Statement by Alex Snary  
National Director, World Vision Jerusalem-West Bank-Gaza  
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JERUSALEM – World Vision welcomes the ceasefire between Israelis and Palestinians. We call on all parties to respect the cease fire agreements and to work toward a lasting, just and peaceful resolution to the overall conflict.

World Vision is working in Gaza to help children distressed by the recent military operation. Our staff in Gaza have conducted a preliminary assessment and World Vision is preparing to provide psychosocial support services, safe spaces for children, women and infants, potable water, food, medical assistance and temporary shelter. Once these immediate needs are met, World Vision will commence the next phase of response, which will focus on improving livelihoods of the people in the communities we serve.

World Vision has been working in Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank since 1975 and has nearly 45,000 children in our development programmes, including 7,000 in Gaza. In addition to child-focused programming, our work in Gaza includes projects that aim to improve the communities World Vision serves, where roughly 80 per cent of the population relies on international and humanitarian aid.

As a child-focused organization, World Vision believes that all children should be afforded protection and safety and not be subjected to violence, fear, or distress. Children should not have to live under threat of imminent invasion, nor fear of being struck by rocket fire, nor air raids. We are especially concerned and alarmed by the mounting humanitarian crisis in Gaza and its impact on civilians, especially children.

Children in Gaza are particularly vulnerable due to the area's high population density along with the reality that the people of Gaza have nowhere to go to escape violence, due to continued restrictions on movement and ongoing Israeli blockade. We hope that this ceasefire agreement will materially improve movement and access of people and goods in and out of Gaza.

The enduring impact of past conflicts with Israel has left the people of Gaza with weak infrastructure, poor health services and scarcities of electricity and clean water. Individual families and emergency services have been unable to cope with the effects of the recent round of violence.

World Vision is praying for, and urging the international community to exercise utmost pressure and diplomacy to secure, a lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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Note to editors:

World Vision’s response is based on humanitarian need. The per capita GDP of Israel is US$31,005; in Gaza it is US $876 and in the West Bank US $1,924. World Vision also works with Israeli organizations committed to promoting peace and justice.