

## Ban Ki Moon: the Gaza blockade is devastating the population



The UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, said on Thursday "the Gaza blockade is devastating the population and achieving little in security and political terms," during his monthly press conference.

He added " If the crossings continue to remain closed for most goods, the people of Gaza will slide into even deeper hardship, with the risk of further radicalization."

He also talked about looking forward to the next Quartet meeting later in the month in Italy hoping to build on what he describe the encouraging momentum to the peace process.



Furthermore, he asked Israel to freeze settlement expansion and dismantle outposts.

On the question of Gaza reconstruction, the UN secretary general said that the issue will be discussed during the Quartet meeting and that he was ready to play any role asked of the him in the reconstruction process, adding that he asked Israeli leaders many times to lift the blockade and allow materials other than essential food into the beleaguered costal Strip.

Asked on Israeli official visits to his office and specifically on the forthcoming visit by Avigdor Lieberman, Ki Moon said that he was looking forward to Lieberman's visit and that they would discuss a wide range of issues pertaining to the Middle East peace process.