



OCHA

United Nations Office
for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Affairs

Partnership for Humanity

**Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
(OCHA)**

**Situation Report on the Humanitarian Situation in the Gaza Strip – No. 13
17-18 January 2009**

The following information is based on reports from member states, the UN Country Team for the occupied Palestinian territory, humanitarian partners and authorities involved in the humanitarian response.

1. General Overview

1. A unilateral ceasefire in Gaza was declared by Israel at 0200 hrs (0000 hrs GMT) on 18 January. Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) troops remain inside Gaza, but have withdrawn from some of the most populated areas, including Al Zaitoun, Beit Lahiya, and Beit Hanoun. Israel stated that it will not fully withdraw forces until there is a cessation of rocket fire into Israel from Palestine.

2. Limited violence, including Israeli bombardment and rocket fire from Palestine into Israel continued until the afternoon (local time) on 18 January. As at 1600 hrs (1400 hrs GMT), seventeen rockets were fired into Israel from Palestine on 18 January. At 1600 hrs (1400 hrs GMT) on 18 January, Hamas announced a week-long ceasefire, during which they said the IDF is to leave Gaza

3. The UN Secretary General stated that he was, “relieved that the Israeli Government has decided to cease hostilities...and that Hamas must stop firing rockets”. He urged that the ceasefire be the first step toward establishing a durable and sustainable ceasefire leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza, as called for by Security Council resolution 1860. He also stressed that urgent access for the people of Gaza is the immediate priority, and that the UN is ready to support these efforts.

4. On 17 January a UN Relief and World Agency (UNRWA) school was shelled. Two children were killed in the attack and fourteen were injured. The school was functioning as an emergency shelter at the time it was hit, and was hosting 1,600 people. The UN Secretary General condemned the incident as “outrageous” and, “strongly demanded a thorough investigation into these incidents, and the punishment of those who are responsible for these appalling acts.”

5. To better establish the immediate humanitarian and early recovery needs, planning is underway to conduct an inter-agency assessment in Gaza, followed by sector-specific assessments, as the security situation permits.

6. Casualty figures:

	Total # since 27 December	# / percent of total that are children since 27 December	# / percent of total that are women since 27 December
Palestinian Fatalities*	1,300	410 / 32 percent	104 / 8 percent
Palestinians Injured*	5,300	1,855 / 35 percent	795 / 15 percent
Israeli Fatalities**	13	Unknown	Unknown
Israelis Injured***	84	Unknown	Unknown

* According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH), as of 1600 hrs (1400 hrs GMT) 18 January, not including those treated for shock.

**According to Israeli Police Spokesman and Magen David Adom.

*** According to Magen David Adom, not including those treated for shock.

UN Casualties in Gaza since 27 December	Fatalities	Injured
UNRWA Staff	5	5
UNRWA Contractors	3	4
WFP Contractors	1	2
TOTAL	9	13

Humanitarian Installations/Convoys	# hit in Gaza since 27 December
UN Buildings	50
UN Compounds	1
NGO Installations	1
NGO Compounds	To be confirmed
Convoys	4

7. On 16 January, Foreign Minister Livni signed a Memorandum of Understanding with US Secretary of State under which the US and NATO will aid in countering the smuggling of weapons into Gaza. The Egyptian Foreign Minister stated that Egypt would not be bound by a US-Israeli Memorandum of Understanding.

2.1 Coordination and Humanitarian Response

Gaza Crossings

8. Despite the ceasefire, all crossings of international staff into Gaza still require clearance through COGAT. There will also continue to be IDF checkpoints to monitor movements within Gaza.

Crossing	Total crossings on 17 January	No. of total with humanitarian goods	Type of humanitarian goods	Total crossings on 18 January
Kerem Shalom	51 trucks (in)	10 trucks	Food items NFIs 115,000 litres of industrial gas	Open
Rafah	27 doctors (in) 6 journalists (in) 7 trucks (in) 27 medical cases (out)	7 trucks	Medical supplies	Open
Karni conveyor belt	Closed (for Shabat)	-	-	Open
Nahal Oz pipeline	Closed (for Shabat)	-	-	Open
Erez	ICRC and MSF staff (in)			Open

2.1. Protection

9. On 17 January, Israel unilaterally ceased military activities between 1200 – 1500 hrs (1000 – 1300 hrs GMT).

10. With the 18 January ceasefire, and in anticipation of increased movement within Gaza, there are serious concerns about the dangers posed by unexploded ordnance (UXOs) and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Save the Children informed that they plan to distribute information to raise awareness of these risks.

2.2. Food

11. WFP reported that there have been significant increases in the price of food items within Gaza, which is constraining households from accessing food: wheat flour has increased by 45 percent; tomatoes have increased by 500 percent and chicken has increased by 23 percent. On 17 January, WFP distributed 98 MTs and UNRWA distributed food parcels to 874 households.

