the killing of a senior editor and an attack on the facilities of a popular independent TV channel have led to a total paralysis of the media community.

Launching a new report, [Media Under Fire: Press Freedom Lockdown in Sri Lanka](#), the International Mission criticised the Sri Lankan Government over its inaction and failure to take the attacks, murder and assassination of reporters seriously.

This had led to an almost total blackout of independent and objective reporting from the north and east of Sri Lanka which had seen the worst of the country's long-running civil war.

"In all the cases of attacks against media and assassinations of reporters, there are few serious investigations by the authorities and none of the killers are ever brought to trial, the International Mission said in a joint statement.

"The killing of Lasantha and the deaths of at least eight other journalists, along with two disappeared since 2007, illustrates in painful detail just how journalists and media staff continue to suffer for their profession," the International Mission said.

"We urge Sri Lanka's Government to accept the creation of an international commission and to investigate the two recent attacks in line with requests by Sri Lankan journalists and media institutions. As a group, the International Mission will offer its assistance to form this commission and to participate in the investigation."

Since 2006, the International Press Freedom Mission to Sri Lanka has conducted three missions to Sri Lanka, the last in October 2008. It includes representatives from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the International Media Support (IMS), the International Press Institute (IPI), the International News Safety Institute (INSI) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

DETAILS: Vincent Brossel, Reporters Without Borders, on + 33 1 44 83 84 70
Sukumar Muralidharan, International Federation of Journalists, on +91 124 405 6719
Robert Shaw, International Media Support, on + 1 347 575 8746.

SEVEN KABUL JOURNALISTS ARRESTED, SIX RELEASED

According to the Afghan Independent Journalists' Association (AIJA), seven Kabul journalists working on the daily Paiman were arrested on January 14, along with another member of staff, following the publication of an article entitled 'A Prediction of a Third World War' on January 10.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reported (19/1/09) that a council of the Ulema (Islamic scholars) held the article blasphemous. Afghanistan's Media Commission, which has ultimate authority, held the article was offensive to religious beliefs and referred it to the office of the Attorney-General for further action.

Following a public apology by the daily, which said publication of the article was due to a technical error in its layout and production section, six of the journalists and the driver were released. Journalist Nazar Paryani continues to be detained, the AIJA said.

DETAILS: IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919.

RUSSIAN HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER AND JOURNALIST MURDERED

A top Russian [human rights](#) lawyer was assassinated in the centre of Moscow in a killing apparently linked to his work defending opponents of the pro-Kremlin government in Chechnya, the London Guardian reported (20/1/09).

Stanislav Markelov, 34, was shot in the head by a man using a pistol with a silencer on a busy Moscow street. Markelov worked as a lawyer for Novaya Gazeta, the newspaper whose special correspondent Anna Politkovskaya was murdered in Moscow in 2006. The paper's co-owner Alexander Lebedev said Mr Markelov had dealt with Politkovskaya's case.

Before escaping, his killer also shot Anastasia Barbuova, a 25-year-old trainee journalist also employed by Novaya Gazeta. She died later in hospital.

Mr Lebedev said staff had been put under protection after the newspaper published an article about Chechen execution squads roaming around Moscow.

REPORT: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/20/russia-lawyer-murder>

AUSTRALIAN WRITER JAILED FOR 3 YEARS

An Australian writer was jailed for three years on charges that he insulted Thailand's monarchy in a self-published novel, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) stated, condemning the court's decision (20/1/09).

Harry Nicolaidis, 41, apologised and pleaded guilty to charges under Thailand's harsh *lese majesty* laws. The court reduced the sentence from six years.

Thailand's *lese majesty* laws are among the strictest in the world. The criminal code allows for a penalty of three to 15 years' jail for "defaming, insulting or threatening" the king, queen, heir-apparent or regent.

Since Mr Nicolaidis was arrested in August 2008, other new cases have been laid, the IFJ reported. In December, an edition of *The Economist* was withdrawn from sale in Thailand for fear of drawing penalties against magazine distributors.

DETAILS: IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919.

SEE also Other News page: THAI ACADEMIC CHARGED WITH INSULTING KING

AFGHAN JOURNALISTS PROTEST GOVERNOR'S ABUSE

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) is extending its solidarity to journalists in Afghanistan protesting the rough treatment of three reporters at a press conference.

