UNITED NATIONS
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
occupied Palestinian territory

The Humanitarian Impact of the Blockade and the 'Cast Lead' Israeli offensive on Gaza

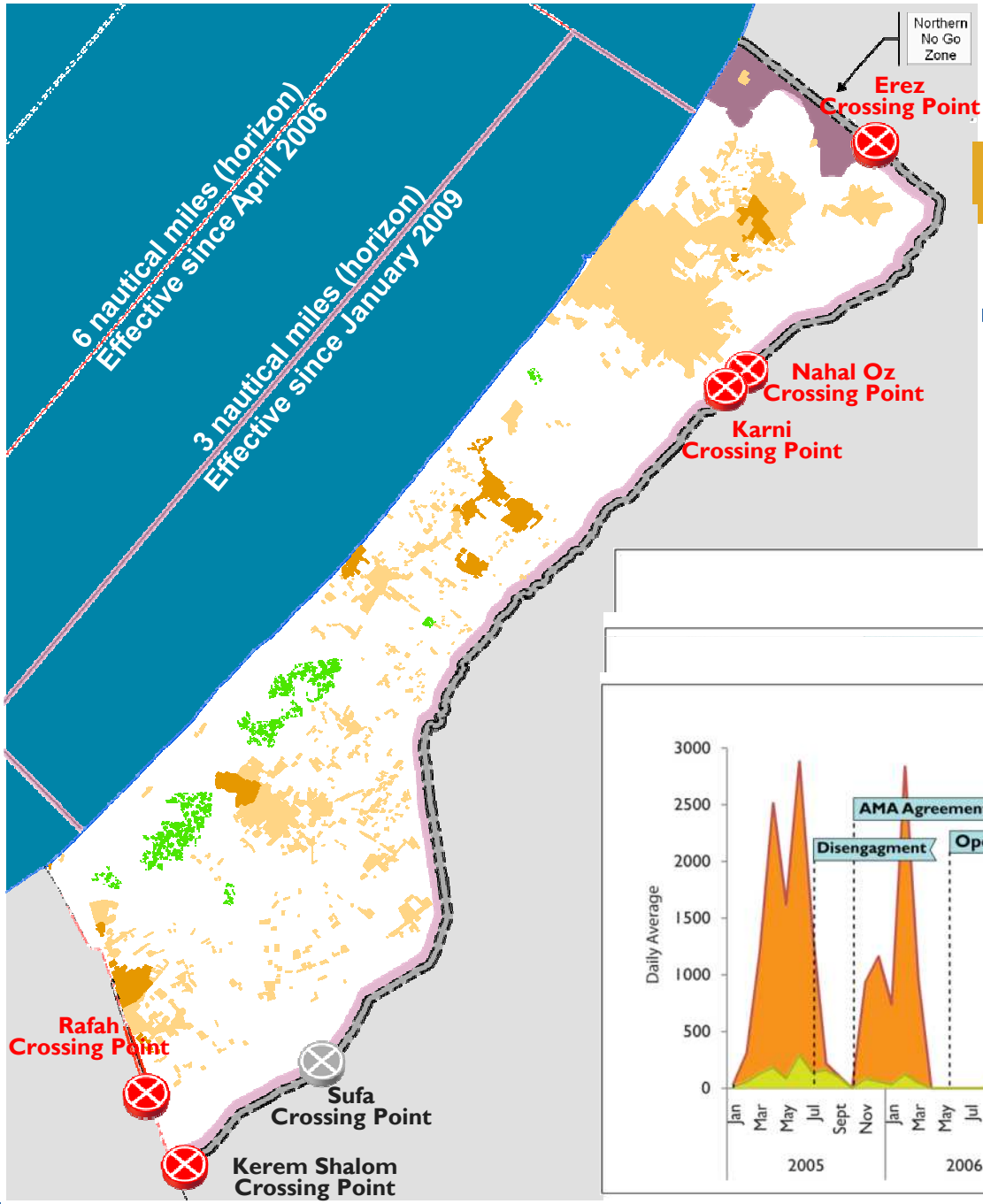
