



UNRWA

PRESS RELEASE

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10 year old schoolgirl dies in hospital after being hit by bullet in classroom

GAZA -

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East expresses its deepest sorrow at the death of Raghda Adnan Al-Assar, 10 years old, who passed away on 22 September at Gaza European Hospital in Khan Younis.

Raghda Adnan al-Assar was hit by an IDF bullet while sitting at her desk at the UNRWA Elementary School in Khan Younis on 7 September.

This tragic event occurred despite numerous calls by the Agency to the Government of Israel to instruct the Israel Defense Forces to stop firing at or in the vicinity of its schools. The response of the Israeli authorities has routinely been to deny that such firing took place or to cite ongoing security necessity.

Mr Peter Hansen, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, said: "I am horrified by this death, and I have conveyed my deepest condolences to the victim's family. It was the result of military violence which is completely unnecessary and simply cannot be justified: schools are supposed to be havens of safety for the children. They are specifically protected under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Israel is a party. On countless occasions I have called upon the Israeli authorities to respect their obligations under the CRC and under International Humanitarian Law in general, and to stop firing on the schools, fearing that innocent schoolchildren would inevitably be killed. Now it has happened. It is a tragic and senseless death. We have all failed to protect this child. Such killings must stop."

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