

Oxfam Factsheet

RIGHT TO LIVE WITHOUT A BLOCKADE

The impact of Israeli access and movement restrictions on the Gaza economy

June 2022



COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT UNDER THE PRETEXT OF SECURITY

Beginning in the early 1990s, the Israeli government introduced incremental measures to restrict the movement of people and goods between Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as cutting off Gaza from the rest of the world.

In 2005, Israel withdrew its settlers and military from all areas in central Gaza to the border areas. However, Israel has not ended its occupation and continues to have control over Gaza's coastline, airspace, land perimeter and border crossings (partly in coordination with Egypt), and key aspects of infrastructure, including electricity supply and high-speed data services.¹

Israel remains the occupying power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and therefore retains primary responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of the population under international humanitarian law (IHL). Despite this, Israel has imposed a crippling land, sea and air blockade on Gaza since 2007 restricting

the movement of people and goods into and out of Gaza.

The 15-year illegal Israeli blockade impacts every aspect of daily life in the Gaza Strip and deprives its 2.1 million population (41% is less than 15 years old) of fundamental rights.²

Israel's deliberate separation policy, as articulated by Israeli officials, consists of two parts: the blockade, in which Gaza's population and land are physically separated from the rest of the OPT and the political isolation of Gaza's de facto government, to which the majority of the international community participates.³

The separation policy has had devastating implications for civilians in Gaza, limiting the import of essential goods, including materials necessary for reconstruction, shutting down Palestinian internal trade and export to international markets and preventing Palestinians in Gaza from leaving to visit family, access health care, seek employment, or access education services and professional training in the West Bank and abroad. The detrimental impact of the blockade and suffering of the entire population of the Gaza Strip amounts to collective punishment,⁴

which is explicitly prohibited under international humanitarian law by Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Oxfam condemns all violence against civilians.

The Government of Israel has stated that the aim of the blockade has been to isolate Hamas and to stop Palestinian rocket fire into Israel.⁵

However, Dov Weisglass, then a senior advisor to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, explained that the Israeli policy towards Gaza was designed "to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger".⁶

While there are legitimate concerns regarding Israel's security, the security narrative cannot be used as a sweeping justification to violate the rights of civilians and to stifle the sustainable development and economic sovereignty of a future Palestinian state.

Gaza Strip

Mapping Movement and Access

January 2020

ג'ישה
Gisha

Gisha - Legal Center for Freedom of Movement
ג'ישה - מרכז לחופש תנועה
مركز للتحرك بحرية الحركة

What is known today as the Gaza Strip, originally a region in Mandatory Palestine, was created through the armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt in 1949. From that time until 1967, the Strip was under Egyptian control, cut off from Israel as well as the West Bank, which was under Jordanian rule. In 1967, the connection was renewed when both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were occupied by Israel. The 1993 Oslo Accords define Gaza and the West Bank as a single territorial unit within which freedom of movement would be permitted. However, starting in the early 90s, Israel began a gradual process of closing off the Strip; since 2007, it has enforced a full closure, forbidding exit and entry except in rare cases. Israel continues to control many aspects of life in Gaza, most of its land crossings, its territorial waters and airspace.

Width 5.7-12.5 km / 3.5 - 7.7 mi
Length - 40 km / 24.8 mi
Area 365 km² / 141 mi²
Population 1,943,398 • 48% Under age 17 July 2019
Unemployment rate 47% 2019 Q2
Percentage of population receiving aid 80%
Population density 5,453 per km² July 2019

Legend

Crossing Points
● Open ● Closed

Locations

- Dense urban areas
- Refugee camp
- Town
- Main city
- Bridge
- Wastewater treatment plant
- Water desalination plant
- Sewage outlet
- Wharf
- Hospital
- Landmark

