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HUMANITARIAN MONITORING REPORT – November 2003

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), among 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.reliefweb.int/hic-opt).

I) **Context**

The report monitors the humanitarian commitments made by the Government of Israel (GOI) to the Bertini mission in August 2002. The UN Secretary-General 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 with regard to humanitarian needs.

Her visit to the region from August 12-19 2002, concluded that there were serious humanitarian problems linked to the ongoing conflict and specifically to the measures implemented by the GoI 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. Similarly, humanitarian service providers such as UN agencies, NGOs and Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and Palestinian Ministry of Health ambulances have experienced providing assistance and services to beneficiaries.

II) **Commitments****Health:**

- 1.1 Ambulances will wait no more than 30 minutes at checkpoints
- 1.2 Mechanisms will be set in place to ensure patients seeking critical medical services eg. delivery, dialysis, chemotherapy can quickly pass all checkpoints

Water:

- 2.1 Problems relating to water deliveries in Palestinian towns and villages will be addressed to ensure daily provision of adequate volume can be supplied by Palestinian water tankers

International Organizations:

- 3.1 GoI will fully facilitate the activities of international organizations with particular reference to UNRWA
- 3.2 GoI agreed to review and strengthen the liaison arrangements between international agencies and the IDF

Additional Commitments:

On previous occasions, the GoI 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
- Enabling olive farmers access to their fields
- Increase in shipments at Karni crossing
- Increase in the number of permits for Palestinian workers in Israel.

| Commitment | Benchmarks | Actual Status | Remarks |
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| <p>1. Health:</p> <p>1. 1 Palestinian ambulances will wait no more than 30 minutes at any checkpoints (Gol to Bertini mission, 12-19 April 2002)</p> <p>1.2 Effective mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that Palestinians seeking critical medical services (e.g. giving birth, dialysis, chemotherapy, etc.) can quickly pass all checkpoints. (Gol to Bertini mission, 12 – 19 August 2002)</p> | <p>1.1. Instructions issued to all checkpoint commanders concerning maximum time for ambulance delay at checkpoints; PA MOH, PRCS, UNRWA and hospitals no longer report ambulance delays at checkpoints.</p> <p>Mechanisms established and Palestinian public informed; Explicit instructions issued to all checkpoint commanders.</p> <p>1.2.1 No more instances of Palestinians seeking critical medical services denied passage at checkpoints reported</p> | <p>West Bank & Gaza: 38 incidents Palestinian ambulance operators reported a total of 38 humanitarian access incidents (compared to 64 incidents in October), in which the provision of first aid and/or medical evacuations were delayed, obstructed and/or prevented by the IDF.</p> <p>Ambulance Access Denials: Of the 38 incidents reported, 13 included humanitarian access denials. Some of these incidents are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06 November, Nablus – IDF stopped a PRCS ambulance on its way to transport a patient in a critical condition. After searching the ambulance the vehicle was detained for 30 minutes and then denied access. After a second attempt the ambulance was able to cross the checkpoint with injured woman but she was pronounced dead on reaching the hospital. <p>Ambulance Delays: 13 documented incidents included delays considerably in excess of the 30-minute limit, ranging from 45 to 180 minutes. The following is an example the long delays reported in November :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06 November, Khan Yunis – A PRCS ambulance on its way to transport an injured person came under fire twice, and was delayed for three hours. After coordination with ICRC the ambulance was allowed to pass. <p>Harassment of Ambulance Crews: In November, in 3 incidents crews came under IDF attacks (firing and physically abusing paramedics)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 09 November, Kassarat checkpoint – IDF soldiers fired at a PRCS ambulance when approached the checkpoint after being given the signal from the soldiers to proceed and forced the crew and the patients out of the ambulance. After one hour the intervention of the ICRC, the driver was let free and the ambulance was allowed to proceed. <p>Shooting/damage of Ambulance Crews: In 7 reported incidents the ambulance came under fire. In 2 incidents patients were detained.</p> | <p>Access incidents declined from a high in October. However, denials of access transporting patients and long delays, as seen by these examples have had tragic effects.</p> |
| <p>2. Water</p> <p>2.1 Problems related to water deliveries to</p> | <p>2.1.1 Instructions issued to all checkpoints allowing for the easy transfer</p> | <p>In November¹, the main four factors still affected the existing critical water supply situation in the West Bank and Gaza. These factors continued over into the months of November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing closure regime • Significant reduction in water supply to Palestinian communities by the Israeli | <p>The closure and restriction of movement remains one of the most serious causes of</p> |

¹ 17 communities were surveyed during the month of November 2003 from a total of 643 communities. The incidents reported here relate only to 17 communities.

