



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN THE GAZA STRIP

JULY 2011

GAZA FAST FACTS

- The population of Gaza is 1.6 million, with over 50% under 18.
- 38% of Gazans live in poverty.
- 31% of the Gazan workforce is unemployed and 47% of youths are unemployed.
- 54% of Gazans are food insecure and over 75% are aid dependent.
- Economic output in 2010 is 20% lower than in 2005.
- 35% of Gaza's farmland and 85% of its fishing waters are totally or partially inaccessible due to Israeli military measures.
- 50-80 million litres of raw and partially treated sewage are dumped in the sea each day.
- Over 90% of the water from the Gaza aquifer is undrinkable.
- 85% of schools in Gaza run on double shifts.
- Since the beginning of 2010, 59 people have been killed in tunnel accidents including 5 children and 115 have been injured.
- The main crossing for movement of Palestinians in and out of Gaza (Rafah Crossing at the Egyptian border) remains restricted.

- 1. The Gaza blockade is a denial of basic human rights in contravention of international law and amounts to collective punishment.** The blockade severely restricts imports and exports, as well as the movement of people in and out of Gaza, and access to agricultural land and fishing waters. Gazans are unable to provide for their families and the quality of infrastructure and vital services has deteriorated.
- 2. Measures taken to ease the blockade in June 2010 have had little effect on the humanitarian situation.** While imports have increased, they are still only at 45% of the pre-2007 levels. Exports remain tightly restricted and are limited to agricultural produce to Europe, and Gazan businesses cannot access their traditional markets of Israel and the West Bank. Access to land and sea remains highly restricted.
3. While Israel has approved a range of infrastructure projects aimed to improve vital sanitation, education and health services in Gaza, few of these projects have been implemented. This is mainly due to the unwieldy, cumbersome approval process and difficulties in importing materials. This means Gazans have seen little improvement in the quality of vital services.
- 4. Thousands of people, some of them children, risk their lives smuggling goods through the tunnels under the border with Egypt every day.** The thriving tunnel industry is a direct result of ongoing restrictions on the import of construction materials, the lack of employment opportunities, and the huge reconstruction needs in Gaza.
- 5. Gazans remain isolated and cut off from the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory.** Movement via the Israeli Erez crossing is prohibited for almost all Gazans, despite promises to ease restrictions. The Egyptian Rafah Crossing remains limited to 500-600 people per day, with hundreds of Palestinians denied passage each week.