Roads

- Main road
- Regional road
- Road

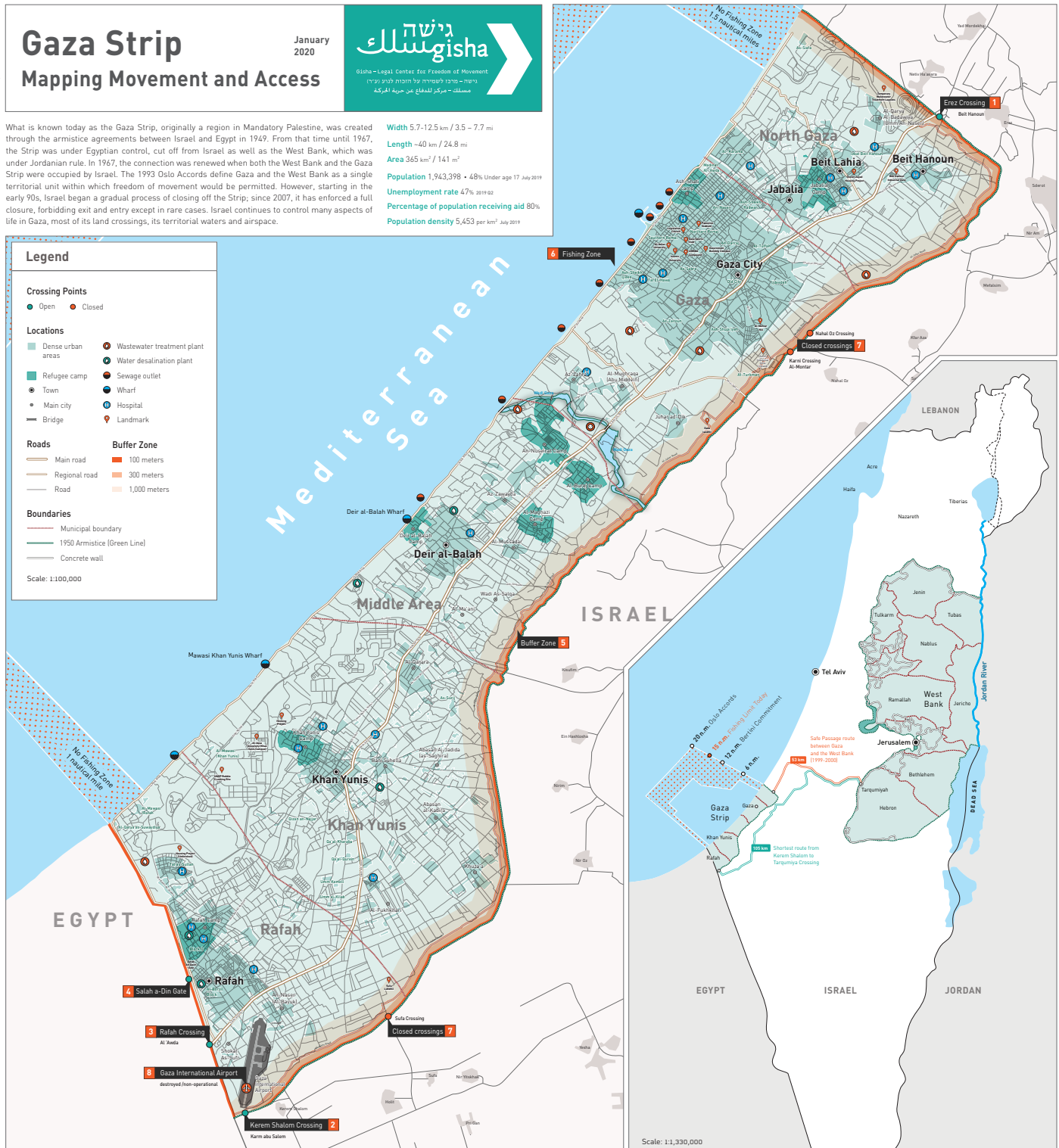
Buffer Zone




- 100 meters
- 300 meters
- 1,000 meters

Boundaries

- Municipal boundary
- 1950 Armistice (Green Line)
- Concrete wall

Scale: 1:100,000



<p>1 Erez Crossing</p> <p>The crossing, for pedestrians, is Gaza's only access point to Israel and the West Bank, and, particularly when Rafah Crossing is closed, also to the outside world. In 1991, Israel canceled the "General Exit Permits" and began requiring Palestinian residents to obtain individual permits to cross Erez. Since 1993, enforcement of travel restrictions has become more strict and the criteria for receiving permits more narrow. Today permits are mostly given only in what Israel refers to as "exceptional humanitarian cases, with an emphasis on urgent medical cases." During the first half of 2019, Israel through Erez Crossing was about 2% of the volume recorded there in early 2000.</p> 	<p>2 Kerem Shalom Crossing</p> <p>This is Gaza's only commercial crossing, though some goods enter the Strip from Egypt through Salah a-Din Gate. Kerem Shalom is located at the southernmost tip of the Gaza-Israel border and operates under full Israeli control. While Israel ostensibly restated its policy of economic warfare (2007-2010), when many everyday items were blocked from entering the Strip, it continues to limit entry of a long list of items essential to industry, infrastructure and daily life, which it deems to be "dual-use." Due to ongoing restrictions on what goods can exit the Strip, especially to Gaza's primary markets in the West Bank and Israel, the volume of goods exiting the Strip through Kerem Shalom is only about 20% of what it was before the closure was tightened in 2007.</p> 	<p>3 Rafah Crossing</p> <p>Opened in 1992, Rafah is the only crossing for pedestrians between Gaza and Egypt. From late 2005 to mid-2007, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority operated the crossing under EU supervision, with indirect Israeli control. Following the Hamas takeover, the crossing was closed or operated sporadically for a number of years. From mid-2012 to mid-2013, the crossing operated regularly, and some 40,000 crossings in both directions were recorded each month. From July 2013 to May 2018, it remained mostly closed. Pressure on Egypt to open it, generated by the Great March of Return protests and deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Gaza, led to the crossing being open five days per week, with a monthly average of 11,000 entries and exits recorded in the first half of 2019.</p> 	<p>4 Salah a-Din Gate</p> <p>The Salah a-Din Gate is located about four kilometers west of Rafah Crossing, and has been used for bringing goods into Gaza from Egypt since February 2018. On the Gaza side, the crossing is controlled by Hamas officials in terms of both security and civilian matters. No Palestinian Authority customs or government officials are present. From the time the crossing began operations until June 2019, an average of 714 trucks entered each month, compared to 8,962 trucks entering through Kerem Shalom Crossing over the same period of time. However, about 25% of the cement entering Gaza and 70% of the cooking gas enter via Salah a-Din Gate.</p> 	<p>5 Access Restricted Areas (Buffer Zone)</p> <p>Israel restricts access to an area within Gaza that runs along the perimeter fence separating it from Israel. Gisha's attempts to receive exact information about access restrictions in this area have yielded contradictory answers from Israeli authorities over the years. According to the most recent response, Gaza residents may approach up to 300 meters from the fence and farmers may approach up to 100 meters. Israel enforces restrictions aggressively, including through use of live fire. Since 2014, Israel has been spraying herbicides onto lands near the fence, causing damage to crops and financial losses for farmers.</p> 	<p>6 Fishing Zone</p> <p>According to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement (1995), Gaza fishermen may sail to a distance of up to 20 nautical miles off the coast. In practice, however, Israel has not allowed access that far; in recent years, the fishing zone has ranged from three to nine nautical miles most of the time. In 2019, Israel allowed fishing as far as 16 nautical miles off a small stretch of Gaza's southern shore for the first time. Restrictions are routinely enforced using live fire at boats and fishermen, resulting in loss of life, injury and damage to equipment. The Gaza Strip does not have a seaport, despite agreement to build one under the Oslo Accords. In September 2001, Israel destroyed the planned site and has not given permission for a port to be built.</p> 	<p>7 Closed crossings</p> <p>Karni Crossing was built in 1994 and served as the main commercial crossing for the transfer of goods into and out of the Strip. In June 2007, after Hamas seized control of Gaza, Israel shut down the crossing, leaving only a conveyor belt used for transferring grants and animal feed, which remained operational until March 2011. Sufa Crossing was built in 1994 and was used to transport construction materials into Gaza. Israel closed it in 2008. Nahal Oz crossing, used to transport fuel, was shut down in early 2010.</p> 	<p>8 Yasser Arafat International Airport</p> <p>The airport, located on the southern edge of Rafah City, was inaugurated in late 1998. Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and US President Bill Clinton attended the inaugural ceremony. The airport was slated to serve 700,000 passengers each year. Israel put a halt to its operations in October 2000, after the start of the Second Intifada. In December 2001 and May 2002, Israel bombed the control tower and the runway. What remained was destroyed during Operation Cast Lead in 2009.</p> 
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This map is based on OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, occupied Palestinian territory) basemap of the Gaza Strip, 2019, found at www.ochaopt.org • Map produced: October 2019 • Designed by: RoniLevit.com • Contact details: tel: 972-3-6244120 • fax: 972-3-6244130 • info@gisha.org • www.gisha.org

