



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

State of the Gaza Strip Border Crossings 01 - 30 July 2018

Coinciding with the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip that entered its 12th consecutive year. During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities imposed tight restrictions on the commercial crossings as they closed the only commercial crossing “Karm Abu Salem” and prevented the entry of goods into the Gaza Strip, except for some humanitarian goods, including food and medicine. Furthermore, the Israeli authorities imposed a complete ban on exporting and marketing goods from the Gaza Strip.

As for the Crossings designated for the persons' movement, the Israeli authorities continue to impose tight restrictions on the movement of the Gaza Strip population through Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing, and narrowly allowing the travel of limited categories. As part of imposing further restrictions on the travel of these categories, the Israeli authorities lately forced some of these categories, particularly students studying abroad and travelers through al-Karama crossing, to travel in buses that carry them from Beit Hanoun Crossing to al-Karama crossing within "shuttle service", which exaggerated the suffering of these categories and imposed complicated restrictions on their movement.

The Israeli consequent decisions relevant to tightening the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, completely closing the only commercial crossing Karm Abu Salem, and ban the entry of all types of fuel, gas, goods and basic needs for the Gaza Strip population caused a deterioration of the humanitarian, economic and living conditions for 2 million Palestinians due to the serious effects resulted from these decisions¹.

• Restrictions on Goods Movement

- On 10 July 2018, the Israeli forces issued a decision to tightening the closure as they closed Karm Abu Salem crossing and prevented the entry of goods into the Gaza Strip, except for some humanitarian goods, including food, medicine, medical supplies, fuel and gas. Furthermore, the Israeli authorities imposed a complete ban on exporting and marketing goods from Gaza Strip. On 16 July 2018, the Israeli authorities issued a decision to completely close Karm Abu Salem crossing, except for the entry of food, medical supplies, fuel and gas only when needed. On 01 August 2018, the Israeli Defense Minister, Avigdor Lieberman, issued a decision to ban the entry of fuel and gas into the Gaza Strip through Karm Abu Salem crossing starting from Thursday, 02 August 2018, until further notice.

¹ To view the serious effects of the Israeli decisions to tighten the closure on the Gaza Strip, see PCHR's press release issued on 02 August 2018, on the following link:

