



GLOBAL NETWORK FOR RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT (GNRD)

In collaboration with



Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights

Report on

Israeli Enforcement of Buffer Zone Area in the Gaza Strip

"Most Important Violations Resulting from the Buffer Zone"

January 2010 to December 2011

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Zone Area in the Gaza Strip***

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1. Introduction

The so-called buffer zone is a military no-go area that extends along the entirety of the Gaza Strip's border with Israel as well as at sea. The buffer zone allegedly responds to the Occupying Power's legitimate security concerns; yet, Israel's unilateral expansion of this restricted area and its enforcement mechanisms seriously infringe upon the rights of protected persons and constitute collective punishment against population of the Gaza Strip. .

The Gaza Strip was already a small territory which has been further reduced by the buffer zone. The inside of the Gaza Strip is progressively turning into one big, densely-populated urban zone in comparison to other geographical areas.

The Buffer Zone is a military no-go zone imposed by Israel, starting at the border fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip and extending a substantial distance into Gazan territory. Israel's imposition of the buffer zone, and the lethal restrictions that go with it don't serve the application of military necessity that is stipulated in Geneva Conventions but it aims to impose severe restrictions on the population of the Gaza Strip.

The no-go zone would be established with a width ranging from 2-3 km. The security zone stretches from the Mediterranean Sea shores at Gaza's northwest to Rafah crossing border at the southeast of Gaza. Israel's army says it considers the area a combat zone and frequently fires at Palestinians who enter the area. Palestinians, mainly farmers and landowners, are denied access to the land; whereas Israeli forces use live fire against anyone within the buffer zone.

This report focuses on the violations that are committed against the population in the Gaza Strip by the Israeli Occupation Forces during the reporting period (February 2010 until December 2011).

This report focuses on the suffering of the Palestinian people, particularly fishermen due to the enforcement of buffer zone area. The enforcement of this buffer zone resulted in destroying the properties of citizens in the pretext of achieving the Israel's legitimate security concerns. The IOF's conduct in this area flagrantly violates the rules of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

During the previous two years, there was serious escalation in the Israeli attacks against Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Israeli forces have continually confiscated Palestinian land along the borders of Gaza for a so-called 'security buffer zone. Also, Gaza's fishermen have been greatly affected by successive reductions imposed by Israel on the size of the fishing grounds they are allowed to exploit.

These violations come in the context of collective punishment imposed against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and resulted in violations of all international conventions and rules that prohibit the collective punishment. These conducts amount to the level of war crimes.

1.1 History of Buffer Zone:

Gaza Strip is the southern region of the Palestinian coast on the Mediterranean, the Strip is a narrow strip north-east of the Sinai Peninsula, the Strip is about 1.33% of the area of historic Palestine, Gaza Strip extending over an area of 360 square kilometers, where the length of 41km, Egypt in the south-west from the Strip.

The Oslo Accords allowed the Israeli army to maintain a security perimeter between Israel and Gaza. This buffer zone soon turned into an area which was effectively off-limits to Palestinians that the Israeli authorities expanded unilaterally after the second Intifada in 2000. In January 2010, Israel dropped leaflets all over Gaza to warn people that the buffer zone would now encompass a 300 meter-wide stretch of land on the Palestinian side of the Wall separating Gaza from Israel. In practice, the zone is even wider and local farmers don't dare approach closer than up to one or two kilometers depending on the location. They fear being shot at by Israeli soldiers and don't know where the exact limits are.¹

After the unilateral Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip in the summer of 2005, the IOF again warned Palestinians to keep a distance of 150 meters from the border fence.

IOF reduced the area allowed for fishing in the Gaza Strip Sea from 20 nautical miles – the area agreed on in the Palestinian-Israeli agreements to six nautical miles in 2008. In 2009, this area was further illegally reduced to just 3 nautical miles. According to Oslo agreement, the 42-km Gaza Strip Coast was divided to k.m.1 areas. K extends to 20 miles in the north of Gaza and 1,5 miles to the south, m extends from 20 miles in the south to a mile in the Egyptian waters, and 1 area extends to 20 miles from the seashore. In 2006, Israel reduced the limit to 6 nautical miles and since the military “Operation Cast Lead” in December 2008; the limit was set up to 3 miles.

