



The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Closure Continues

A Report on the Impact of the Israeli Closure on the Gaza Strip



01 January – 31 December 2012

20 May 2013



The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights is an independent non-profit legal agency based in Gaza city. The Centre was established in April 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists in order to protect human rights and promote the rule of law in accordance with international standards, create and develop democratic institutions and an active civil society in Palestine in accordance with internationally accepted standards and practices and support all efforts aimed at enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights according to international law.

The Centre enjoys Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations. It was granted three international prominent awards for its efforts in the field of human rights:

1. The 1996 French Republic Award on Human Rights; and
2. The 2002 Bruno Kreisky Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights; and
3. The 2003 International Service Human Rights Award (UNAIS).

The Centre has wide relationships with human rights and civil society organizations throughout the world. It is an affiliate of five international and Arab human rights organizations, which are active in the international arena:

International Commission of Jurists

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), headquartered in Geneva, is a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe and the OAU. Founded in 1952, its task is to defend the rule of law throughout the world and to work towards the full observance of the provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. its membership is composed of sixty eminent jurists who are representatives of the different legal systems of the world.

Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme

The Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH) is an international non-governmental organisation dedicated to the world-wide defence of human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Founded in 1922, FIDH has eighty-nine national affiliates in all regions.

Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (Euro-Med Network) is a network of human rights organisations and individuals from the Middle East, North Africa and the European Union, established in 1997. The overall objective of the Network is to contribute to the protection of the human rights principles embodied in the Barcelona Declaration of 1995.

International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC)

The International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) is one of the most important international legal bodies. It is specialized in legal and judicial training. It includes more than 30 members of distinguished legal organizations throughout the world, including American Bar Association; Arab Lawyers Union; and Bar Council of England and Wales.

The Arab Organization for Human Rights

It is an NGO founded in 1983. It calls for respect and promotion of human and people rights and fundamental freedoms in the Arab World for all individuals on its land in accordance with international human rights instruments. The Organization signed an agreement with Egypt in May 2000, according to which its headquarter was moved from Limassol in Cyprus to Cairo.



The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights is an independent non-profit non-governmental organisation dedicated to the protection and promotion of human rights, the rule of law, and democratic principles in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

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Contents:

REPORT SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	6
THE GAZA STRIP CROSSINGS IN 2012.....	8
COMMERCIAL CROSSINGS.....	8
CROSSINGS FOR THE MOVEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS	15
IMPACT OF THE CLOSURE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS OF THE GAZA STRIP POPULATION	19
DETERIORATION OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY RATES RISE.....	19
VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING	20
THE SITUATION OF FOOD SECURITY.....	20
VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION.....	23
VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO HEALTH.....	24
RECOMMENDATIONS	28



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Tables and Diagrams

Tables

Table (1): Number of cargo trucks allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and before the imposition of the closure in June 2007.

Table (2): Comparison between the amount of cement allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Table (3): the amount of construction steel allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Table (4): the amount of construction aggregates allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Table (5): Comparison between the amount of gas allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Table (6): Number of family members of Gazan prisoners in Israeli jails that were allowed to visit their relatives since the re-activation of the visitation program.

Table (7): the daily average of workers allowed to cross the Beit Hanoun crossing in 2012 and the daily average before the imposition of the closure.

Table (8): deterioration of food insecurity levels in the past three years

Table (9): the number of patients who applied at the Ministry of Health for traveling via Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing compared to the patients allowed to travel and the number of patients who faced problems

Table (10): Shows the Israeli violations against Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip in 2012.

Diagrams

Diagram (1): Shows the number of cargo trucks allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and before the imposition of the closure in June 2007.

Diagram (2): Shows the amount of cement allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Diagram (3): Shows the amount of construction steel allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Diagram (4): Shows the amount of construction aggregates allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Diagram (5): Shows the amount of gas allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Diagram (6): Shows the number of family members of Gazan prisoners in Israeli jails that were allowed to visit their relatives since the re-activation of the visitation program.

Diagram (7): Compares between the daily average of workers allowed to cross the Beit Hanoun crossing in 2012 and the daily average before the imposition of the closure.

Diagram (8): deterioration of food insecurity levels in the past three years

Diagram (9): Shows the overall number of patient who applied for treatment in 2012 and the number of those who faced problems and were denied treatment.

Diagram (10): Shows Israeli violations against Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip in 2012.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Report Summary

- **The Closure Continues in 2012:** The economic and social indicators that PCHR documented, and others published by national bodies and institutions, Palestinian government ministries in Gaza, and international organizations such as the World Food Program, UNICEF and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, indicate that the continuous Israeli-imposed closure on the Gaza has caused a deterioration in the humanitarian situation and violated all economic and social rights of the population of the Gaza Strip.
- **Food insecurity:** 40% of the Gaza Strip population suffers from food insecurity, 65% of whom are children. As a result, the levels of malnutrition, underweight, delayed or stunted growth, and anemia increased and became significantly higher than those in neighboring states.
- **Water Conditions:** The percentage of polluted, undrinkable water that reaches the Gaza population is 90%, which has created dangerous results that reflected, and will continue to, on the human health which is exposed to many dangerous diseases that threaten the lives of the population and their future.
- **Violation of the right to education:** The education sector suffers from a real crisis, caused by the closure and the inability to build new school; as a result of which the average number of students in one class room increased to 49 students per room in some schools which hinders the students' ability to comprehend actively.
- **Violation of the right to health:** The Gaza Strip witnessed a continuous lack in medicines and medical supplies, especially in March, June and November. Also, 2012 witnessed a sharp decrease in the number of patients allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing to access hospitals in Israel, Jerusalem and the West Bank. The number of referred patients reached 8596; this number used to reach approximately 20,000 applications annually before the imposition of the closure in 2007.
- **Deterioration of the economic situation:** The economic situation deteriorated in 2012, as a result of the restrictions imposed on movement, the decrease of aid supply, and the paralysis of the private sector. Additionally, the inability to benefit from 40% of the Strip's lands, 82% of its ground water, 50% of its arable land and 85% of its fishing resources.
- **Poverty rates:** The percentage of Palestinian families living under the poverty line is 40%. This large segment of population has lost social protection and respect to their fundamental right to a dignified life.
- **Violation of the right to work:** The unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip has reached 33% (third quarter of 2012) according to the Ministry of Labor's estimations. This percentage is significantly larger among the youth, as 45% of young men and 78.1% of young women are unemployed.
- **Naval blockade:** Palestinian fishermen were deprived from practicing their job, denied of 85% of their income source due to the limited fishing area, even though it was increased in late November 2012 to 6 nautical miles. Israeli forces committed 257 violations against fishermen, including 106 shooting incidents which led to killing of a fisherman and injuring



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

injuring 2 others, 85 arrests, and 41 incidents which led to confiscation, destruction of fishing boats or damaging fishing equipment.

