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Situation Report - 9th April to 17th April 2009

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Summary

Content

1. MAIN ISSUES

- The Logistics Cluster has received written notification from COGAT stating that “requests allowing construction material into the Gaza strip are not approved at this period”. OCHA has confirmed that the prevention of material for reconstruction is significantly impacting the implementation of the Flash Appeal and other recovery activities in Gaza.
- Three truck-loads of household kits (Save the Children) were stopped at Kerem Shalom crossing on 07 April by IDF who prevented transportation of these items to Gaza. The Logistics Cluster has received no explanation for this action. However, the driver of one of the trucks was informed that the refusal was due to absence of notification from COGAT in Tel Aviv. The items have been taken back to WFP’s Qalandia warehouse.

2. LOGISTICS COORDINATION

- Jerusalem–Gaza Logistics Cluster: Since 25 January the Logistics Cluster has delivered 5878 pallets of cargo to the Gaza Strip through Kerem Shalom crossing, on behalf of 28 cluster members
- Kerem Shalom crossing: The Logistics Cluster together with WFP, UNRWA and USAID will continue to encourage relevant authorities to take practical steps for the expansion of the Gaza side of Kerem Shalom crossing. Construction of an additional staging area and the installation of lighting are necessary in order to improve the process for transportation of humanitarian cargo through the crossing.
- Donations routed through Egypt: NGO ‘Give Gaza’ located in the Gaza Strip has agreed to receive 470 pallets of food items from a bilateral donation (KSA) in El Arish. The Logistics Cluster in El Arish is assisting with guidance on customs processes and clearing agents for transportation of the cargo to Gaza.
- During the past two weeks up to 1000 MT of wheat flour and 500 MT of sugar have been transferred from Egypt to Israel (through Nitzana crossing) by the Egyptian Red Crescent Society. The cargo is currently being stored on the Israeli side of the border awaiting transportation to Gaza.

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- Due to the accumulation of bilateral donations in El Arish, the Governor of North Sinai has requested donors with relief supplies in El Arish to consider local donation of items with a six month expiry date, or less. The Governor also requested dissemination of the message to donor countries to stop transport of humanitarian relief through Egypt until further notice.

3. INTERACTION WITH COGAT

- Due to the Passover holiday (08 -15 April) there have been no COGAT meetings since 07 April.
- There has been no official acknowledgement of the implementation of the 22 March Cabinet instruction for the entry of all foodstuffs to Gaza without restriction. COGAT has stated that requests for coordination of shipments on an individual basis are still necessary.
- The Logistics Cluster continues to request clearance of the following items currently listed in the document 'Clearance Status of Humanitarian Cargo':

- Construction material (Mercy Corps International) – Delayed since 01 April: On 16 April COGAT stated that they will not approve requests for construction material.
- Household kits (Save the Children) - Sent back from Kerem Shalom 07 April.
- UNICEF children's toys (musical instruments) - Delayed since 03 March: COGAT has stated that this shipment is not approved but a decision may be given after the holidays.
- UK MAP medical equipment - Delayed since 30 January: On 16 April COGAT notified the Logistics Cluster that all equipment has been approved but confusion over the PA donation number now prevents transportation.
- FAO veterinary supplies - Delayed since 19 February: All information regarding this cargo has been presented to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who have confirmed that they have now referred the issue back to COGAT.
- FAO fruit and olive trees – Delayed 04 March: COGAT has stated that more information on the planned location of the trees is necessary before approval can be given. UPDATE: FAO have had to cancel this shipment and deliver outside Gaza due to damage to the plants from prolonged stay in the nursery.

Further details on the clearance status of these items is available **here**

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

4. PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT OF DELIVERY OF HUMANITARIAN RELIEF TO GAZA STRIP: FOCUS ON ACCESS FOR RECONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

- The decision by Israeli Authorities to prohibit the transportation of construction items to Gaza has severe implications for the implementation of the humanitarian and reconstruction programme in the Gaza Strip and will significantly impact the disbursement of donor funding for the recovery phase.

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- According to the COGAT report on Merchandise Traffic and Humanitarian Aid 08–15 April 2009, almost 90 per cent of cargo permitted to cross through Kerem Shalom was comprised of shipments of food and hygiene items. This does not reflect the current need for rehabilitation of infrastructure and livelihoods in the Gaza Strip.
- Only 2.4 per cent of cargo which crossed through Kerem Shalom during this period was for rebuilding livelihoods (agricultural input and animal feed).
- The remaining 7.6 per cent of cargo consisted of medical equipment, stationery items and mattresses.
- Security Council Resolution 1860 [S/RES/1860/2009] “emphasizes the need to ensure the sustained and regular flow of goods and people through Gaza crossings” and "Calls for the unimpeded provision and distribution throughout Gaza of humanitarian assistance including food, fuel and medical treatment”.
- This signifies that humanitarian assistance is not limited to food, fuel, and medical supplies.

Find more in the attached Situation Report

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