



OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS
occupied Palestinian territory

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Humanitarian Monitoring Report – June 2005 Bertini Commitments

The Humanitarian Monitoring Report is produced monthly by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It draws on information from the Access, Closure and Information System (ACIS) and other data sources that humanitarian agencies have submitted to OCHA. The report is provided to the Task Force on Project Implementation (TFPI) as a basis for discussions with the government of Israel. It is available on the website www.ochaopt.org.

Context

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed Ms Catherine Bertini as his Personal Humanitarian Envoy to address the humanitarian needs arising from the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict since September 2000. Ms Bertini was requested to assess the nature and scale of the humanitarian needs, and to clarify the respective responsibilities of all actors involved.

This report monitors the humanitarian commitments made by the government of Israel to Ms Bertini during a mission to the region from 12 to 19 August 2002. It concluded that there were serious humanitarian problems linked to the ongoing conflict and, specifically, to the measures implemented by the government of Israel to safeguard its citizens from Palestinian attacks.

These security measures, including curfews, closures and roadblocks, led to a crisis of access and mobility, instigating a drastic decline in the Palestinian economy. A large part of the Palestinian population has difficulty accessing basic services such as health and education. Humanitarian service providers, such as UN agencies, NGOs, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH) ambulances, have experienced problems providing assistance and services to beneficiaries.

Commitments made by Israel

Health

- Ambulances will wait no more than 30 minutes at checkpoints.
- Mechanisms will be set in place to ensure patients, seeking critical medical services (child delivery, dialysis, chemotherapy), can pass all checkpoints quickly.

Water

- Problems relating to water deliveries in Palestinian towns and villages will be addressed to ensure that daily provision of adequate amounts of water can be supplied by Palestinian water tankers.

Facilitation for International Humanitarian Organisations

- The government of Israel will fully facilitate the activities of international organisations, with particular reference to UNRWA.
- The government of Israel agreed to review and strengthen the liaison arrangements between international agencies and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

Additional Commitments

On previous occasions, the government of Israel has made the following commitments, which were confirmed to the mission:

- The fishing zone for Palestinian boats off the Gaza coast will be extended to 12 nautical miles
- Olive farmers will be allowed access to their fields
- Increased shipments will be allowed at Karni crossing in the Gaza Strip
- The number of permits for Palestinian workers in Israel will be increased

The Bertini Commitments represent a minimum and specific set of humanitarian standards agreed to by the government of Israel. The Bertini Commitments are not a substitute for compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as laid down in the Fourth Geneva Convention. The maximum waiting period of 30 minutes for an ambulance at a checkpoint, for example, while an improvement on the situation in August 2002, falls short of the intent of provisions of IHL.

Executive Summary

Health

Palestinian ambulance operators reported a total of at least 12 access incidents in June 2005 (compared to 14 in May 2005), in which the provision of first aid and/or medical evacuations were delayed, obstructed and/or prevented by the IDF. The number of incidents reported a year ago in June 2004 was 38.

Water

Closure measures, including checkpoints and earth mounds, continue to have a severe affect on water transport; closures often result in the inability of water tankers to reach their destination.