¹ Report issued by PCHR on the Impact of Israeli Siege on Civilians in the Gaza Strip (June 2010 to November 2011)

2.1 Definition of Buffer Zone

The so-called 'buffer zone' is a military no-go area that extends along the entire northern and eastern perimeter of Gaza, bordering with Israel, as well as the southern border with Egypt (known as the Philadelphi Corridor). Palestinian access is prohibited in the buffer zone, which extends anywhere from 300 metres to 2 kilometres at its widest point in North Gaza. Israeli military patrols enforce access restrictions by opening 'warning fire' at individuals who enter or come too close to the buffer zone. The lack of clarity around the delineation of the buffer zone has raised serious protection concerns for civilians who reside in close proximity to the border areas

3.1 Isolating Areas inside the Gaza Strip and changing them into Military No- go area "Buffer Zone"

Since Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip in September 2005, Israeli forces have established a 'buffer zone', an area prohibited to Palestinians, along the land and sea borders of the Gaza Strip. The precise areas designated by Israel as 'buffer zones' are unknown and changing. Israeli policy is typically enforced with live fire. At a minimum, the 'buffer zone' is established at 300m from the land border, but it can extend to over 2km.

4.1 Political Reading of Buffer Zone Areas

The Gaza Buffer Zone is a military no-go area created under Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements that extends along the border between Israel and the Gaza Strip. Originally intended to be 50 meters wide, the Buffer Zone as been unilaterally expanded by Israel numerous times and is now 0.5-1km along the eastern border and 1.8-2kmalong the northern border. The creation of this buffer zone reflects Israeli's disregard to all agreements with the Palestinian side.

The 1967 border is the internationally-recognized border between Israel and the oPt. Despite this, Israel continues to enforce the buffer zone, grabbing more Palestinian land in violation of international law. The Gaza Strip was already a small territory which has been further reduced by the buffer zone. The inside of the Gaza Strip is progressively turning into one big, densely-populated urban zone and this is why the areas located along the borders are vital to the food security of Gazans.²

²Report on borders issued by negotiations affairs department of the Palestinian Liberation Organization <http://www.nad-plo.org/atemplate.php?id=17> "1

Israel creates the buffer zone to prevent Palestinian militants from launching any attacks against Israeli settlements. But Israel wants to create the buffer zone on the northern border of Gaza to achieve more than goal and mean. Israel wants to make the PNA responsible on the erupted violence on the northern border. Also, this buffer zone allows Israel to intervene wherever and whenever in Gaza and also it can disrupt any real reconstruction process.

2-Buffer Zone on land

The area has increased from 50 to 300 meters since it was first imposed following the Oslo Accords. The Israeli enforced "buffer zone" along the border with Gaza was originally supposed to stretch about 150 meters into Gaza. The precise areas designated by Israel as the "buffer zone" are unknown and at times extend up to 1.5 kilometers inside the Gaza Strip, which is only 5-12 kilometers wide. In January 2010, Israel dropped leaflets all over Gaza to warn people that the buffer zone would now encompass a 300 meter-wide stretch of land on the Palestinian side of the Wall separating Gaza from Israel. The most fertile lands and many water wells are located within the zone. Many Gazan farmers can no longer access their own land safely and as a consequence have lost their livelihood.³

A total of 30% of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip was assessed to be inaccessible or out of production owing to inaccessible areas lying within the "security buffer zone". Farmers in these areas are unable to cultivate and produce goods for consumption or sale. With limited access to agricultural areas, local production has declined and farmers' livelihoods are increasingly precarious. the Buffer Zone contains rain-fed crops including wheat, barley, beans and various vegetables, as well as olives, almonds and citrus trees. Most of the Gaza Strip's animal production is concentrated in the zone, which also contains important infrastructure such as wells and roads. Consequently, fewer people are able to sustain their source of livelihoods from agriculture.

