
Statement by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark on Gaza

UNDP welcomes the current ceasefire and expresses its hopes for an agreement which ends hostilities and civilian suffering while also laying a foundation for sustainable peace. UNDP is supporting the Palestinians to assess immediate needs and chart a path for recovery and human development.

Nearly a month of armed conflict has claimed the lives of more than 1,800 Palestinians, including over 400 children. More than one quarter of the population of Gaza has been displaced. An estimated 65,000 people have seen their homes destroyed or severely damaged.

Living conditions in Gaza were bleak before the current crisis - now they are worse. Instead of being able to move forward, the people of Gaza have been going through a period of "de-development." Vast damage has been done to water and sewage systems, the power supply, schools, hospitals, roads and other infrastructure essential for social and economic sustenance, and human dignity.

Removing rubble, restoring solid waste systems, rebuilding homes and creating jobs and livelihoods are among UNDP's immediate priorities. We are totally committed to supporting Gaza's recovery.

The people of Gaza have suffered for too long in a cycle of crisis and despair. Now is the time for transformative change towards the human development the people long for.

Such a transformation is within reach, but only with the concerted and sustained support of the international community, and with peace.

UNDP joins the UN Secretary-General in his call for the root causes of this conflict to be addressed, including by lifting the blockade which has crippled efforts for human development and economic opportunity since 2007.

The tragic status quo cannot be sustained.