Gaza Strip – Profile

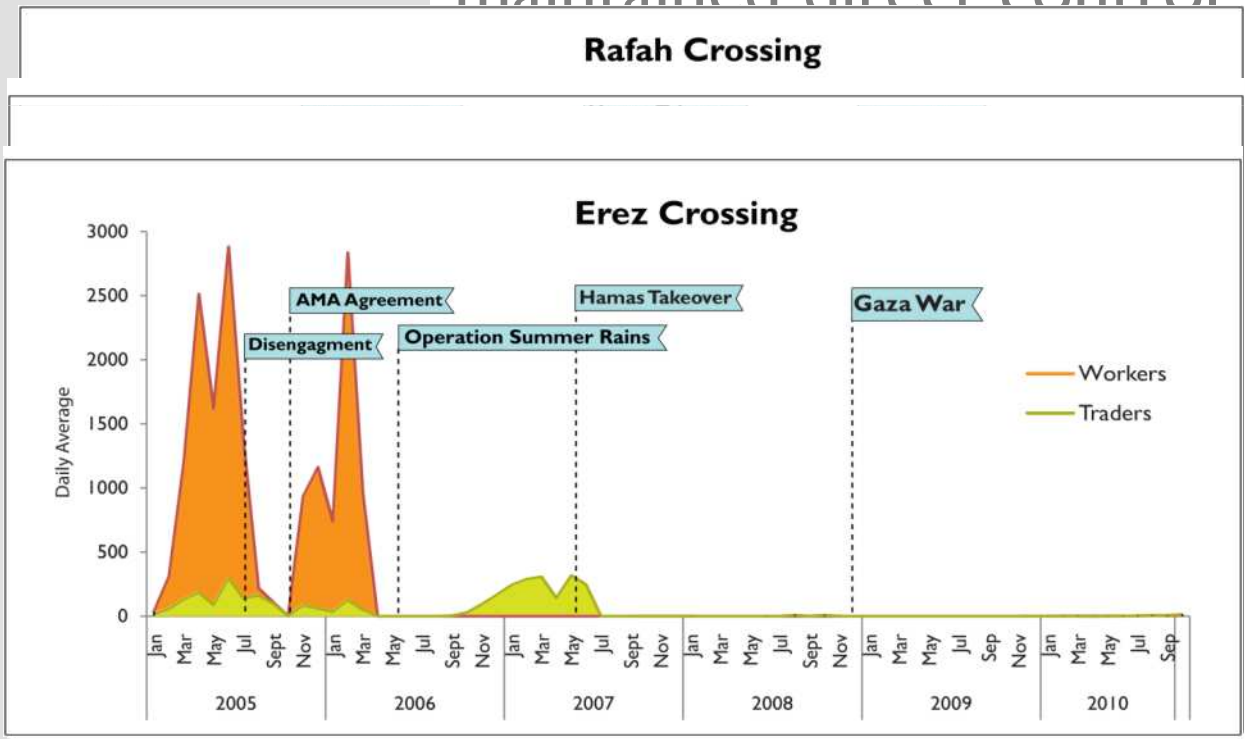
- Population
  - 1.43 million (~1 million refugees, ~70%)
- Crowded
  - 3,881 persons per sq km
- Young
  - 54% of the population under the age of 18
- Poor
  - 80% aid dependant

