



Hundreds of thousands of people in Gaza fled the bombing. When families returned to Shujaiya in eastern Gaza during a brief 12-hour pause, many found their homes completely destroyed (July 2014). Iyad al Baba/Oxfam

CEASE FAILURE

Rethinking seven years of failing policies in Gaza

The most recent escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel has come at terrible human cost. More than 1,500 civilians in Gaza, and six in Israel, have been killed. Over 100,000 Palestinians have been left homeless and vital civilian infrastructure worth billions of dollars has been destroyed in Gaza. The recent ceasefire announcement is certainly a welcome one, but is only the first step on a long road toward lasting peace.

Unless long-term solutions are found to ensure economic growth and sustainable development in Gaza, frequent military escalations will only continue, increasing insecurity for Israelis and Palestinians alike. The Israeli government's implementation of a policy of separation – politically and physically isolating Gaza from the West Bank – has resulted in the fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and is a major obstacle to the chances of lasting peace.

The conflict between Palestinians and Israelis requires a long-term political solution that begins with a lasting ceasefire, continues with the end of the blockade of Gaza, and ends with a negotiated peace based on international law.

SUMMARY

The most recent escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel has come at an unacceptable human cost. To date, it has resulted in the deaths of more than 2,100 Palestinians, with roughly 85 per cent of those identified thought to be civilians.¹ Six civilians in Israel and 64 Israeli soldiers have been killed. More than 10,000 Palestinians, the vast majority civilians, and more than 500 Israelis have been injured. Vital infrastructure in Gaza has been extensively damaged, with initial estimates for reconstruction well into the billions of dollars and 100,000 Palestinians left without a home.

The new ceasefire between Israel and Hamas – agreed on 26 August – is a much needed respite for all civilians, after 50 days of intense violence, but it is only a first step toward peace and security for all. Israel must permanently lift its restrictions on Palestinian development and allow freedom of movement. After Gaza's last major escalation of violence in late 2012, Israeli and Palestinian leaders – and the international community – utterly failed to take advantage of the ceasefire to end the cycle of violence and significantly improve the lives of people on both sides. We cannot afford to make the same mistake again. Now is perhaps the last opportunity to implement lasting solutions that can bring tangible improvements to the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis. Otherwise, military escalations are likely to resume and occur in shorter and shorter cycles, magnifying insecurity for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

The recent formation of a technocratic Palestinian National Unity Government is one of the most positive developments in recent years toward overcoming the physical, political, economic and social divisions of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), and is an essential step towards achieving the goal of a viable two-state solution.

But the Israeli government's policy of separation – politically and physically isolating Gaza from the West Bank – continues to fragment the OPT. Punitive measures that disproportionately affect Palestinians in Gaza have resulted in a GNP per capita of \$1,074, half that of the West Bank, and just over three per cent of Israel's.² Improving life in Gaza and reconnecting Gaza to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, will require a reassessment of the framework by which the international community engages with the OPT.

Israel has legitimate security concerns; however, these cannot continue to be addressed at the expense of the Palestinian civilian population. The conflict between Palestinians and Israelis requires a political solution that begins with a comprehensive ceasefire agreement, continues with the end of the blockade of Gaza, and ends with a negotiated peace based on international law.

GAZA: THE DAY AFTER

The most recent escalation in violence in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel has resulted in the deaths of at least 2,100 Palestinians, with at least 85 per cent of those identified thought to be civilians.³ Six civilians in Israel and 64 Israeli soldiers have been killed.⁴ 10,000 Palestinians, the vast majority civilians,⁵ and more than 500 Israelis, of whom 101 are civilians, have been injured.⁶ With 43 per cent of the population in Gaza below the age of 14,⁷ children have paid a terrible price: 493 children have been killed, which is higher than the number of Palestinian armed militants killed in the fighting.⁸ In Gaza, residential buildings, hospitals, health clinics, schools and UN shelters have been directly hit; 17,200 homes have been completely destroyed or severely damaged. According to the High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, there is “serious doubt about whether the Israeli strikes have been in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.”⁹ Approximately 100,000 persons have been made homeless as a consequence,¹⁰ with up to 520,000 people displaced by the fighting.¹¹

