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## GAZA HUMANITARIAN SITUATION REPORT

### 20 JUNE 2007

#### 1. SUMMARY POINTS

- Crossing points into Gaza remain largely closed. Agreed mechanisms for commercial and humanitarian food imports have not yet been re-established. The re-opening of Kami crossing is vital to prevent general food shortages in 2-4 weeks.
- **WFP** reports a 40% increase in the price of wheat flour over the past week. Available food stocks are at risk of hoarding by individual consumers and bulk traders.
- Seven truckloads of food (**WFP**) and 3 trucks of medical supplies (**ICRC/WHO**) entered Gaza through the Kerem Shalom crossing on 19 June. **WFP** hopes to move 10 truckloads per day through the crossing. Meanwhile, 104 UNWRA containers await transit through Kami.
- **UNRWA** wheat flour reserves will be exhausted in 10 days, and **WFP** food reserves in 7 days, unless normal imports are resumed.
- Fuel, electricity and water supplies remain normal.
- The **ICRC** is working to coordinate the transfer of 12 critical medical cases awaiting referral abroad
- Some 250 Gaza residents seeking exit at Erez are being aided by, **ICRC**, **UNRWA** and the **IDF**.

#### 2. ACCESS TO THE GAZA STRIP

All parties have expressed their desire to ensure that basic food and medical supplies enter the Gaza Strip. For a crisis to be avoided, commercial and humanitarian food stocks must be replenished regularly and reliably. However, with the noted exception of small quantities of humanitarian supplies entering Gaza on 19 June, the area remains effectively closed. Six days after the end of the recent crisis, no reliable systems for the entry of basic commodities into the Gaza strip have been re-established. The Secretary General, and the Quartet, have called for the cooperation of all parties to ensure that appropriate access conditions for the passage of humanitarian goods are restored. In addition, arrangements are being sought to resume the secure movement of humanitarian personnel in and out of Gaza.

#### 3. INTERNAL FOOD AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Figures from **WFP** and the **Gaza Businessmen's Association** indicate that commercial stocks of basic commodities, such as flour, sugar, rice, pulses and oil, appear sufficient for 2-4 weeks. In addition, most fresh vegetables remain available on local markets. However, access to basic food items is becoming more difficult for the 87% of Gazans now living below the poverty line<sup>1</sup>: **WFP** estimates that flour prices have risen by 40% in the past week. A sudden, 350% rise in wheat-flour purchases in some areas of Gaza raises serious concerns about hoarding by bulk traders due to the uncertainty of commercial imports. Steep price increases and hoarding are expected to drive up food insecurity, which affected 56 % of Gaza residents prior to the recent conflict. Dairy and other perishable products are reported to be out of stock in several neighbourhoods.

**UNRWA**, which provides emergency food assistance to 850,000 Gaza refugees, has **10 days** of wheat flour stocks. **UNRWA** wheat flour is purchased locally. **UNRWA** operations therefore depend directly on commercial grain imports through the Kami crossing. In addition, **UNRWA** is currently waiting to receive 104 containers of food commodities which remain at Ashdod port due to the closure of Kami crossing.

**WFP**, which provides emergency food assistance to 275,000 non-refugees in Gaza, completed a round of regular distributions on Tuesday 29 May. After importing seven truckloads on 19 June through the Kerem Shalom crossing, **WFP** currently has **7 days'** worth of emergency food stocks available in Gaza. **WFP** are currently working to establish import levels of 10 trucks per day via the crossing.

#### 4. FUEL, ELECTRICITY AND WATER

Supplies of all fuels, including cooking gas, petrol and industrial fuel continues to enter from Israel normally, despite speculation about interruptions. No interruptions in electricity or water supplies from Israel have been reported.

#### 5. HEALTH

Hospitals, primary clinics and emergency services of the **Ministry of Health** continue to operate. Immediate shortages in medical supplies were offset by the import of 3 **WHO** and **ICRC** truckloads via Kerem Shalom on 19 June, and of refrigerated **UNICEF** vaccines via Erez on 20 June. However, fuel supplies for hospital generators and ambulances will be exhausted within one week unless payments to Israeli providers are ensured. A total of 400 medical cases are listed for referral outside of Gaza. Of a reported 19 critical cases awaiting immediate evacuation for treatment in Israel, seven were moved with facilitation by the **ICRC** on 19 June. A further 12 critical cases await transferral.

#### 6. CIVILIAN PROTECTION

The Gaza Strip has been relatively calm since 15 June. However, the number of recorded casualties from the period between 9-14 June continues to rise due to the deaths of critically wounded. The **Ministry of Health** currently reports 135 deceased and 487 injured. Independent estimates are higher. Since the end of the fighting, there continue to be intermittent reports of extrajudicial killings. These raise serious concerns about violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

Also of concern is the situation of a reported 3,500 people at Rafah awaiting re-entry into Gaza from Egypt. In addition, some 250 people wishing to leave Gaza due to perceived threats to their personal security have fled to Erez crossing. They are currently receiving assistance from **UNRWA**, the **ICRC** and the Israel Defense Forces, but their situation remains unresolved.

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<sup>1</sup>The official poverty line in the oPt is set at \$2.4 daily income.