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Situation Report - 21st to 27th March

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Summary

Content

1. MAIN ISSUES

- On 19 March COGAT refused clearance for the following items in USAID shipments to Gaza: Tomato paste; white tahine; jam. The decision means that 150 pallets of food parcels (approximately six truck-loads) were prevented from delivery to Gaza.
- At a Cabinet meeting on 22 March, the Government of Israel instructed relevant authorities to enable the entry – without restriction – of foodstuffs to the residents of Gaza from all relevant sources, in the framework of the humanitarian effort. The Government directed that this instruction should be scrupulously implemented (Source: Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This decision has not yet been implemented.
- Plastic floor mats in shipment for Mercy Corps International have been rejected by COGAT because of their potential use in mosques.

2. LOGISTICS COORDINATION

Jerusalem-Gaza Logistics Cluster: On 24 March, the Logistics Cluster organised a visit to Kerem Shalom border crossing for Logistics Cluster participants to become familiar with procedures for cargo transfer from Israel to Gaza. Representatives from Mercy Corps International, CHF International, MSF Spain, Oxfam, Save the Children, USAID, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and the Logistics Cluster were shown around the crossing and briefed by IDF CLA and civilian MoD staff. A summary of the visit will be posted on the Logistics Cluster website.
A sketch of Kerem Shalom border crossing and link to a live webcam is posted **here**

3. INTERACTION WITH COGAT

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- As reported last week, the Logistics Cluster continues to request clearance from COGAT for transportation of UNICEF early childhood development kits, recreational sports kits and children's toys (musical instruments); UK MAP medical equipment; FAO veterinary supplies; FAO fruit and olive trees; World Vision washing powder in hygiene kits.
- The Logistics Cluster continues to compile information on humanitarian cargo awaiting approval or rejected for transport to Gaza. On 26 March the Logistics Cluster met with COGAT to discuss this cargo. The list of items and explanatory narrative documents are posted **here**

Please note that this document is updated on a regular basis. If your organisation wishes to provide information on cargo which has been refused clearance for entry to Gaza, or cargo which is under review for clearance, please send details to **gaza.logs@logcluster.org**.

4. PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING DELIVERY OF HUMANITARIAN RELIEF TO GAZA

- The Humanitarian community requests the immediate implementation of the Government of Israel's instruction (22 March 2009) to enable the entry of foodstuffs to residents of Gaza, without restriction.
- The Humanitarian community requests COGAT to clearly define the policy-level process governing approval of relief items destined for Gaza. The objective is to increase predictability for clearance of cargo and ensure transparency of process.
- The Logistics Cluster requests that the following measures are taken to increase capacity for transfer of humanitarian relief to Gaza:

- Use of sea containers for the purpose of transportation of humanitarian cargo and permission for the exit/return of empty containers

- Double-stacking pallets on trucks passing through Kerem Shalom

- Installation of better lighting at the Kerem Shalom crossing (Gaza side) to allow operations to continue after dark and thus increase the timeframe for cargo pick-up

Please find the print version in the attachement