Facilitation for International Humanitarian Organisations

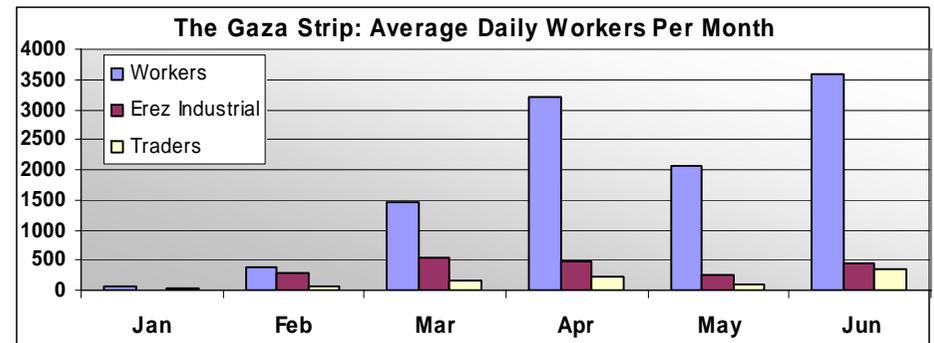
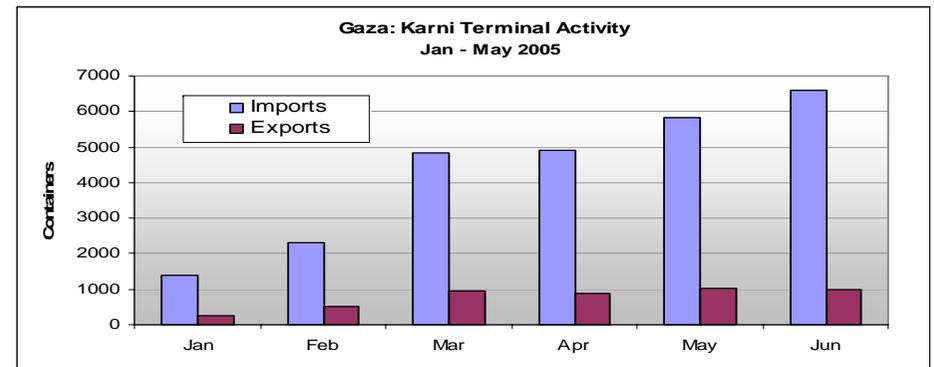
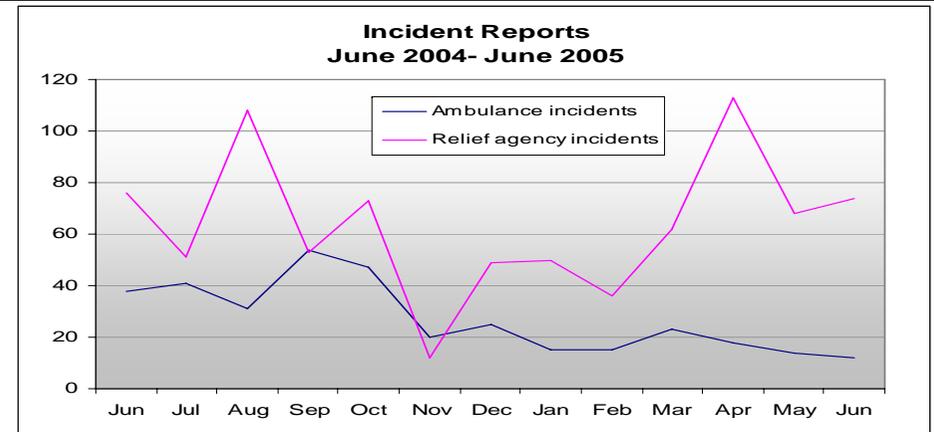
In June 2005, international relief agencies filed at least 74 reports (compared to 68 in May 2005) in which the delivery of aid and/or the movement of personnel were obstructed by the IDF or Israeli Border Police. Approximately 40 percent of the access problems occurred at checkpoints located at the entrances to Jerusalem, notably at the Tunnels, Gilo and Beitunia checkpoints. Last year, June 2004, 76 incidents were reported.

Additional commitments

The total number of containers entering the Gaza Strip at Karni in June 2005 was 6,592; the total number of containers exiting the Gaza Strip was 999. Imports have shown a steady increase, however exports have remained level.

The average daily crossing (accounting for the days entrance could have been permitted and excluding weekends days: Friday and Saturday) for Palestinian workers, traders and those entering Erez industrial estate in June 2005 was: 3,588 workers; 362 traders; 458 Erez industrial estate. All figures are higher than those reported last month.

Gaza Strip fishermen are consistently denied the right to fish up to the 12 nautical mile limit, as was agreed by the Israeli government.