GAZA: 15 YEARS OF ILLEGAL BLOCKADE



Population

2.1 M

Food insecure people

64 %



People in need

1.3 M

Unemployment rate

46.6 %



Hours electricity per day

12

Open crossings

2 out of 5



Open airports and seaports

0

People below the USD 5.5 a day line

61.1 %



Gaza GDP growth in 2021

3.4 %

Gaza GDP decline since blockade

27 %



Sources: UN Humanitarian Response Plan, 2022, World Bank's Economic Monitoring Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, 2022, PCBS, 2022



KEY FACTS ON MOVEMENT AND ACCESS OF PEOPLE AND GOODS

Since the start of the blockade in 2007, more than 2 million residents of the Gaza Strip have been unable to exercise their right to freedom of movement and are confined to an area of 365km².

ONLY PRODUCTS VITAL FOR SURVIVAL WERE ALLOWED TO ENTER

From 2007 to 2010, Israel denied the import of ordinary consumer goods such as jam, dry food items, fruit, fruit juices, chocolate, candles, books, musical instruments, shampoo, wheelchairs, crayons, stationery, A4 paper, soccer balls, and livestock such as chicken, donkeys, and cows.⁷ It allowed into Gaza only basic humanitarian products “vital for the survival of the civilian population”.

In 2012, following a legal battle by the Israeli NGO Gisha, COGAT released a document calculating the minimum number of calories necessary to keep Gazans from malnutrition and avoid a humanitarian crisis. This number was converted to a daily number of food trucks permitted to enter Gaza, with the number reduced to account for food produced in Gaza, and further reduced based on the “culture and experience” of the residents of the Gaza Strip.

THE IMPACT RESTRICTIONS ON MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Prior to the Second Intifada in 2000, up to half a million exits of people from Gaza were recorded in a single month. For the first seven years of the blockade, this number went down to just over 4,000 on average, rising to 10,400 monthly over the next eight years.⁸

According to the Palestine Trade Center (PalTrade), if crossing permits were issued for 10,000 to 20,000 workers, this would contribute somewhere between US\$18 million and US\$36 million to the Gaza economy per month.

Israel only allows specific categories of people to leave Gaza for Israel or the West Bank who require special permits:

- 1) people travelling for medical reasons
- 2) exit abroad for foreign citizens
- 3) attending a funeral
- 4) visiting a critically ill relative
- 5) appointment at an embassy for foreign passport holders
- 6) Palestinians from the West Bank residing in Gaza.

Permit requests may be rejected at any time, and processing time for permits may reach up to 50 days for visiting critically ill relatives and over 20 working days for urgent medical visits.

Palestinians exiting through the Erez crossing are forbidden to carry suitcases, toiletries, laptops and food (even for the travel). These restrictions do not apply to international travelers.

THE IMPACT RESTRICTIONS ON MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Since the start of the Israeli imposed blockade in 2007, the number of operational commercial crossings has reduced from four to one.

The volume of goods exiting Gaza in 2021 (379 monthly average truckloads) has decreased over 50% compared to the total monthly number of truckloads that left Gaza during 2005 (777).⁹ Increasing the export volume, improvement of crossings conditions, application of international dual-use standards, and facilitating the movement of people to the levels of the pre-blockade period would significantly boost the Gaza economy and potentially result in tens of thousands of new jobs.

RECENT CHANGES IN ISRAELI POLICY FAR BELOW SUFFICIENT TO REVIVE GAZA ECONOMY

Changes in Israeli policy (also referred to as “easing” of restrictions) have led to an increase in the movement of authorized people and goods in recent

months to and from Gaza, which still fall far short of meeting needs and reviving Gaza’s economy. The changes include the increased quota of Israeli-issued ‘financial needs’ permits for de facto workers, married people aged 25+ (up to 20,000), 1,500 –2,000 permits for regular traders under the ‘merchant’ (trader) and 500 Businessmen Gaza Status permits.

Other changes in policy on entry of goods to Gaza include the removal of white cement and steel sheets informally from Israel’s list of dual-use materials, following on from removing steel rebar in September 2021. In January this year, Israel allowed the sale of Gaza-grown cucumbers, peppers, zucchini, sweet potatoes and cherry tomatoes in its territory based on demand.

Despite the described changes, sweeping access and movement restrictions on people and goods remain to be in place amounting to collective punishment.

DUAL-USE IS ARBITRARY AND NOT TRANSPARENT

Israel restricts the entry of thousands of goods listed as “dual-use” - civilian goods with a potential military use. Two lists require “special approval” to be brought into the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The first applies to Gaza and the West Bank. The second list of additional items applies to the Gaza Strip only.

The dual-use lists pose disproportionate challenges to Gaza’s economy, and go far beyond the internationally accepted gold standard, the Wassenaar Arrangement.⁹ The lists contain items such as wood, aggregates, steel bars, and cement, that are not internationally recognised as “dual-use.” From 2015 until now, these items were gradually unofficially no longer treated as dual use, so they de facto enter as normal items. The official dual-use list has not been changed (at least not publicly) since 2008. These essential construction materials, like many other items on the “dual-use” list

are found in homes, hospitals, and office buildings throughout the world.

Currently, the process of listing materials as “dual-use” appears arbitrary and is non-transparent. The process also fails to take into account the civilian nature of these materials, as well as the overall necessity for the Palestinian population and their necessity to internationally funded aid efforts.

THE ECONOMIC COST OF PROLONGED CLOSURE

UNCTAD estimates that the cumulative economic cost of the Israeli occupation in Gaza under the prolonged closure and severe economic and movement restrictions and military operations amounts to \$16.7 billion between 2007 and 2018, equivalent to six times the GDP of Gaza and 107 percent of the Palestinian GDP.¹⁰

According to the World Bank, movement and access restrictions have resulted in a closed economy. Recent data shows that since 1994, Gaza’s compounded annual growth rate was only 1%, compared to 3.9% in the MENA region (excluding high-income countries), resulting in a dramatic decline of the contribution in Gaza’s economy to the Palestinian economy from 36% in 1994 to 18% in 2021. As a result, the Gaza GNI per

capita is now less than a third of the West Bank’s, whereas in 1994 it represented 87%. Gaza’s investment-to-GDP ratio has shrunk and real capital stock in Gaza declined by 20% from 1994 to 2020. The Total Factor Productivity (TFP) contribution to growth has fallen by about 0.6% per annum from 1997 to 2020. The May 2021 escalation is estimated to have destroyed 2% of Gaza’s capital stock.¹²

RESTRICTIONS ON ONLINE AND ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SYSTEMS

People in Gaza have no access to 3G and 4G (and naturally 5 G) mobile networks, as the frequency spectrum bands required for those services have not been released by the Israeli authority, despite an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority signed in 2015.