- **Employment of Karm Abu Salem crossing as the only commercial crossing in the Gaza Strip:** In 2012, Israeli forces employed Karm Abu Salem as the only operative commercial crossing in the Gaza Strip, in spite of its limited operational capacity. Also, the crossing is not well equipped to sufficiently supply all the needs of the Gaza Strip population. As a result, the transportation costs rose, which led to the rise imports' prices and adding additional financial burdens to the exporters.
- **Destruction and closure of al-Mentar crossing:** Israeli forces destroyed al-Mentar crossing's facilities, which was, before its closure on 02 March 2012, the major crossing in the Gaza Strip, as it was highly equipped for the entry of goods. 75% of the Gaza Strip's needs used to enter via this crossing, as its operational capacity allows the export of 400 and the import of 600 truckloads daily.
- **Previously taken steps to tighten the closure on the Gaza Strip:** In the past few years, Israeli forces have undertaken measures to tighten the closure on the Gaza Strip, including the complete closure of Nahal Oz crossing, which was dedicated for the delivery of fuel and cooking gas to the Gaza Strip, on 04 January 2010, and Sofa crossing, which was dedicated for the delivery of construction materials, on 15 June 2007.
- **Ban on Gaza Strip imports:** Israeli forces continued to impose an almost-complete ban on the export of Gaza Strip products to the West Bank, Israel and other countries. In 2012, Israeli authorities allowed the export of only 279 truckloads, an average of less than 1 truck per day, while the Strip's exports used to reach 150 truckloads daily before the imposition of the closure on it. The allowed exports represent less than 1% of the Gaza Strip exports before the closure.
- **Restrictions on Gaza Strip imports:** Israeli forces continued to ban the entry of a large number of goods to the Gaza Strip, the vast majority of which are raw materials, construction materials and heavy machinery. The average of daily imports to the Gaza Strip reached 161 truckloads in 2012, i.e. 28.3% of the number of truckloads (570 truckloads daily) imported into the Gaza Strip daily before the tightened closure was imposed on it.
- **Construction materials:** Israeli forces continue to ban the entrance of construction materials for the private sector, and allowed the entry of limited amounts for international organizations. In comparison with the Gaza Strip's annual needs in normal circumstances and before the imposition of the closure, the percentage of materials allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 reached 7.03% of its needs of cement, 1.91% of the needed construction steel and 89.46% of its needs of construction aggregates.
- **Vehicles:** In 2012, Israeli forces continued to ban the entry of buses, trucks and heavy machinery to the Gaza Strip, and imposed restrictions on the entry of small cars to the Strip, limiting the number of cars allowed to enter the Gaza Strip to 80 cars per week; thus, the prices of vehicles in the Gaza Strip are significantly higher than those in the West Bank.
- **Fuel:** Israeli forces continue to limit the amount of fuel allowed to enter the Gaza Strip since November 2007, and in 2012 they allowed the entry of very limited quantities of diesel, industrial fuel and benzene to the Gaza Strip, which used to reach 350,000 liters of



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PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

diesel and 120,000 liters of benzene daily before the Israeli authorities decision to limit the amount of fuel allowed into Gaza. Through the past six years, the Gaza population relied on the diesel and benzene imported to the Gaza Strip through the tunnels on the Palestinian – Egyptian borders.

- **Cooking gas:** The Gaza Strip witnessed several gas crises in 2012, due to the reduction of gas amounts allowed into Gaza, as well as the repetitive closing of Karm Abu Salem crossing, and its limited operation capacity. The average amount of cooking gas allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 reached 99.28 tonnes daily, i.e. 49.46% of Gaza's daily needs.
- **Beit Hanoun crossing:** In 2012, Israeli forces continued to close Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing for the movement of Palestinians. Israel only allows the movement of a limited number of groups: patients in critical state; international journalists; international workers; and travelers abroad. These groups were allowed to travel via the crossing under severe restrictions, complicated procedures and degrading treatment. Whilst civilians in the Gaza Strip have been denied access to holy places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem to perform religious rituals. Students were prevented from traveling to join universities in the West Bank. Families were prevented from visiting their relatives in the West Bank or vice versa.
- **Rafah International Crossing Point:** during the reporting period, Egyptian authorities added significant improvements on the operation mechanism of the Rafah Crossing Point, which eased the suffering of Palestinians wishing to travel through the sole outlet from Gaza. The operation of the crossing point continued under the same adopted mechanism before it was closed by Israeli authorities in June 2006, which allowed the following groups to travel to travel via the crossing without obtaining a travel permit: Palestinian women of all ages; Palestinian males under 18 and above 40 years old; patients; holders of foreign passports; and students enrolled in Egyptian universities.



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Introduction

This report is issued in the context of the closure policy imposed by the Israeli authorities on the Gaza Strip, which has been implemented for six consecutive years, which has affected Palestinians' lives in a brutal way. These cruel conditions resulted from the restrictions imposed on the border crossings affecting the economic, social and cultural rights of 1.6 millions in the Gaza Strip and all their basic needs. This report, that covers the year 2012, documents the state of the Gaza Strip's border crossings used for the movement of persons and goods. Further, it presents comprehensive statistics on the border crossings showing the latest developments at the crossings and the impacts on the Gaza Strip. The report also refutes the Israeli claims on the alleged "easing" of the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.

The reporting period witnessed a large-scale Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (14 – 21 November 2012) for 8 consecutive days, which caused wide-scale destructions to civilian objects as well as governmental facilities. The issuance of this report coincides with the fourth anniversary of the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009). It documents the impact of denying the entrance of construction materials for the private sector, which is in urgent need for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip in order to rebuild all civilian facilities that were destroyed partially or completely during the mentioned period. The report presents statistics on the limited quantities of construction materials allowed for international organizations, in addition to statistics on the annual needs and the basic quantities needed to avoid a humanitarian crisis.

The report addresses the health situation in the Gaza Strip focusing on medical referrals and difficulties that obstructed the patients' freedom of movement, denied them their right to travel and/or delayed dates of traveling for hundreds of patients seeking for medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip. As a result, they suffered from serious health problems leading to the death of a number of them.

The report focuses on the educational situation under the ongoing closure as well, while it sheds light on the impact of preventing thousands of students in the Gaza Strip from joining the West Bank universities to choose the fields they prefer and are considered as vital for the Gaza Strip as a result of the continued closure and closing of the borders.

The report addresses the economic situation in the Gaza Strip and how thousands of Palestinian families lost their income as thousands of workers in the economic sectors lost their jobs. It shed light on the high rates of families below poverty line and the unprecedented rates of unemployment due to the semi-complete paralysis of the economy.

The report analyses the effect of the naval blockade on the Gaza Strip, in spite of the extension of the distance allowed for fishing to 6 nautical miles. Furthermore, it reflects the impact of preventing the Palestinian fishers from reaching areas in which fish breeds. It also shows the



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

frequent attacks against the fishermen such as firing, killing and wounding fishers, in addition to chasing, searching and insulting them, as well as confiscating their fishing boats.

The report concludes that the field facts in 2012 prove that the Israeli closure on the Gaza Strip continued, refuting the Israeli allegations about the easing of the closure and the restrictions imposed on the entrance of various goods to the Strip. Israeli authorities started these allegations in June 2010, the latest of which was on 31 December 2012, as Major General Etan Dankot, Operations Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, stated to the Israeli Radio that Israel would allow the entry of raw construction materials, passenger buses, and trucks, and improve the capacity of electric power on the Israeli electricity networks destined for the Gaza Strip for the first time since the closure was imposed on the Gaza Strip.

The facts documented in the report confirm that these Israeli facilitations are false as well as being limited, and it is a one-time-facilitation in the vast majority. No substantial change has occurred on the movement of commercial crossing under the continued almost-complete ban on all Gaza-made exports, except for very limited quantities, the most of which are agricultural products. Furthermore, Israeli authorities continued to ban the entry of the majority of the basic goods needed for the Gazan population, especially construction materials, raw materials needed for production, machinery, industrial equipment, and production lines. The Israeli authorities' announcement of the alleged facilitations on the entrance of new goods into the Gaza Strip (most of which are foodstuff and consumer goods), are proved to be a mere attempt to delude the international community that facilitations on the movement of goods into the Gaza Strip have been made. However, the goods that were allowed in did not answer the minimum amount of the Gaza Strip population's basic needs, and even the Gaza market did not need these new products, as they were already imported in large quantities from Egypt via the tunnels. Additionally, the challenging economic and social situation hinders the civilian's ability to buy these products.

The report also shows that as long as the Israeli authorities continue to allow limited goods into the Gaza Strip and ban dozen others, especially construction and raw materials, the situation in the Gaza Strip will continue to deteriorate, and there will be no real change to the Palestinians' economic and social situation.

The report also confirms that the continuous ban on the Gaza exports to the West Bank, Israel and the rest of the world, including industrial and agricultural exports, which limits the possibility of resuscitating the Gazan economy, which suffers a catastrophic and chronic deterioration as a result of the ban policy. There are limited exceptions as the Israeli authorities allowed the export of limited amounts, mostly agricultural and consumer products such as strawberries, flowers and tomatoes, and cloths, biscuits and furniture. This amount is less than 1% of the Gaza Strip's exports before the tightening of the closure in 2007.

