

# *Israeli Military Vessel Shoots at Palestinian Boats, Wounds Fishermen*

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Gaza City, January 22 (RHC)-- An Israeli naval patrol has opened fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the coast of the besieged Gaza Strip, wounding at least two Palestinian fishermen. The Israeli vessel fired at the Palestinian boats sailing off the northern Gaza coast on Wednesday.

The Gaza Health Ministry spokesman, Ashraf al-Qudra, said the injured Palestinian fishermen were taken to a hospital to receive medical treatment. An Israeli military spokeswoman has confirmed the attack on the fishing boats.

The Israeli boat "identified several vessels deviating from the designated fishing zone in the northern Gaza Strip," the spokeswoman said. Under Israel's naval blockade on the impoverished enclave, Palestinian boats in Gaza are permitted to fish up to six nautical miles from the coast. However, the targeted fishermen said the Israeli vessel opened fire before they reached that limit.

According to the Gaza Fishermen's Syndicate, the Tel Aviv regime has on numerous occasions violated a ceasefire agreement with the Palestinians that took effect after indirect negotiations in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, last summer.

The truce put an end to the latest Israeli military aggression against Gaza, which started on July 8, 2014, killing at least 2,140 Palestinians and injuring thousands of others. Under the ceasefire agreement, Israel said it would immediately expand the fishing zone off Gaza's coast and allow fishermen to sail as far as six nautical miles from the shore. The Israeli military actions have significantly damaged Gaza's fishing industry.

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