Access to Gaza

Since June 2007

Despite the ‘disengagement’, Israel maintained direct control





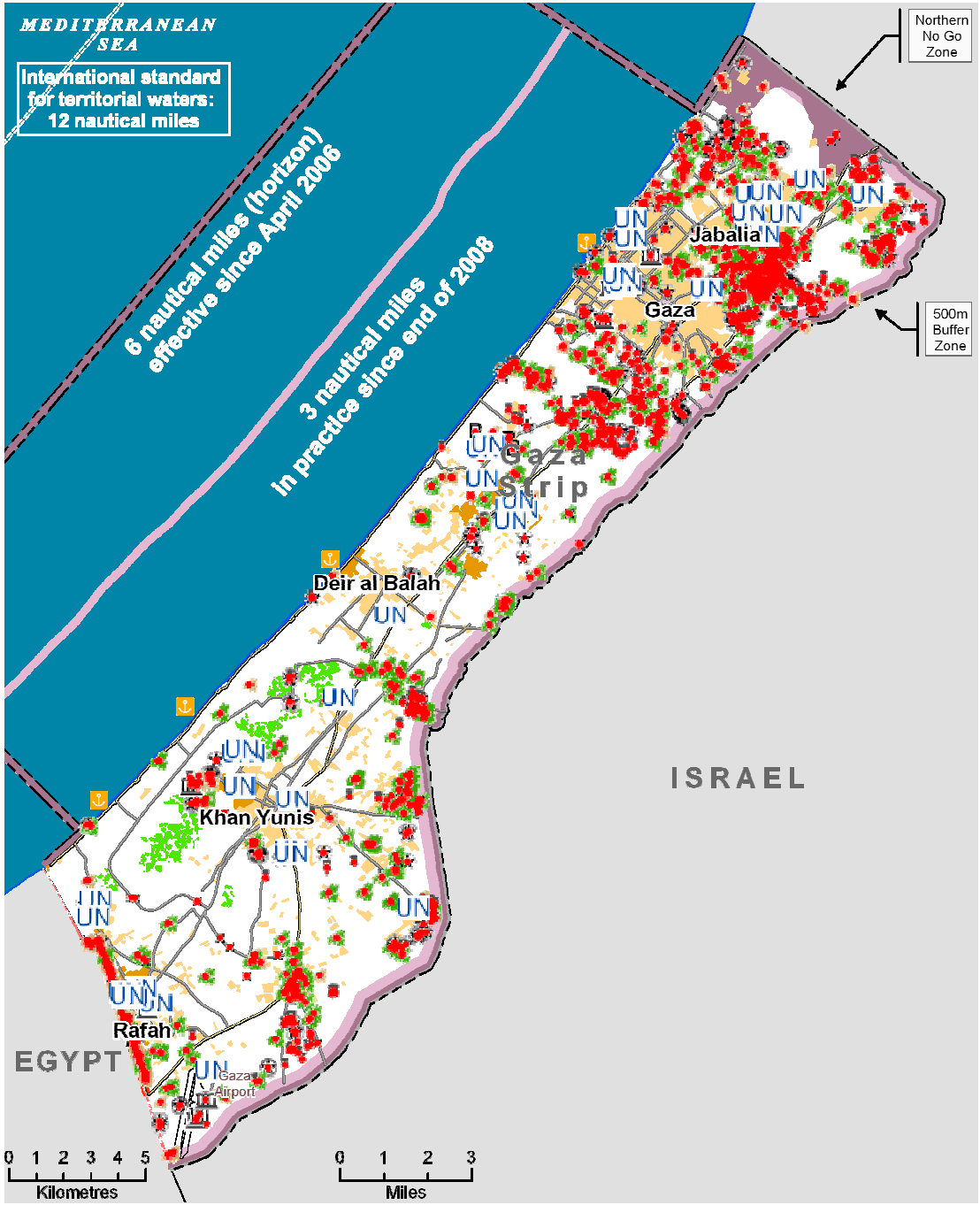
Gaza 2005-2007

- August-Nov. 2005: Removal of settlements, IDF, AMA
- January 2006: Hamas wins PLC elections
- March 2006: Hamas sets up government in oPt;
  - International sanctions imposed on PA
  - Reduced/intermittent access
  - Strikes and weakened public services
- **2006**: Qassams, Shalit, IDF "Summer Rains", "Hot Winter" military offensives.
- **March 2007**: National Unity Government
- June 2007: Hamas takeover of Gaza
- **Israeli Blockade on Gaza**

The Gaza War: 27 Dec 2008-18 Jan 2009

1.4 million civilians unprotected:

- Massive military aerial and ground bombardment
- Densely populated – small area
- No safe space – no bomb shelters
- No alarm/warning system
- No place to flee – all borders sealed



Gaza War Damages:

Damage Assessment
JRC, 28 Jan 2009

- Public infrastructure
- Agricultural land
- Commerce/Industry
- Residential buildings
- UN property
- Tunnels
- All together

