
Presidency Statement on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip

Press release 227/2006

9 July, 2006

The Presidency of the European Union expresses its grave concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. The Foreign Minister of Finland Erkki Tuomioja has raised this concern in discussions with the Foreign Minister of Israel Ms Tzipi Livni. The Presidency is very preoccupied by the implications of the continuing Israeli military operation. The air strikes on Gaza's only power plant have contributed to the worsening of the humanitarian situation. The Presidency strongly urges Israel to facilitate and ensure transfer of assistance for humanitarian needs. The Presidency stresses the importance of opening up border crossings such as Rafah and Karni in order to allow humanitarian aid to be delivered.

The Presidency is also concerned about the fate of the Palestinians who are stranded on the Egyptian side of the closed border crossing at Rafah, and expects all parties to do everything to facilitate the safe return of these Palestinians to Gaza.