

Press release

Words on paper? UN Security Council resolution must be implemented now

Gaza, Occupied Palestinian Territories (Jan. 9, 2008) – Yesterday's United Nations Security Council Resolution 1860 is an important step forward, but it must be implemented immediately – otherwise, it is just "words on paper", warns CARE.

"The Security Council resolution is an important step towards ending this current conflict, but the devil is in the details," said Martha Myers, CARE International's Country Director in West Bank and Gaza. "If this isn't implemented immediately, it's just words on paper. "

"Gaza's people are facing the destruction of their lives, families, society, and community. They are cut off from water and electricity, and food is in short supply. Health care is inaccessible to all but the injured and even they are not guaranteed care. The people of the Gaza Strip are caged and cannot move away from the violence all around them."

The Security Council resolution calls for an immediate ceasefire, humanitarian access, and a permanent truce.

"What is needed is an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire. The current three-hour ceasefire to allow distribution of humanitarian aid is inadequate. It takes at least five hours to complete a single food distribution and we are faced with a choice of leaving people without provisions or working on while bombs fall. The CARE staff are amazingly brave and deeply committed to the service of their community, but they are at risk as much as any other civilian," said Myers.

CARE is the only international agency providing fresh food to people in Gaza, but it is becoming increasingly dangerous to do so. Yesterday, CARE workers distributing food were forced to flee an area under heaving bombing. CARE normally delivers a week's worth of fresh vegetables to 60,000 people each week, but yesterday were only able to reach 240 families. On Monday, one of the workers for CARE's Fresh Food Project, Mohammed Ibrahim Al Samouni, was killed along with several members of his family, including his 10-month-old son, in an attack on his home.

"CARE is distributing a fraction of the food that we normally deliver because of the bombings, and now, the needs are even higher," said Myers.

About CARE: CARE is one of the world's largest humanitarian aid agencies, providing assistance in nearly 70 countries. CARE has been working in Israel, West Bank and Gaza since 1948, implementing programs in food security, health and water, support for civil society groups, and distributions of fresh food. Since the conflict started Dec. 27, CARE has distributed fresh food, medical supplies, heaters, blankets and plastic sheeting to hospitals, families and feeding centres in Gaza.

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