While some websites do not recognise the existence of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), other platforms only use online e-payment systems (such as PayPal) that are not available for Palestinians in Gaza or the West Bank.

Restrictions on online and electronic payment systems have severe consequences for many Palestinian companies and freelancers, hindering growth and preventing international business transactions. Palestinians must

have equal access to financial services to participate in the global market. The unemployment rate in Gaza is over 46% (63% among youth and almost 83% among women), which forces young entrepreneurs to think outside of the box to seek employment opportunities and make a living. With the global rise of freelancing and working online, talented youth in Gaza attempt to utilise online working platforms, but are let down when facing severe obstacles with online payment systems.

“Without access to PayPal, Palestinian businesses, entrepreneurs, startups and freelancers are at a great disadvantage. While there are other payment portals, none are as widely recognized or trusted as PayPal. As a result, to continue business many Palestinian businesses, entrepreneurs and freelancers must relocate their businesses overseas and as a result often do not contribute to Palestine’s economy and must endure an additional ‘tax’ for conducting business that includes the additional costs associated with establishing a business in a foreign country.”

7amleh – Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media

ISRAELI RESTRICTIONS ON “DUAL-USE” ITEMS NOT IN ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Israel restricts the entry of thousands of items both to the West Bank and Gaza through the Defense Export Control Law (2007) and the Defense Export Control Order (2008). Different countries adopt different protocols on regulating trade in dual-use items, however international best practice is established by the Wassenaar Arrangement, a voluntary export control regime, signed by 42 countries.

Israel’s lists go far beyond the Wassenaar Arrangement. As a result of Israel’s stringent controls, many items almost never enter Gaza at all. Some of the items enter the Gaza Strip via Egypt relatively freely and are sold at high cost due to the shortage in the local market. The chronic lack of ‘dual-use’ items on the local market impedes construction, reconstruction, the functioning of the healthcare system and critical civilian infrastructure, as well as stifling Gaza’s economy and industries.

Israel’s official dual-use lists cannot be changed without a legislative process involving the Minister of Defense. However, Israeli security officials grant themselves permission to ‘add’ or ‘remove’ items ad hoc, citing a document titled “Decision B/44” of the Ministerial Committee on Security. There is little transparency about this decision or the decision-making process it confers.

Examples of controlled essential items on Israel’s dual-use list beyond the Wassenaar Arrangement:

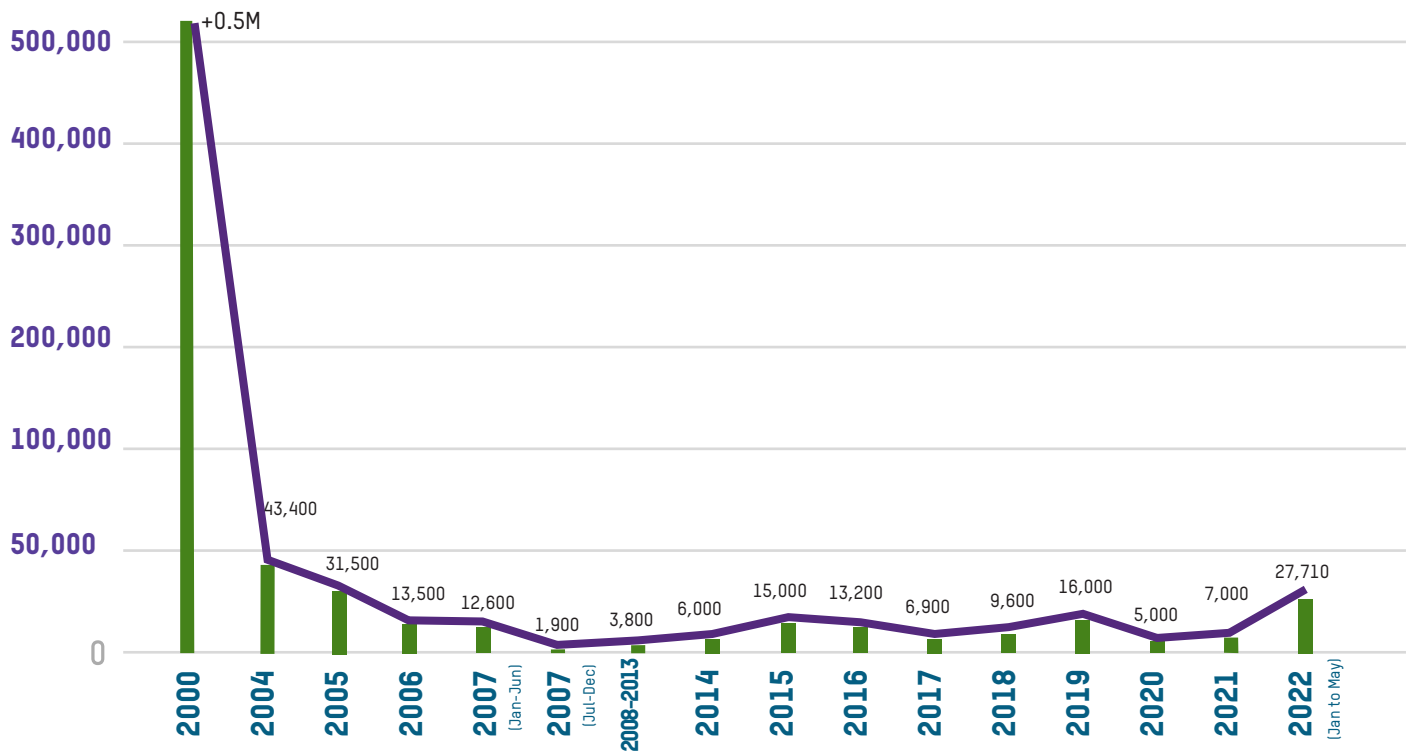
Boat engines	Water and sewage pumps
Pesticides and fertilizers	Fiberglass
Steel pipes (for water infrastructure)	Drilling equipment
Paint thinners	Cement mixers
Electrical cables	Cranes
Water generators	

“Israel is obliged to strike a balance between civilian needs in Gaza and measures it takes to protect the security of Israeli citizens. Israel faces complex security challenges, but severe restrictions on entrance of essential items (deemed “dual-use” by Israel) are disproportionate to the threat they ostensibly pose and are wielded in a manner that violates the basic rights of Gaza residents.”

Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement

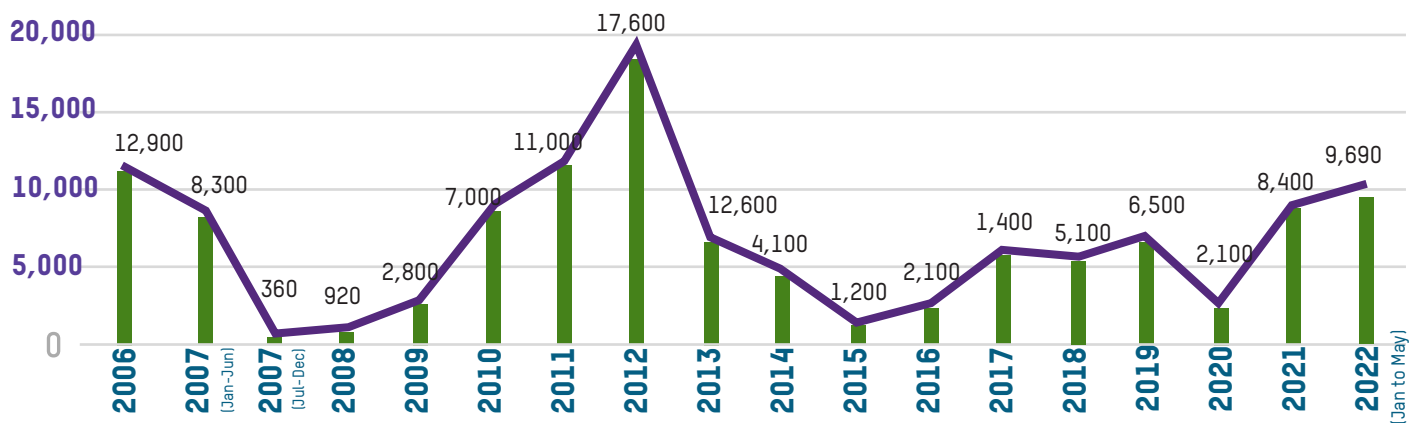
Source: Gisha, 2021

MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE MONTHLY AVERAGE TRAVELLERS OUT OF EREZ



Source: OCHA, 2022

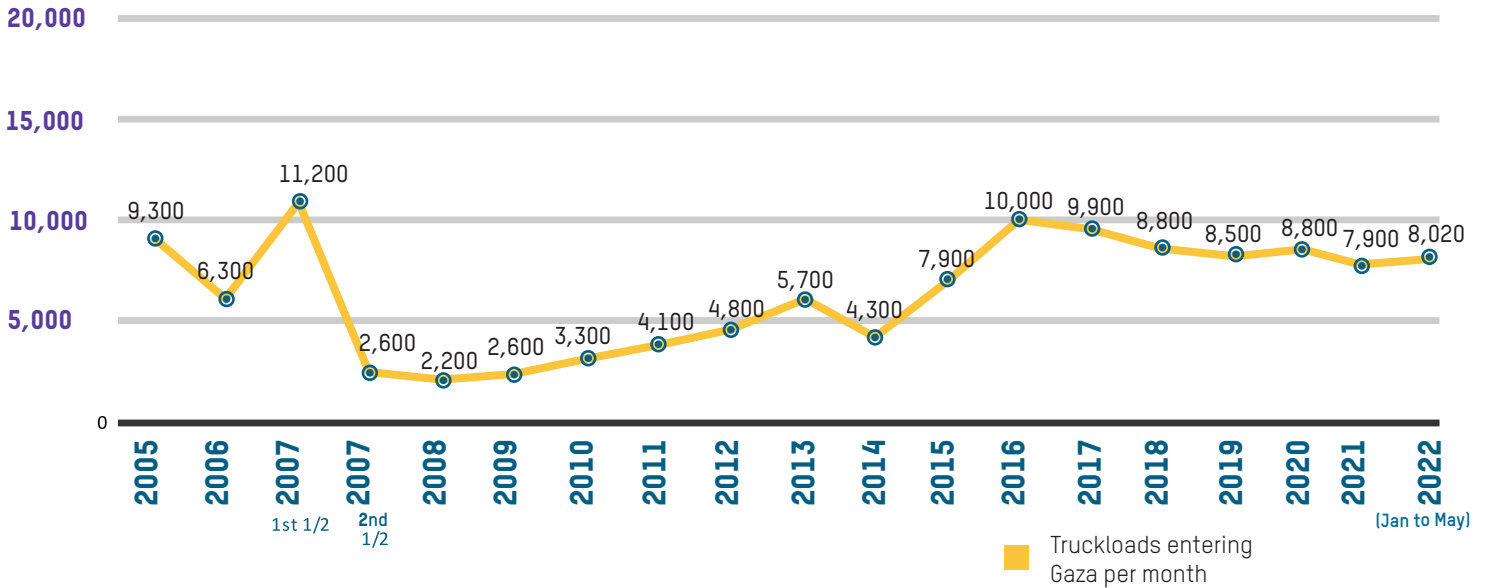
MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE MONTHLY AVERAGE TRAVELLERS OUT OF RAFAH