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Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p>1. Health</p> <p>Palestinian ambulances will wait no more than 30 minutes at any checkpoints</p> <p>(government of Israel to Bertini mission, 12 to 19 August 2002)</p> <p>Effective mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that Palestinians seeking critical medical services (child delivery, dialysis, chemotherapy, etc) can quickly pass all checkpoints</p> <p>(government of Israel to Bertini mission, 12 to 19 August 2002)</p>	<p>Instructions issued to all checkpoint commanders concerning maximum time for ambulance delay at checkpoints</p> <p>Palestinian Ministry of Health, PRCS, UNRWA and hospitals no longer report ambulance delays at checkpoints</p> <p>Mechanisms established and Palestinian public informed</p> <p>No more reported instances of Palestinians in need of critical medical services being denied passage at checkpoints.</p>	<p><i>West Bank and the Gaza Strip: 12 incident¹s</i></p> <p>Palestinian ambulance operators reported a total of at least 12 access incidents in June 2005 (compared to 14 in May 2005), in which the provision of first aid and/or medical evacuations were delayed, obstructed and/or prevented by the IDF.</p> <p><i>Ambulance Access Denials</i></p> <p>Of the 12 incidents reported, at least three included humanitarian access denials, including one at the Tunnel checkpoint, Bethlehem, on 20 June of a PRCS ambulance.</p> <p><i>Ambulance Delays</i></p> <p>There were nine documented incidents of delays, in excess of 30 minutes. Including the incidents noted below.</p> <p>22 June: A PRCS reported a delay of two hours inside Balatah Refugee Camp, Nablus</p>	<p>In addition to the 12 reports, there were incidents in which the work of medical teams was hampered by Israeli settlers. On 11 June, settlers threw stones at a PRCS ambulance, near Bittar Elit settlement, while it was en route to transport a woman in labour from Nahalin village to a Palestinian hospital in Bethlehem. A similar incident was reported on 26 June in which Israeli settlers threw stones at a MoH ambulance inside Al Mawassi, the Gaza Strip. On the same day it was reported that a group of Israeli settlers impeded the work of the MoH Al Mawassi clinic.</p>
Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p>2. Water</p> <p>Problems related to water deliveries to Palestinian towns and villages will be addressed to ensure that daily water deliveries in proper quantities can be supplied by Palestinian water tankers.</p> <p>(government of Israel to Bertini mission, 12 to 19 August 2002)</p>	<p>Instructions issued to all checkpoints allowing for the easy transfer of water tankers through all checkpoints</p> <p>The IDF removes barriers that prevent the access by water tankers to villages that rely on tankered water</p> <p>No reports on lack of water or delay/stoppage of water tankers at checkpoints</p>	<p>Closure measures, including checkpoints and earth mounds, continue to have a severe affect on water transport; closures often result in the inability of water tankers to reach their destination.</p>	

¹ Data primarily from the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Ministry of Health

Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p>3. Facilitation for International Humanitarian Organisations</p> <p>Israel will fully facilitate the assistance activities of international organisations with particular reference to UNRWA</p> <p>(government of Israel to Bertini mission, 12 to 19 August 2002)</p> <p>Israel agrees to review and strengthen the liaison arrangements between international agencies and the IDF to facilitate assistance activities</p> <p>(Government of Israel to Bertini mission, 12 to 19 August 2002)</p> <p>Israel will improve the situation at checkpoints, including the deployment of more experienced IDF personnel</p>	<p>Free access for all international staff of international organisations throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and at international crossings, at all times.</p> <p>Free access for all Palestinian staff of international organisations throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip at all times.</p> <p>No delays/ stoppage of international organisations' transport of development and humanitarian goods at any point (that is, at international borders, borders between Israel and the West Bank or the Gaza Strip, within the West Bank or the Gaza Strip) at any time.</p> <p>Palestinian drivers (with either Jerusalem or West Bank IDs) allowed to drive humanitarian vehicles for international organisations, in particular UNRWA, WFP and ICRC</p> <p>Procedures will be established that provide direct access by international organisations to operational and command structures within the IDF.</p>	<p>In June 2005, international relief agencies filed at least 74 reports² (compared to 68 in May 2005) in which the delivery of aid and/or the movement of personnel were obstructed by the IDF or Israeli Border Police. Most incidents reported included delays and disrespect by the IDF of international humanitarian organisations' mandates, privileges and immunities</p> <p><i>Access by UNRWA staff</i></p> <p>UNRWA, the largest humanitarian organisation operating in the oPt, reported almost all of the received reports in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in which there were access problems at IDF checkpoints.</p> <p>In total, 68 incidents involving delay and/or denial of access at fixed and mobile checkpoints, predominantly those located at the entrances to Jerusalem, and at the gates in the Barrier were reported to the UNRWA office. Of these, 57 involved delays to vehicles, affecting 266 staff members, and there were 10 incidents in which access was denied, affecting a total of 37 staff members. In addition, one incident involved an UNRWA staff member who was detained by the IDF. In total, 304 staff members were affected compared to 332 in May. From the total number of access problems, 29 occurred at checkpoints located at the entrances to Jerusalem, notably at the Tunnels, Gilo and Beitunia checkpoints. In addition, four incidents took place at Bartaa and Baqa gates in the Barrier.</p> <p>In the Gaza Strip, a further two delays were reported by UNRWA, both at Abu Houli checkpoint. One delay of 11 buses (410 persons) was for more than four hours on 18 June and the other was delay of five buses (195 persons) for six hours on 28 June.</p> <p>In June 2005, there were additional four incidents, reported by other UN agencies: two denials and two delays.</p> <p>5 and 7 June: An OCHA team was denied access at the Nazlat Isa checkpoint, Tulkarm and at Beit Furik checkpoint, Nablus respectively.</p> <p>5 June: A MSF health service team was stopped for one hour by the Israeli</p>	<p>UN staff members continued to report incidents where IDF soldiers at checkpoints refused to cooperate with DCL officers and/or accept the validity of UN identity cards, insisting instead that UN staff show another form of identification.</p>

