

# *UN Says Israeli Blockade of Gaza Prevents Reconstruction Efforts*

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United Nations, July 10 (RHC)-- A top official in the United Nations has called on the Israeli regime to end its "inexcusable" siege on the Gaza Strip as the blockade has hampered reconstruction in the coastal enclave just one year after Israeli raids on the area devastated hundreds of homes.

"The blockade remains in place and its crippling effect on Gaza is undeniable, inexcusable," Robert Turner, operations director in Gaza for the UN relief agency UNRWA, told reporters.

More than 2,500 were killed in Israel's summer 2014 war on Gaza with more than 500 of them being children. Tens of thousands were also displaced in the wake of the conflict, which also brought about huge devastation across Gaza.

The UN official called for a full lifting of the blockade as he said the partial reopening of the borders would not alleviate the suffering of the Gazans.

One year after the war, homes and installations in Gaza remain flattened with twisted steel rods and concrete blocks still littering the ground in every neighborhood.

Observers say Israel's continued siege is the main reason behind the delayed reconstruction process in Gaza, with many warning that could sow the seeds of a future conflict in the area. About 18,000 homes have reportedly been destroyed or severely damaged during the war.

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