Most of the Gaza Strip's animal production is concentrated in the zone, which also contains important infrastructure such as wells and roads. 32 chicken farms were included in this area. Also, 20 farms were found in Beit Hanoun, in addition to other poultry farms. Israel restricts Palestinians' access to the land located in the "buffer zone", sometimes through the use of live fire. During the reporting period, at least 77 civilians have been killed, and 315 others were injured. Moreover, 40 civilians have been arrested, 15 houses have been damaged and 56 civilian properties have been destroyed.

the facts and information available show that the unilateral expansion of the "buffer zone" and its enforcement regime result in violations of international humanitarian law and grave infringement of a number of rights of Palestinians, particularly farmers . The enforcement of the "buffer zone" results in Palestinians being unable to use property necessary for the production of food, which had its severe impact on the agricultural and livestock sectors that represent the basis for the Palestinian economy.

³ Report issued by PCHR on the Impact of Israeli Siege on Civilians in the Gaza Strip(June 2010 to November 2011)

1.2 Violations of Buffer Zone on Land

Overall, the land restricted area is estimated at 3.4% of Gaza Strip's total land mass, 95% percent of them are agricultural land and 5% are agricultural roads. Israel restricts Palestinians' access to the land located in the "buffer zone", sometimes through the use of live fire. Farmers are effectively prevented from accessing land located up to 1,500 meters from the fence. 95 per cent of the restricted area is arable, meaning that that buffer zone takes up over a third the Gaza Strip's agricultural land.

The Israel's air force dropped thousands of pamphlets along the border areas of the Gaza Strip warning that anyone found within 300 meters of the border would be eliminated.

Israel restricts Palestinians' access to the land located in the "buffer zone", sometimes through the use of live fire without any warning. Consequently, seven civilians have been killed and others injured in incidents involving Israeli gun and tank fire in areas near the buffer zone

- At app. 12:00pm on Wednesday 28 April 2010, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) opened fire on a peaceful demonstration for the ' Popular Campaign against the Buffer Zone'. As a result Ahmed Suliman Salim Deib, 19, was shot in the right thigh. At app. 4:15pm on the same day, medical sources at Shifa Hospital announced his death. The demonstration was organized near the eastern separation fence between the Gaza Strip and Israel in Ash-Shija'ia neighborhood east of Gaza City. The demonstrators were about 150 meters away from the separation fence when the IOF opened fire on them.

- At approximately 8:45pm on Tuesday 13 July 2010, Israeli occupation forces (IOF), positioned at the separation fence east of Gaza Valley, south east of Gaza City, fired three artillery shells on a residential house.. As a result of the attack, Ni'meh Yousif Abu Sa'eed (An-Nabaheen), 32, was killed as she sustained injuries in the head, the front side of the abdomen and cuts in the thighs. She was injured while she was looking for her children around the house. Sa'eed was married and had five children. Three other persons were also injured in the attack. Their names are identified as the follows:
 - Sanaa' Ahmed Abu Sa'eed, 25, , sustained injuries in the lower parts of her body;
 - Amira Jabir Abu Sa'eed, 30, sustained injuries in the right shoulder; and
 - Jaber Abu Sa'eed, sustained injuries in the foot.

The house was also physically damaged as a result of the attack.

- At approximately 04:45 pm, on Sunday, 12 September 2010, IOF stationed at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel to the northeast of Beit Hanoun town in the northern Gaza Strip fired five shells towards a group of Palestinian farmers and shepherds, who were on Abu 'Eida land, 600 meters away from the border, in the northeast of Beit Hanoun. As a result, three persons were killed in the area; an old man and two children, including his grandson. They are:
 1. Ibrahim Abdullah Mousa Abu Es'ayed, 91, from Block 7 in Jabalya refugee camp;
 2. Hosam Khaled Ibrahim Abu Es'ayed, 16, from Block 7 in Jabalya refugee camp; and
 3. Isma'il Waleed Mohammed Abu 'Oda, 17, from al-Amal neighborhood in Beit Hanoun.