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| <p>Palestinian towns and villages will be addressed to ensure that daily water deliveries in proper quantities can be supplied by Palestinian water tankers. (Gol to Bertini Mission, 12-19 August 2002)</p> | <p>of water tankers through all checkpoints.</p> <p>2.1.2 The IDF removes barriers that prevent the access by water tankers to villages that rely on tankered water.</p> <p>2.1.3 Absence of any reports on lack of water or delay/stoppage of water tankers at checkpoints.</p> | <p>Merkorot company ²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damages/destruction of water distribution networks • Movement restrictions of maintenance teams and water tankers <p>The combination of these four factors created a greater dependency on water supplied by tankers. The increased dependency should be seen against the background of tight internal closures in the West Bank and limited purchasing power of the general population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 private roof tanks were destroyed during the month of November in Jit in Qalqiliya and Rafah. In addition, 6 Wells in 6 localities, 1 spring, were destroyed: • 30 incidents relate to maintenance teams' movement restriction, while trying to maintain the destroyed or broken. In 10 incidents, maintenance teams were delayed between 1-6 hours as a result of the closure. In 20 incidents maintenance teams were denied access, 11 cases of denial of access were due to checkpoints and 5 as a result of physical road barriers and 4 because of curfew. • In November 2003, the closure regime and the physical barriers still affected the movement of the water tankers providing water to communities. The EWaSH (Emergency Water and Sanitation Hygiene) reported that out of 129 trips scheduled to deliver water, 41 were successful due to the delays and denial of access on checkpoints. The main problematic checkpoints were Sara checkpoint in Nablus at Sara checkpoint, Barta'a ash Sharqiya and Jaljouliya Barrier Gates and Zeef intersection in Hebron. | <p>the water problem in Palestinian towns and villages. Destruction of the water networks is another reason that affects the serious causes of water problem.</p> <p>The restriction on movement of maintenance teams maintaining destroyed water networks increased the number of communities depending on the tankered water. However, these restrictions were considerably less than October.</p> <p>Physical barriers on primary roads and entrances to Palestinian residential areas, force water tankers to take more circuitous and often unpaved routes resulting in higher transport costs that are transferred onto the Palestinian consumer. Many Palestinians cannot afford to pay for the expensive water. Removal of IDF barriers positioned at the</p> |
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² Estimated average losses in the water network are about **40%** of the total supplied amount according to Palestinian Water Authority (PWA).

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| | | | <p>entrances and on the roads leading to Palestinian towns and villages will ease this situation.</p> <p>Water demand through Mekorot, declined in the month of November due to the rainy season.</p> |
| <p>3. International Organisations</p> <p>3.1 Israel will fully facilitate the assistance activities of international organisations with particular reference to UNRWA. (GOI to Bertini Mission, 12-19 August 2002)</p> <p>3.2 Israel agreed to review and strengthen the liaison arrangements between international agencies and the IDF to facilitate assistance activities (GOI to Bertini Mission, 12-19 August 2002)</p> <p>3.2 Israel will improve the</p> | <p>3.1.1 Free access for all international staff of international organisations throughout the West Bank and Gaza and at international crossings at all times.</p> <p>3.1.2 Free access for all Palestinian staff of international organisations throughout the West Bank and Gaza at all times.</p> <p>3.1.3 No delays/stoppage of international organisations' transport of development and humanitarian goods at any point (i.e. at international borders, borders between Israel and the West</p> | <p>International relief agencies filed some 129 incident reports in November (compared to 165 in October) in which the delivery of humanitarian aid and/or movement of relief personnel were obstructed by the IDF and the Israeli Border Police. In 24 cases (compared to 53 in October) humanitarian access was denied.</p> <p>UNRWA - the largest humanitarian operator in the oPt – reported 108 incidents of delay or denial of passage at IDF checkpoints (compared to 161 incidents reported in October): 88 incidents of delay and 20 incidents in which staff members were denied access. In these incidents, 633 (compared to 1077 in October) staff members were affected and UNRWA lost approximately 2,133 working hours (compared to 2,546 working hours in October). The average length of delays for those who were able to cross was more than 2 hours, with an average of 6 staff members involved in each incident. The majority of access problems continued at checkpoints around Jerusalem, particularly at Gilo checkpoint.</p> <p>Some of the access denial cases included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 November: Three UNRWA vehicles with West Bank Staff members were subjected to a search under protest at the Huwwara checkpoint. • 17 October: Border Police at a mobile checkpoint near Gilo Junction had detained a West Bank UNRWA driver on the basis he didn't have a permit to drive in Israel. Despite being informed by the team that this was not permitted under the Privileges and Immunities of the UN, the driver was denied access. • 21 November: UNRWA staff members travelling from Bethlehem to Jerusalem were denied access at Wadi an Nar checkpoint. Despite several attempts to negotiate, IDF insisted that the checkpoint would remain closed. <p>Other UN agencies filed 6 incidents were in 1 incident staff were denied access. In some incidents UN staff members were delayed to checkpoints/road barriers. In one incident UN staff members were subject to vehicle and personal property search.</p> | <p>The number of incidents reported was lower than those reported in October. The most problematic checkpoints were around Nablus (and in Gaza.</p> <p>UN staff members continued reporting about IDF not recognizing the UN IDs, or recognizing any liaison done with liaison offices in the Districts.</p> <p>Although the situation improved from October, agencies still experience problems crossing checkpoints with the correct IDs.</p> |