Source: OCHA, 2022

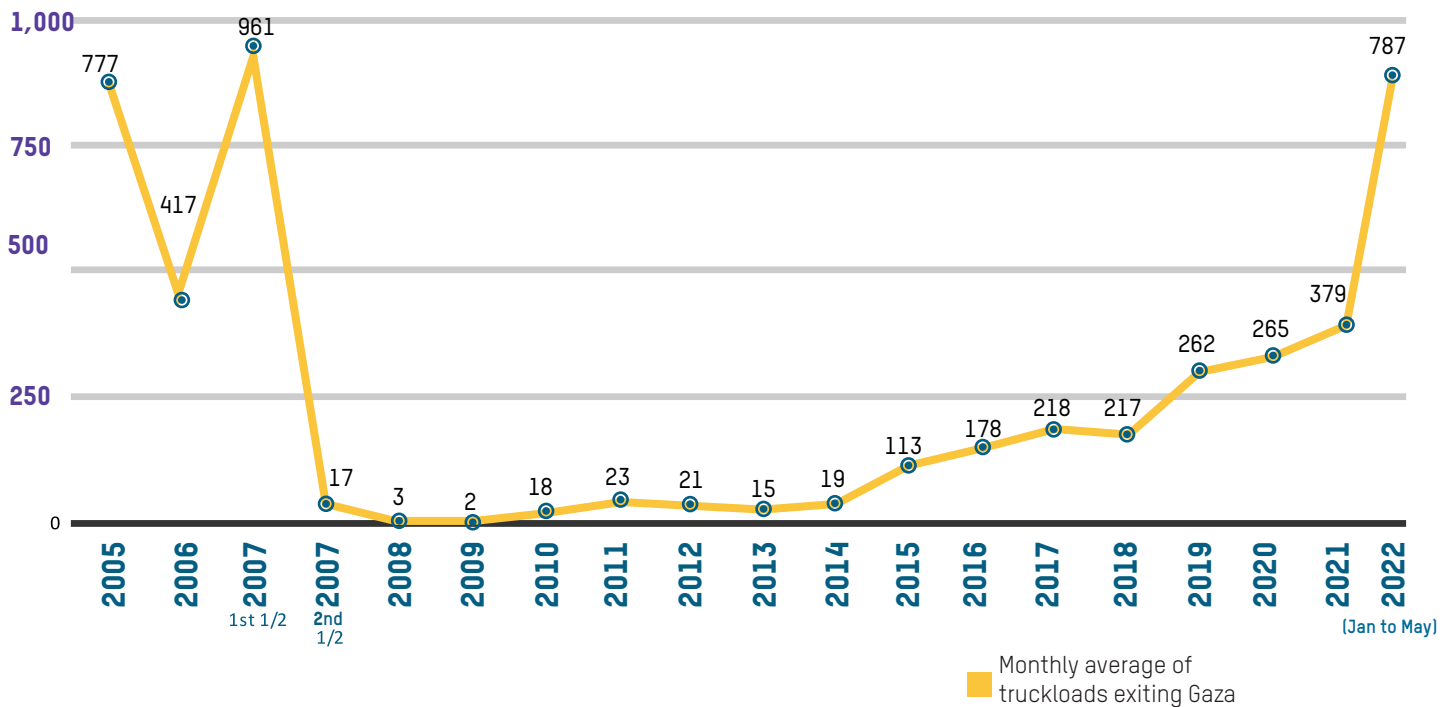
MOVEMENT OF GOODS

GOODS ENTERING GAZA MONTHLY



Source: OCHA, 2022

GOODS EXITING GAZA MONTHLY



Source: OCHA, 2022



KEY CHALLENGES TO THE AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR

A high potential trade & export hub prior to the blockade

HIGH POTENTIAL EXPORT SECTOR Prior to the blockade, the Gaza Strip had a comparatively modern sector exporting cash crops such as carnations, citrus fruits, barley, wheat and strawberries. Gaza had the potential to export 2,300 tons of strawberries, 55 million carnation flowers, and 714 tons of cherry tomatoes per annum.¹³ If Gaza had the same access to production inputs as the West Bank, growth rates would have been three times higher than the current rates. The blockade has eroded the productive base of the economy. The combined size of the manufacturing and agriculture sectors fell from 27% of GDP in 1994 to 17% in 2021.¹⁴

DUAL- USE Farmers in Gaza indicate that the prevention of importing inputs, so called 'dual-use-materials', remain among the largest challenges of the blockade. Prices of essential inputs such as pesticides, fertilisers, seeds, plastic materials and steel pipes (used for greenhouses) are up to triple the market value and resulting into major financial losses. Consequently, farmers use alternative varieties against higher prices and lower qualities, affecting production quality. Dual-use restrictions on agricultural inputs result in an average of 30% higher production costs.¹⁵

EXPORT AND TRADE Only specific commodities can be traded from Gaza to the West Bank (see table). Today, Israel only allows for the export of goods from Gaza to the Israeli market, with requirements and procedures that reach the stage of incapacitation. Before the blockade, 80% of processed food items made in the Gaza Strip used to be sold in Israel and the West Bank.¹⁶ Food products including date paste, cookies, and potato chips had been a significant part of the Gaza economy prior to the blockade. Israel inexplicably bans the exit of processed foods from Gaza into Israel

and severely limits it to the West Bank and international markets.

DELAY AND STATUS OF CROSSINGS The majority of traders in the West Bank only order fresh produce from Gaza when the price is lower than Israeli produce. Traders in Gaza are never guaranteed that the shipments will actually make it to the West Bank, due to arbitrary rejections, or due to frequent delays at the crossings. The process for trade and export is long and costly and the conditions at Kerem Abu Salem crossing jeopardize the quality of products.

BUFFER ZONE The buffer zone - also known as "access restricted areas" (ARA) - covers approximately 62.6 square kilometers and about 35 percent of the total agricultural land of the Gaza Strip and 15 percent of its total area.¹⁷ Access to areas within 300 meters of the perimeter fence with Israel is prohibited and areas several hundred meters beyond are not safe, preventing or discouraging agricultural activities. Israel uses live ammunition against civilians approaching the fence. The manner in which the restrictions are enforced harms lives and livelihoods: these areas are vital for the fishing and agricultural industries. Israel has also sprayed herbicides in the land-restricted areas, damaging crops.¹⁸

REDUCTION OF FISHING ZONE Since the blockade, fisherfolk have only been allowed to fish between 3-15 nautical miles off shore. With most of the fish at least nine miles out at sea, they have already been struggling to make a living and now; 85% of fisherfolk are reliant on international aid.¹⁹ Israel restricts essential materials for the maintenance of the boats, incl. GPS devices, marine engines and fiberglass, resulting into an average increase of fishing costs by 30%. More than 20% of the total boats in the Gaza Strip have become dysfunctional, in part due to damage inflicted by the Israeli navy when confiscating or firing on boats.

xxii The number of people employed in the fishing industry in Gaza dropped from about 10,000 in 2000 to about 3,600 by early 2020. The number of women who work in the fishing and agriculture sectors plummeted from 36% to 3% in 10 years - from 2007 to 2017.