² These figures apply only to the humanitarian aid organisations that reported incidents at checkpoints to OCHA.

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		<p>police in the Old City of Hebron.</p> <p>6 June: A Medicins Du Monde tream was delayed at Huwarra checkpoint, Nablus, for one hour.</p>	
Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p>4. Additional Commitments</p> <p>The fishing zone for Palestinian fishing boats off the Gaza Strip coast will be extended to 12 nautical miles</p>	<p>Extension of fishing zone fully implemented</p> <p>No arrests of fishermen or confiscation of fishing boats within the 12 nautical mile zone.</p>	<p>Since January 2005, the Israeli authorities have permitted Palestinian fishing up to 10 nautical miles from the Gaza Strip coastline compared to 6 nautical miles previously. Under the Oslo Accords, Gaza Strip fishermen are entitled to fish 20 nautical miles from the coast. Fishing is still prohibited for the Al Mawassi – Khan Younis wharf and fishing from the Rafah wharf in Al Mawassi is subject to additional restrictions. Fishermen, boats, equipment and catch are inspected and only three traders are allowed to enter al Mawassi to purchase the catch. Most fishing happens off the Gaza Strip wharf.³</p>	
<p>An increase in shipments at Karni crossing, Gaza Strip.</p>	<p>Quantifiable increase in humanitarian aid shipments permitted through the crossing.</p>	<p>The total number of containers⁴ entering the Gaza Strip at Karni for the first six months of the 2005 is as follows.</p> <p>January 2005: 1,403 imports; 242 exports February 2005: 2,311 imports; 501 exports March 2005: 4,852 imports; 968 exports April 2005: 4,903 imports; 875 exports May 2005: 5,828 imports; 1,030 exports June 2005: 6,592 imports; 999 exports</p> <p>There were two closure days reported in June.</p>	<p>Most goods imported into the Gaza Strip and all exported goods pass through Karni crossing⁵. A higher demand for imported goods reflects the decline in the Gaza Strip’s local productive capacity since September 2000. Only in January 2005 was there a decrease in imported goods due to a high number of closure days that month following a Palestinian militant attack that killed six Israelis at the crossing. The increase in exported goods since February 2005 follows the Sharm al Sheikh summit.</p> <p>Restrictions continue on international humanitarian</p>

³ Please also see OCHA June Gaza Strip Situation Report

⁴ Ministry of National Economy data obtained by UNSCO and OCHA

⁵ The other three commercial crossings are Rafah, Sufa and Nahal Oz.

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			organisations that need prior coordination with Israeli authorities to enter and leave the Gaza Strip. A small number of high-level Palestinian UN staff members are permitted to cross. On 17 and 18 June, international organisations were allowed entry but no exit. Only diplomats with prior coordination were allowed to leave.
Increase in the number of work permits for workers in Israel.	Quantifiable increase in the number of work permits issued for workers in to work inside Israel.	<p>The average daily crossing (accounting for the days entrance could have been permitted and excluding weekends days: Friday and Saturday⁶) for Palestinian workers, traders and those entering Erez industrial estate of the six months of 2005 is as follows.⁷</p> <p><i>Daily average</i> January 2005: 49 workers; 17 traders; nine Erez industrial estate February 2005: 390 workers; 70 traders; 278 Erez industrial estate March 2005: 1,451 workers; 158 traders; 537 Erez industrial estate April 2005: 3,200 workers; 224 traders; 487 Erez industrial estate May 2005: 2,067 workers; 103 traders; 259 Erez industrial estate June 2005: 3,588 workers; 362 Traders; 458 Erez industrial estate</p>	

⁶ Weekend figures are excluded because, in general, fewer crossings are recorded on Fridays and Saturdays.

⁷ National Security Forces data obtained by UNSCO.