New OCHA reports on the Gaza Strip and latest developments

Dear partners,

Today, we release three reports on the Gaza Strip, covering June 2018, which are available through the links below. We also include here within a short narrative update on several significant developments experienced in Gaza during the first weeks of July.

On 9 July, the Government of Israel imposed a series of severe restrictions on the movement of goods through Kerem Shalom, the main commercial crossing to and from the Gaza Strip, which will remain in place until further notice. According to the Israeli authorities, the measures were adopted in response to the launching of incendiary kites and balloons from Gaza towards Israel, which have resulted in extensive property damage in Israel.

Only food, medical supplies, animal fodder, livestock and fuels are now allowed into Gaza via Kerem Shalom, without quantity restrictions. The entry of all other items, including building materials, furniture, wood, electronics and fabric, has been halted, as has the exit of all goods.

Since the imposition of these restrictions, a total of 193 truckloads carrying the permitted items entered Gaza on 10 July and 174 truckloads with permitted items entered on 11 July. This amounts to 45 per cent or less of the daily average of trucks that entered during the first half of 2018. Among the imports scheduled for 10 July that were cancelled following the announcement were 16 truckloads of building materials for two UN agencies, designated for education, health and WASH projects.

On the same day, the Israeli authorities also prevented the exit of eight truckloads of agricultural produce to markets in the West Bank and Israel. In response, the authorities in Gaza announced a halt in the import of Israeli agricultural produce.

Additionally, the Government of Israel announced on 9 July the termination of a previous extension of the fishing area along the southern coast of Gaza, from six to nine nautical miles.

Depending on their duration, the new restrictions are likely to exacerbate the already dire living conditions in Gaza, driven by over 11 years of an Israeli blockade that has raised concerns of collective punishment, alongside an unresolved internal Palestinian divide.

Best regards,

OCHA oPt