People affected during "Cast Lead" Offensive

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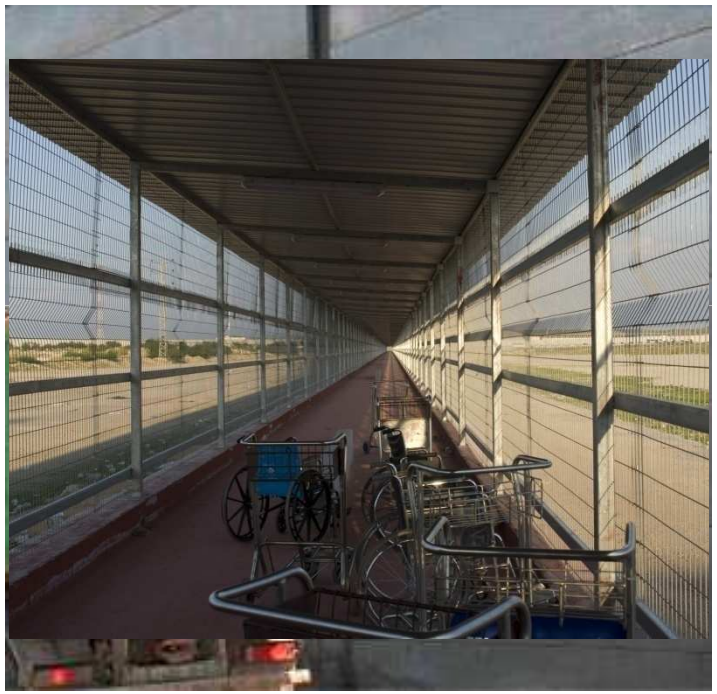
The Israeli Blockade on Gaza since June 2007



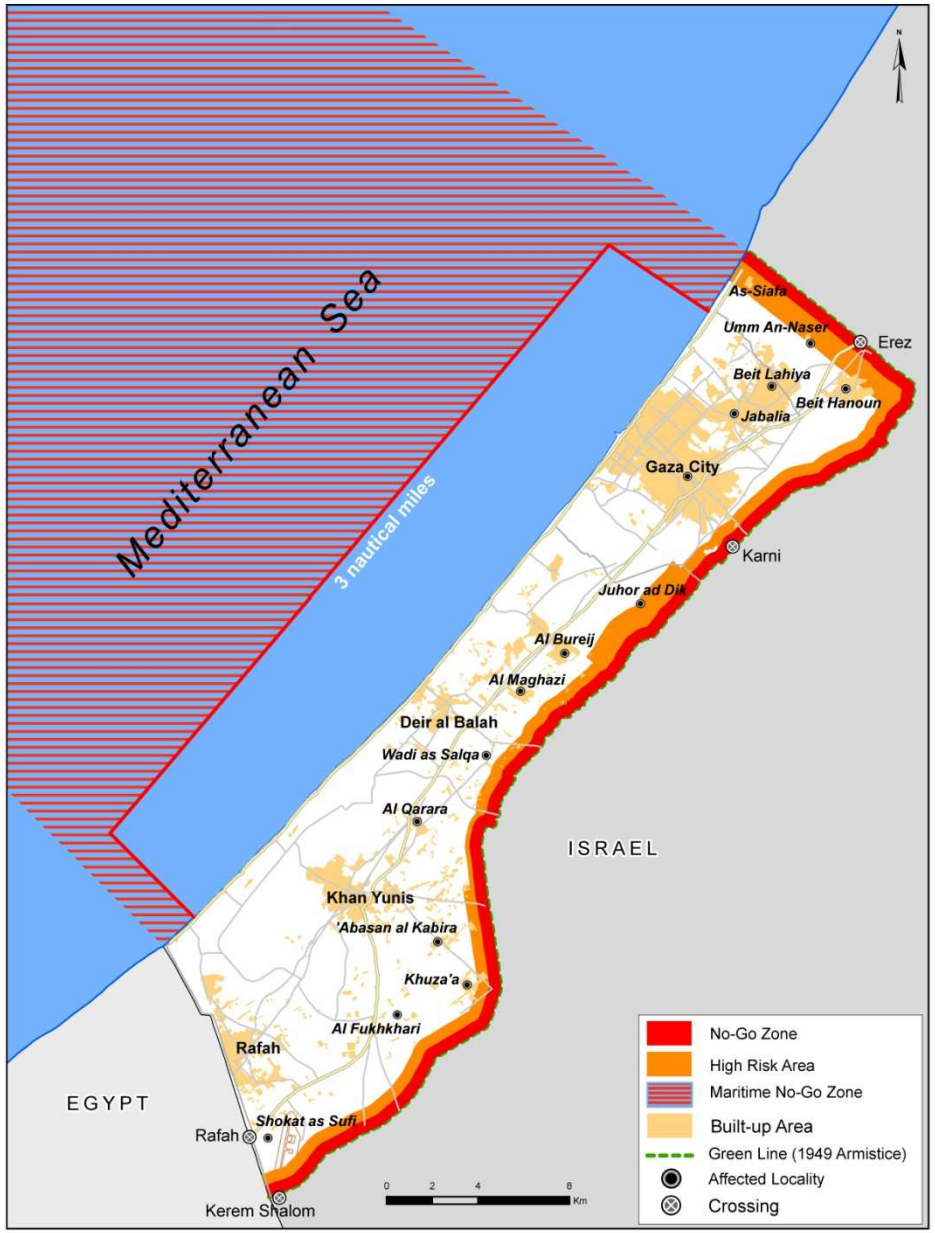
- Import of most construction, raw materials & spare parts banned
- Import of consumer goods and fuel restricted
- Movement of people largely banned
- Access to agricultural land and fishing areas increasingly limited – Buffer Zones