The latest military operation – known as Operation Protective Edge – comes just five years after Operation Cast Lead, which resulted in the deaths of 13 Israelis and at least 1,440 Palestinians, the majority civilians, and a year and a half after Operation Pillar of Defence, which resulted in the deaths of four Israelis and 103 Palestinian civilians.¹²

In Gaza, vital civilian infrastructure has been badly damaged, including 33 health facilities¹³ and 230 schools,¹⁴ as well as water pipelines, sewage treatment facilities and water desalination plants. The destruction of Gaza’s only power plant has further exacerbated the pre-existing energy crisis. Total damage to basic infrastructure in Gaza has been estimated by the Palestinian Deputy Prime Minister at \$6bn.¹⁵ Farmers, fishermen and herders, whom Oxfam have supported for years, have seen their livelihoods – fishing boats, greenhouses and dairy production facilities – destroyed.

Palestinians in Gaza once again need international assistance to repair homes, schools, water systems, and business- and livelihood-related infrastructure, in addition to medical and psychosocial support. The recent hostilities come on top of the devastating impact of more than seven years of the Israeli government’s blockade of Gaza that has left people in Gaza extremely vulnerable.

The recent ceasefire announcement comes not long after the ceasefire signed by the two parties in November 2012. According to Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the year that followed that ceasefire was the quietest in a decade, with the lowest numbers of rocket attacks from Gaza and Palestinian casualties.¹⁶ However, Israeli and Palestinian leaders – and the international community – failed to take advantage of the unprecedented opportunity to end the cycle of violence and significantly improve the lives of civilians on both sides. We cannot afford to make the same mistake again.

“The [...] fighting emphasizes the need to finally end the 47-year-old occupation and the chokehold on Gaza, ensure security based on mutual recognition, and achieve a viable two-state solution by which Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and security, side by side.”

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, 25 July 2014

Unless the root causes of conflict are addressed and long-term solutions are implemented, the Gaza Strip will continue steadily sliding toward the abyss, and Gaza and southern Israel will continue to be immersed in periodic escalations of violence. Even before Operation Protective Edge, the UN questioned whether Gaza would be ‘a liveable place’ by 2020.¹⁷

After Operation Cast Lead in 2009, UN Security Council Resolution 1860 conferred obligations on UN Member States to “ensure the sustained re-opening of the crossing points” into and out of Gaza.¹⁸ UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stressed that “a political way forward was required to deliver long-term security and peace.”¹⁹ A viable two-state solution, with a Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel, is not possible without Gaza. A viable Palestinian state will require the unification of Palestinian politics, economy, culture – in short, the fabric of everyday life.

Water in Gaza

Airstrikes caused extensive damage to Gaza’s water and sanitation systems. Gaza’s only power plant was bombed, leaving water pumps and treatment plants with extreme shortages of electricity and fuel. Water supply to around 1.5 million people – 80 per cent of Gaza’s population – was cut off or severely restricted. The destruction of sewage plants, the lack of clean water, and the severely overcrowded shelters, have combined to raise fears of a public health crisis.

“Due to the Israeli bombardment, we had to leave our houses and sought shelter in this UNRWA school. There are nearly 3,000 here with us. There is no tap water, which we use for washing and hygiene, but also a lack of drinking water. There are many cases of children with diarrhoea and fever. The lack of water creates hygiene problems in the bathrooms. The people working in the school are doing their best, but if the situation continues, we will face a catastrophe.” – Fatma, displaced to an UNRWA school in Al Shujaiya.

Before Operation Protective Edge began, people in Gaza were already facing a dire shortage of clean water and adequate sanitation systems. 90 per cent of extracted water in Gaza was unfit for human consumption, with the aquifer estimated to become unusable by 2016. Only 15–25 per cent of households received running water every day. With tap water not safe to drink, around 75–90 per cent of Palestinians in Gaza were forced to buy water from private vendors, with some spending as much as a third of their income on water. Fuel shortages over the past year have severely affected the operation of desalination and wastewater treatment plants. Israeli restrictions on the entry of construction materials into Gaza have put essential sanitation infrastructure projects on hold. As a result, 90 million litres of raw or partially-treated sewage are discharged into the Mediterranean Sea every day.