Following agreement by the Palestinian Authority and Israel, preparations are underway to facilitate the entry into Gaza under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) of dual-use materials and equipment needed for the repair and maintenance of Gaza's fishing boats as part of revitalizing the fishing sector.²⁰

ISRAELI MILITARY OFFENSIVES The continuous cycle of military offensives has major consequences for farmers. During the May 2021 escalation, around 88 hectares (ha) of rain-fed crops, irrigated vegetables and orchards were either destroyed by direct impact of missiles or burned by the fires generated by the missiles.²¹

Israeli prolonged blockade and military offensives resulting into:

- Reduction of agriculture and food industries contribution to GDP from 26% (2005) to 12% (2018).²²
- Farmers and fisheries using equipment and infrastructure that is more than 20-30 years old.²³
- Average wages of farmers and small-scale producers less than \$200 per month (NIS 650).²⁴
- \$1.5 billion sectoral loss between 2007-2017.²⁵
- \$16.7 billion total economic cost of the Israeli occupation on the Gaza Strip during the past decade (from 2007 to 2017).²⁶

Right to Live Without a Blockade



CLASSIFICATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS THAT ARE ALLOWED TO BE MARKETED TO THE WEST BANK AND EXPORTED TO ISRAEL AND ABROAD

- Israel allows the following agricultural crops to be traded from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank (Category I): strawberry, sweet peppers, cherry tomatoes, tomato, sweet potatoes, chili pepper, dates, cucumber, lemon, cauliflower, zucchini, pumpkin, cabbage, eggplant, carrots, olive and fish.
- The following agricultural crops are pending final approval to be traded from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank (Category II): Grapes, potato, olive oil, oranges, fresh herbs, onions, green beans watermelon, radish, lettuce, broccoli, artichokes, dates (and around 20 additional items according to the Agriculture Ministry in Gaza)
- Export of eggplants, tomatoes and strawberries from Gaza to the Israeli market, must follow requirements and procedures that reach the stage of incapacitation.
- Eggplants, tomatoes, zucchini and peppers. In January 2022, COGAT permitted the exit of cucumbers, peppers (regular and chilli), sweet potatoes, and cherry tomatoes to Israel. Exit is subject to quotas and demand, rather than set agreements, making it difficult for farmers in Gaza to plan.
- Israel inexplicably bans the exit of processed foods from Gaza into Israel, and severely limits it to the West Bank and to international markets. In theory Palestinian businesses are allowed to export all manufactured products from the Gaza Strip to international markets through Kerem Abu Salem / Kerem Shalom Crossing. Both agricultural and non-agricultural products face difficulties reaching international markets due to high transportation costs, delay in loading and unloading trucks, long travelling routes, restrictions on movement of business owners.

Source: Palestinian General Administration for Crossings and Borders (GACB), March 2022

Agricultural inputs on dual-use list

A. Soil fertilizers	B. Fertilizers rich in nitrates	C. Fishing-related items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adokeem Super • Metaprome 98 • Metaprome 980 • Metaprome 100 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnesium Nitrate • Potassium nitrate • Sodium nitrate • Boron nitrate • Calcium nitrate • Iron nitrate • N-P-K (20,19,18,17,16,15,14) • Urea (CO(NH₂)₂) CH₄N₂O 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polyester resin • MEKP: Methyl Ethyl Ketone Peroxide medium activity for hardening polyester resin and gelcoat • Special paint of fiberglass • Fiberglass Mat • Boat engines

Source: Palestinian General Administration for Crossings and Borders (GACB), 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. End the blockade of Gaza, as the primary cause of the crippled economy:

The international community must reaffirm UN Security Council Resolution 1860 and demand Israel's compliance with international law, starting with an end to the blockade, and make bilateral and multilateral relations with the Government of Israel conditional on progress toward such an end. The international community must re-introduce mechanisms and principles proposed as part of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA).

The UN & third states must facilitate dialogue with a broad range of vested stakeholders with the overall objective to develop a political and economic roadmap for the overall development of Gaza, which will have to incorporate and address the issue of movement and access of people and goods. Engagement is required with the Palestinian authorities, private sector and CSO's, that looks at the actual needs which will bring an end to the humanitarian crisis, and revives Gaza's economy. The international community must connect new reconstruction efforts to a time-bound plan to end the blockade, including benchmarks and accountability mechanisms.

2. Open all crossings to allowing (commercial and humanitarian) goods and people to freely enter and leave Gaza:

As part of wider measures to open all the crossings and help to normalize economic life in Gaza, ensure priority is given to allowing goods to freely enter and leave Gaza. Israel should re-open the crossings it closed previously, including Karni, and allow all crossings to operate at full capacity.

In coordination with the Palestinian Authority (PA), Gaza de facto authorities and the governments of Egypt and Israel, alternative trade routes to third countries could also be explored via an upgraded Rafah crossing. However, any move to upgrade Rafah does not in any way lessen the necessity for the Government of Israel to open all other crossings (including Karni) since the primary markets for goods from Gaza are in Israel and the West Bank, and it is Israel, not Egypt, that is the occupying power. Furthermore, any measures to open Rafah or upgrade its facilities should not be allowed to undermine intra-Palestinian reconciliation or perpetuate the further isolation of Gaza from the West Bank.

3. Remove restrictions on entrance of items and allow additional exports:

Given the impact of the Israeli government restrictions on these items on civilian life and on donor funded reconstruction efforts, the government of Israel should align its dual-use policy with the Wassenaar Arrangement, the international gold standard. Access must be granted for items that are needed for the civilian population. This could start with certain priority items needed for industry and construction, however, limited de-listing of certain items facilitating the entry of construction materials is not a substitute for ending the blockade. Import and export protocols and procedures must be transparent, public and simplified.

The international community must work effectively with the parties to the conflict to ensure the crossings to Gaza are open for people and goods in a manner consistent with international law. The crossings can be equipped with technology used world-wide in airports and border crossings, allowing for the free flow of people and goods while taking all the necessary precautions that keep citizens safe. Any access mechanism, especially if brokered by the international community, should aim to achieve full access and completely lift the Israeli blockade.