Impact of Blockade: Livelihoods devastated

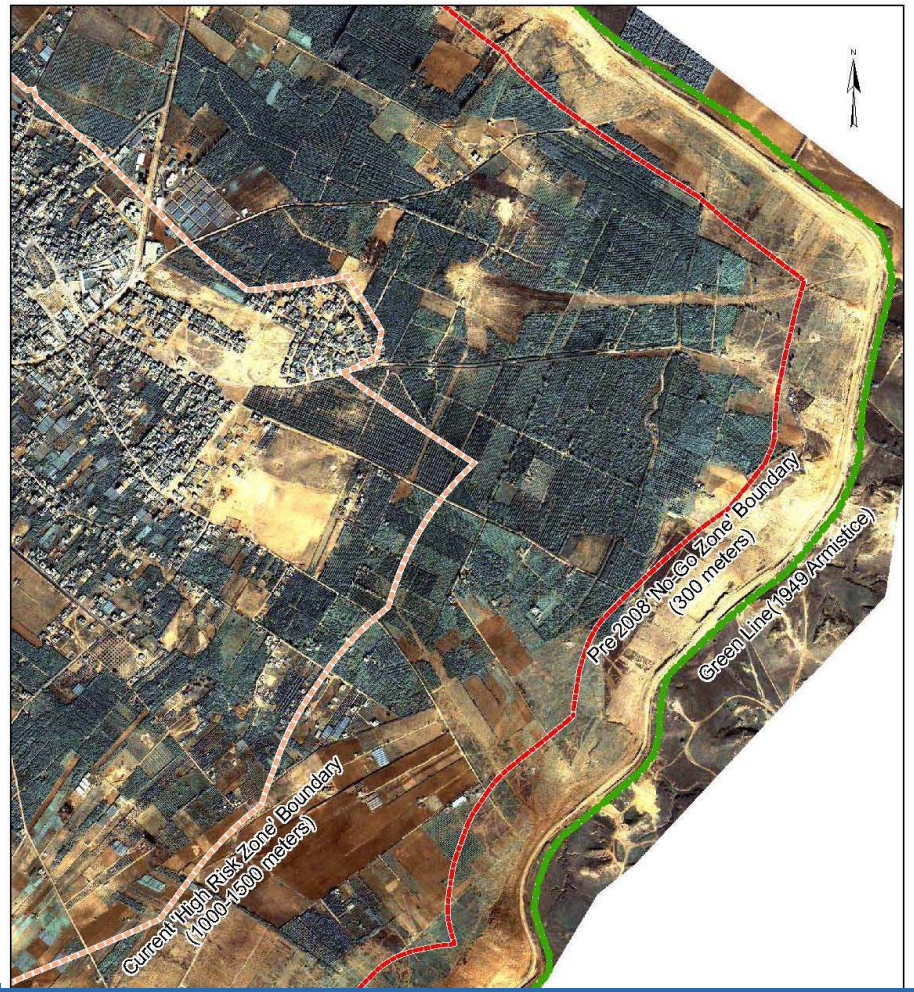
- 120,000 private sector jobs lost in first two years
- 268 establishments destroyed during "Cast Lead"
- 70% of industrial establishments closed (Jan 2010)
- Over 40% unemployment (2010)