The program of protests and boycotts in Kunar, an eastern province of Afghanistan, continued for a fourth day (23/1/09), following accusations of rough treatment by a provincial governor of three reporters at a press conference on January 18.

According to the Afghan Independent Journalists' Association (AIJA), the governor publicly addressed three journalists and threatened to destroy their professional equipment.

Khan Wali Salarzai, of the independent news agency Pahjwok and the government-controlled Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA), Abdul Ghani, also of RTA, and Sayed Abdullullah Nezami, of Al-Jazeera TV, were named as those threatened. The local leadership of the AIJA decided all members will boycott official functions involving the governor until he tenders an unconditional apology. **DETAILS:** IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919.

INDIA'S DECISION TO SHELVE BROADCAST CODE FOR EMERGENCIES

A clarification by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that his government had no immediate intention of introducing a statutory code for broadcast news channels in designated "emergency" situations was welcomed by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) (16/1/09).

India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) had reportedly prepared a code requiring news channels to carry only pre-authorised content during situations notified as "emergencies". The issue became a serious concern with the MIB following the live coverage of the November 26 attacks in Mumbai and the 60-hour siege of three buildings in the city.

It was reported that India's Chief Justice commented the "symbolic impact of terrorist attacks" had been "considerably amplified by the role of pervasive media coverage". The "proliferation of 24-hour TV news channels and the digital medium" ensured that "disturbing images and statements reach a very wide audience". He said "unrestrained coverage" may have the effect of "provoking anger amongst the masses" and fuelling "an irrational desire for retribution".

A consortium of India's most prominent news channels has since formulated a code of conduct for emergency situations that emphasises the "public interest" as the vital touchstone. The MIB nevertheless continued with its effort to work out a statutory code and had reportedly drafted amendments to be notified by ordinance to India's cable TV law.

DETAILS: IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919.

SOUTH ASIA MEDIA SOLIDARITY NETWORK

The January monthly e-bulletin of the South Asia Media Solidarity Network (SAMSN) includes:

Sri Lankan journalist knew he would be murdered
Young woman journalist murdered in Nepal
Armed gang attacks Nepal media house
Two journalists killed in Pakistan Bast
Editor arrested in India on defamation charges
India contemplates then disavows curbs on live TV
Sindhi TV channel attacked in Pakistan
Najam Sethi Wins Golden Pen Award

DETAILS: SAMSN is a group of journalists' trade unions, press freedom organisations and journalists in South Asia that have agreed to work together to support freedom of expression and association in the region. Details: www.ifj-asia.org/page/samsn.html

IFJ CHINA CAMPAIGN

The IFJ Asia -Pacific's monthly Press Freedom in China Campaign e-bulletin for January includes:

New internet restrictions result in site closures
IFJ to launch 2008 China Report
IFJ calls for Release of Journalist Detained in Shanxi
Writers detained after signing call for human rights
Hong Kong journalist assaulted
Journalists suspended for reporting on strike
Writer jailed in Guangdong

DETAILS: IFJ Asia -Pacific on +612 9333 0919; asiapacific.ifj.org; ifj@ifj-asia.org and ifjchina@ifj-asia.org

G. OTHER NEWS

OBAMA SWORN IN AS 44TH PRESIDENT

Barack Obama took the oath of office on Tuesday at the National Mall in Washington before what may be the largest inaugural crowd ever, the New York Times reported (20/1/09).

REPORT: <http://www.nytimes.com/?emc=na>

OBAMA TAKES OATH, AND NATION IN CRISIS EMBRACES THE MOMENT

Barack Hussein Obama called on Americans to confront "our collective failure to make hard choices." **REPORT:** <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/21/us/politics/21inaug.html?th&emc=th>

THAI ACADEMIC CHARGED WITH INSULTING KING

Police charged a prominent Thai political commentator on Tuesday with insulting Thailand's revered king in a 2007 book — a day after an Australian writer was jailed for three years for a similar offence, the Associate Press/Google reported (21/1/09).

Ji Ungpakorn, a political scientist at Chulalongkorn University — one of the country's leading universities — denied the charges and accused the government of increasingly using Thailand's harsh *lese majeste* laws to silence criticism.

