Blast Outside U.N. Refugee Agency HQ in Gaza

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An explosive device was detonated outside the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees in Gaza City overnight, without causing any injuries, U.N. and Palestinian security sources said late Saturday.

"A bomb exploded near the outer wall of U.N.RWA's headquarters in Gaza, some 10 meters from the gate, without causing any injuries or damage," agency spokesman Adnan Abu Hasna told AFP.

The Hamas-run security forces also confirmed the blast, saying they had opened an inquiry after "two homemade bombs" exploded, one outside UNRWA and a second elsewhere in the city, causing slight damage but no injuries.

The incidents took place just hours before members of the Ramallah-based Palestinian cabinet were to visit Gaza.

Such explosions take place on a regular basis in Gaza, often targeting political officials, whether representatives of president Mahmud Abbas's Fatah party or the rival Hamas movement which is still the de facto power in Gaza.

They have also targeted both public buildings and private homes and cars.

In December, an explosive device went off by the French Cultural Centre in Gaza City, the most visible foreign presence in the tiny enclave, which is home to 1.8 million people.

Such incidents, which have increased since last summer's deadly conflict with Israel which left some 2,200 Palestinians dead, are never claimed.

But experts say they point to a deterioration of security in the Gaza Strip which has lived through three wars in six years.