
UN Slams Israel for Suffocating Gaza Economy

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The UN denounced on Wednesday Israeli policies that suffocate the Gazan economy.

"Even before the latest military operations, Gaza's local economy was in a state of total collapse, chiefly because of the accumulated impact of a tightly maintained seven-year blockade and two previous devastating Israeli military operations in November 2012 and December 2008," said a report by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

The UN previously described how the Israeli blockade on Gaza, which bars essential foodstuffs, building materials and medicine, causes an ongoing humanitarian crises.

The Palestinians are now negotiating an end to the crippling embargo.

The UNCTAD report comes after a 50 day Israeli military campaign against Gaza killed over 2,100 Palestinians, including more than 500 children. A truce was finally reached over a week ago between Israel and the Palestinians.

According to the UNCTAD report, Israeli policies caused economic growth in Gaza to fall from 5.9 percent in 2012 to 1.5 percent in 2013. UNCTAD said 36 percent of Gazans are unemployed, while 22 percent of the people in the occupied West Bank are without a job.

The report also slammed Israel's policy of denying Palestinians access to their farmland, irrigation water, stone quarries and minerals and other natural resources in the West Bank, which Israel occupies since 1967. About 60 percent of natural recourse there are under Israeli

control.