This report reiterates the fear that the Israeli authorities' policies and claims about closure facilitations may push towards another internationally-accepted stage of the unjust closure. These policies are, particularly, part of measures taken to institutionalize the closure on the Gaza Strip with international consent, which means that Israel succeeded in manipulating the



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

rules of international law, including the international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Perhaps the Gaza population does not suffer from shortage of goods, but their economic

dependence and inability to take care of their own continues as well as being isolated from the rest of the world economically, socially, culturally, and academically.

The Gaza Strip Crossings in 2012

Commercial crossings

- **Employment of Karm Abu Salem crossing as the only commercial crossing in the Gaza Strip:** In 2012, Israeli forces employed Karm Abu Salem crossing, in the southeast of Rafah, as the only operative commercial crossing in the Gaza Strip, in spite of its limited operational capacity. Also, the crossing is not well equipped to sufficiently supply all the needs of the Gaza Strip population. As a result, the transportation costs rose, which led to the rise of the imports' prices and adding additional financial burdens to the exporters (the very limited agricultural goods that are allowed to be exported). As a result of these measures, the transportation of 1 goods container from the Port of Ashdod to the Gaza Strip is 10,400 NIS (a distance is 70 kilometers), while the cost of transporting the same container from China to the Port of Ashdod is 6,600 NIS (a distance is 9,000 kilometers), due to the complicated transportation measures and high fees imposed by the Israeli authorities on the good entering the Gaza Strip
- **Destruction and closure of al-Mentar crossing:** Israeli forces destroyed al-Mentar crossing's facilities, which was, before its closure on 02 March 2012, the major crossing in the Gaza Strip, as it was highly equipped for the entry of goods. 75% of the Gaza Strip's needs used to enter via this crossing, as its operational capacity allows the export of 400 and the import of 600 truckloads daily. According to the Crossings Agreement signed in November 2005, this crossing allows the exportation of 400 truckloads daily of vegetables, fruits and industrial and commercial products, while allows the importation of 600 truckloads of goods daily. Al-Mentar crossing is located inside the main industrial zone that was destroyed by the Israeli forces in the 2008-2009 Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip.
- **Previously taken steps to tighten the closure on the Gaza Strip:** In the past few years, Israeli forces have undertaken measures to tighten the closure on the Gaza Strip, such as the employment of Karm Abu Salem crossing, which is unsuitable for commercial purposes, as the main and sole crossing in the Gaza Strip. On 04 January 2010, Israeli authorities closed Nahal Oz crossing, which was dedicated for the delivery of fuel and cooking gas to the Gaza Strip, and deferred the delivery of the limited quantities of fuel to Karm Abu Salem crossing. As a result of this closure and the employment of the under-equipped Karm Abu Salem for the transportations of fuel, especially cooking gas, into the Gaza Strip, the Gaza Strip witnessed many gas crises within the past three years. Additionally, Israeli authorities closed Sofa crossing, which was dedicated for the delivery



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

of construction materials on 15 June 2007, although it was used for the entrance of humanitarian aid until November 2008, when it was closed completely and the delivery of the limited humanitarian aid was transferred to Karm Abu Salem crossing as well.

- **Ban on Gaza Strip imports:** Israeli forces continued to impose an almost-complete ban on the export of Gaza Strip products to the West Bank, Israel and other countries. In a limited exception, Israeli authorities allowed the export of limited quantities of agricultural and consumer products such as flowers, strawberries and tomatoes, and clothes, biscuits and furniture. In 2012, Israeli authorities allowed the export of only 279 truckloads, an average of less than 1 truck per day, while the Strip's exports used to reach 150 truckloads daily before the imposition of the closure on it. The allowed exports represent less than 1% of the Gaza Strip exports before the closure.
- **Restrictions on Gaza Strip imports:** PCHR's documentations in 2012 refute the alleged Israeli announcement of easing the closure, as Israeli authorities continued to ban the entry of a large number of goods to the Gaza Strip, the vast majority of which are raw materials, all construction materials and heavy machinery that are necessary for the construction sector. Therefore, as well as the continuous closure of the Karm Abu Salem crossing, the sole commercial crossing into the Gaza Strip, the percentage of actual imports into Gaza remains very low and does not satisfy the minimum needs of the Gazan population, as well as it being mostly consumer products. The average of daily imports to the Gaza Strip reached 161 truckloads in 2012, i.e. 28.3% of the number of truckloads (570 truckloads daily) imported into the Gaza Strip daily before the tightened closure was imposed on it.¹

Table (1): Number of cargo trucks allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and before the imposition of the closure in June 2007

	Before June 2007	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	Mar 2012	Apr 2012	May 2012	Jun 2012	Jul 2012	Aug 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2012
Daily Average	570	162	135	112	149	180	168	178	166	166	178	133	209
Daily Average Before June 2007	100%	28.5%	23.7%	19.7%	26.1%	31.6%	33.3%	31.1%	29.1%	29.1%	31.2%	23.3%	36.3%

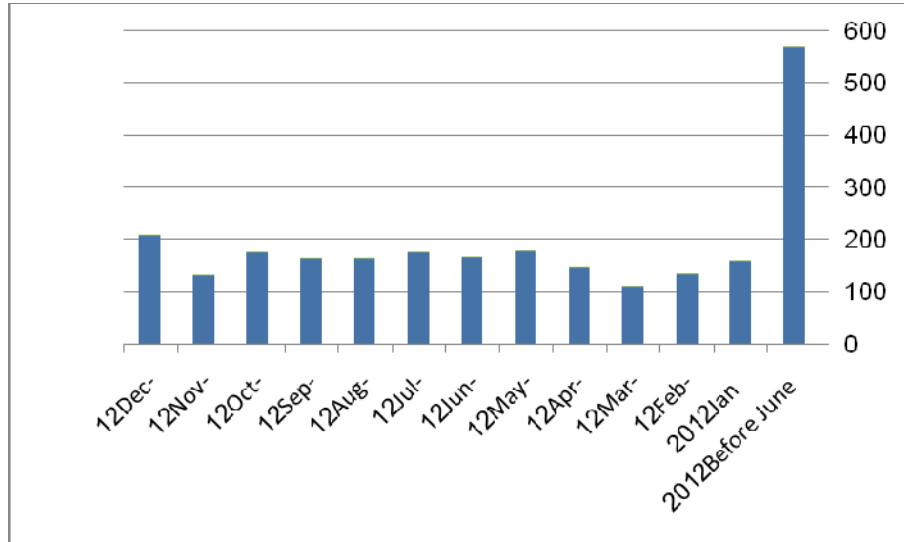
¹ Source: The Palestinian Ministry of National Economy in Gaza.



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Diagram (1): Shows the number of cargo trucks allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and before the imposition of the closure in June 2007.



- **Construction materials:** Israeli forces have continued to ban the entrance of construction materials for the private sector for more than 6 years now. Israeli authorities allowed in June 2010 the entry of limited amounts of construction materials for international organizations; however, the allowed amounts are very limited and do not satisfy Gaza's minimum needs. According to the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy, in 2012 Israeli authorities allowed the entry of 816,389 tons of construction aggregates, 77,031 tons of cement and 11,921 tons of construction steel for projects conducted by international organizations, under the so-called facilitations that the Israeli authorities announced in June 2010. Also in the reporting period, Israeli forces allowed the entrance of limited quantities of tar, building supplies, plumbing tools, ceramic and marble.
1. Cement: the amount of cement allowed into the Gaza Strip for international organizations in 2012 reached 77,031 tons, which is a very limited quantity and does not exceed 7.03% of the Gaza Strip's annual needs in normal circumstances, as before the imposition of the closure on the Gaza Strip and ban on the entry of construction materials 6 years ago, the Strip's annual needs exceeded 1 million tons.