2.3. Health

12. According to WHO the Al Quds hospital sustained significant damage when it was shelled on 15 January and patients were evacuated to Shifa Hospital. Fuel for generators at Shifa Hospital is urgently needed to ensure that lifesaving activities can continue.

13. A Magen David Adom (MDA) primary care clinic inside Erez checkpoint will be operational by 1400 hrs (1200 hrs GMT) on 18 January. The clinic has the capacity to treat 200 patients/day. To access this clinic patients will have to go through normal Erez clearing/checking.

2.4. Water and Sanitation

14. Approximately 400,000 Gazans remain without running water and the water system east of Gaza City, in northern Gaza and in Middle Area requires further repairs.

15. The Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) confirmed that two million litres of wastewater leaked from the Gaza City Wastewater Treatment Plant into the surrounding agricultural land after it was shelled on 10 January. According to the CMWU, 30 cubic metres of sewage are also flowing into the streets of Beit Hanoun every hour due to the damage of a sewage pump carrying sewage to the Beit Lahia Wastewater Treatment Plant.

2.5. Shelter and Non-Food Items

16. The UNRWA emergency shelters are severely overcrowded and there is an insufficient amount of NFIs for those seeking refuge at the shelters.

No. in UNRWA Emergency Shelters*	No. UNRWA Emergency Shelters	Increase in no. people from 16 January
50,896	50	At least 5,896

2.6. Early Recovery

17. On 16 January, UNDP highlighted that with an end to conflict, Gaza will require an, "immediate, multi-dimensional early recovery strategy focused on the restoration of access and movement, the restitution and reconstruction of basic services and infrastructure and the reduction of additional risks and vulnerabilities, as well as additional investments in livelihoods, shelter, governance systems, security and rule of law and environmental sustainability".

18. Media reported that the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics had cited that during the Israeli operation in Gaza, damage worth an approximate USD 476 million dollars was sustained. This includes the destruction of approximately 4,000 dwellings, 48 Government offices and buildings, 30 police stations and 20 mosques. Damage to roads, schools, the electrical grid and water network was also sustained. Figures suggest that some 14 percent of all buildings in Gaza had been damaged or destroyed.

3.0 International Assistance and Priority needs

3.1. Funding

19. On 13 January, as part of the United Nations efforts to meet the rapidly growing humanitarian needs of civilians caught in the fighting, the Emergency Relief Coordinator allocated some seven (7) million USD in funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to help jump-start life-saving humanitarian programmes in Gaza. The funding will be used to support UNICEF, UNRWA, and WFP, respectively, to provide: safe drinking water to as many as 200,000 people, including displaced civilians; fuel for the generators that power water pumping stations, hospitals and other municipal services in Gaza, and cash assistance to help civilians to rent alternative shelters, defray the costs of necessary services and purchase essentials such as food and basic household materials; and provide ready-made meals to 16,000 IDPs staying in UNRWA shelters.

20. The Humanitarian Country Team has re-visited projects proposed for the 2009 CAP (which appealed for over USD 462 million) to ensure that the projects, activities and priorities remain relevant to the ongoing emergency and increased the budget to USD 529 million.

21. To respond to the current urgent needs in Gaza, priority projects were identified in the following sectors: protection; shelter; food aid and food security; water and sanitation; agriculture; cash for work/assistance; education; health; and coordination and support services. Funding needs for the priority projects amounted to USD 117, of which USD 54 million has been committed or pledged as of 15 January. For the initial response plan and list of immediate funding needs, see:

http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_crisis_cap_funding_2009_english.pdf

22. In total, as of 18 January, donors have already committed or pledged over USD 80 million (in funding or in-kind contributions) for projects in the Consolidated Appeal and over USD 50 million to projects outside of the appeal (<http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/pageloader.aspx?page=emerg-emergencyDetails&appealID=834>). This information was compiled by OCHA, based on the information provided by donors and appealing organisations. All humanitarian partners including donors and recipient agencies are encouraged to inform FTS of cash and in-kind contributions to: fts@reliefweb.int.

3.2. Priority Needs

23. **Protection:** Compliance with international humanitarian law is essential to enhance security for civilians within Gaza, allow civilians freedom of movement to reach lifesaving services, and for humanitarian actors to distribute assistance.

24. **Access:** A sustained re-opening of all crossings into Gaza is required to meet assistance needs. Improved humanitarian access into Gaza is also required for humanitarian staff, particularly for NGO staff as well as humanitarian goods. Increased security and improved access within Gaza is essential for civilians to reach lifesaving services, and for humanitarian actors to distribute assistance.

25. **Electricity & Fuel:** Hospitals require fuel to run generators on which they rely; water and sanitation facilities require fuel to operate; and households and bakeries require cooking gas.

26. **Wheat grain:** Wheat grain is urgently needed for local bakeries and for humanitarian food distributions.

