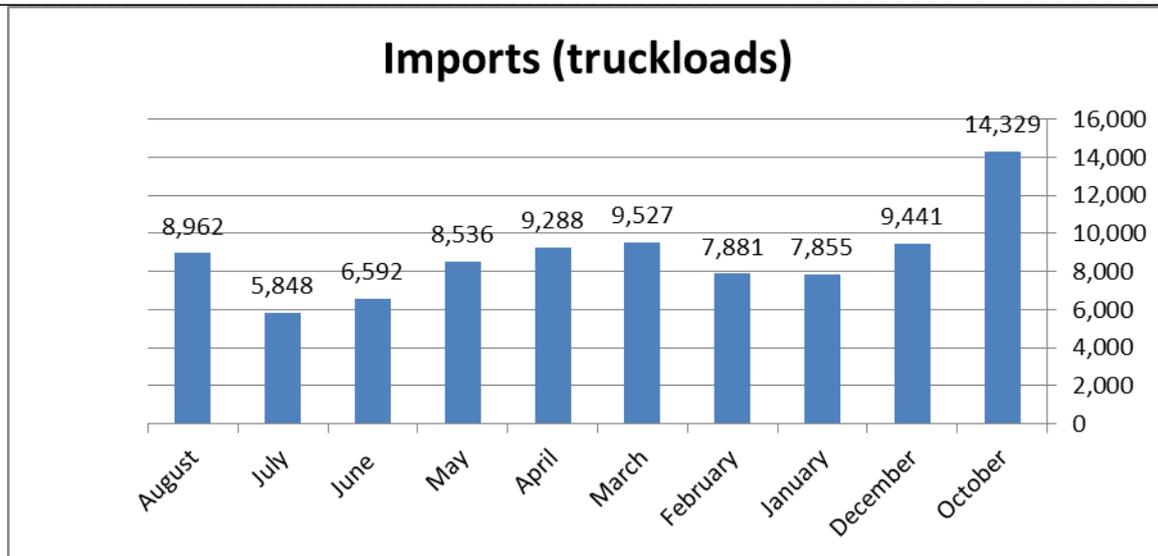


State of the Gaza Strip Border Crossings 01 - 31 August 2018

The Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip continues for the 12th consecutive year. During the reporting period (August), the Israeli authorities intensified the restrictions on the commercial crossings as they closed the Kerm Abu Salem Crossing and banned the entry of all goods and commodities into the Gaza Strip, except for the humanitarian supplies (including food and medicine). Moreover, the Israeli authorities decided to totally ban the exportation of all goods from the Gaza Strip. As for the Crossings for the movement of persons, the Israeli authorities continue to impose tightened restrictions on the movement of the Gaza Strip residents through Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing, 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 wanting to study abroad and travelers through al-Karamah Crossing, to travel in buses that carry them from Beit Hanoun Crossing to al-Karamah crossing within "shuttle service", exaggerating the suffering of these categories and imposing complicated restrictions on their movement.