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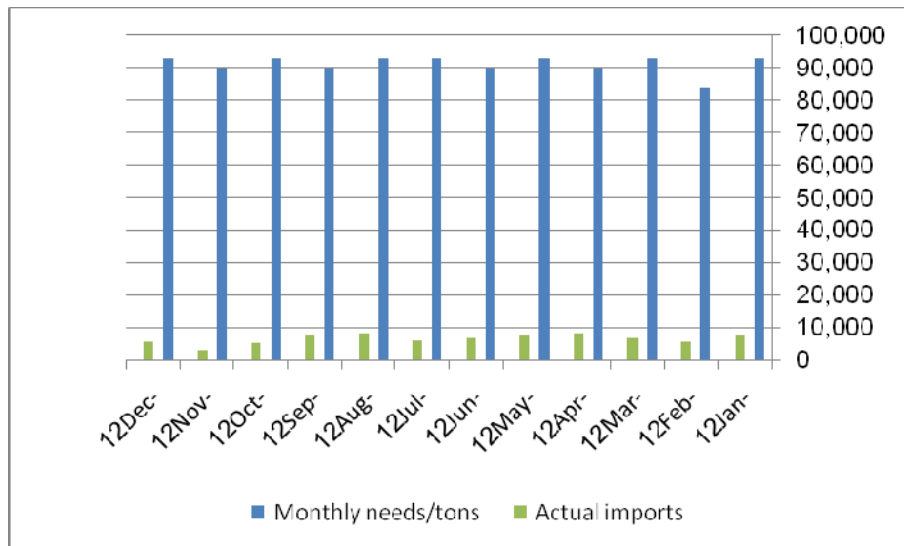
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Table (2): Comparison between the amount of cement allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	Mar 2012	Apr 2012	May 2012	Jun 2012	Jul 2012	Aug 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2012	Total
Monthly Needs/ton	93,000	84,000	93,000	90,000	93,000	90,000	93,000	93,000	90,000	93,000	90,000	93,000	1,095,000
Actual imports	7,412	5,451	6,524	8,232	7,470	6,652	5,936	7,999	7,435	5,305	3,061	5,554	77,031
Percentage	7.96%	4.48%	7.01%	9.14%	8.03%	7.39%	6.38%	8.60%	8.26%	5.70%	3.48%	5.97%	7.03%

Source: the National Economy Ministry in Gaza.

Diagram (2): Comparison between the amount of cement allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.



2. Construction steel: the amount of construction steel allowed into the Gaza Strip for international organizations in 2012 reached 11,921 tons, which is a very limited quantity and does not exceed 1.91% percent of the Strip's annual needs in normal as before the imposition of the closure on the Gaza Strip and ban on the entry of construction materials 6 years ago, the Strip's annual needs exceeded 622,000 tons.



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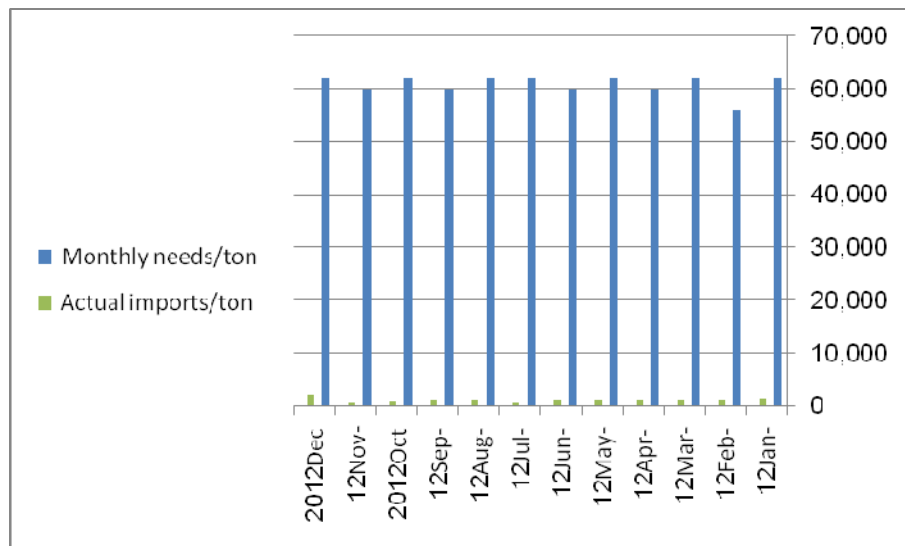
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Table (3): the amount of construction steel allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	Mar 2012	Apr 2012	May 2012	Jun 2012	Jul 2012	Aug 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2012	Total
Monthly Needs/ton	62,000	56,000	62,000	60,000	62,000	60,000	62,000	62,000	60,000	62,000	60,000	62,000	622,000
Actual Imports/ton	1,435	979	941	1,088	828	920	486	873	1,159	717	514	1,981	11,921
Percentage	2.31%	1.74%	1.51%	1.81%	1.33%	1.53%	.78%	1.40%	7.93%	1.15%	.85%	3.19%	1.91%

Source: the National Economy Ministry in Gaza.

Diagram (3): the amount of construction steel allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.



3. Construction aggregates: the amount of construction aggregates allowed into the Gaza Strip for international organizations in 2012 reached 816,389 tons, about 89.46% percent of the Strip's annual needs in normal as before the imposition of the closure on the Gaza Strip and ban on the entry of construction materials 6 years ago, the Strip's annual needs exceeded 816,389 tons.



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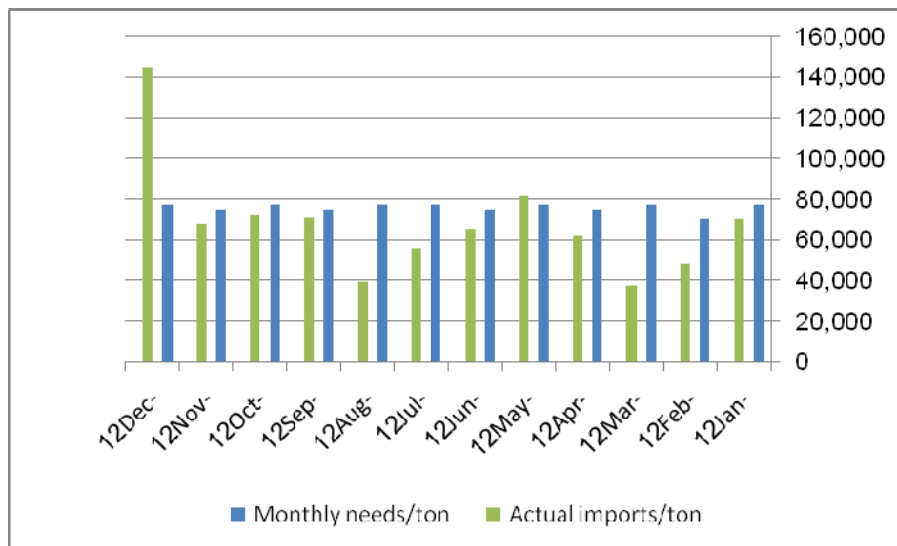
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Table (4): Shows the amount of construction aggregates allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	Mar 2012	Apr 2012	May 2012	Jun 2012	Jul 2012	Aug 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2012	Total
Monthly Needs/ton	77,500	70,000	77,500	75,000	77,500	75,000	77,500	77,500	75,000	77,500	75,000	77,500	912500
Actual Imports/ton	70,000	48,465	37,380	62,310	81,926	65,530	55,790	39,540	71,035	71,730	67,650	145,033	816,389
Percentage	90.32%	69.23%	48.23%	83.08%	105.71%	87.37%	71.98%	51.01%	94.71%	92.55%	90.08%	187.1%	89.46%

Source: the National Economy Ministry in Gaza.

Diagram (4): Shows the amount of construction aggregates allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.



- Vehicles:** In 2012, Israeli forces continued to ban the entry of buses, trucks and heavy machinery to the Gaza Strip, and imposed restrictions on the entry of small cars to the Strip, limiting the number of cars allowed to enter the Gaza Strip to 80 cars per week; thus, the prices of vehicles in the Gaza Strip are significantly higher than those in the West Bank.
- Fuel:** Israeli forces continue to limit the amount of fuel allowed to enter the Gaza Strip since November 2007, and in 2012 they allowed the entry of very limited quantities of diesel, industrial fuel and benzene to the Gaza Strip, which used to reach 350,000 liters of diesel and 120,000 liters of benzene daily before the Israeli authorities decision to limit the amount of fuel allowed into Gaza. Through the past six years, the Gaza population relied on the diesel and benzene imported to the Gaza Strip through the tunnels on the Palestinian – Egyptian borders.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

6. **Cooking gas:** The Gaza Strip witnessed several gas crises in 2012, due to the reduction of gas amounts allowed into Gaza, as well as the repetitive closing of Karm Abu Salem crossing, and its limited operation capacity. The most significant crisis started in mid November, which witnessed a large-scale Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, and is still on-going to this date. Palestinian civilians in Gaza depend solely on the limited amounts of cooking gas imported from Israel via Karm Abu Salem crossing, as it is not possible to import it through the tunnels due to technical difficulties. The daily average of cooking gas allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 reached 99.28 tons, approximately 49.46% of the daily needs of the Gaza population.