REPORT:

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hVnTHd0lxIMajklApqinef_4ychgD95QPU0GO

SEE also Media Matters page: AUSTRALIAN WRITER JAILED FOR 3 YEARS

IRAN SENTENCES TOP AIDS DOCTORS

Two distinguished Iranian AIDS doctors and two other men were sentenced to prison after being convicted on charges of allegedly recruiting dozens of experts to develop information

on the nation's infrastructure and civil defence for a US-led effort to topple Iran's Islamic government. **REPORT:** [Seattle Post-Intelligencer/The Associated Press](#) (19/1/09).

POLITICIANS SLEEP IN HOVEL

UK Foreign Minister David Miliband joined Indian MP Rahul Gandhi for a stunt in Uttar Pradesh, sleeping in a hovel in the poverty-stricken Indian state in order to introduce Miliband to how the other half lives. [The Guardian \(London\)](#) (16/1/09).

Chinese legislators passed a bill Monday to create Serf Emancipation Day, marking the date Communists declared their rule over Tibet after forcing the Dalai Lama and his supporters to flee. The move comes just months before the 50th anniversary of the events. [The New York Times](#) (1/19)

OVER 100 WOMEN BECOME LIBERIAN POLICE OFFICERS

A record number of over 100 newly-trained women police officers, making up two-thirds of the cadets completing the training for the Liberia National Police (LNP), prompted a senior United Nations official to hail the progress made since the first batch of recruits passed through the gates of the National Police Training Academy in 2005, UN News reported (20/1/09).

"LNP now has 3,800 officers trained in modern policing methods and techniques," said Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, the Deputy Head of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), speaking at a graduation ceremony on Saturday.

That total exceeds the initial UN target of 3,500, including 150 new officers of which 104 are women, which takes the female representation in the LNP to 449 officers, or 12.6 per cent of its current strength.

Almost 2,900 officers have now been trained in the protection of women and children, criminal investigations, traffic investigations, media relations and firearms instruction, in a bid to create a force able to meet the policing needs of all communities.

H. ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

RESEARCHERS CREATE FILTER THAT COULD LOCK AWAY NUCLEAR DANGER

Radioactive waste, the inevitable product of nuclear energy, may no longer be dangerous to store, thanks to a team of QUT academics, writes Rachel Wilson in a recent issue of IQ Inside, newsletter of Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

In Australia such waste is generated, partly, by medical applications, radiopharmaceutical production, the Lucas Heights facility, and the mining of mineral sands and uranium. Two uranium mines alone produce about 10 million tonnes of mill tailings per year.

According to Associate Professor Zhu Huai Yong, of QUT School of Chemical and Physical Sciences, his team has created a material with the potential to filter and safely lock away radioactive ions from waste water. QUT Applied Chemistry researchers have worked in conjunction with researchers from Nankai University, China.

LINKS: www.news.qut.edu.au

<http://www.natureasia.com/asia-materials/highlight.php?id=247>

SPRAY-ON MATERIAL TO LEAD TO CHEAPER SOLAR PANELS

A new spray-on material that could make solar panels cheaper is to be developed in a joint research effort announced by the Australian National University (ANU) and Spark Solar Australia (21/1/09).

As one of two new projects worth a combined \$1.85 million, the spray-on project will focus on a new way to treat the surface of a solar cell, the core component inside a solar panel that converts sunlight to electricity. The project will be run with the Finnish materials company Braggone Oy.

"It will provide an opportunity for significant manufacturing cost reductions by replacing the

conventional, expensive manufacturing techniques that are currently employed industry-wide with the spray-on films," said Dr Keith McIntosh from ANU, the chief investigator in the first project.

The second project will investigate methods to change the surface of a solar cell to improve its efficiency. This project will be run in conjunction with German solar company GP Solar and led by chief investigator Dr Klaus Weber, from the ANU.

Spark Solar Australia is a new company that is raising \$60 million and will build a factory in the ACT region to commence solar cell production in 2010. The factory will initially produce eight million solar cells per year, enough to power about 10,000 Australian homes, using state-of-the-art manufacturing technology.

DETAILS: ANU: Dr Klaus Weber on 0438 217 465; Dr Keith McIntosh on 02 6125 8966; Spark Solar Australia: Mark Jeanes on 0414 995 895/02 6248 5161.

BIGGER ROLE FOR COMMUNITIES IN MURRAY RESTORATION PROGRAM

Communities along the Murray River are to play a bigger role in shaping Australia's most significant river restoration program, according to Murray–Darling Basin Authority Chief Executive Rob Freeman.