• Restrictions on Goods Movement

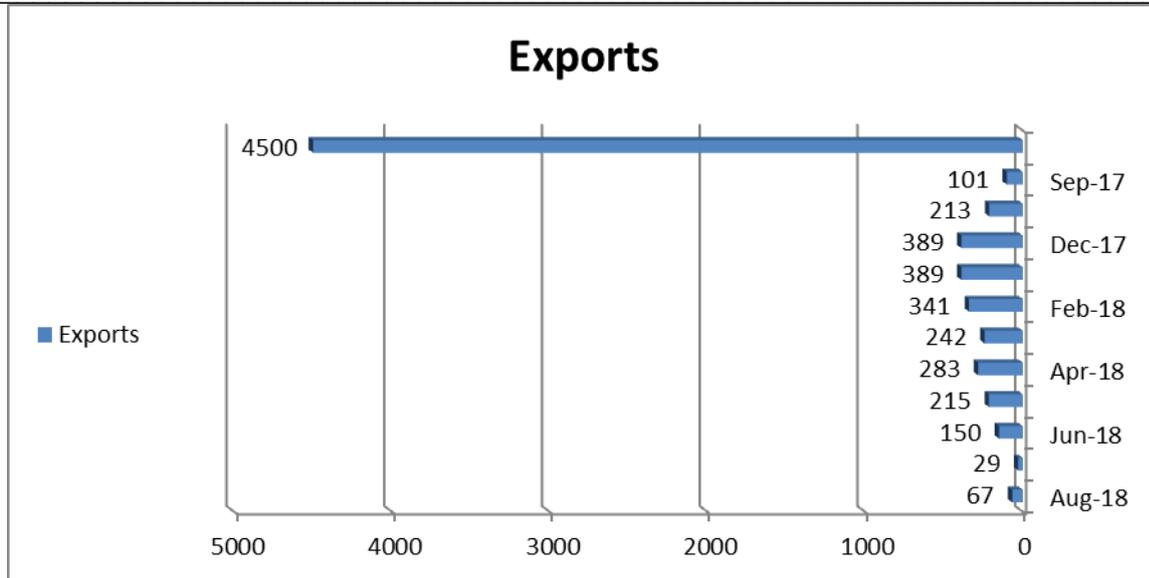
- On 01 August 2018, the Israeli Defense Minister, Avigdor Lieberman, ordered a freeze on all fuel and gas shipments into the Gaza Strip via Kerm Abu Salem starting from 02 August 2018. This decision was preceded with the Israeli authorities' decision on 10 July 2018 to close the Kerm Abu Salem Crossing and ban the entry of goods and commodities into the Gaza Strip except for the humanitarian supplies, including food, medicine, medical supplies, fuel and gas. They also decided to impose a total ban on the Gaza Strip exports. The total closure of Kerm Abu Salem Crossing continued until 15 August 2018 when the Israeli authorities reopened the crossing. However, the tightened restrictions continued on the imports classified as "dual-use materials" as the Israeli authorities officially list 118 types within these materials, including hundreds of basic goods and commodities and raw materials. The Gaza Strip imports via Kerm Abu Salem Crossing in August were 8962 truckloads after reopening the crossing.



▪ **Ongoing ban on Gaza Strip exports:**

The Israeli authorities continued to ban the Gaza Strip exports. In a limited exception, they allowed the exportation of very limited types of goods; most of which are exported to the West Bank and only little quantities are exported to Israel and other counties. In August (particularly after abolishing the decision to totally ban exports), the Israeli authorities allowed the exportation of 67 truckloads (43 of which were to the West Bank). Those truckloads were agricultural products, fish, furniture, animal skin, aluminum scrap, and clothes.

- The exports rate in June was 1.4% of the monthly exports before June 2007 (4500 truckloads monthly). The lowest exports rate was reported in last July as only 29 truckloads were exported. However, the exports in January were the highest as 389 truckloads were exported.

