



OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS  
occupied Palestinian territory

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## Humanitarian Monitoring Report – July 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](http://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 18 access incidents in July 2005 (compared to 12 in June 2005), in which the provision of first aid and/or medical evacuations were delayed, obstructed and/or prevented by Israeli forces. The number of incidents reported a year ago in July 2004 was 41.

### 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

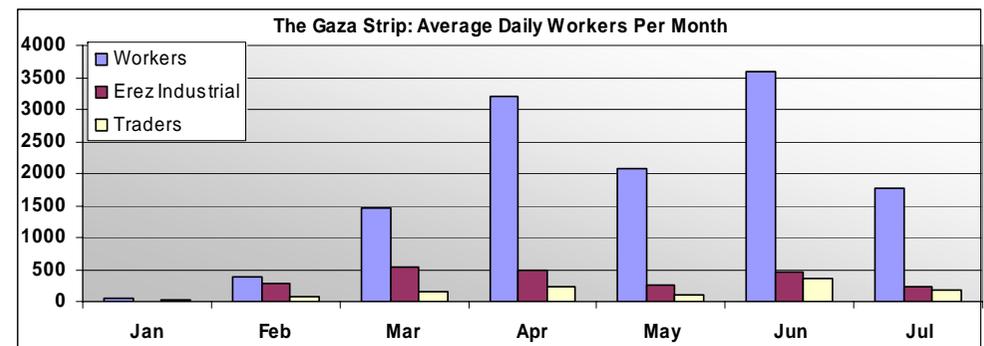
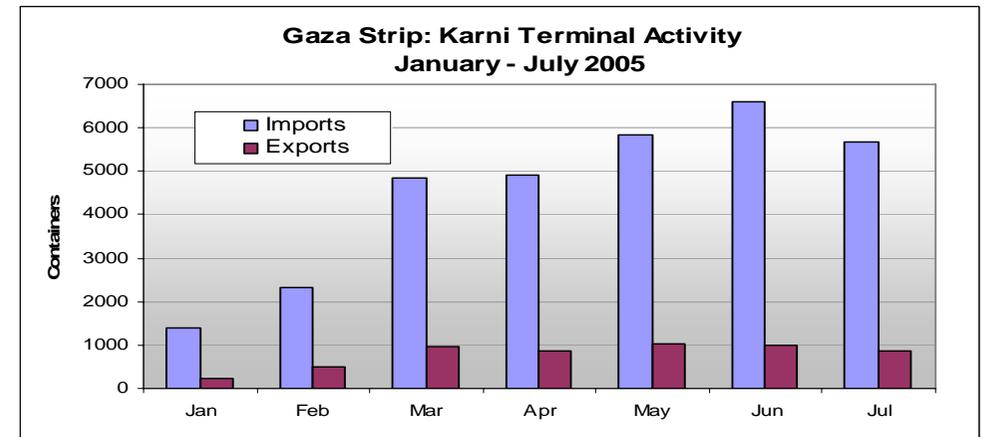
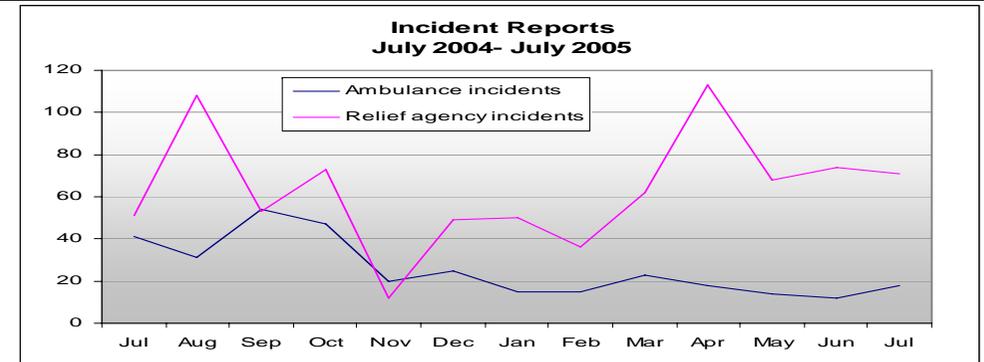
In July 2005, international relief agencies filed at least 71 reports (compared to 74 in June 2005) in which the delivery of aid and/or the movement of personnel were obstructed by the IDF or Israeli Border Police predominately at closures located at the entrances to Jerusalem, and at the gates in the Barrier. Most incidents reported included delays and disrespect by the IDF of international humanitarian organisations' mandates, privileges and immunities. Last year, July 2004, 51 incidents were reported.

### Additional commitments

The total number of containers entering the Gaza Strip at Karni in July 2005 was 5,685; the total number of containers exiting the Gaza Strip was 849. Truckloads of imported goods to the Gaza Strip fell in July 2005 compared with the previous month; they are higher than the same month the previous year and pre-Intifada. Exports have remained fairly stable since March this year. Nevertheless, the volume of exported goods remains lower than pre-Intifada.

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 July 2005 was: 1,767 workers; 175 traders; 233 Erez industrial estate.