- At approximately 04:30pm, on Monday, 28 June 2010, Israeli troops stationed at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel fired an artillery shell at activists of the Palestinian resistance in the east of al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City. As a result, Bassam Ibrahim Mahmoud Badwan, 29, was killed.
- At approximately 09:00 am, on Friday 16 April 2010, , IOF moved nearly 300 meters into the east of al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City. The IOF launched several artillery shells in that area. As a result, Mohammed Mahmoud Mohammed Isleim, 23, who lives in the Ash-Shija'ia was killed.

The people of Gaza have suffered enormously since the blockade imposed by Israel .Moreover, the border areas are the most fertile land in Gaza Strip. These agricultural lands constitute a food basket and represent food security to all those living in the region. The fertile farmland in and next to the buffer zone was not long ago Gaza's food basket and half of Gaza's food needs were produced within the territory. Farming now yields the least and has become one of the most dangerous sectors in Gaza, due to Israeli firing, shelling and aggression against people in the border regions. With limited access to agricultural areas, local production has declined and farmers' livelihoods are increasingly precarious. This is also deeply affecting the economy in Gaza. What used to be a green, fertile area of rich farming and grazing land has turned into a deserted place where no one dares to go and cultivate. This issue resulted in a change In the nature and fertility of the soil , in addition to its contamination , which made it unsuitable for use and killed the beneficial organisms within it.

2.2 Policy of Bulldozing Agricultural Lands

Since 2000, Israeli bulldozers leveled dozens of dunams of land and attacked Palestinian civilians and their properties near the borders. Israeli soldiers started intensively bulldozing the land in 2006. But they finished the job in the last war on Gaza. Israeli bulldozers continue to raze decades-old olive and fruit trees, farmland and irrigation piping, and demolish homes, greenhouses, water wells and cisterns, farm machinery and animal shelters. During 2009, 22,000 dunams have been destroyed during Israeli invasions and operations. IOF has increased its bulldozing near the Gaza Strip's southern and northern borders with Israel

The bulldozing policy had its impact on Gaza's agricultural sector. Cultivated land, livestock, poultry farms and agricultural infrastructure have been destroyed. The buffer zone contains rain-fed crops including wheat, barley, beans and various vegetables, as well as olives, almonds and citrus trees. Most of Gaza's animal production is concentrated in the zone, which also contains important infrastructure such as wells and roads.

3- Buffer Zone at Sea

Palestinian fishermen have not been able to fish beyond three nautical miles from the shore of the Gaza Strip. This has resulted in a depletion of catches and revenues. In addition, fishermen remain vulnerable to various forms of violence at sea, including the use of live ammunition against fishing boats and arbitrary detention. IOF continued to attack Palestinian fishermen, even in the restricted area in which they were allowed to fish. Such attacks prevent fishermen from working, endanger their lives, and damage equipment. IOF also confiscated fishing boats and detained, attacked and arrested fishermen, often imposing heavy fines.

In addition, IOF reduced the area allowed for fishing in the Gaza Strip Sea from 20 nautical miles – the area agreed on in the Palestinian-Israeli agreements [1] – to six nautical miles in 2008. In 2009, this area was further illegally reduced to just 3 nautical miles. Before Israel imposed a tight blockade on the Gaza Strip when Hamas seized control of the coastal enclave in 2007, the Israeli army has been restricting the area of fishing for the Palestinians from 20 miles to three miles only.⁴

There are approximately 8,200 fishermen and workers in the fishing sector in the Gaza Strip. These fishermen and workers provide for approximately 50,000 dependents. They are distributed among the different areas of the Gaza Strip as follows: 200 fishermen in the northern Gaza Strip; 1,900 in Gaza City; 500 in the central Gaza Strip; 700 in Khan Yunis; and 400 in Rafah.

There are also 2,000 traders and others who work in the fishing sector irregularly. The number of workers in occupations associated with fishing is approximately 2,500. These workers are employed in professions associated with the fishing sector. They manufacture and maintain fishing boats, prepare fishing nets, manufacture ice needed to preserve fish, or clean and sell fish. The total numbers of fishing boats are 1,249 boats across the different areas of the Gaza Strip.