27. This situation report, together with further information on ongoing emergencies, is also available on the OCHA Internet website at <http://reliefweb.int>. A copy of the Field Update from the Humanitarian Coordinator for the oPt can be found at:

http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_humanitarian_situation_report_2009_01_08_english.pdf

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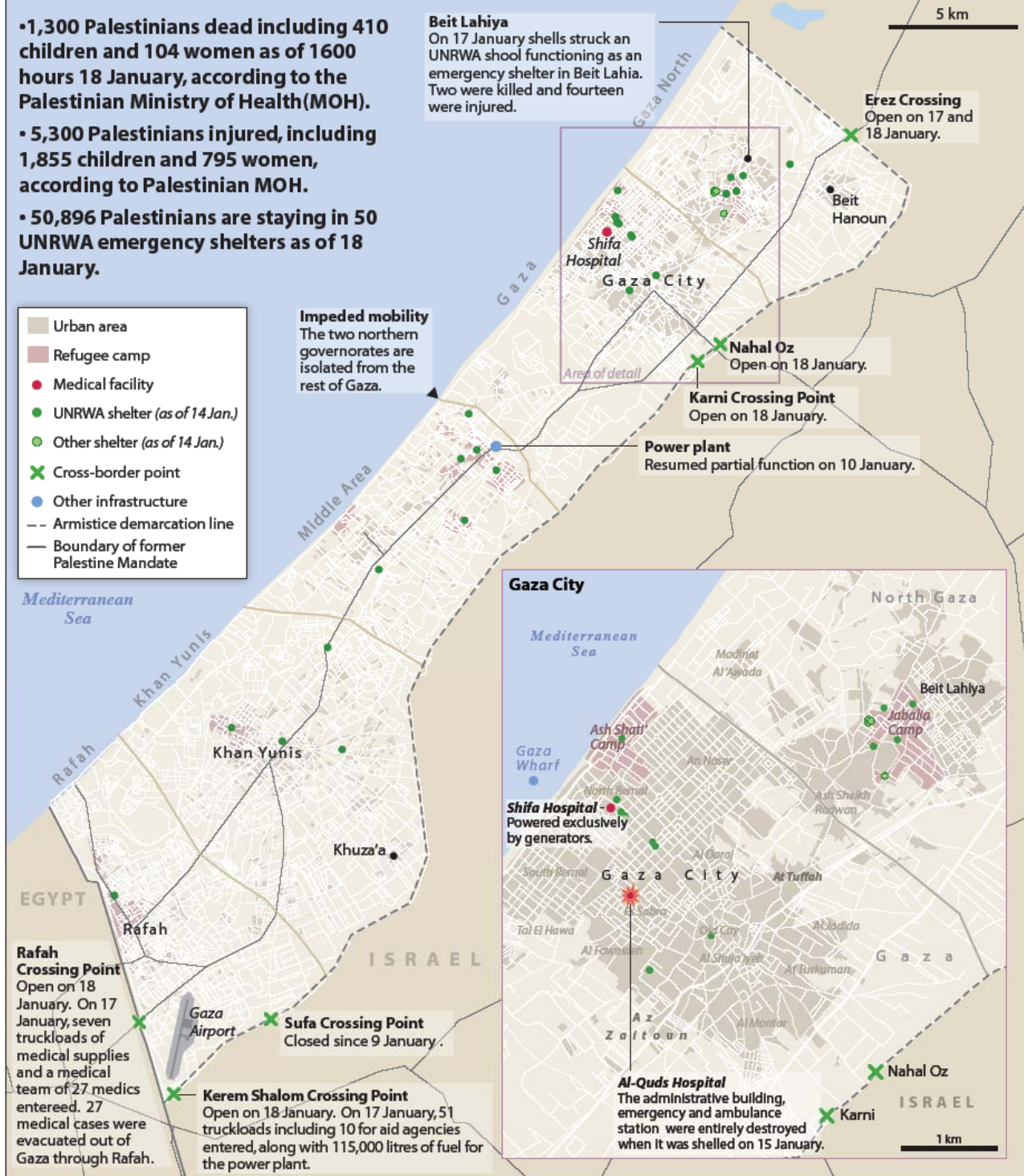
Situation in Gaza Strip (as of 18 Jan 2009)

- 1,300 Palestinians dead including 410 children and 104 women as of 1600 hours 18 January, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health(MOH).
- 5,300 Palestinians injured, including 1,855 children and 795 women, according to Palestinian MOH.
- 50,896 Palestinians are staying in 50 UNRWA emergency shelters as of 18 January.

Beit Lahiya
On 17 January shells struck an UNRWA school functioning as an emergency shelter in Beit Lahiya. Two were killed and fourteen were injured.

- Urban area
- Refugee camp
- Medical facility
- UNRWA shelter (as of 14 Jan.)
- Other shelter (as of 14 Jan.)
- Cross-border point
- Other infrastructure
- Armistice demarcation line
- Boundary of former Palestine Mandate

Impeded mobility
The two northern governorates are isolated from the rest of Gaza.



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