A POLICY OF SEPARATION

For years, the Israeli government has been implementing a separation policy that has resulted in the political, social and economic fragmentation of the OPT by isolating Gaza from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.²⁰ The separation policy consists of two parts: the political isolation of the then de facto government in Gaza – in which the majority of the international community participates – and the blockade, the physical separation of Gaza’s population and land from the rest of the OPT. Both have had devastating implications for civilians in Gaza.

Israel’s and the international community’s policies of isolating Hamas after the June 2007 dissolution of the Palestinian unity government have effectively excluded Gaza’s 1.8 million residents from negotiations about the future State of Palestine. International funding, security coordination, and engagement focused primarily on the Palestinian Authority (PA), limiting international engagement with Gaza mainly to humanitarian assistance.

The political split between Hamas and Fatah exacerbated the physical separation between the West Bank and Gaza, with the duplication of nearly every governmental function between the PA government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in Gaza. Sustainable development projects are exceedingly difficult to deliver, as contact with ministries in Gaza is mostly limited to the lowest technical level. This effectively impedes institution building, which is necessary for a long-term development strategy implemented by a viable state, and often prevents recovery and development assistance from reaching vulnerable populations. Over time, these measures have entrenched the Fatah–Hamas split.

In June 2014, tangible steps were taken to overcome Palestinian political divisions with the formation of a Palestinian National Unity Government. The EU welcomed the development and the US government provisionally accepted that it would work with the unity government. However, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu condemned the move, saying that PA President Mahmoud Abbas, “can have peace with Israel or a pact with Hamas; he can’t have both”.²¹ Currently, ceasefire negotiations are one of the rare occasions when international actors engage with Hamas, even if indirectly.

The blockade of Gaza is the most visible part of the separation policy and is implemented through the strict enforcement of restrictions on movement and access for both people and goods. These restrictions have contributed to the de-development of a once-vibrant economy. The West Bank – once one of the largest markets for Gaza’s farmers, manufacturers, and small-scale producers – is now closed to them. Students, families, and government officials cannot freely travel between Gaza and the West Bank.

Without the necessary means to export, formally trade, or access external education and employment opportunities, Gaza’s economy has now fallen significantly further behind its West Bank counterpart, with 80

per cent of Palestinians in Gaza today receiving some form of international assistance.²²

The effects of the policy are clear – as seen by the difference in poverty rates²³, unemployment²⁴ and life expectancy²⁵ between Palestinians in Gaza and those in the West Bank – and constitute collective punishment of the population in Gaza.

THE BLOCKADE OF GAZA

Since the 1994 Oslo Accords, unemployment rates in Gaza have more than quadrupled; today, more than 40 per cent of the labour force is unemployed.²⁶ Punitive measures that disproportionately affect Palestinians in Gaza have resulted in a GNP per capita of \$1,074, which is half that of the West Bank, and just over three per cent of Israel's.²⁷

The enforcement of the Access Restricted Area (ARA)²⁸ on land and sea poses a serious risk to the safety and security of civilians in Gaza; the Israeli military regularly uses live fire, in violation of international law, to impose these restrictions.²⁹ Following the November 2012 ceasefire agreement, the situation improved to a certain extent, with some farmers able to access their land within the ARA for the first time in years, although with a great degree of uncertainty. Today, up to 35 per cent of Gaza's agricultural land is in the ARA, and therefore cannot be safely cultivated or can only be cultivated with restrictions. In the first half of 2014, four Palestinian civilians were killed and 87 injured by Israeli forces within the ARA, with people shot at as far as 500 metres inside Gaza.³⁰

Similarly, the live-fire enforcement of the fishing zone continues to put the lives of fishermen at risk; in the first half of 2014, 181 incidents of Israeli naval fire against fishermen were recorded, with eight fishermen injured.³¹ Land and sea access restrictions have had a devastating impact on livelihoods, the economy and, ultimately, on levels of poverty in Gaza. While the Israeli-imposed fishing limit has fluctuated between three and six nautical miles (NM), both are still significantly less than the 20 NM allocated by the Oslo Accords.³² Nor do fishermen's livelihoods benefit significantly from a minor increase in the fishing limit, as better fishing grounds are only found at 10 NM and beyond.

A Fishing Family under Fire

The killing of four children playing football on Gaza's beach made headlines around the world. The children were from one of Gaza's fishing families, which has struggled for years due to the blockade's restrictions on livelihoods. A few days before the tragedy we spoke to Sabri Bakir, the boys' uncle.

