

**Statement on humanitarian access to Gaza**  
***United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator Maxwell Gaylard***  
***31 December 2008***

“Conditions for parents and children in Gaza are dangerous and frightening. We are in a life or death situation for many people today. It is absolutely crucial that there is an end to the fighting. Without it, more civilians will continue to be killed. Without the violence stopping, it is extremely difficult to get food to people who need it, we cannot assess where the most urgent needs are, and it is too dangerous for civilians to leave their homes to seek urgent medical treatment, buy supplies and assist people in distress.

We desperately need Karni to open, today, to get wheat grain in. UNRWA has no wheat grain for the 750,000 people who need it. The wheat grain warehouses are empty. We need to get that wheat grain in now. This is a must.

We need fuel to the power station so that the power plant goes back on. Gaza’s hospitals are facing their largest ever trauma caseloads under some of the most adverse conditions imaginable. They must have reliable power.

We are in hourly contact with the Israeli authorities. They are offering their cooperation and we are offering ours. They have been responsive to specific requests, which we appreciate. But the gravity of the situation now demands more. Today, we need that cooperation translated into real results on the ground.”