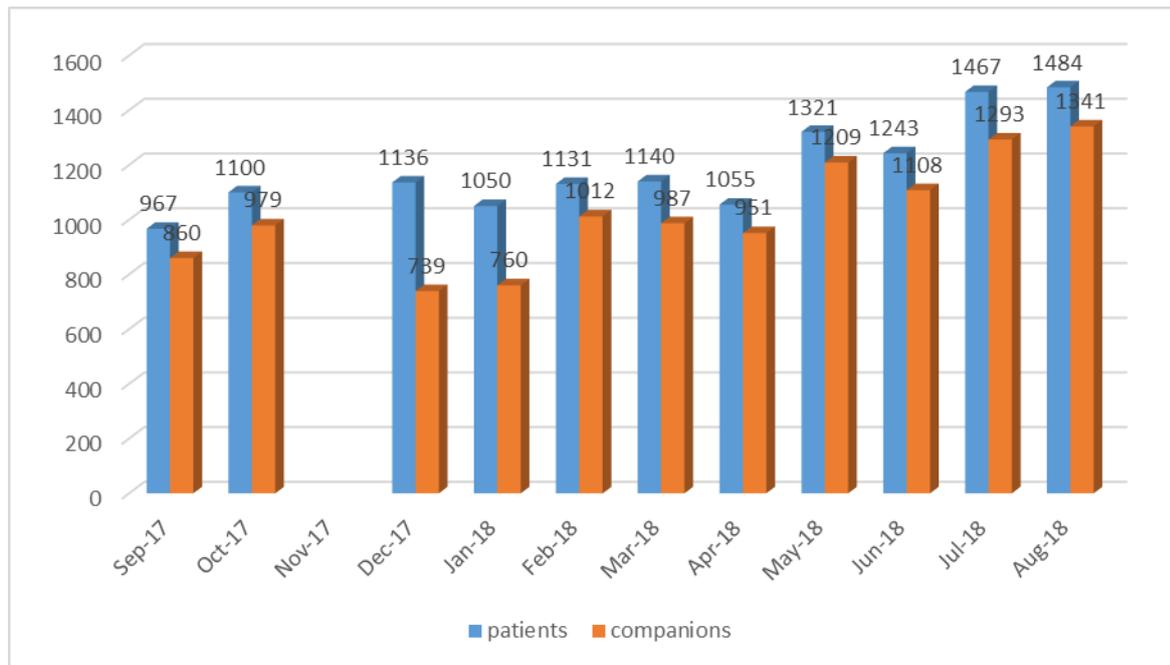


- The Israeli authorities continue to impose tightened restrictions on the goods classified as "dual-use materials", which are around 118 types and include hundreds of basic goods and commodities. The dual-use materials are essential to the life of the population, so imposing restrictions on them contribute to the deterioration of infrastructure and 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, elevators, 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 relevant Israeli officer to check it. Moreover, the Palestinian trader should close the transaction with the Israeli seller or broker and pay for it to be able 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 forces 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:**

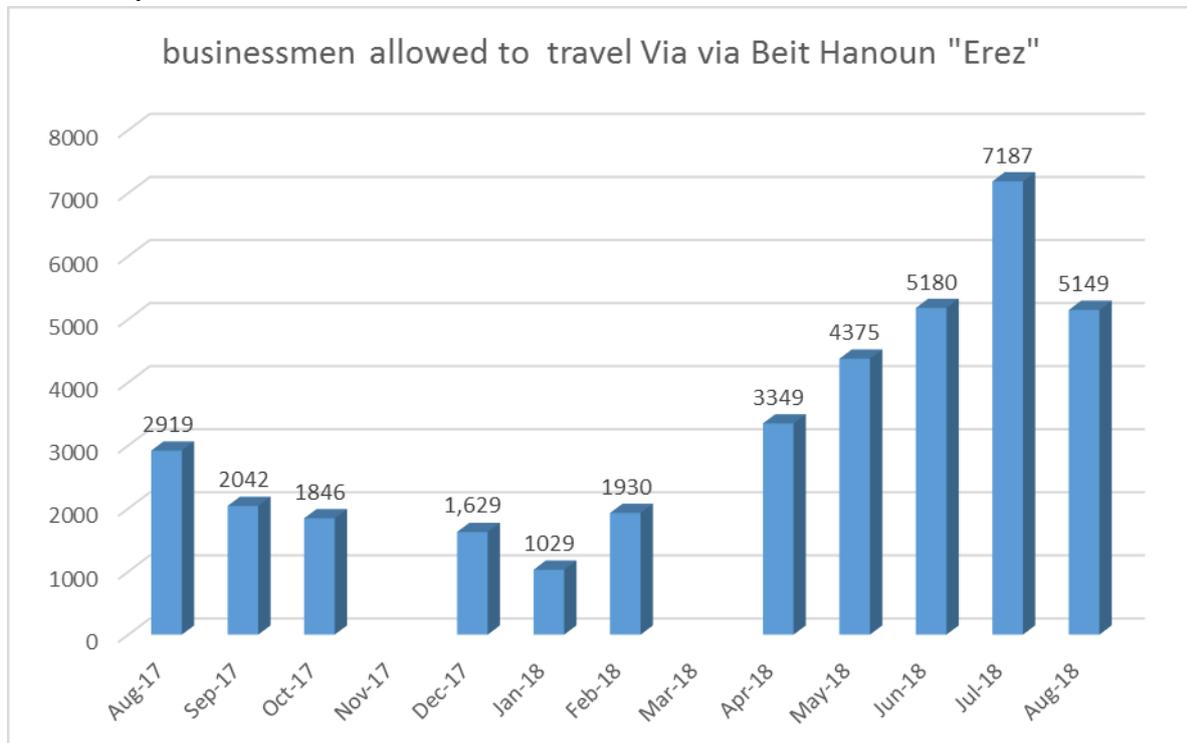
- The Israeli authorities continued to impose tight restrictions on the movement of the Gaza Strip population through Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing and allow limited categories to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing: patients and their companions, Arabs holding Israeli ID cards, international journalists, 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 travelers' needs 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.