4. Improve conditions at Kerem Abu Salem/ Shalom crossing:

Despite the severe restrictions on exports from Gaza, since 2014 some products, including agricultural produce, fish, furniture and textiles are allowed to exit Gaza through the Kerem Abu Salem / Shalom crossing for either export overseas or as transfer to the West Bank. However, severe restrictions are in place on products exported to the Israeli market as well as to the West Bank. Export still remains restricted to only a few approved companies. Improvements would include creating shaded and refrigerated areas to shield produce from the elements and to increase the allowed height of items stacked on trucks to improve cost-effectiveness, enabling increased volumes to be traded and exported.

5. Remove restrictions to sea and land-restricted areas: According to the Oslo Accords, Palestinians should be able to access 20 NM of fishing area (notwithstanding the fact that international law, including IHL, should be the standard against which Israel's actions are assessed – Oslo cannot supersede this). Calling for expansion of the fishing zone is a step towards a full lift of the blockade and does not substitute calling

to end the blockade, which is illegal under international law.

6. Open dialogue with all parties:

Open dialogue with all parties, including the de facto authorities in Gaza, is necessary to amend and implement the 2005 AMA.

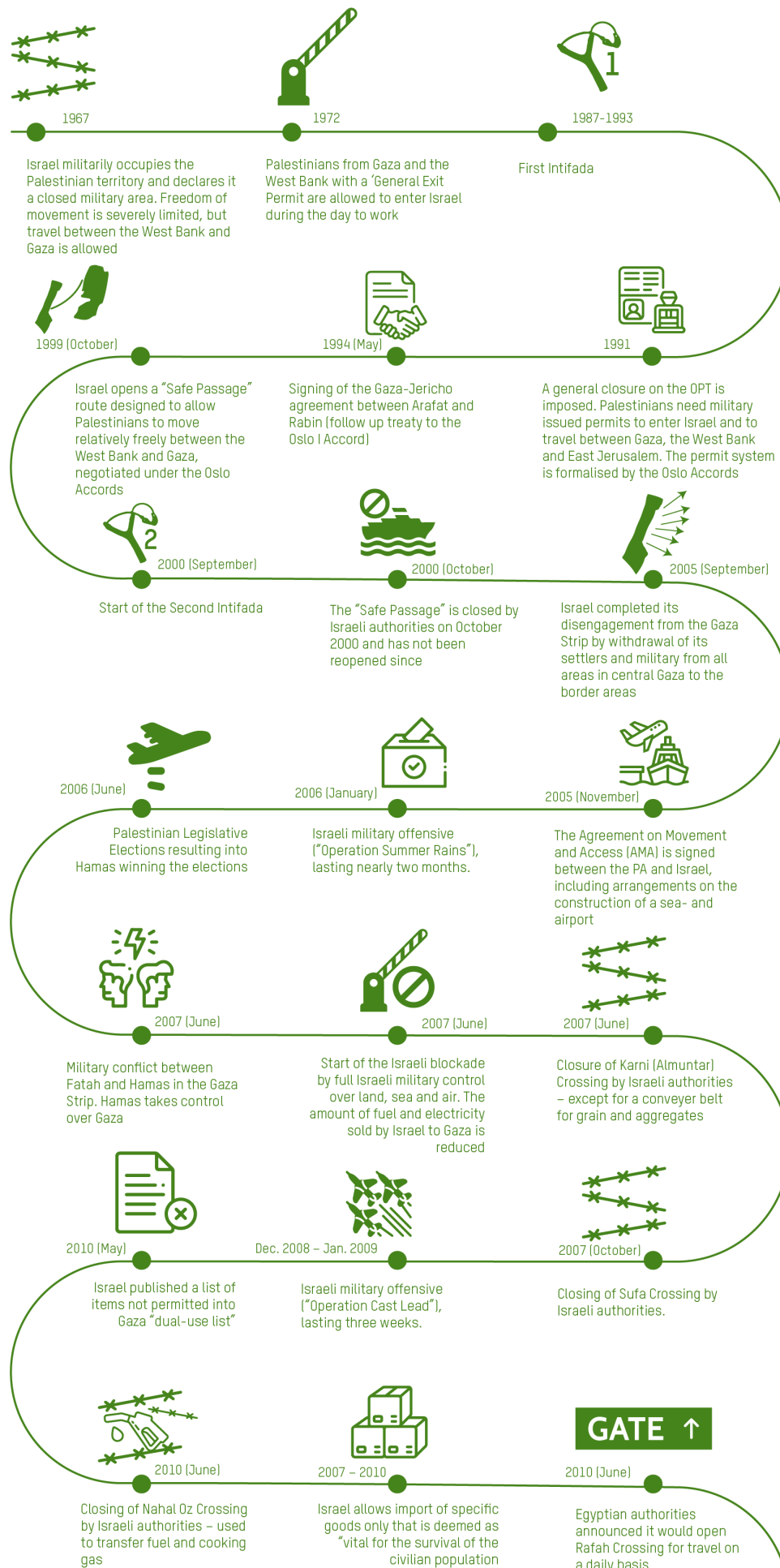
The opening of crossings for civilians and commercial goods is imperative for poverty alleviation and respect for human rights and should therefore not be contingent on Palestinian Authority and the Gaza de facto authorities reconciliation (although that is crucial) or the resumption of formal peace negotiations between the PA and the Government of Israel. The international diplomatic and financial boycott of Gaza's de facto government has marginalized Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and contributed to exacerbate the intra-Palestinian divide. **The international community should actively support the current (though stalled) reconciliation process.**

7. Donors must support long-term economic development and enhance production:

Donors should leverage humanitarian investment to support the recovery of livelihood assets and boost private sector investments to support longer-term economic and social development. It is critical to maintain and restore the connection between Gaza and the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) to guarantee the economic viability of all Palestinians. In order to increase and enhance production there is also a need to strengthen the skills and capacities of workers. Workers who were employed before the closures on Gaza have had little exposure to new techniques and technologies, and few opportunities for training and professional exchange outside of Gaza. There is a need for investment in vocational training and capacity-building, as well as the ability for the youth to leave Gaza on study programs, and to develop business networks - particularly in the West Bank.

8. Trade with the outside world: For a sustainable recovery, Gaza needs to be able to trade effectively with the outside world, and this requires actions by all parties. This includes scaling up development, financial mechanisms, and technical support to the private sector in the Gaza Strip, including strengthening export capacities and application of international standards.

TIMELINE: MOVEMENT AND ACCESS RESTRICTIONS 1967-2021





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