# UN chief stands by UNRWA

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United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday dismissed calls by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to shut down UNRWA, the UN agency for “Palestinian refugees”.

Netanyahu’s call came after terror tunnels were discovered underneath one of UNRWA’s schools in Gaza.

Guterres "is concerned about recent public criticism of UNRWA and the integrity of its operations," spokesman Farhan Haq said, according to AFP.

"He wishes to express his support for UNRWA and his admiration for the role it plays in delivering essential services and protecting the rights of millions of Palestine refugees across the Middle East."

Guterres also "calls on all member states to continue their support to the agency in order for UNRWA to be in a position to fulfill impartially and efficiently its essential role," Haq added.

Netanyahu called for UNRWA to be dismantled on Sunday, accusing it of incitement against the Jewish state.

The Prime Minister said he raised the issue during a recent visit by Washington's UN envoy Nicky Haley, who has accused the United Nations of bias against Israel.

"I told her that the time had come for the United Nations to reconsider the continued existence of UNRWA," Netanyahu's office quoted him as saying.

The discovery of a terror tunnel underneath an UNRWA school is not the first time that UNRWA has been found to be involved with Hamas.

During the 2014 counterterrorism Operation Protective Edge, Hamas rockets were discovered inside an UNRWA school building.

Likewise, a booby-trapped UNRWA clinic was detonated, killing three IDF soldiers. Aside from the massive amounts of explosives hidden in the walls of the clinic, it was revealed that it stood on top of dozens of terror tunnels, showing how UNRWA is closely embedded with Hamas.

More recently, it was revealed that Suhail al-Hindi, a Gaza employee of UNRWA, had been elected to Hamas's political bureau. UNRWA later dismissed Hindi.