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><b>1. Health</b></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: 18 incidents<sup>1</sup></i></p> <p>Palestinian ambulance operators reported a total of at least 18 access incidents in July 2005 (compared to 12 in June 2005) in which the provision of first aid and/or medical evacuations were delayed, obstructed and/or prevented by Israeli forces.</p> <p><i>Ambulance Access Denials</i></p> <p>Of the 18 incidents reported, at least three included humanitarian access denials, including the ones noted below.</p> <p>13 July: A PRCS team was denied access at Qaffin checkpoint, Tulkarm. 30 July: A PRCS team was denied access at Gilo checkpoint, Bethlehem.</p> <p><i>Ambulance Delays</i></p> <p>There were 15 documented incidents of delays, in excess of 30 minutes, including the incidents noted below.</p> <p>9 July: A PRCS was delayed for three hours at the Jericho border. A delay of 50 minutes was reported at the same location on 28 July 2005.</p> <p><i>Other (not included in the total)</i></p> <p>13 July: According to the PRCS, a PRCS ambulance was stopped at Huwwara checkpoint while en route from transporting a delivery case from Aljit village to Rafidya hospital in Nablus. A soldier ordered the team out of the vehicle and the ambulance was then searched. An Israeli Army M16 weapon was found inside the vehicle. The soldiers questioned the crew about the source of the weapon, and the crew denied any knowledge about the weapon and refused the soldiers' order to remove it. The soldiers then removed the weapon.</p>	<p>In addition to those incidents noted in the status column, on 18 and 25 July the Palestinian MoH reported that its ambulance services were hampered by the internal and external closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.</p>
Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p><b>2. Water</b></p> <p>Problems related to water</p>	<p>Instructions issued to all checkpoints</p>	<p>Closure measures, including checkpoints and earth mounds, continue to have a</p>	

<sup>1</sup> Data primarily from the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Ministry of Health

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<p>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>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>severe affect on water transport; closures often result in the inability of water tankers to reach their destination.</p> <p>According to Water and Sanitation, Hygiene Monitoring Projects (WaSH), Battir, (population 4,400) in the Bethlehem Governorate is suffering from a chronic shortage in water supply. The major source of water to the community is the Israeli Mekorot Company, which supplies other Palestinian communities in the area - the supply quantity is limited, according to WaSH. Furthermore, Israel demolished two cisterns in the village of Ar Ramadinin, the southern edge of the West Bank, because Israel said they were not properly licensed. The two cisterns were used as drinking water sources for cattle grazing.</p>	
Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p><b>3. Facilitation for International Humanitarian Organisations</b></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</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</p>	<p>In July 2005, international relief agencies filed at least 71 reports<sup>2</sup> (compared to 74 in June 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. In the West Bank, 56 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 by UNRWA. Of these, 47 involved delays to vehicles, affecting 307 staff members, and nine incidents in which access was denied, affecting a total of 29 staff members. From the total number of access problems, 20 occurred at checkpoints located at the entrances to Jerusalem, notably at the Tunnels, Gilo and Beitunia checkpoints; and one incident took place at Khirbet Jbara gate in the Barrier.</p> <p>In the Gaza Strip, a further six incidents of closure, three denials and three delays, affecting access were reported by UNRWA. In three of the incidents UNRWA vehicles were denied access for 24 hours; in the three incidents, between 80 and 260 staff members could not attend their duty stations due to the closures.</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>

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

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<p>at checkpoints, including the deployment of more experienced IDF personnel</p>	<p>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><i>Other</i></p> <p>In June 2005, there were additional nine incidents, reported by other humanitarian agencies, including those noted below.</p> <p>10 and 13 July: Médecins Sans Frontières teams experienced a denial and a delay of access respectively.</p> <p>26 July: Three UN staff members were blocked south of Abu Houli junction, the Gaza Strip, for more than 24 hours due to closure.</p>	
Commitment	Benchmarks	Status	Remarks
<p><b>4. Additional Commitments</b></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>The fishing catch in July 2005<sup>3</sup> was higher than during the same month last year but was lower than in July 2000. 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. The Bertini commitments state that the fishing zone for Palestinian boats off the Gaza coast will be extended to 12 nautical miles). Fishing is prohibited for the Al Mawassi – Khan Younis wharf and fishing from the Rafah wharf in Al Mawassi is subject to additional restrictions.<sup>4</sup> Most fishing boats leave from the Gaza wharf.</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 containers<sup>5</sup> entering the Gaza Strip at Karni for the first seven 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                  July 2005: 5,685 imports; 849 exports</p>	<p>Most goods imported into the Gaza Strip and all exported goods pass through Karni crossing.<sup>6</sup> Truckloads of imported goods to Gaza fell in July 2005 compared with the previous month although they are higher than the same month the previous year and pre-Intifada. Exports have remained fairly stable since March this year. Nevertheless, the volume</p>

<sup>3</sup> Data from the Rafah wharf are not yet available. The total for July 2005 is likely to be higher than stated here.

<sup>4</sup> Fishermen can only access the wharf during opening hours (8-11am and 3-5.30pm) and are not allowed on the shore at other times. Fishing is limited to 8 nautical miles of the coastline and 3 kilometres north of the wharf along the coastline and two nautical miles north of the Egyptian border. Fishermen, boats, equipment and catch are searched by the IDF and only three traders are allowed to enter Al Mawassi to purchase the catch.

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of National Economy data obtained by UNSCO and OCHA

<sup>6</sup> The other three commercial crossings are Rafah, Sufah and Nahal Oz.

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			of exported goods remains lower today than pre-Intifada. A higher demand for imported goods reflects the decline in the Gaza Strip's local productive capacity since 2000. The increase in exported goods since February 2005 follows the Sharm al Sheikh summit.
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 Saturday<sup>7</sup>) for Palestinian workers, traders and those entering Erez industrial estate of the seven months of 2005 is as follows.<sup>8</sup></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            July 2005: 1,767 workers; 175 traders; 233 Erez industrial estate</p>	From 13 to 30 July 2005 (and ongoing), general closure was imposed on the oPt after of a Palestinian suicide bombing in Netanya on 12 July.

<sup>7</sup> Weekend figures are excluded because, in general, fewer crossings are recorded on Fridays and Saturdays.

<sup>8</sup> National Security Forces data obtained by UNSCO.