He said consultation groups were now functioning at six key sites along the Murray River and would guide community engagement along the river as part of the authority's Living Murray program (21/1/09).

"The groups will play a vital role in ensuring that a broad range of community views are sought when delivering the program at the local level," he said. "They will also provide practical advice on the best way to communicate the objectives of The Living Murray program to the wider community.

"To achieve the program's goals it is important to consider the interests of communities and balance this against environmental, economic and social interests to ensure the best decisions are made for both the community and the environment. These groups will help make this happen," he said.

The Living Murray program was established in 2003 by the Australian, Victorian, New South Wales, South Australian and ACT governments to tackle the serious decline in the health of the Murray River. **DETAILS:** Sam Leone on 02 6279 0141.

US-INDIAN NUCLEAR DEAL STILL ON DRAWING BOARD

Despite reaching an historic agreement that cleared the way for a nuclear development deal between India and the US, the way to building nuclear reactors in India remains obscured -- primarily by red tape. Bureaucrats and businesspeople on both sides say that it will take two to three years before all parties are able to clear enough bureaucratic and administrative hurdles to lay shovel to ground on the project. **REPORT:** [The Washington Post](#) (21/1/09).

ENERGY SUPPLY FOR POOR PEOPLE 'MUST BE MDG TARGET'

Ensuring energy supplies to poor people should have been included as a Millennium Development Goal, and the exclusion of this element adversely affects the global fight against poverty, Rajendra Pachauri, head of the United Nations climate panel, said.

REPORT: [AlertNet.org/Reuters](#) (21/1/09).

I ARTICLES IN FOCUS

NO CHOICE BUT TO MATTER

Barack Obama staged his arrival in Washington to evoke Abraham Lincoln's, but the historical echo is faint, writes [Eugene Robinson](#) in the Washington Post (20/1/09). Lincoln's famous train ride to his 1861 inauguration traversed a landscape of bitterness and strife. He had to speed through Baltimore "like a thief in the night" for fear of riots and possible assassination. Obama, by contrast, was met by tens of thousands of Baltimoreans who braved subfreezing

temperatures to cheer the new president. As Obama made his way to the capital, he crossed a landscape of hope. Rarely has a new presidency been greeted with such a consensus of goodwill -- and rarely has a new president so needed it. The importance of Obama's mind-blowing historical breakthrough can hardly be overstated ... For nearly a century after African Americans were freed from bondage, American society still relegated us to a corner reserved for second-class citizens. Having a black man as president does not magically eliminate racial disparities in income or wealth; it does not fix inner-city schools, repair crumbling neighbourhoods or heal dysfunctional families. Psychologically, though, it changes everything.

ARTICLE: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/19/AR2009011902281.html?wpisrc=newsletter>

POLL FINDS FAITH IN OBAMA, MIXED WITH PATIENCE

President-elect [Barack Obama](#) is riding a powerful wave of optimism into the White House, with Americans confident he can turn the economy around but prepared to give him years to deal with the crush of problems he faces starting on Tuesday, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News Poll (New York Times, 17/1/09). While hopes for the new president are extraordinarily high, the poll found, expectations for what Mr Obama will actually be able to accomplish appear to have been tempered by the scale of the nation's problems at home and abroad. The findings suggest that Mr. Obama has achieved some success with his effort, which began with his victory speech in Chicago in November, to gird Americans for a slow economic recovery and difficult years ahead after a campaign that generated striking enthusiasm and high hopes for change.

ARTICLE: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/18/us/politics/18poll.html?th&emc=th>

THE ROLE OF RELIGION UNDER OBAMA

Reporter Gail Chaddock discusses how President Obama's selection of religious leaders to participate in his inauguration may portend his ability to build consensus in the Christian Science Monitor (22/1/09). After decades of ceding God to the GOP, at least in the public square, Democrats – with President Obama in the lead – are speaking with a fuller religious voice. The watchword? Inclusiveness.: It's a voice that signals openness at a time when diversity in American religious life is rising. "We know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus – and nonbelievers," Mr Obama said in Tuesday's inaugural address. Wednesday's National Prayer Service, a tradition since George Washington's inauguration, featured faith leaders chosen "to symbolise America's traditions of religious tolerance and freedom," said the 2009 Presidential Inaugural Committee. It included, for the first time, a sermon delivered by a woman. For Obama, the broad outreach into the faith community isn't confined to ceremonies but is emerging as a key element in his approach to coalition-building, say religious leaders who worked on the transition.