"I've been a fisherman forever. Fishing is the only thing I know in life and it's been the sole source of income for me and my family. My new boat and nets were completely destroyed in the recent airstrikes. My old boat and nets were confiscated by the Israeli navy in 2012, so I had to borrow \$10,000 to buy new ones and I haven't paid the loan yet."

"Before this military operation started, the situation was already very bad. Six miles is not enough at all to have fair quantities of fish. Three miles is like a bad joke. What would you get within three miles? Nothing. All of this restriction has had a great impact on our economic situation. Now my boat is gone I have nothing at all. I really do not know what will I do now, or how I will even provide food to my children."

Movement of people continues to be extremely restricted: between January and June 2014, about 200 people per day were allowed to exit Gaza via Israel,³³ compared to a daily average of 26,000 in the equivalent period of 2000, before the second Intifada.³⁴

Passage of people through the Erez crossing into Israel is allowed only "in exceptional humanitarian cases, with an emphasis on urgent medical cases."³⁵ For example, the State's response to an Israeli High Court petition on behalf of four women students who wanted to travel from Gaza to the West Bank to complete their Master's degrees underlined that "[...] the policy in effect with respect to entry of Gaza Strip residents to the [West Bank] is a policy of separation between the two areas, which limits the cases approved for entry into the [West Bank] to humanitarian and exceptional cases only [...]."³⁶ Israel has barred residents of Gaza from studying in the West Bank since 2000, with only three allowed to study in the West Bank in 14 years.³⁷ Gaza is also treated as a *terminus* station by Israeli authorities. Family reunification for Gaza residents in the West Bank, for example, is virtually impossible, but becomes relatively easy if spouses pledge to relocate permanently to Gaza.³⁸

The only other option available to Palestinians wishing to exit Gaza is through the Rafah crossing to Egypt. The Rafah crossing became Gaza's main gateway to the world after the fall of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in 2011, with 40,000 people crossing every month.³⁹ However, changes in Egypt led to a tightening of restrictions in July 2013, when Egypt began limiting the opening hours of the crossing and restricting travel to exceptional cases only. By June 2014, the average number of crossings per month had fallen to 6,445 – only 16 per cent of 2013 figures.⁴⁰ Thousands of people in Gaza – including 500 students registered in foreign universities and many professionals working in third countries – are presently unable to cross via Rafah.⁴¹

Severe restrictions are imposed on the import of goods into Gaza. Items that Israel defines as 'dual-use'⁴² – including construction materials and inputs essential for the agricultural sector – are expressly prohibited from entering Gaza.⁴³

Since 2010, Israel has allowed an extremely limited amount of goods produced in Gaza to transit through Israel en-route to third markets; it does not, however, allow access to those same goods to Israeli or West Bank markets, on security grounds.⁴⁴ While export of certain goods to third markets through Israel is permitted, these are not Gaza's traditional markets; additionally, the competitiveness of export products is limited, due to heightened transaction costs linked to Israeli restrictions. The Kerem Shalom crossing, connecting Gaza to Israel, remains the only operational crossing for goods entering and leaving Gaza.⁴⁵ During the first half of 2014, less than one truckload of goods per day (on average) exited Gaza – less than two per cent of the pre-2007 average.⁴⁶

As a result of the limitations imposed by the Israel blockade, the economy of Gaza has for years relied on tunnels connecting Gaza to Egypt as a lifeline for the import of essential commercial and public sector goods. During the first half of 2013, 50 per cent of total imports, including affordable goods, construction materials and fuel, entered Gaza through the tunnels.⁴⁷

The almost complete closure of the tunnels since July 2013 by the Egyptian government has exacerbated the impact of longstanding Israeli restrictions. Unemployment in Gaza has increased dramatically without construction materials to drive the economy.⁴⁸ The provision of basic services, such as electricity, water and sanitation, has been severely affected by the shortage of affordable fuel.⁴⁹

While the blockade remains in place, any economic initiatives will be unable to generate sustainable economic growth and development in Gaza. According to the IMF, even a moderate easing of restrictions could boost growth by an estimated three per cent over the next three years, raise investment and generate employment. However, in a status quo scenario, the economic prospects for Gaza are dim and are likely to worsen without "a broad-based and sustained easing of Israeli restrictions."⁵⁰

Taken together, the two elements of the separation policy are designed to severely disrupt the traditional political, economic, social, and cultural ties between Palestinians, leading to international mediation efforts being focused on the West Bank, effectively excluding Gaza.