Land Restricted Areas

- 'No-Go' Zone: zero to 500 meters
- 'High Risk' Zone: 500 to 1000/1500 meters
- 17% of the Gaza Strip
- 35% of Gaza's agricultural land

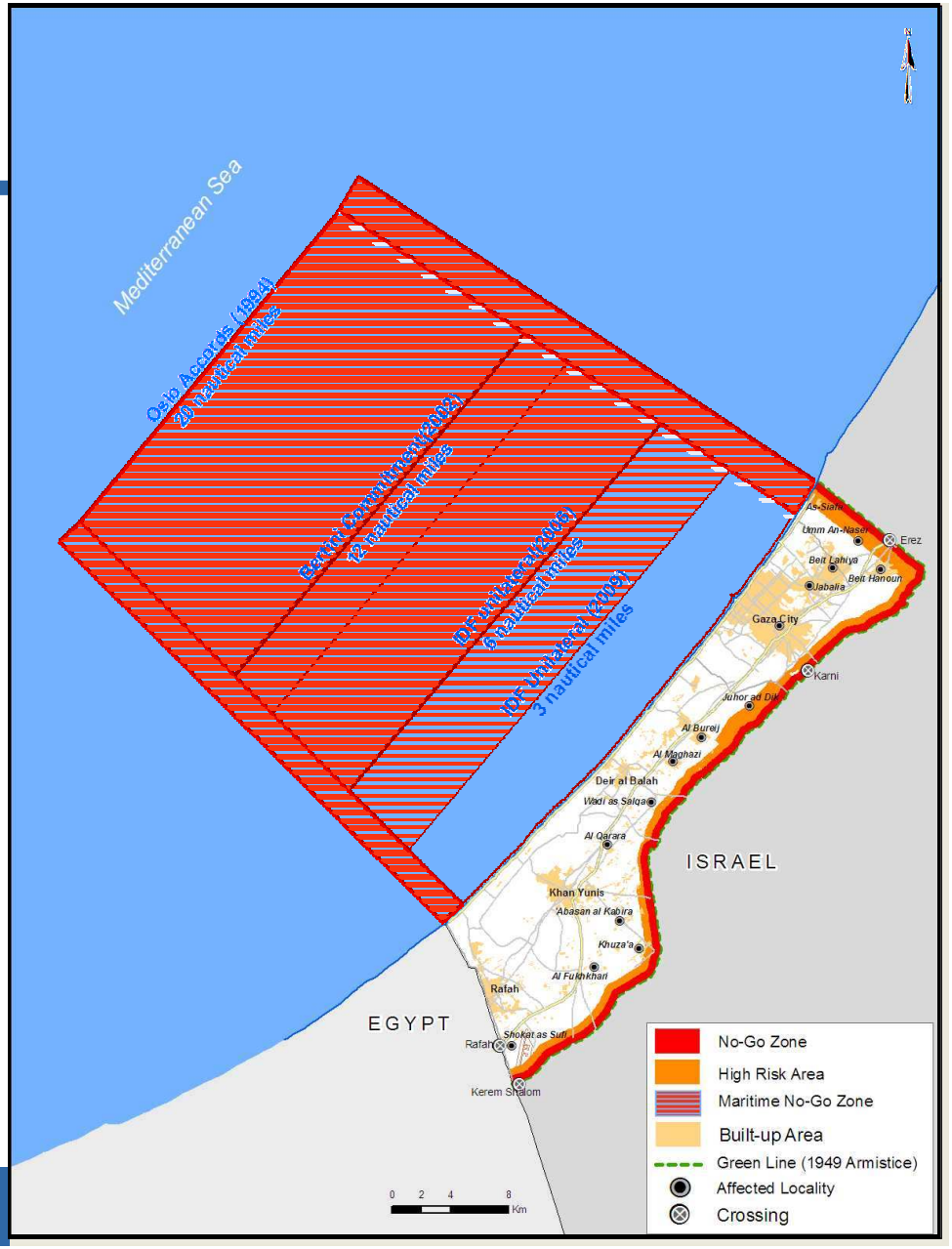


Land leveling - Beit Hanoun agricultural area



Sea Restricted Areas

- Access to sea areas along the coast gradually restricted
- Since early 2009 - 85% of coastal areas off limits