- Patients:** During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities stationed at Beit Hanoun "Erez" Crossing obstructed the travel of 690 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 August, Israel allowed the travel of 1,484 patients. the number of those patients allowed to travel only constitute 68.2% of the number of patients who applied for travel permits via the crossing (2174).
- 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 since the beginning of 2018 was 16,282 applications; 9,881 were approved (60.6% of the total applications.)
- Prisoners' Visits:**

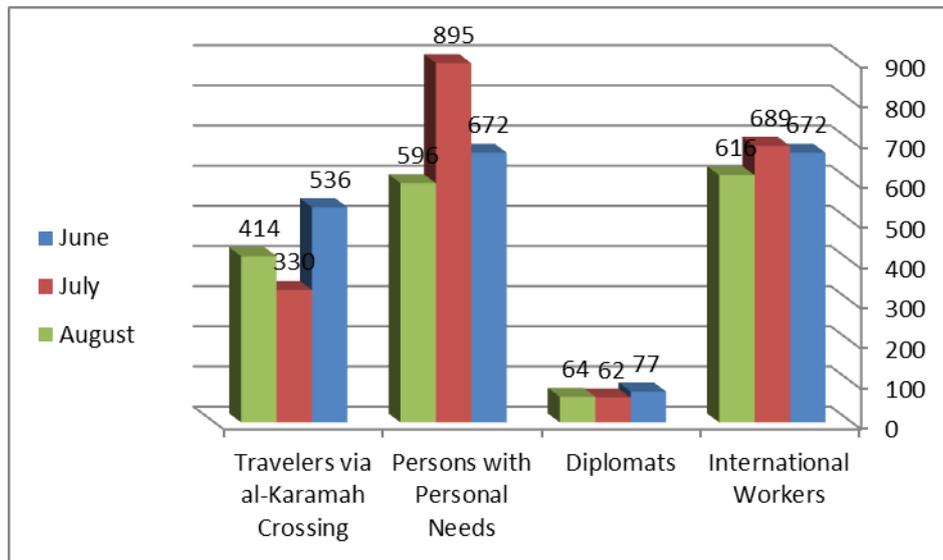
In August, the Israeli authorities allowed 93 family members of prisoners divided into 2 groups to visit their relatives in the Israeli prisons according to the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) in Gaza. The number of Families' visits to prisoners in the Israeli jails during August was very limited comparing with the number of visits reached in the agreement between the Israeli authorities and prisoners in May 2012. The families of prisoners were subject to arbitrary practices, obstacles and degrading and immoral searches during their visit.

- **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 August, they allowed 5,149 businessmen to travel via Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing, according to the General Authority for Civil Affairs. the number of the businessmen who were allowed to travel in August recorded an increase of 28.3% comparing with July when 7187 could travel. Although the number of businessmen allowed traveling increased comparing to last months, Israeli authorities still ban the travelling of hundred businessmen without any reasons.



- **Other categories:** According to GACA, the Israeli authorities allowed the entry of 616 international workers; 64 diplomats; 596 persons with personal needs; 414 travelers via al-

Karama (Allenby) crossing; and 229 Arabs in Israel. 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.



▪ Rafah International Crossing Point:

The Egyptian authorities continued to open the Rafah Crossing, the only outlet for Gaza residents to the outside world, so that the humanitarian cases could travel or return to the Gaza Strip. During the reporting period, 7,977 managed to leave while 6,251 returned to the Strip in addition to 591 who were returned by the Egyptian authorities and banned from travelling for no reason. According to the Gaza Crossings and Border Authority, thousands of civilians registering to travel at the Ministry of Interior are unable to travel.