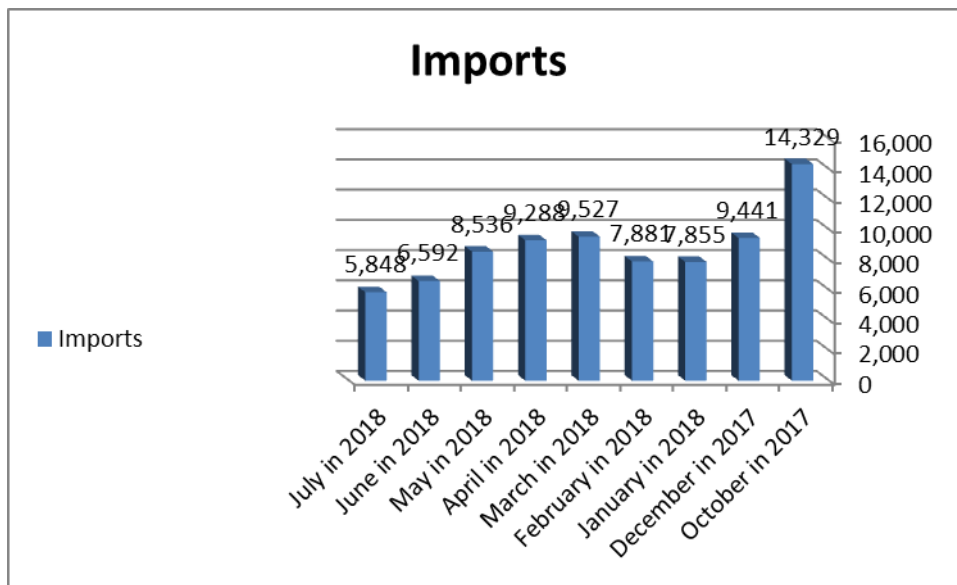
<https://pchr.org/ar/?p+15784>



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

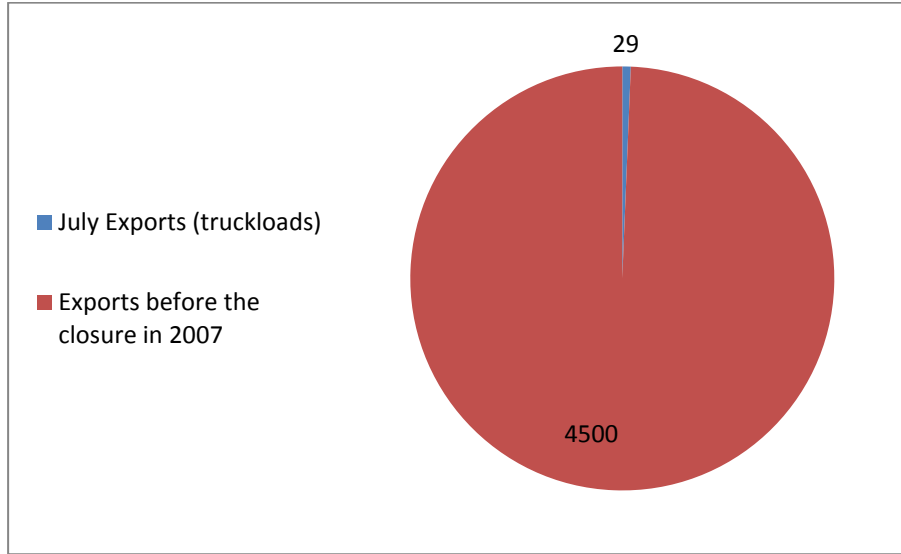
- The Israeli authorities tightening of closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, the sole commercial crossing “Karm Abu Salem”, and banning the entry of all types of fuel, gas, goods and basic needs for the Gaza strip population caused a sharp decline in imports. In July, the Israeli authorities allowed the entry of 5.848 truckloads and in June, they allowed the entry of 6.592 truckloads. In May, the Israeli forces allowed the entry of 8.536 truckloads, and in April, they allowed the entry of 9.288 truckloads, and in March, they allowed the entry of 9.527 truckloads. Furthermore, in February, the Israeli forces allowed the entry of 7.881 truckloads and in January, they allowed the entry of 7.855 truckloads.



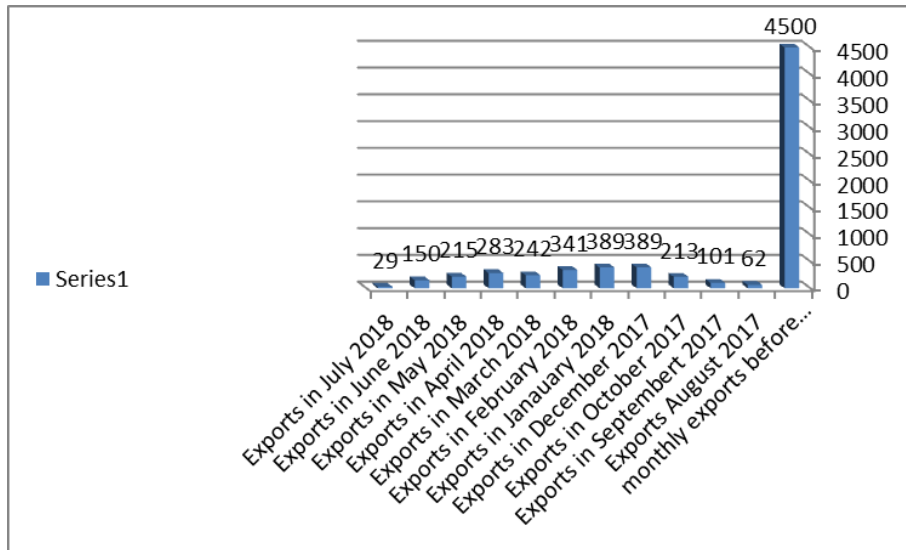
- Since tightening the closure on the Gaza Strip on 10 August 2018, the Israeli authorities are detaining about 2,500 containers of raw materials, industrial and commercial goods, causing great losses for the Gaza Strip traders due to delaying the entry of goods, in addition to forcing traders to pay extra fees (storage and demurrage charges) for each day of delay.
- **Continued Ban on the Gaza Strip Exports:**
- The Israeli authorities continued to ban the Gaza Strip exports. In a limited exception, they allowed the exportation of limited amounts of goods; most of which are exported to the West Bank and little amounts are exported to Israel and other countries. In July, the Israeli authorities allowed the exportation of 29 truckloads the West Bank (before the complete ban decision), most of which are agricultural, fish, furniture, animal skin, aluminum scrap, and clothes.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



