



Craig Whittaker MP

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Humanitarian Situation in Gaza

Thank you for contacting me about the situation in Gaza.

I share your concerns about the humanitarian situation in Gaza. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan assessed that 1.1 million of Gaza's population are acutely vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance in 2017; and report that a lack of funding for water, sanitation and hygiene interventions have left 1.45 million Gazans at risk of waterborne diseases.

I am encouraged that the UK is a long-term supporter of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, providing basic services to 1.3 million people in Gaza, including basic health care. The UK is also supporting approximately 1 million Gazans by addressing critical water, sanitation and hygiene needs through the United Nations Children's Fund. Moreover, the Government's direct financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority now focuses solely on vital health and education services, in order to meet the immediate needs of the Palestinian people and maximise value for money.

The Government also continues to lobby the Israeli authorities on the issue of improving movement and access into Gaza, and encourages Egypt to show maximum flexibility on opening the Rafah crossing. The UK is working to highlight legal trade for Gazans as being firmly in the region's long-term interests.

As you indicate, we must continue to encourage prioritising progress towards reaching a durable solution for Gaza, taking the necessary practical steps to ensure Gaza's reconstruction and economic recovery.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP