
Media Release

Switzerland demands an end to the blockading of the Gaza Strip

17.11.2008

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is very concerned about the situation in the Gaza Strip which has been completely cut off from the outside world. It demands the parties to the conflict to adhere to the ceasefire agreement and to comply with international humanitarian law.

The FDFA is especially concerned about the humanitarian consequences on the civilian population of the tightened blockade. It demands that access for humanitarian workers to Gaza be ensured in order to facilitate the supply of food and medicines to the local people. Furthermore, the work of the relief agencies must not be hindered.

The FDFA condemns the firing of rockets from the Gaza Strip, which is both intolerable for the Israeli civilian population and a violation of international humanitarian law.

Through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Switzerland supports the humanitarian activities in the Gaza Strip of the UN (WFP, UNRWA) and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The SDC coordinates its relief work closely with the ICRC. In addition, it supports several Palestinian foundations and NGOs active in education, psychiatric services, and human rights. It provides aid on the basis of careful evaluations of the programmes in question and of budget transparency. All of those partner-organisations have had to cease the bulk of their activities and close their headquarters as a result of the recent violence. The SDC office in Jerusalem is in daily contact with its partners.

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs