
'20 years needed to rebuild homes in Gaza because of Israeli restrictions'

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A long-term truce in Gaza was agreed with Israel last week. Israel Defense Forces began operation Protective Edge in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip on 8 July. According to the IDF the operation was to stop rocket fire from Gaza into Israel. More than 2,100 people, mostly Palestinians, died during the 2014 Israeli-Gaza conflict. UN and human rights groups said almost 75 percent of the casualties were civilians.

RT: *Two decades to repair seems a long time since Gaza is such a small territory. Just how bad is the situation in your opinion?*

Ruth Allan: Basically, there has been an unprecedented amount of destruction and damage caused as a result of this Israeli operation in Gaza. The Norwegian Refugee Council as the lead agency of the shelter cluster and has calculated that it will take 20 years to rebuild the homes that are needed in Gaza. And the way we have come to this analysis is by knowing that 17,000 homes were destroyed in Operation Protective Edge. On top of that 5,000 homes have still not been rebuilt from previous military operations here in Gaza. And also there are 75,000 homes that are needed because of the natural increase in the population. So there is a short fall of 100,000 homes.

RT: *How difficult is to supply Gaza with materials for infrastructure rebuilding?*

RA: Bringing in building materials to Gaza is very difficult because of the Israeli blockade which prevents movement of materials and people in and out of the Gaza Strip. So basically with the

border crossing between Israel and Gaza which is open we have calculated that you need 7.5 trucks of gravel which is obviously used for making concrete to build one house! Based on this calculation, on the current Israeli imposed restrictions on Gaza, we think that it will take 20 years to rebuild houses. And that is only houses! Not schools, not hospitals, not any of the other civilian infrastructure which has been damaged, only houses.

RT: *How will those affected families go about their lives with nowhere to live as rebuilding takes place?*

RA: There are several things that are currently happening within Gaza to try and provide some kind of shelter and homes for those who were made homeless. Several local authorities are providing schools where people are currently staying, and the Palestinian Authority, as well as international agencies, is looking at providing transitional solutions to this shelter problem. The reconstruction plans are made.

The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.