⁴ A Report issued by PCHR on the Impact of Israeli Siege on Civilians in the Gaza Strip (June 2010- November 2011)

1.3 Background on fishing sector in the Gaza Strip

The fishing sector plays an important role in the economic and food structure of Palestinian society in the Gaza Strip. Statistics show that the fishing sector witnessed different changes regarding contribution in the Palestinian national economy; it was unable to actually contribute in the Palestinian national economy throughout the period prior to the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority; consequently, it only contributed by 0.5% in the national product. However, statistics indicate that after 1993, a rise was witnessed in the fishing sector's contribution to the national product which reached 2.5% in 1996. Its contribution in the agricultural sector, according to the data of 2000, was estimated at 5%. This rise goes back to the increase in the number of fishermen and workers in the field of fishing sector⁵.

2.3 other professions related to Fishing

The number of workers who work in professions related to fishing, such as building and maintaining boats, preparing fishing nets, ice-making for fish preservation and fish gutting is estimated at 2000 workers who support approximately 50,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Over the last two decades, the fishing sector has witnessed a notable increase in the number of fishermen and related employees in the Gaza Strip. In 1992, there were about 1680 fishermen; the number increased to 2000 fishermen in 1993, then to 2543 fishermen in 2002, 2500 fishermen in 2003, 2700 fishermen in 2004, and 3000 fishermen in the years from 2005 to 2008. In the current year 2009, the number reached 3465 fishermen distributed throughout the Gaza Strip's five governorates: 152 fishermen in the northern governorate, 1594 fishermen in Gaza governorate, 589 fishermen in the middle area governorate, 638 fishermen in Khan Yunis governorate and 428 fishermen in Rafah governorate. The number of fish traders and part-time fishermen, who do not practice fishing permanently, is estimated at 1054 traders and part-time fishermen distributed as follows: 6 in the northern area, 411 in Gaza, 210 in the middle area, 316 in Khan Yunis, and 111 in Rafah.⁶

3.3 Social life of fishermen

⁵ Report issued by PCHR on Impact of Israeli Attacks on Fishermen in the Gaza Strip (June 2001 to 31 August 2009)

⁶ Al Dameer conducted an interview with Eng. Jihad Youssef Salah, Director of Public Service Department in the General Directorate of Fisheries

There are 30,000 registered fishermen in the Gaza Strip, and others are dependent indirectly upon the fishing industry for their livelihoods through the servicing and maintenance of the fleet of vessels.

Omar Ibrahim Abed Al Moti, 58, Former head of fishermen society, clarified that all fishermen depends directly to cover their daily needs on practicing fishing. The sea blockade has caused damage to Gaza fishing industry. Palestinian fishing was originally to be permitted up to 20 nautical miles (37 km) offshore under Oslo Agreement. But As a result of Gazan fishermen being unable to access, neither “quality” fish nor sufficient quantities in general were found.

The fisherman Khaled Ibrahim Al Habel shed a light on the suffering of Palestinian fishers who facing a lot of problems and obstacles during their practicing work. He has confirmed that the most important obstacles that hindering the movement of fishers in the sea is the limited area allowed by Israeli occupation in order to fishing inside it, which led to the increasing the rate of unemployment in the strip, noting that most fishers live under the poverty line.

Al Habel added that the financial costs that are needed from us to go fishing on the 24 hour is 3000 shekels, which is equivalent to 700\$. We buy diesel, ice, and food, while the financial costs for building a boat and buying a generator cost about 250.000 \$.

4.3 Economical life of fishermen

The daily Israeli practices against the fishermen like confiscation their fishing tools and forcing them to strip and swim naked have forced many fishermen to give up their profession and try to look for other professions that could provide them and their families with the minimum income.

IOF’s violations against fishermen are specifically relevant to the 4th Geneva Convention. Article 52 of the 4th Geneva Convention states” All measures aiming at creating unemployment or at restricting the opportunities offered to workers in an occupied territory, in order to induce them to work for the Occupying Power, are prohibited “.