Table (5): Comparison between the amount of gas allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.

Month	Daily average/tons	Percentage of daily average compared to the actual needs
January 2012	91	45.5%
February 2012	107	53.4%
March 2012	64.8	32.4%
April 2012	114.4	57.2%
May 2012	137.3	68.6%
June 2012	109.7	48.8%
July 2012	78.4	39.2%
August 2012	60.9	34.4%
September 2012	147.6	73.1%
October 2012	93.3	49.2%
November 2012	67	33.5%
December 2012	111	55.5%
Actual needs	200	100%

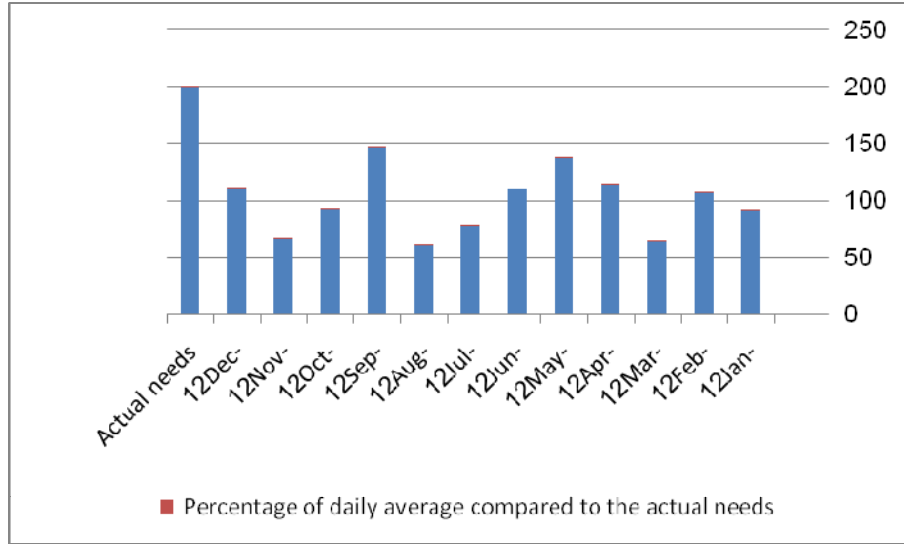
Source: General Petroleum Department in Gaza.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Diagram (5): Comparison between the amount of gas allowed into the Gaza Strip in 2012 and its actual needs.



Crossings for the movement of individuals

- **Movement of Gazans via crossings for individuals' movement:** the population of the Gaza Strip remains denied of their right to the freedom of movement, and suffer greatly from the restraints imposed upon their movement through all the crossings that link the Gaza Strip to the rest of the world, as well as the West Bank and Israel.
- **Gazans denied travel via Beit Hanoun crossing (Erez):** The Palestinians in the Gaza Strip remain denied of their right to freedom of movement, and suffer greatly due to the restraints imposed upon their travels via Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing, the only port for the Gazans into the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and/or Israel. This has continued in 2012, Beit Hanoun crossing continued to be closed for the movement of Palestinians. Civilians in the Gaza Strip have been denied access to holy places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem to perform religious rituals. Students were prevented from traveling to join universities in the West Bank. Families were prevented from visiting their relatives in the West Bank or vice versa. Israeli authorities have only allowed, since Hamas movement overtook control over Gaza on 15 June 2007, a limited number of groups to travel via the crossing: patients in critical state; international journalists; international workers; and travelers abroad. These groups were allowed to travel via the crossing under severe restrictions, complicated procedures and degrading treatment.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

- **Denying Gazan patients the right to receive medical treatment in hospitals in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and/or Israel:** 2012 witnessed a sharp decline in the number of patients from the Gaza Strip allowed to travel via the crossing. Israeli authorities obstructed the access of thousands of patients to health care in hospitals in the West Bank and/or Israel with its conditions and constraints on applications for treatment in those hospitals. Even in the limited cases where patients were allowed to apply, Israeli authorities refused to give passing permits for hundreds of them under different pretexts, most important of which: security reasons, orders to change companions, wait for another appointment, or waiting for an Israeli reply after doing the security interview. Patients in the Gaza Strip, who are referred to Palestinian hospitals in the West Bank, including hospitals in Jerusalem, and Israeli hospitals, suffer due to the being blackmailed by the Israeli Internal Security Service (Shabak) to force them to collaborate with them and give them security information. Israeli authorities started denying a new category of patients from travelling via Beit Hanoun crossing for treatment, under the pretext that what their cases need is not life saving but luxury. The latest category includes patients who have lost vision and limbs, which raised the number of patients whose referral applications were refused. For more information on statistics related to medical referrals, view the part of this report on the right to health.
- **Restrictions on the visitation program for Palestinian prisoners' families from Gaza:** Israeli prison service agreed in 2012, within the latest deal with prisoners after their 30-day hunger strike which ended on 14 May 2012, to allow the visits for the families of prisoners in Israeli jails from the Gaza Strip, like that for those from the West Bank. Each prisoner is entitled to two visits a month, each for 45 minutes. According to PCHR's documentations, Israel did not abide by the deal as they started organizing limited visitations; dividing them into groups with each one including 23 prisoners. They also denied visitation rights to children, or entering personal things for the prisoners. Furthermore, Israeli authorities stopped the visitation program in 2012 to the approximately 440 Palestinians from Gaza detained in Israeli jails without any given reasons. In 2012, the number of family members of prisoners that were allowed to visit their relatives in Israeli jails reached 869. Those who were allowed to visit were subjected to arbitrary procedures, obstacles, humiliating and unethical search practices. They also suffered from the arbitrary provocative measures practiced against them, the constant threats of cancelling their visitation rights in the future and depriving them from seeing their relatives if they do not adhere to the Israeli forces' orders. It should be mentioned that the Israeli forces have prevented prisoners from Gaza, who are distributed among all Israeli detention facilities, from their families' visitation since 6 June 2007, in violation of the international humanitarian law, and with the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, especially article 116, which stipulates that: " Every internee shall be allowed to receive visitors, especially near relatives, at regular intervals and as frequently as possible. As far as is possible, internees shall be permitted to visit their homes in urgent cases, particularly in cases of death or serious illness of relatives."



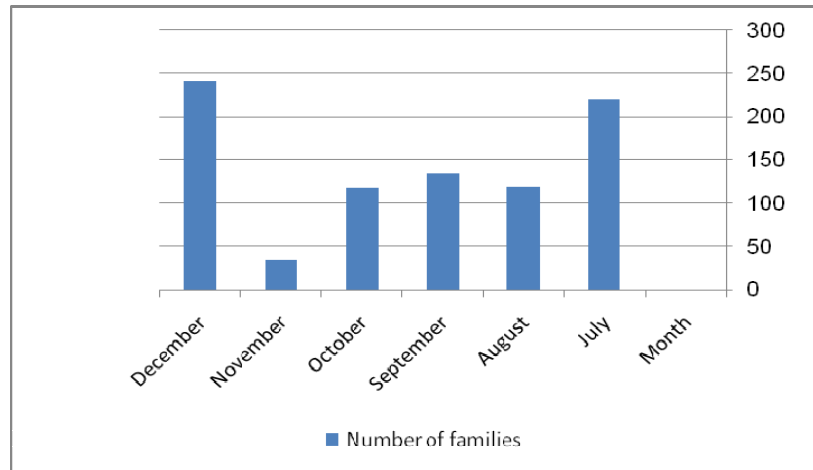
المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Table (6): Number of family members of Gazan prisoners in Israeli jails that were allowed to visit their relatives since the re-activation of the visitation program

Month	July	August	September	October	November	December
Number Of families	220	120	135	118	35	241

Diagram (6): Number of family members of Gazan prisoners in Israeli jails that were allowed to visit their relatives since the re-activation of the visitation program



- **Restricting the movement of traders from the Gaza Strip to Israel or the West Bank:** in 2012, there was a significant decline in the numbers of traders allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing, as the daily average of traders allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun was 68. This is considered a decline in comparison to the daily average of businesspeople allowed to travel via the crossing in 2006 that was 150 traders daily.