ARTICLE: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0122/p01s02-usgn.html>

RESPECT FOR FREEDOMS SLIDES

The general trend over the last shows a decline in freedoms of expression and association and a rising level of disdain for the rule of law around the globe, according to Freedom House's latest annual report: [The Economist](#) (1/15/1/09). The new 2009 edition paints a sombre picture of how the world fared during George Bush's time in office. An initial five years of improvement were followed by a three-year decline — less in 2008 than previously, but still disappointing. Russia's rigged elections and cowed media attract particular criticism in the gloomy ex-Soviet section. Though Iraq posts a slightly better score, Afghanistan shifts from "partly free" to "not free" in Freedom House's broad three-category system. The Middle East and north Africa region — the centrepiece of Mr Bush's efforts to promote freedom — showed little measurable improvement over the previous year. More widely, the number of "electoral democracies" (those with tolerably free and fair elections) dropped by two, to 119 (thanks to four demotions and two promotions). The general trend was down too, with declines in freedom of expression and association, and a weaker rule of law. **ARTICLE:** http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12936575#top

FIGHTING TERRORISM, THE RULE OF LAW MODEL IS STRONGER THAN ANY ARMY

The terrorist attacks in Mumbai seven weeks ago sent shockwaves around the world. Now all eyes are fixed on the Middle East where Israel's response to Hamas's rockets, a ferocious military campaign, has already left 1000 Gazans dead, writes David Miliband in the Sydney Morning Herald (16/1/09). David Miliband is the British Foreign Secretary. Seven years on from September 11, 2001, it is clear that we need to take a fundamental look at our efforts to prevent extremism and its terrible offspring, terrorist violence. Since the events of that September, the notion of a war on terrorism has defined the terrain. The phrase had some merit: it captured the gravity of the threats, the need for solidarity, and the need to respond urgently - where necessary, with force. But ultimately, the notion is misleading and mistaken. The issue is not whether we need to attack the use of terrorism at its roots, with all the tools available. We must. The question is how.

(This article was first published in The Guardian and is based on a speech to be delivered at the Taj Hotel in Mumbai, one of the sites of the attacks last year.)

ARTICLE: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2009/01/15/1231608880942.html>

PUT TO THE ACID TEST

"One of the hardest things has been the decision to leave Pakistan," said 23-year-old Rhodes scholar Natasha Simonsen, in the Sydney Morning Herald (17/1/09), when describing her work with the UN Children's Fund's juvenile justice program as a "jail tour" of Pakistan ... She visited one jail with 120 males - aged 10 to 20 - crowded into a cell block fit for 50 ... (But she also followed up a friend's email about a story from the *Herald* about the work of the Acid Survivors Foundation in Pakistan. She saw the effects of how) ... more men are using highly caustic acid against their wives in horrific domestic violence attacks. Usually the woman has refused sex or been accused of an affair. As well, in some cases a second wife is attacked by the family of a jealous first wife. The acid melts both skin and bones, leaving the victims disfigured and psychologically shattered. No one knows how many women have been victims but the foundation has treated about 170 women since it was established in early 2006 by a Frenchwoman, Valerie Khan.

ARTICLE: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2009/01/16/1231608989662.html>

WAR CRIMES: TALK BUT NOT MUCH ACTION

Since July 1, 2002, the International Criminal Court in The Hague has been responsible for prosecuting war crimes, writes Richard Ackland in the Sydney Morning Herald (23/1/09). War crimes committed before that year are dealt with by ad hoc tribunals set by the United Nations Security Council - for instance, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the ICT for Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. To get anything before the ICC is a tortuous process ... The case has to have "sufficient gravity", and you can argue forever about that. The US is not a party to the Rome Statute, which created the ICC, nor is Israel. They don't accept its jurisdiction to try their citizens for war crimes. A state or country has to accept the jurisdiction of the tribunal before the court can start the machinery of justice. In Gaza, there are more than 1200 Palestinians dead, of whom more than 400 were children, and thousands more injured. According to Human Rights Watch, the Israelis exploded white phosphorous shells over Gaza which left victims horribly burnt. UN relief supplies were destroyed and last weekend an Israeli tank killed two boys in a UN school.

ARTICLE: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/opinion/war-crimes-talk-but-not-much-action/2009/01/22/1232471493830.html>