- The exports rate in July was 0.64% of the monthly exports before June 2007 (4500 truckloads monthly). The lowest exports rate was reported in July as 29 truckloads only were exported. However, the exports in January were the highest as 389 truckloads were exported.



- The Israeli authorities continued to impose tightened restrictions on the exportation of the Gaza Strip goods into the, claiming that they are "dual-use materials". The Israeli forces put 118 types of goods on the list of the "dual-use materials". These types include hundreds of basic goods. For example, the communication equipment alone includes dozens of goods.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

- The items on the "dual-use goods" list are essential to the life of the population, so imposing restrictions on them contribute to the deterioration of infrastructure and the deterioration of economic, health and education conditions. These items include communications equipment, pumps, large generators, iron bars, iron pipes in all diameters, welding equipment and welding rods used in welding, various types of wood, UPS devices that protect the electric devices from breaking down when the electricity suddenly cuts off, X-ray machines, cranes and heavy vehicles, types of batteries and several types of fertilizers.
- The process of submitting applications by the Gaza Strip population to enter goods classified by the Israeli authorities as dual-use goods is very complex and ambiguous. Those residing the Gaza Strip should send a request to the Palestinian Coordination Committee for the Entry of Goods that refers the request to the Israeli Coordination and Liaison Office at "Erez" crossing. After that, the goods will be classified and sent to the competent Israeli officer to check it. Moreover, the Palestinian trader should close the transaction with the Israeli seller or broker and pay for it to submit the request. If the response was positive, the coordination for the entry of goods will be allowed through the Karm Abu Salem (Kerem Shaloum) crossing. A number of traders and contractors said to PCHR that the abovementioned measures are very complicated as the Israeli authorities deliberately delay responses to applications for months. Additionally, in many cases, the Israeli authorities stationed at (Kerem Shaloum) crossing return the goods that had been already approved on to enter. This inflicts heavy losses on traders who pay large amount of money for the storage and demurrage charges and to contractors who undertake to deliver their projects on time.

Restrictions on the Movement of Persons:

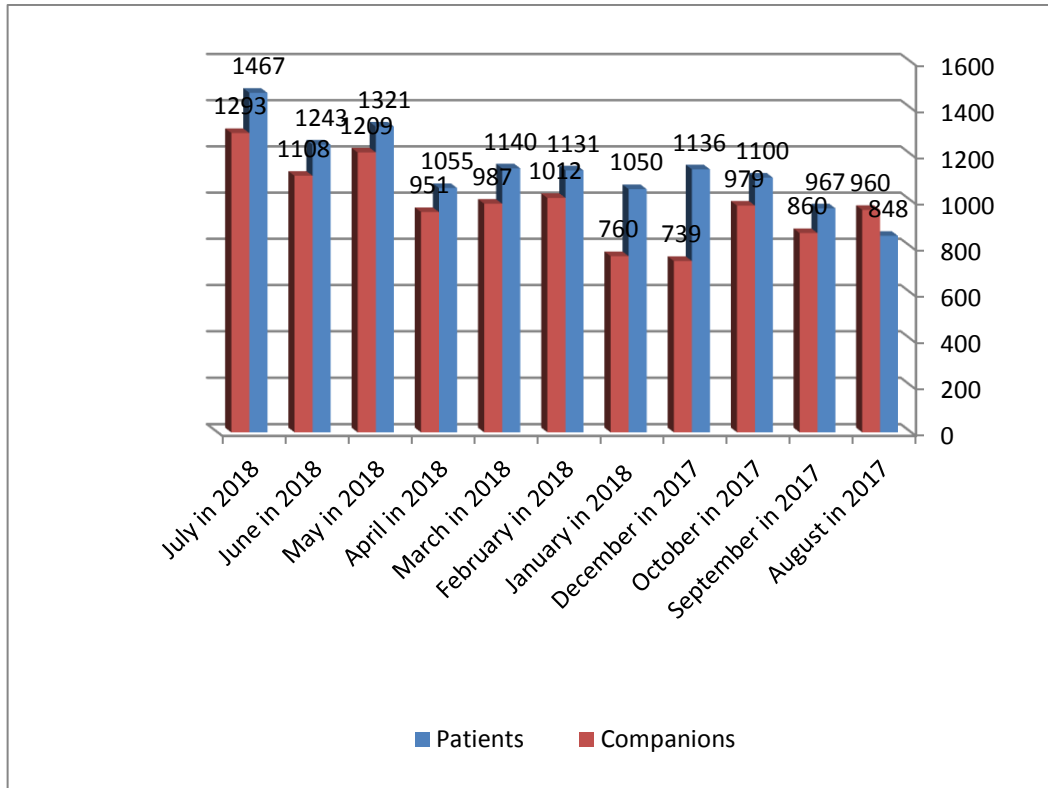
- The Israeli authorities continued to impose tight restrictions on the movement of the Gaza Strip population through Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing. However, they allowed limited categories to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing: patients and their companions, Arabs holding Israeli ID cards, international journalists, workers of international humanitarian organizations, businesspeople, relatives of prisoners in the Israeli jails, and persons travelling via al-Karama crossing.
- The Israeli authorities imposed new restrictions on the departure of those limited categories, who are allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing. These restrictions include extending the time required to handle the applications of Gaza exit-permits from 24 days to 70 days for those requesting the permit for studying, trade, and travelling abroad; 50 days for visiting a sick relative, attending conferences, appointments in Embassies and Consulates in the West Bank or Israel; and 23 days for non-urgent medical referrals applications. It should be noted that this period does not include the weekend on Fridays and Saturdays.
- The Israeli authorities also imposed new restrictions on the items which the traveler is allowed to carry when traveling through Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing. These restrictions include preventing acquisition of electronic and electric devices, cosmetics, and foodstuffs; and preventing travelers from putting their belongings in wheel bags.

غزة - شارع جمال عبد الناصر "الثلاثيني" - مجمع الرويا - الطابق 12 - مقابل جامعة الأزهر ويجوار الهلال الأحمر - د. حيد عبد الشافي
ص . ب 1328 تليفون 2825893 / 08 2824776 فاكس 2835288

Gaza- Jamal 'Abdel Nasser "al-Thalathini" Street - Al-Roya Building- Floor 12 - Opposite to al-Azhar University - Near
Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) -Dr. Haidar 'Abdel Shafi
PO Box 1328 Tel/: 08 - 2824776 / 2825893 Fax 2835288 E-mail: pchr@pchrgaza.org – Web page: www.pchrgaza.org