Table (7): the daily average of workers allowed to cross the Beit Hanoun crossing in 2012 and the daily average before the imposition of the closure.

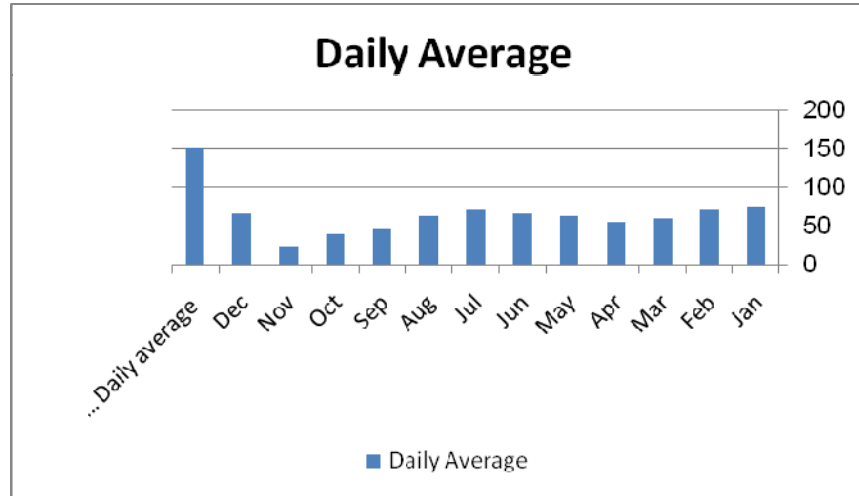
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Daily average before the closure
Daily Average	75	71	59	55	63	65	70	62	46	39	24	65	150



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Diagram (7): the daily average of workers allowed to cross the Beit Hanoun crossing in 2012 and the daily average before the imposition of the closure.



- **Rafah International Crossing Point:** during the reporting period, Egyptian authorities added significant improvements on the operation mechanism of the Rafah Crossing Point, which eased the suffering of Palestinians wishing to travel through the sole outlet from Gaza. The operation of the crossing point continued under the same adopted mechanism before it was closed by Israeli authorities in June 2006, which allowed the following groups to travel via the crossing without obtaining a travel permit: Palestinian women of all ages; Palestinian males under 18 and above 40 years old; patients; holders of foreign passports; and students enrolled in Egyptian universities. According to PCHR's follow-up, hundreds of Palestinians, who met the conditions to go through Rafah crossing, were delayed, especially in June, July, August and September,² due to the limitation on the number of travelers, the overcrowding at the crossing, especially during the summer vacation and the high number of Palestinians wanting to travel after 5 years of suffering. This creates an overload of the crossing's administration, which has modified travel dates several times. As a result, Palestinians wishing to travel had to register and reserve a date ahead of time. PCHR has expressed, through its reports that monitor the crossing's operation, its hope that the Egyptian authorities would adopt measures that would enhance the Gazan's practice of their right to freedom of movement, especially for young men between 18 and 40 years old, including travelling freely in and out of the Gaza Strip via Rafah crossing.

² On 05 August 2012, Egyptian authorities closed the crossing for 8 days, after a crime was committed and 16 Egyptian soldiers were killed. The crossing was temporarily opened on 10 August 2012 for Palestinians wishing to travel back to Gaza, performers of the little pilgrimage and humanitarian cases. On 26 August 2012, the Egyptian authorities re-opened the border under the same operative hours.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Impact of the Closure on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the Gaza Strip Population

The aggravation of the humanitarian conditions and economic and social rights in the Gaza Strip continued due to the dangerous and long-term effects of the Israeli closure policy which succeeded in undermining any real chance of restore the Gaza Strip's economy and reviving its different sectors. This systematic policy resulted in violations of the Palestinians' right to an adequate standard of living as it includes the right to food security, the right to adequate housing, the right to work, the right to social security, the right to health and the right to education.

Deterioration of the Economic Situation, Unemployment and Poverty Rates Rise

The on-going closure and restrictions imposed on the entry of raw materials that are necessary for production, as well as the destruction of 70% of Gaza's economic facilities during Israeli military operations against it has led to the paralysis of the different economic sectors, which suffered already due to the closure of the commercial crossings.

The deterioration of the economic situation in the Gaza Strip led to the percentage of Palestinian families living below the poverty line reached 38.8%, 21.1% of them live in extreme poverty.³ Also, the unemployment rate reached 31% in 2012, 20% of them are males and 50% are females according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.⁴

In this context, the Trade and Development report of 2012, issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), warned of the consequences of the high unemployment rate among Palestinian youths which could fuel more desperate measures, confirming that the workers' situation in the Gaza Strip is one of the worse in the area. The report also asserted that the economic horizon in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) is getting dimmer, and the report provided a

number of explanations to justify this state, including the restrictions on movement, the reduced humanitarian aid, paralysis of the private sector and the budget crisis. Additionally, the report affirmed that the Palestinian economy is unable to benefit from 40% of its lands and 82% of its groundwater. The report criticized as well the catastrophic impacts of the occupation on the agricultural sector in Palestine, explaining that Palestinians cannot benefit of half of the arable lands in Gaza and 85% of its fishing resources. The report also mentioned that the Palestinian economic and commercial dependency to Israel is alarming, as commerce with Israel makes 80% of the overall Palestinian commercial exchanges, the trade deficit with

³ Economic Performance report of 2012, The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), 13 May 2013.

⁴ Status of the Palestinian Labor Force in Palestine in 2012, (PCBS), 30 April 2013.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Israel represents 84% of the overall Palestinian deficit and 31% of Palestine's national produce⁵.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) considered that "the situation of workers in Gaza is one of the worst in the region and the world," pointing out that the unemployment rate in Gaza is the highest regionally. A report issued by ILO in 2012 said that the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip is three times the regional average, and called for urgent attention in the form of assistance for vocational training, business development and employment directed at young men and women, as Gaza's growing youth population has a right to better work opportunities and growth with equity. They need decent jobs, a minimum of social protection and respect for their basic rights to ensure a life of dignity, under the workers' fragile situation in the oPt.⁶

Violation of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

The closure imposed on the Gaza Strip has targeted all what may contribute to facilitating the livelihood of the Palestinian civilians. Because of the high rates of unemployment and deterioration of income levels resulting originally from the restrictions imposed on the freedom of movement of persons and goods, the levels of food insecurity increased and nutrition levels decreased. Malnutrition of children raises the concerns of Palestinians and organizations working in the fields of health and children. The families, whose breadwinners used to work in Israel, are the most affected by the food insecurity. The restrictions on the access to their traditional sources of livelihood in the Israeli agricultural and industrial markets affected to their ability to provide their families with the food they need.

The situation of Food Security

Food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. If civilians lack the ability to obtain the needed food, due to physical, social or economic constraints, there will be food insecurity. According to the representative of the World Food Programme (WFP) in the occupied Palestinian territory, Pablo Recalde⁷, in a statement issued on 09 December 2012, 40 percent of Gazans do not have regular access to food and are dependent on aid to survive, 65% of whom are under 18 years. Food insecurity has led to the high levels of malnutrition, weight loss, delayed or stunted growth and anemia among children, these levels have become exceedingly higher than those in neighboring countries.

Food insecurity among children is linked to the high levels of severe malnutrition and difficulties of growth in the long run. Besides, their health conditions are expected to escalate

⁵ Trade and Development Report, 2012, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), September 2011.

⁶ ILO, press release 05 September 2012.