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| <p>situation at checkpoints, including the deployment of more experienced IDF personnel.</p> | <p>Bank or Gaza, within the West Bank or Gaza) at any time.</p> <p>3.1.4 Palestinian drivers (with either Jerusalem or West Bank ID) allowed to drive humanitarian transports for international organisations, in particular UNRWA, WFP and ICRC.</p> <p>3.2.1 Procedures established that provide direct access by international organisations to operational and command structures within the IDF</p> | <p>The international NGO community reported 15 access incidents. In 3 incidents access was denied and in 8 incidents they were subject to delays between 1-4 hours. In 3 incidents staff reported being abused at the checkpoints, or threatened by IDF weapons, and in 1 incident NGO staff members were subjected to personal property search while being on duty in the organization vehicle. In some incidents reported NGO staff members were captured in areas under shooting, despite earlier coordination with IDF about field visits. Some of these incidents were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 November – an MSF staff member was threatened by IDF at gunpoint at a bypass road near Netzarim settlement, after conducting a visit to a patient. | |
| <p>4. Additional Commitments</p> <p>4.1. The fishing zone for Palestinian fishing boats off the Gaza coast will be extended to 12 nautical miles</p> | <p>Extension of fishing zone fully implemented.</p> <p>No arrests or confiscation of fishing boats within the 12 nautical mile zone.</p> | <p>There was a tightening of restrictions that was evident by the IDF in October. Specifically, on 19 November the Israeli Navy arrested 7 fishermen for sailing up to 8 nautical miles from the coastline.</p> <p>In addition, the IDF has issued an order prohibiting access to the Mediterranean from the entire Al Mawasi coastline. This marks an extension of the ban which previously only applied to Al Mawasi Khan Younis. The order is valid for 6 months. As a result, most of the Al Mawasi fishermen have moved their boats and equipment to Deir El Balah which is unaffected by the closure order.</p> | <p>Restrictions on Gazan fishermen have increased countering earlier trends of relaxation. It runs counter to the commitment.</p> |
| <p>4.2. An increase in shipments at Karni crossing</p> | <p>Quantifiable increase in humanitarian aid shipments permitted through the crossing.</p> | <p>Karni was open for imports throughout November with the exception of 3 days that coincided with the Eid feast. The number of containers entering Gaza from the West Bank, Israel and Overseas totalled 6,598, a reduction on the previous month's figure of 7,272 and considerably less than August (8,898) and July (9,209).</p> <p>Karni was closed for exports for a five day period surrounding the Eid feast. In spite of this, the total number of containers leaving Gaza was 957 which compares with 752 for October.</p> | <p>There was a quantifiable increase in both imports and exports for October when compared with the previous month.</p> |

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| | | This is also an increase on the figures for September (618) and August (935). | |
| <p>4.3. Increase in the number of work permits for workers in Israel</p> | <p>Quantifiable increase in the number of work permits being made available for workers in the West Bank and Gaza to work inside Israel</p> | <p>In contrast to October when Erez was closed between 4 and 28 October, Erez was open every day in November. The maximum number of workers entering Israel was 9,949 on 20 November which is a reduction on the daily passage throughout July and August.</p> <p>Erez industrial estate remained open throughout the month with the number of workers per day ranging from a low of 14 during Eid on 25 November to 3,985 on 19 November.</p> | |