Unless an equitable peace settlement is reached and long-term solutions are found to ensure economic growth and sustainable development in Gaza, military escalations will continue to occur in shorter and shorter cycles – at an unacceptable human cost to the population of Gaza.

RECONCILING POLICY WITH PRACTICE

The EU has called for “the immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from the Gaza Strip, the situation of which is unsustainable **as long as it remains politically and economically separated from the West Bank**” [emphasis added].⁵¹ The formation of a technocratic Palestinian National Unity Government is one of the most positive developments in recent years toward overcoming the physical, political, economic and social divisions of the OPT. It is an essential step toward achieving the goal of a viable two-state solution. The international community must do far more, however, to move all parties toward this goal.

A recent EuropeAid evaluation of EU development support to the OPT concluded that the EU’s flow of aid – €2.5bn over the last five years – had “little demonstrable impact on the main obstacles to achieving the two-state solution” and that the current aid paradigm “**has reached its limits in the absence of a parallel political track that addresses the binding constraints** [...] particularly Israeli occupation and settlement policies and the political division of the West Bank and Gaza” [emphasis added].⁵² The EU’s significant contributions to Palestinian welfare will never translate into a viable Palestinian state if EU practice is not aligned with EU policy.

To start, re-affirming the centrality of the 1967 Green Line in EU–Israel partnership discussions is crucial to countering Israeli policies that are in violation of international law and continue to have a negative impact on the lives of Palestinians.

Implementing a comprehensive EU policy framework, based on adherence to international law, is urgently needed to ensure that EU relations with Israel do not extend beyond the internationally accepted 1967 borders, and take into account Israel’s obligations as an occupying power under international humanitarian law. Such a policy should be applied coherently, consistently and independently of progress in the peace process. To this end, the EU and the international community must:

- 1) **Challenge** Israel’s implementation of the separation policy in a comprehensive manner, recognizing the strategic necessity of Gaza to a viable two-state solution.
- 2) Demand Israel’s compliance with international law, starting with an **end to the blockade**, and make bilateral and multilateral relations with the Government of Israel conditional on progress toward such an end.

Israel has legitimate security concerns, but these cannot continue to be addressed at the expense of the Palestinian civilian population. Previous agreements demonstrate that workable technical arrangements exist to ensure that the fundamental rights of Palestinians in Gaza are guaranteed while providing for Israel’s security.⁵³ These precedents

should remain an instructive starting point for renewed discussion with all relevant parties, including Hamas.

To quote Philip Gordon, Special Assistant to President Obama and White House Coordinator for the Middle East: “Israel confronts an undeniable reality: It cannot maintain military control of another people indefinitely. Doing so is not only wrong but a recipe for resentment and recurring instability.”⁵⁴

The international community must immediately work with relevant stakeholders to make the most of the important opportunity this ceasefire provides to implement Oxfam’s recommendations below, as important first steps towards improving the lives and livelihoods of Palestinians, halting the collective punishment of Gaza’s 1.8 million residents and putting an end to the recurring cycles of violence. The conflict between Palestinians and Israelis will not end militarily. It will require a political solution that begins with a lasting ceasefire, continues with an end to the blockade of Gaza, and ends with a negotiated peace based on international law.

The following recommendations set out a series of vital steps to put that into practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS: 14 IMMEDIATE STEPS

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

- **Deploy international personnel** as a temporary confidence-building measure to monitor the cessation of hostilities, publicly report any violations of the ceasefire agreement, including movement and access provisions, and guarantee humanitarian access to the civilian population.
- Ensure adequate inspection of the border between Egypt and Gaza to eliminate the smuggling of illegal weapons; **press all sides to refrain from violence and better protect Palestinian and Israeli civilians** from military operations and rocket attacks, in accordance with international law.
- **Limit the manner in which Israeli security forces are legally permitted to engage in the Access Restricted Areas (ARA) on land and sea, so as to better protect civilians, in line with all international legal obligations.** Israeli activity is currently conducted under the *laws of armed conflict*, which allow for the legal use of deadly force under an extensive range of circumstances. A more appropriate approach is the *law enforcement* model, which would limit the legal use of deadly force to extreme circumstances, and only when all other non-lethal measures have proven insufficient.
- **In all cases of a killing or serious injury, ensure that the Government of Israel implements the findings of the Turkel Commission⁵⁵ by automatically opening an investigation into the**

circumstances of each case. The Commission found that in the context of law enforcement, “the killing of an individual [...] by security forces [...] gives rise in itself to an investigatory obligation.”⁵⁶ This is a necessary first step toward increasing much-needed accountability and access to effective legal remedy, and a way to prevent more violence and destruction in the future.

MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

- **Re-establish a permanent and open connection through the Erez crossing for movement of civilians between Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.** Current restrictions place arbitrary and disproportionate constraints on the entire population of Gaza. Progress could begin with a shift to a ‘no travel’ list, whereby requests for travel permits can only be denied on the basis of a specific and substantiated security threat posed by an individual.
- **Open the Rafah crossing to Egypt for movement of civilians.** Increased movement of people through Rafah in no way relieves the Israeli government of its obligations to open and normalize passage of people and goods through all other crossings.
- **Re-deploy PA Presidential Guards along the Gaza–Egypt border** to facilitate an easing of restrictions on the movement of people into and out of Gaza in a sustainable manner. Security provided by these measures is an essential step towards providing free and unfettered movement of people and goods through Israel.

MOVEMENT OF GOODS

- Guarantee the immediate entry of construction materials – including the concrete, aggregate and steel essential for the recovery of Gaza’s public infrastructure, factories, businesses and homes. **Humanitarian and recovery assistance must be provided based on need and cannot be contingent upon political developments or demands,** including the demilitarization of Palestinian armed groups.
- As a first step toward sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation, **upgrade the Kerem Shalom crossing such that it is fully functional for commercial goods.** Increasing opening hours and making improvements that allow for containerization⁵⁷ at Kerem Shalom would decrease transaction costs and increase volume and profit margins. While opening all crossings into and out of Gaza is essential for long-term economic growth, an upgrade of Kerem Shalom would have a significant and immediate impact on the Palestinian economy.
- **Clarify and work to address alleged security reasons for the ban on trade between Gaza and the West Bank and Israel.** Technical arrangements must be implemented on the clear understanding that they may only be altered in exceptional circumstances related to direct security threats, not as a means to indiscriminately punish the entire population.
- **Harmonize the list of dual-use items banned from entering Gaza with the list of goods banned from the West Bank.** While the

dual-use items list for the West Bank does create significant barriers to Palestinian livelihoods there, and should be revised, it is still less restrictive than the list for Gaza. The West Bank list can therefore provide a minimum starting point for further technical discussions.

DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT

Achieving progress on improving life in Gaza and reconnecting Gaza to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, will require **a reassessment of the framework by which the international community engages with the National Unity Government**, including Hamas.

- **Support President Abbas to rapidly move toward elections.** The Palestinian National Unity Government is a technocratic entity, which has been welcomed by the EU and provisionally accepted by the US; it should be encouraged to fulfil its stated function of injecting Palestinian political leadership – and any future peace negotiation efforts – with democratic legitimacy.
- **Hold the post-election Palestinian government – not individual parties – accountable to the current Quartet principles** (renunciation of violence, acceptance of previous agreements signed by the PLO, and recognition of the State of Israel). Following elections, it is likely that the Palestinian government will include members from Hamas and other Palestinian factions with whom there is currently no consensus on diplomatic engagement. International agreement about minimum standards should be transparent and in place before the elections.
- **Actively support the rationalization of all Palestinian ministries** as a way to reduce expenditures, ensure provision of quality services to the Palestinian population on the basis of need, form the basis for strategic national plans, and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of donor-funded projects.

NOTES

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- ⁶ Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 August 2014, <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Pages/Rise-in-rocket-fire-from-Gaza-3-Jul-2014.aspx>
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- ¹⁹ UN press statement, 8 January 2014, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/sc9567.doc.htm>
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- ²⁷ Oxfam International (2013), '20 Facts: 20 Years Since the Oslo Accords', op.cit.
- ²⁸ On land, the Access Restricted Area (ARA) is the zone that extends up to 500 metres into Palestinian territory in Gaza from the perimeter with Israel. Movement and access within the ARA is extremely limited. At sea, the ARA includes all territorial waters beyond the six NM fishing limit imposed by

Israel. Israeli security forces often enforce these limitations on land and sea using live fire. The extent of the ARA is subject to arbitrary changes based on Israel's assessment of both the security and political climate.