⁷ Press conference for Pablo Recalde held in Dubai on 09 December 2012.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

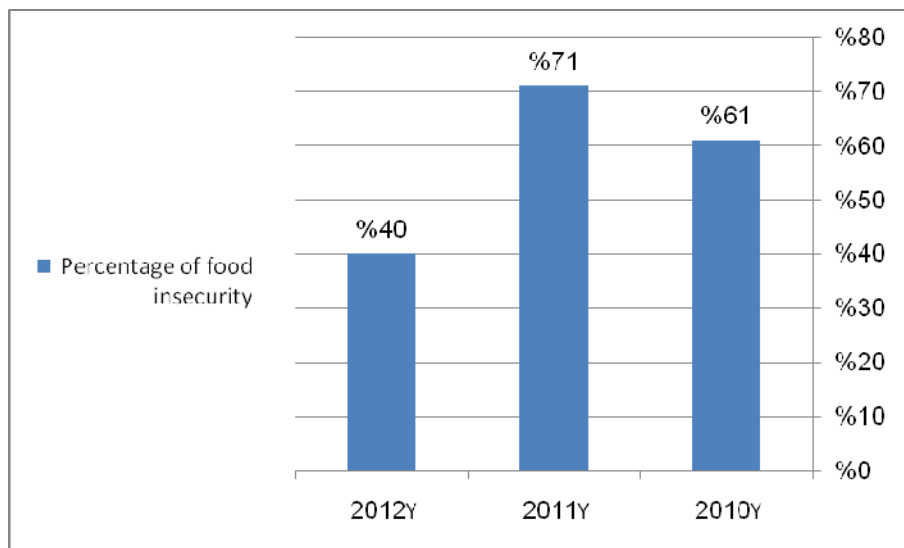
PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

as food insecurity contributes to the prevalence of diarrhea and anemia due to insufficient iron levels in blood because of the unavailability of clean water and balanced nutrition.

Table (8): deterioration of food insecurity levels in the past three years

Year	2010	2011	2012
Percentage of food insecurity	61%	71%	40%

Diagram (8): deterioration of food insecurity levels in the past three years



Furthermore, the water situation in Gaza continues to deteriorate and affect the lives of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including their right to access drinking water supplies. Munther Shublaq, director of the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU), said that 95% of the Gaza Strip's water is contaminated and unfit for human use, and that only 5% of the water supplied to Gazans is compatible with international health standards. In spite of this, the amount of water available for the Gazan population (which is not compatible with the international health standards) is insufficient, as each person gets 90 liters of water a day, which does not satisfy the World Health Organization's (WHO) standard, which requires that each individual must receive 100 – 150 liters of water a day.⁸ Shublaq also pointed out that by the year 2016 Gaza's supply of usable water will end and the Strip's municipalities will not be able to supply any to the population. The causes of the contamination of drinking water come down to the obstruction of sanitation projects, not supplying sewage treatment plants with the necessary equipment, and the pumping of approximately 80 million liters of waste water into the sea daily. The leakage of polluted seawater causes a high rate of salt in the soil, contaminates the natural underground water reservoirs, threatens the main source of drinkable

⁸ Gaza Water drowned in Pollution, al-Hayat Newspaper Economic Annex, 23 December 2012.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

water, and leaves dangerous effects that reflect, and already have, on the health of the population, who have become susceptible to many dangerous diseases. The contamination of the groundwater has also caused damages to large areas of agricultural lands surrounding wastewater collection pools, which are commonly distributed in the north, south and central Gaza Strip.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Violation of the right to education

The illegal Israeli closure policy imposed on the Gaza Strip has obstructed the development of the infrastructure of its educational facilities, including elementary, preparatory and high schools. The Israeli restrictions on the entry of construction materials to the Gaza Strip, even for international organizations, mainly UNRWA, has hampered reconstruction in schools that were destroyed in the Israeli offensives on the Gaza Strip, or the construction of new ones to accommodate the steady growth in the number of student refugees in Gaza. The educational sector still suffers greatly due to the inability to build new schools to accommodate the natural growth and rapid increase in the number of students, or due to the inability to reconstruct schools, that were damaged within Israeli offensives for the lack of construction materials, in spite of the readiness of the necessary designs and land. All of this has caused the overcrowding of classrooms, as the rate reaches 49 students per classroom in some schools. These factors combined affected the students' academic achievement; therefore, 85% of the Gaza Strip's schools adopted the two shifts system.

Meanwhile, the most prominent violation committed against Gazans in terms of education is the denying of thousands of students with opportunities of education in the West Bank, including scientific specializations that are un-available in the Gaza Strip's universities. This policy, which was adopted by the Israeli forces in the 1990s, has led to the prevention of all Gazan students from joining universities in the West Bank, knowing that 26% of students enrolled in the West Bank were from Gaza. As a result, hundreds of students were obliged to change their academic preferences and join universities in the Gaza Strip, or travel abroad, especially to Egypt.

The Gaza Strip students in the West Bank, at the time, used to go to their universities via Beit Hanoun crossing; however, the Israeli measures at Beit Hanoun crossing during al-Aqsa Intifada gradually increased restrictions on the movement of persons until the crossing was completely closed on 16 February 2007. As a result, Palestinians, including students joining universities in the West Bank, were prevented from traveling via the crossing. Although limited categories of people were allowed to travel under complicated measures, students were totally prevented. As a result, thousands of students from the Gaza Strip were denied the chance to study in the West Bank universities, while other hundreds were not able to resume their study in those universities. The number of Gazan students decreased in the West Bank universities and the percentage of Gazan students exceeded 26%, i.e. over 3,000 students before the imposition of the Israeli restrictions in 1994.

Civilians in the Gaza Strip are not self-sufficient in their academic education. Several vital and necessary university programs are not available in the Gaza Strip, especially in the field of modern medical and engineering sciences. Besides, universities in the Gaza Strip do not offer PhD programs in any of the different academic fields, although certain programs offer MA in some fields. The Gaza Strip universities suffer due to the lack of expertise, as the Israeli forces prevent the entry of international academics and experts in Gaza. Palestinian academics



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

are also denied traveling abroad whether to participate in scientific conferences, to complete their studies and improve their abilities or to exchange knowledge with other universities in the West Bank and abroad.

Depriving the Palestinian students from their right to education constitutes a grave violation of the human rights principles recognized by the International Bill of Human Rights and international humanitarian law. Everyone has the right to education, and "higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit," according to article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Additionally, article 13 of the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights includes the recognition of the States Parties to the present Covenant of the right of everyone to education. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education and that higher education shall be made equally accessible to all. Israel as a State party to this Covenant is obliged to fulfill the provisions of the text and the spirit of the Covenant.

Israel is fully responsible for the deprivation of all the Gaza Strip students from studying abroad, as Israel is the occupying power. The Israeli occupation has been ongoing in the Gaza Strip at the practical and legal levels in spite of the implementation of the Israeli unilateral disengagement plan in September 2005. The Israeli forces have maintained control over the Gaza Strip's air, sea and border crossings. According to the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949, the occupation is defined according to its practical control over the civilian life and the reality that confirms the complete control of the occupying authorities over civilians and all the political, economic and social aspects of life.

Violation of the right to health

The aggravation of health conditions in the Gaza Strip has been ongoing. The civilians have suffered from a continuous violation of their right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The Gaza Strip witnessed a continuous lack in medicines and medical supplies, especially in March, June and November 2012. The most dangerous violation of the Gazans' right to the highest attainable standard of health care remains the denial of hundreds of patients from receiving treatment in the hospitals of the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and/or Israel because of the closure policy imposed on the Gaza Strip by the Israeli authorities. The reporting period witnessed a sharp decrease in the number of patients allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing. Israeli forces allowed 8596 patients to travel via the crossing, which means that the daily average of patients allowed to travel decreased to 23, i.e. 46% of the allowed average in 2006. According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, the number of applications for medical referrals in 2012 was 9330, 8596 of them were given permitted to travel to receive treatment in their designated hospitals. Of the latter, Israeli forces obstructed 734 patients, 84 of which were denied for security reasons, 94 were asked to change their companions, 84 has to wait for a new appointment, while 472 other patients had to wait for Israel's reply after their security interviews as their applications were under consideration. The patients who were summoned for security interviews suffered from cruel and degrading treatment, imprisonment and blackmail. It should be mentioned that the number of patients



