



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

### **Situation Report on the Humanitarian Situation in the Gaza Strip – No. 16 22-23 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. The ceasefire in Gaza continues to hold, though four Palestinians were injured on 22 January by a shell fired from off the Gaza coast. A child was also injured on 22 January due to gunfire east of Gaza City.
2. The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process visited Gaza on 22 January, launching an assessment process of the humanitarian needs in Gaza. Describing the scene at several sites, the ERC informed that he, “saw a lot of shocking destruction” and underscored the heavy and multi-faceted impact that the conflict has had on the civilian population. He further emphasised that, “it is shocking that civilians suffered so disproportionately in this military operation”.
3. The ongoing assessment will focus on life-saving needs, including restoring basic social services, such as water, health and education, as well as emergency repairs of critical infrastructure. The assessment will be followed by the launch of the Gaza Flash Appeal on 2 February in Geneva, to address urgent humanitarian and early recovery needs.
4. The UN Secretary General briefed the Security Council on his mission to the Middle East 21 January. He highlighted that, “much more remains to be done on both the humanitarian and diplomatic fronts,” underscoring that, “for many in Gaza this remains an hour of despair, grief and desperate need”. Members of the Security Council stressed the need for the unimpeded provision and distribution of humanitarian aid throughout Gaza.
5. The international NGOs CARE and Save the Children released a joint statement on 22 January highlighting that, “they are prevented from scaling up their emergency response because of restrictions on humanitarian access and movement of international NGOs into Gaza.” Citing that the agencies have not been allowed to send any staff and have been limited in sending aid into Gaza, they called for, “immediate and unfettered access for humanitarian aid and staff into Gaza to meet the critical and growing needs of the population, more than half of whom are children.” During his mission in the region, the ERC underscored the need to open all border crossings so that aid and humanitarian staff can enter Gaza to address urgent needs.

#### **2.1 Coordination and Humanitarian Response**

##### **2.1. Protection**

6. UNICEF is preparing a report on child rights violations during the recent fighting in Gaza, as requested by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict.
7. In response to the serious risk posed by Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), UNICEF is airing two new radio announcements on mine risk education and will distribute a leaflet to raise awareness of the risks in Gaza. In an effort to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian support, UN Mine Action Service, Mine Action Group and Norwegian Peoples Aid began an assessment of the scope and scale of the UXO problem in Gaza on 23 January.

8. On 23 January, Amnesty International called on the Israeli authorities to disclose the weapons and munitions used during the fighting in Gaza, citing that they, “now know that white phosphorous munitions were used in built-up civilian areas”. It was highlighted that this information is critical so that doctors can, “be fully informed so that they can provide life-saving care”.

9. Casualty figures:

	<b>Total # since 27 December</b>	<b># / percent of total that are children since 27 December</b>
<b>Palestinian Fatalities*</b>	1,314	412 / 32 percent
<b>Palestinians Injured*</b>	5,450	1,855 / 35 percent
<b>Israeli Fatalities**</b>	13	Unknown
<b>Israelis Injured***</b>	182	Unknown

\* According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH), as of 1600 hrs (1400 hrs GMT) 19 January, not including those treated for shock.

\*\*According to Magen David Adom. Total includes nine Israeli soldiers and four civilians.

\*\*\*According to Magen David Adom, four were critically injured, 11 moderately injured and 167 lightly injured, not including those treated for shock. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 336 Israeli soldiers were wounded.

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

## 2.2. Gaza Border Crossings

10. The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) reported that cash will be allowed into Gaza for UNRWA and the ICRC and that priority consideration will be given for humanitarian items (including food, medicine and non-food items – NFIs) to cross into Gaza.

<b>Crossing</b>	<b>Crossings on 22 January</b>	<b>No. with aid</b>	<b>Type of goods</b>	<b>Crossings on 23 January</b>	<b>No. with aid</b>	<b>Type of goods</b>
<b>Kerem Shalom</b>	108 trucks (in)*	63		Open**		
<b>Rafah</b>				Open**		
<b>Karni conveyor belt</b>	84 trucks (in)*		Flour, grain and wheat	To be confirmed		
<b>Nahal Oz pipeline</b>	440,000 litres of diesel (in)* 225 tonnes of gas (in)*			Open**		
<b>Erez</b>	Open for medical evacuations and humanitarian staff with clearance*			Open for medical evacuations and humanitarian staff with clearance*		

\*Based on reports of the Israeli Joint Humanitarian Coordination Cell (JHCC).

\*\* Based on reports from the Logistics Cluster.