Poverty and Food Insecurity

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Protracted Energy Crisis

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A Challenged Health System

Deterioration of water and sanitation services

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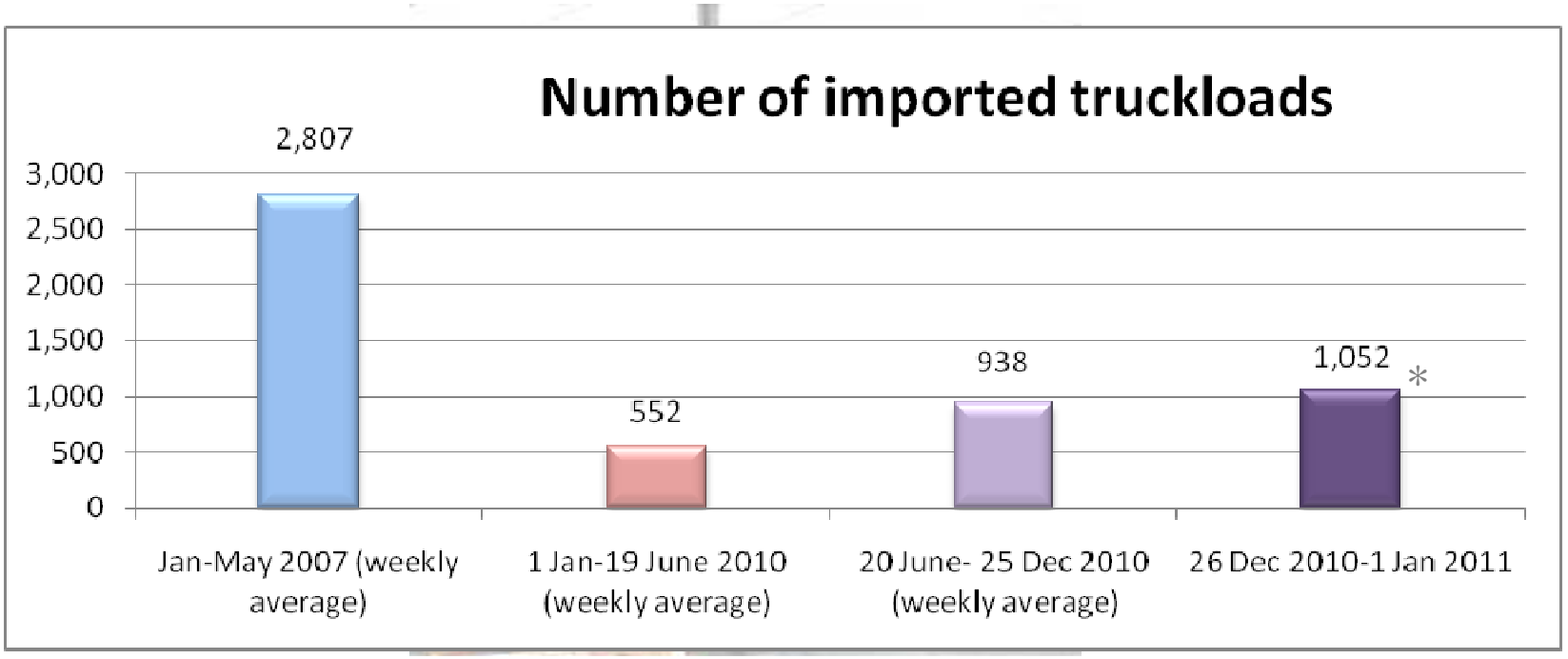
The blockade "easings" as declared:

- From a list of permitted items to a list of banned and "grey" ("dual usage") items
- Construction materials enter for International Community projects only pending on approval
- Extension of crossing hours per demand/need

Changes on the ground:

- **Increase in import of consumer goods**
- **Some easing on import of raw materials**
- **Minor easing on exports**
- **No easing on movement of people**

Truckloads entering through Gaza crossings :



*Food and hygiene items make more than 50% of weekly imports; before May 2007 made only 20%

Housing needs unmet

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The continued Blockade: A protracted human dignity crisis

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- **Further** Ero
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- **Denial of ri**
- **Increasing a**

The way forward

Lift the Blockad

- Lift restrictio
- Allow import ports
- Allow free ac shing areas
- Allow access tween Gaza and the West

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