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

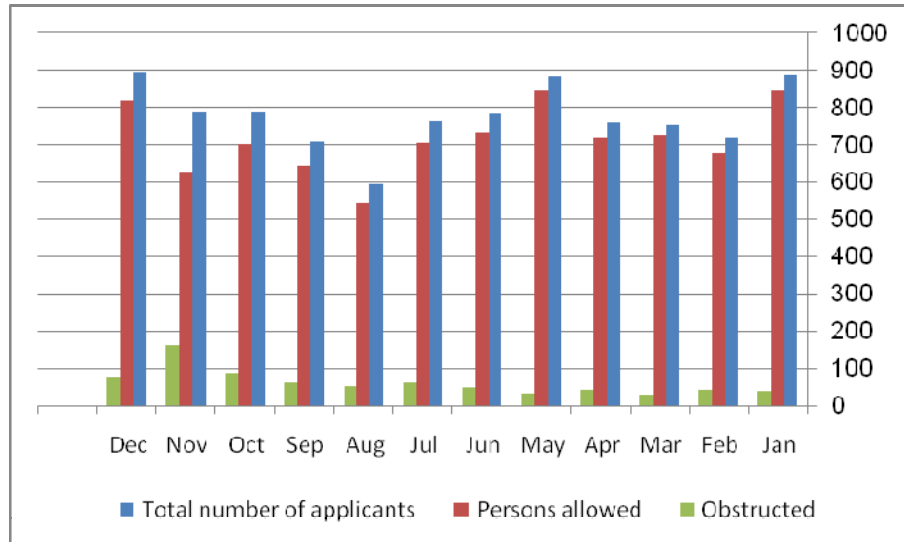
PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

permitted to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing to hospitals in Israel, the West Bank, including Jerusalem, used to reach approximately 20,000 annually before the imposition of the closure in 2007.

Table (9): Shows the overall number of patients who applied for treatment in 2012 and the number of those who faced problems and were denied treatment.

	Total number of applicants	Persons allowed	Obstructed	Security refusal	Change companion	New appointment	Other problems
Jan	888	848	40	6	2	1	31
Feb	720	677	43	10	3	0	30
Mar	754	725	29	9	10	1	9
Apr	761	719	42	8	5	7	22
May	882	849	33	5	2	2	24
Jun	782	733	49	3	6	9	31
Jul	765	705	60	5	14	7	34
Aug	595	543	52	7	12	8	25
Sep	708	645	63	16	8	12	27
Oct	790	703	87	6	10	21	50
Nov	790	629	161	5	10	5	141
Dec	895	820	75	4	12	11	48
Total	9330	8596	734	84	94	84	472

Diagram (10): Shows the overall number of patients who applied for treatment in 2012 and the number of those who faced problems and were denied treatment.





المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The naval Blockade

Israeli forces continued to impose the naval blockade on the Gaza Strip waters, denying the fishermen access to areas in which fish breeds. As a result, Palestinian fishermen were denied of 85% of their income source due to the limited fishing area, even though it was increased in late November 2012 to 6 nautical miles, knowing that the allowed fishing area was up to 3 nautical miles since 2008. Israeli forces also continued to attack fishermen who were subjected to repetitive assaults, such as shooting, killing, wounding, chasing, searching and insulting them, while their boats were confiscated, drowned or destroyed within the allowed fishing area. PCHR documented 257 violations against fishermen in the Gaza sea in 2012, 106 of which were shooting incidents that resulted in the killing of a fisher and wounding two others. Also, PCHR documented numerous chases that resulted in the arrest of 85 fishermen, and 41 incidents which led to confiscation, destruction of fishing boats or damaging fishing equipment.

Table (10): Shows Israeli violations against Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip in 2012

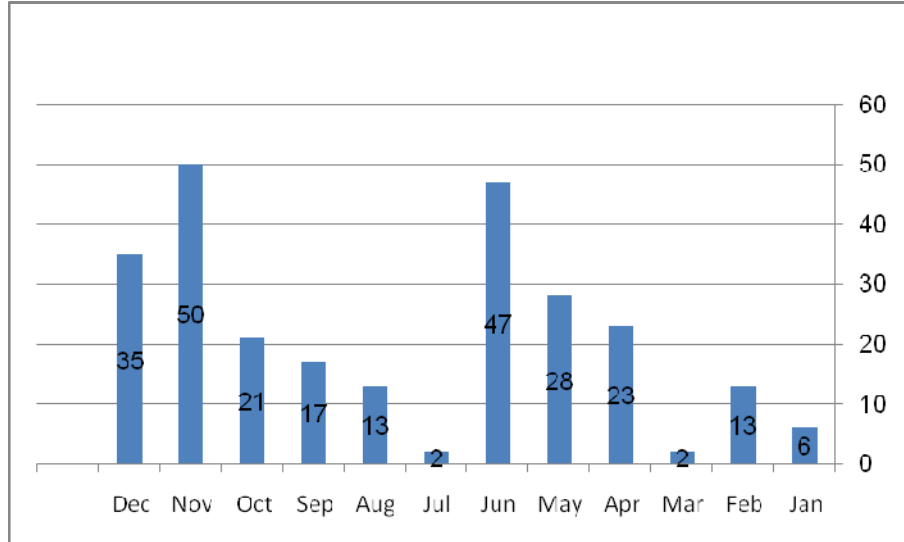
	Shooting	Killed	Wounded	Arrests	Number of detainees	Confiscation of boats	Damaging fishing tools	Othe fishing equipment	Total
Jan	1	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	6
Feb	5	0	0	3	5	3	0	0	13
Mar	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Apr	8	0	0	4	12	3	0	0	23
May	15	0	0	4	9	4	0	0	28
Jun	23	0	0	4	13	7	4	0	47
Jul	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Aug	9	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	13
Sep	12	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	17
Oct	11	0	0	2	8	2	0	0	21
Nov	8	0	0	4	15	1	22	87	50
Dec	10	0	1	4	18	4	2	0	35
Total	106	1	2	0	86	26	32	0	257



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Diagram (10): Shows Israeli violations against Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip in 2012





المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Recommendations

PCHR calls upon the international community, particularly the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, to:

1. Exert effective pressure on Israel to compel it to open all of Gaza's crossings, both those used for commercial purposes and those used for civilian movement, to allow the civilian population of the Gaza Strip to reconstruct civilian property destroyed during Israel's latest offensive on Gaza and to enable them to enjoy their fundamental civil and political rights, as well as their economic, social and cultural rights.
2. Promptly and urgently intervene to ensure respect for the provisions of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in order to put an end to the deterioration of living conditions across the Gaza Strip.
3. Compel Israel to stop measures of collective punishment against the civilian population of the Gaza Strip, including the tightening of the closure of Gaza's border crossings, which leads to a critical deterioration to the civilians' enjoyment of their economic and social rights.
4. Remind the State of Israel, the Occupying Power, of its obligations towards the civilians of the Gaza Strip, under Article 55 of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, which stipulates that: "To the fullest extent of the means available to it, the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate. The Occupying Power may not requisition foodstuffs, articles or medical supplies available in the occupied territory, and then only if the requirements of the civilian population have been taken into account." The High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention must fulfill their obligation under Article 1 of the Convention by ensuring the implementation of the convention's provisions by the State of Israel, in order to ensure the protection of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip.
5. PCHR also asserts that:
6. The Israeli closure on the Gaza Strip constitutes a violation of international law, as the increase of the amount of the products allowed to enter the Gaza Strip while continuing to ban essential materials, particularly construction materials, does not change the fact that this closure is illegal, and is incompatible with its legal obligations as an occupying power (article 34 of Hague Regulations, and articles 33, 55, and 56 of the fourth Geneva Convention), and under international conventions related to human rights, to which Israeli is a State Party, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
7. The right approach to end the dangerous consequences of Israel's arbitrary policy against the civilian population in the Gaza Strip is not by declaring alleged facilitations, or a partial alleviation of the closure, but by announcing the immediate end of the closure completely.
8. And calls on the Egyptian authorities:



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

9. to take more measures to facilitate movement at the Rafah International Crossing Point, and to adopt measures that will facilitate the freedom of movement for people who are denied this right, especially young men between 18 – 39 years
10. to gradually increase the Rafah crossing's operative hours so that it would reach 24 hours a day in the future.