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- ⁴³ COGAT (2013), 'Restricted Import List Gaza Strip 2013', <http://www.gisha.org/UserFiles/File/LegalDocuments/procedures/merchandise/55en.pdf>
- ⁴⁴ This ban continues to be in place due to security reasons, as confirmed by Israel's Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon in response to a parliamentary question on the reasons behind not using a security scanner funded by the Dutch government to allow access for Gaza goods to the West Bank (Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon address to the Knesset on 18/12/2013. Gisha in 'The Separation Policy: List of references prepared by Gisha', July 2014). In an exception to this rule, 55 truckloads of goods have exited Gaza to the West Bank and Israel since March 2012: 49 truckloads of date bars for a World Food Programme project, four truckloads of school desks and chairs ordered by the Palestinian Authority to the West Bank, and two truckloads of palm fronds to Israel. Gisha, 'The Gaza Cheat Sheet – Real Data on the Gaza Closure', *op. cit.*
- ⁴⁵ Since June 2007, Israel has closed three of the four commercial crossings connecting Gaza with Israel: Karni, which was Gaza's commercial life line; Sufa, for construction materials; and Nahal Oz, for fuel and cooking gas. Gisha, 'Land crossings between the Gaza Strip and Israel', November 2014, <http://gisha.org/en-blog/2011/11/14/land-crossings-between-the-gaza-strip-and-israel/>
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- ⁴⁸ Unemployment rose from 29.5 per cent in the second quarter of 2013 to 40.8 per cent in the first quarter. PCBS, 'Labour Force Survey (January–March, 2014)', May 2014, *op. cit.*
- ⁴⁹ One million litres a day of Egyptian fuel used to come through the tunnels; today, Egyptian fuel is almost non-existent in Gaza. Although fuel is available through Israel, it is twice the price of Egyptian fuel, putting it beyond the reach of many. Availability of Israeli fuel is also conditional to the opening of the Kerem Shalom crossing. The shortage of affordable fuel has engendered a chronic energy crisis, with power cuts of 12–16 hours a day now routine. Gaza's only power plant has in more than one occasion been temporarily closed due to lack of fuel. In November 2013, several streets in Gaza were flooded with sewage as one of the main pumping stations ran out of fuel. Water supply has also worsened, with two-thirds of Gaza's population receiving clean water supply only once every three to four days.
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- ⁵² "The Evaluation collected abundant evidence that the goals of the EU have been seriously hampered

by 'binding constraints', the most significant being the Israeli restrictions of occupation and allocation of resources for settlements, but also including Palestinian political divisions and the absence of democratic process". J. Saba, 'Evaluation of the EU Cooperation with the occupied Palestinian territory and support for the Palestinian People,' July 2014. Commissioned by the Evaluation Unit of the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid.

- ⁵³ For example provisions on how to improve the Kerem Shalom crossing included in the Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) signed in 2005 between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.
- ⁵⁴ R. Ahren, 'Top Obama official blasts Israel for denying Palestinians sovereignty, security, dignity', *The Times of Israel*, 9 July 2014, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/top-obama-official-blasts-israel-for-denying-palestinians-sovereignty-security-dignity/>
- ⁵⁵ Established by the Government of Israel in the aftermath of the 2010 Flotilla Incident.
- ⁵⁶ 'The Public Commission to Examine the Maritime Incident of 31 May 2010: Second Report - The Turkel Commission', p. 103, May 2010, <http://www.turkel-committee.gov.il/files/newDoc3/The%20Turkel%20Report%20for%20website.pdf>
- ⁵⁷ Kerem Shalom is currently operated on a double back-to-back system. Shipments arriving from either side are transferred to a 'sterilized truck' that transports them between two separate terminal facilities on the Israeli and Palestinian sides, transferring the shipment again to a new truck. This system is costly, time-intensive, and not appropriate for certain delicate agricultural products. Using the security scanner donated by the Dutch government to switch to a door-to-door system would considerably reduce transaction costs, as containers could be shipped from source to end without needing to unload the shipments twice.

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