## 2.3. Food

11. WFP reported that they now have access to 100 percent of their existing stocks inside Gaza. Since 27 December WFP has reached over 193,500 beneficiaries with food assistance from its regular caseload. An additional 154,000 Palestinians have been reached through emergency bread distributions and with ready to eat foods. On 22 January, WFP began emergency distributions of vitamin A-fortified date bars and high-energy biscuits

to thousands of displaced people in Gaza City. The distributions also include ready-to-eat meals for hospitals and milk for children and are part of providing a, “nutritious boost”, as food security is restored. The agency is also scaling up its regular distributions of wheat flour, vegetable oil, chick peas and sugar. WFP emphasized that all crossing points into Gaza will need to be re-opened for the agency to be able to move a required 600 tons of food every day into Gaza.

**2.4. Health**

12. Recognizing the constraints posed to the provision of health assistance and care by the closure of borders and limitations on the goods that can cross into Gaza, the Executive Board of WHO called for Israel to, “lift its blockade and to open all border crossings to allow access and free movement of humanitarian aid to the occupied Gaza Strip, including the reinforcing of humanitarian corridors to ensure the delivery of humanitarian medical and food aid and to facilitate the passage of medical teams and the transfer of the wounded and injured.”

13. WHO released a health risk assessments and summary of required interventions for Gaza on 22 January. Priority health concerns included: immediate treatment of traumatic injury, burns and acute surgical conciliations; mental disorders and psychosocial problems related to the stress and loss experienced during the fighting; continued treatment and care for chronic conditions, which were the leading cause of death prior to 27 December; and communicable diseases, including the risk of diarrhoeal disease outbreaks due to disruptions in water and sanitation services.

**2.5. Essential Infrastructure**

14. The ICRC reported that one fifth of the population of Gaza remains without direct access to drinking water, and depends on water purchased from private suppliers. Initial assessments indicated that the damage to the water sector amount to a total of USD 3.5 million, according to UNICEF.

15. Serious public health concerns persist, related to damage to the waste water networks in Gaza, Beit Hanoun, Jabalia and Beit Lahia. The Coast Municipalities Water Utility has conducted emergency repairs, but supplies are urgently required for further repairs. The ICRC is continuing to repair the Sheikh Ajleen wastewater treatment plant, which had been out of order after it was hit by a shell during the second week of fighting.

**2.6. Shelter and Non-Food Items**

16. Many households displaced during the fighting are now homeless due to destruction and damaged caused to their dwellings. UNRWA aims to close the existing emergency shelters as soon as possible so that they can function as schools. Those families who are unable to return to their homes, or cannot rely on the support of host families, will be provided with a short-term rental housing allowance by UNRWA. However, a longer term solution for those displaced is urgently required.

No. in UNRWA Emergency Shelters*	No. UNRWA Emergency Shelters	Decrease in no. of people from 19 January
<b>8,500</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9,535</b>

17. The ICRC reported that they have replaced windows and doors of approximately 600 houses in the southern part of Gaza and at another 430 houses in Gaza City. On 19 and 20 January, the ICRC, CHF International and Mercy Corps distributed plastic sheeting and tarpaulins to over 800 families. There are continued needs for additional non-food items for those who remain displaced, or for those who are repairing their homes.

**2.7. Education**

18. The Education Cluster was activated in Gaza on 21 January. Repair of schools damaged during the fighting poses a serious challenge to re-starting classes. All UNRWA schools are scheduled to open on 24 January, accommodating approximately half of the children who have been out of school since 27 December. The curriculum for the first weeks of operations will focus on responding to children’s psychosocial needs. The Ministry of Education also aims to re-open schools on 24 January.

### 3.0 International Assistance and Priority needs

#### 3.1. Funding

19. 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.

Appeal	Amount Requested	Source	Amount pledged and committed as at 23 January
<b>2009 CAP</b>	<b>USD 529 million</b>		
		Other donors	USD 100 million* (of which 71 million is for immediate funding needs**)
		CERF	USD 7 million***
<b>Outside of the CAP</b>			<b>USD 82 million*</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>			<b>USD 189 million</b>

\* In funding or in-kind donations.

\*\* As of 22 January. Priority projects were identified as Immediate Funding Needs (from the revised CAP and outside of the CAP) 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. 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](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_crisis_cap_funding_2009_english.pdf)

\*\*\* Funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) 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. For a funding update see: <http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/pagelader.aspx?page=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](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int).

#### 3.2. Priority Needs

21. **Access:** The sustained reopening of all crossings into Gaza is necessary to ensure access. The list of goods allowed into Gaza must be expanded greatly, and must include construction materials, which are necessary for rebuilding critical infrastructure and homes. To deliver lifesaving services, humanitarian workers require unimpeded access into Gaza, including NGO staff.
22. **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.
23. **Wheat grain:** Wheat grain is urgently needed for local bakeries and for humanitarian food distributions.
24. 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](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_humanitarian_situation_report_2009_01_08_english.pdf)

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