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



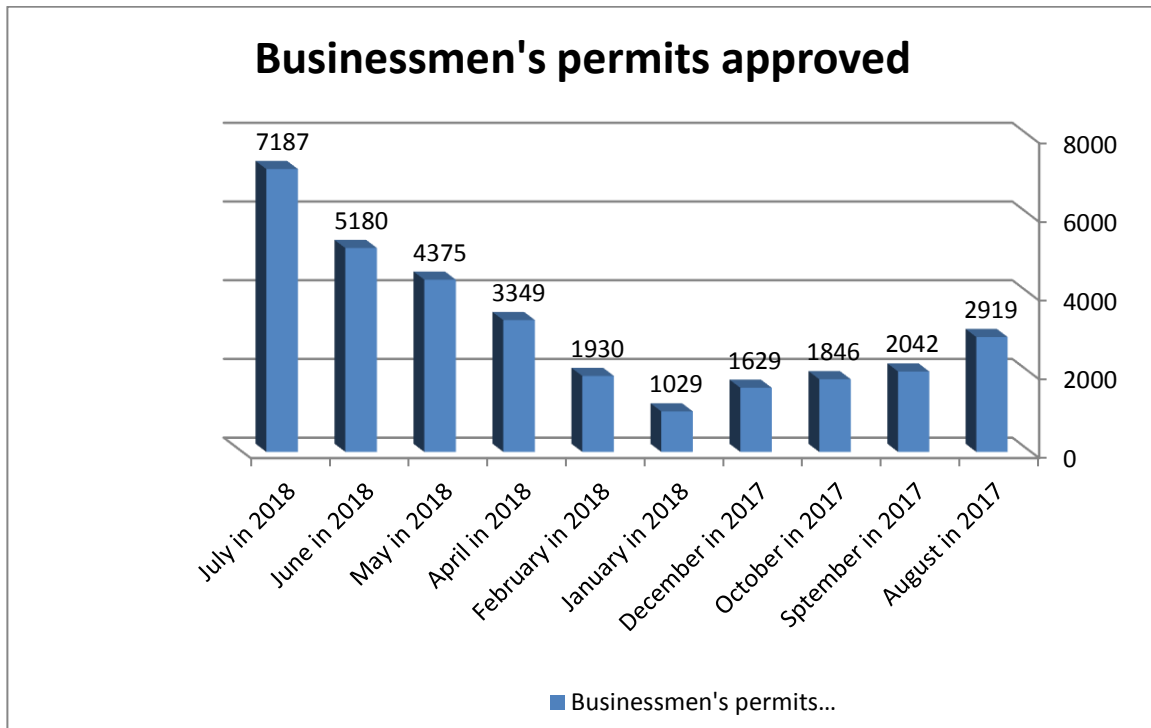
- **Patients:** During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities stationed at Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing obstructed the travel of patients referred for medical treatment in the Israeli hospitals or the West Bank under various pretexts, including security reasons, changing the companions, waiting for a new appointment and awaiting an Israeli reply following security interviews. In July, Israel allowed the entry of 1,467 patients and 1,293 companions.
- It should be mentioned that according to the Coordination and Liaison Department in the Ministry of Health, the number of patients who applied for permits to travel via Beit Hanoun Crossing in 2017 was 25,796 applications; 13,803 were approved (53.5% of the total applications.) It should be noted that the filed applications requesting permits were for patients who are only emergency cases according to the classification of the Israeli authorities (i.e. suffering from life threatening diseases). The Israeli authorities also deprive patients with non-life-threatening diseases, such as blindness and amputation, of traveling for treatment, claiming that their cases are not that urgent and does not require saving a life.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Prisoners' Visits:

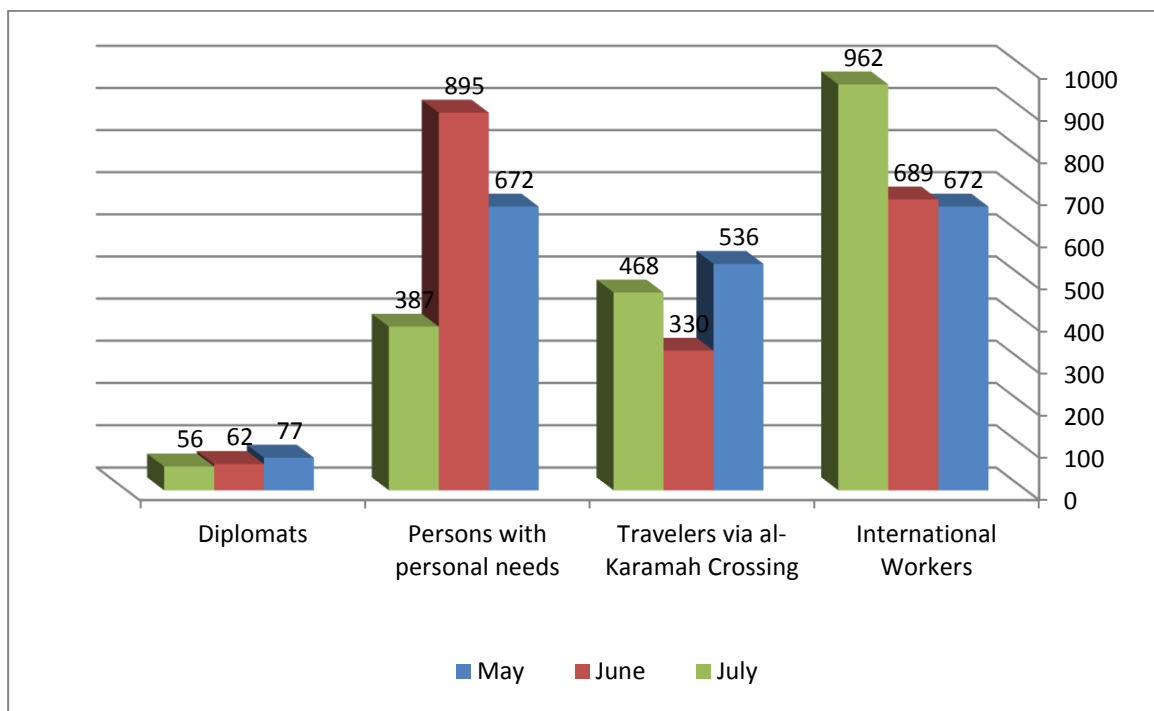
- In July, the Israeli authorities allowed 52 family members of prisoners divided into 3 groups to visit 59 of their relatives in the Israeli prisons according to the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) in Gaza. The number of visits of detainees' relatives to their sons in Israeli prisons in July is very limited compared to the number of visits provided by the agreement between the Israeli authorities and the detainees in May 2012.
- **Number of businessmen who are allowed to travel increased:** the Israeli authorities continued to impose restrictions on the movement of businessmen via Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing. In July, they allowed 7.187 businessmen to travel via Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing, according to the General Authority for Civil Affairs. Although the number of businessmen allowed traveling increased comparing to last months, Israeli authorities still ban the travelling of hundred businessmen without any reasons.





المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

- **Other categories:** According to GACA, Israel allowed the entry of 692 international workers; 77 diplomats; 672 persons with personal needs; 536 travelers via al-Karama (Allenby) crossing; and 184 Arabs in Israel. During the same period, the Israeli authorities banned the elderly from visiting al-Aqsa Mosque to perform prayers in it. It should be mentioned that these statistics do not represent the number of persons allowed to enter as the permit holders are far less than the passing times due to passing many times via the crossing with the same permit in one month.



Two Businessmen Were Arrested at Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing

- At approximately 15:00 on Tuesday, 17 July 2018, Israeli authorities stationed at Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing in the northern Gaza Strip, arrested Mahmoud 'Awad Mohammed al-Sha'er (50), from Kherbet al-'Adas neighborhood in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, while he was on his way to the West Bank to proceed his work in trading and exporting vegetables. Mahmoud's brother, Ibrahim 'Awad Mohammed al-Sha'er, said to PCHR's fieldworker that at approximately 22:00 on the same day, he received a phone call from the Palestinian Liaison informing him that his brother was arrested at the crossing.



المركز الفلسطيني لحقوق الإنسان PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

- At approximately 17:00 on Tuesday, 24 July 2018, Israeli authorities stationed at Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing arrested Sabri Khader Abdul Qader Qandeel (56), a businessman of car spare parts in Qaneel Company from Tal al-Hawa neighborhood in Gaza City. Sabri's son said to PCHR's fieldworker that at approximately 08:00, his father went to Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing. At approximately 17:00 on the same day, the family received a phone call from the Palestinian Liaison informing them that the Israeli Intelligence Service arrested Sabri.

Rafah International Crossing Point:

The Egyptian authorities continued to open Rafah International Crossing Point, the only outlet of the Gaza Strip population. During the reporting period, around 5,970 civilians managed to leave the Gaza Strip while 6,530 civilians returned to the Strip and the Egyptian authorities returned 774 civilians, banning them from travel without any reason.