

Israel's newly imposed restrictions affecting thousands of families in Gaza

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The recent restrictions on goods and people imposed by Israel in response to the deteriorating security situation in Gaza are affecting thousands of families, the United Nations warned today.

In February, Israel imposed new restrictions on the movement of people and goods to, from and within the Gaza Strip, including closures of the Kerem Shalom crossing. Since 21 March these restrictions have also included a reduction in the fishing limit from six to three nautical miles, which is affecting some 3,500 families in Gaza whose livelihoods depend on the fishing industry.

“These measures are resulting in the depletion of stocks of essential supplies, including basic foodstuffs and cooking gas, and undermine the livelihoods and rights of many vulnerable Gazan families,” said UN Humanitarian Coordinator James W. Rawley. “If these restrictions continue, the effect upon the Gaza population will be serious.”

Last week, rocket fire from Gaza into Israel raised tensions in the region, breaching the ceasefire agreement brokered by Egypt in November that brought an end to eight days of violence in Gaza and Israel.

In a news release, the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) said it expects Israel to exercise maximum restraint and uphold international law, and refrain from actions that would adversely impact the civilian population in Gaza.

“The United Nations will continue to support Egyptian efforts to restore the calm and fully implement the ceasefire understanding as the only viable way to address the unsustainable situation in Gaza,” UNSCO said