

Putin, UN Urge Israel, Palestinians to Halt Fighting

By [AFP](#)

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Smoke rises following Israeli airstrikes on a building in Gaza City on Thursday. **Hatem Moussa / AP Photo / TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday jointly called for an end to fighting between Israel and Palestinians.

"In light of the escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it was stated that the primary task is to stop violent actions on both sides and ensure the safety of the civilian population," the Kremlin [said](#) in a statement after a video call with Guterres.

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Both leaders also expressed support for a two-state solution to guarantee peace, the Kremlin added.

On Wednesday, Guterres held talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and the two called for an urgent meeting of the Middle East Quartet — made up of Russia, the United States, the UN and the European Union — in order to halt the worst outbreak of communal violence in years.

Guterres said the UN was "fully ready" to resume the work of the Quartet and facilitate dialogue between the two sides.

The Israeli army has launched hundreds of air strikes on the Gaza Strip since Monday, while Palestinian militants have launched more than 1,000 rockets in some of the worst violence in seven years.

The intense hostilities have left at least 90 dead and hundreds injured.

Despite global alarm and diplomatic efforts to de-escalate hostilities, the conflict has shown few signs of easing.

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