The IOF violations contradict with article 6.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which states, “The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.” In addition, article 2.1 of the covenant stipulates that, “All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic cooperation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.” Finally, article 23.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”

5.3: Buffer Zone and Targeting Fisherman and their Boats:

IOF continued attacking Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip during the period covered by the report, January 2010 to December 2011, IOF violated Palestinian fishermen's right to life, security and safety during the reporting period covered. The direct targeting of civilians is a violation of international humanitarian law, and amounts to a war crime. Several cases in which fishermen and their boats were attacked were documented. These attacks resulted in the murder of one fisherman, while 13t others were injured A number of fishing boats and equipment were also damaged. The cases are as follows:

Excessive use of Force:

on Friday 24 September 2010, Mohammed Mansour Bakr, 20, and three of his cousins sailed on a boat belonging to their family opposite to al-Sudaniya beach, north of Gaza City, for fishing. Then an Israeli gunboat approached at a distance of 100 meters and started heavily firing at the fishing boat without any reason or warning. Mohammed was shot by a bullet to the chest. He fell inside the boat and was bleeding .However, the Israeli soldiers continued to fire for more than ten minutes and Baker was transported by their cousin to Kamal Nasser Hospital in Beit Lahia, but he passed away.

- **Eleven Palestinian fishermen were injured during the reporting period:**
- At approximately 10:00 am, Israeli gunboats opened fire at Palestinian fishing boats opposite to al-Shati refugee camp seashore in the west of Gaza City. As a result, a boat belonging to Mahmoud Mustafa Murad was damaged. Israeli gunboats chased two boats and transferred Mahmoud Murad, to an Israeli hospital as he suffers from renal failure.
- On 31 August 2009, IOF gunboats opened fire at Palestinian fishing boats in the northern Gaza Strip. A fishing boat was totally burnt and Adham Khaled Ibrahim Al Habil was injured.

Confiscation of Fishing Equipment:

During the reporting period, IOF confiscated 19 boats and number of fishing tools and nets. As a result the fishermen were unable to work and sustained heavy financial losses. Israeli attacks violate Palestinian fishermen's right to life, security and personal safety. The targeting of fishermen, and their property, including seaports, boats, and fishing equipment, constitutes serious violations of international humanitarian law.

- At approximately 6:00 pm on sunday 26February 2012, Israeli naval vessels patrolling the Gaza sea opened fire on Palestinian fishing boats which were in the waters off the coast of Deir Al Balah in Middle Gaza district. Israeli forces confiscated a number of fishing nets in this incident belonging to Samir Nustafa Suleiman al-Aqraa, 38, from Deir al-Balah, and Yousef Mohammed Musa al-Aqraa, 50, from Deir al-Balah. The Palestinian boats were inside the zone in which Israel officially allows fishing when its forces opened fire at them.

- On Wednesday morning, 20 July 2011, the Israeli Navy attacked Palestinian fishing boats and the Oliva Boat. Israeli gunboats approached the boat and attacked it using water hoses, causing damages to it.

Arresting fishermen in Gaza Sea: according to the fisherman Mohammed Saleh Abu Riyala, at approximately 08:00 am on Thursday 25 August 2011, Israeli naval vessels patrolling the Gaza sea opened fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the coast north of Al Waha resort, in the As-Sudaniya area, in the west of Beit Lahiya in North Gaza district. A number of Israeli naval vessels then approached the Palestinian fishing boats and surrounded them. The IOF ordered the fishermen on the boats to take off their clothes and swim towards the Israeli vessels. The IOF then took the men and one of their boats north, presumably towards Ashdod harbor. At approximately 6:00 pm on the same day, the IOF released the fishermen at Erez crossing after subjecting them to humiliating treatment.

Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) has consistently harassed Palestinian fishermen. When the IOF arrest fishermen, they are usually subject to ill treatment; including beating and torture. When arresting fishermen, IOF compel them jump into the sea and swim towards the military boats, even in winter. Then the IOF order fishermen to take off their clothes and blindfold and cuffs them with plastic straps

It is noteworthy that many of nets full of fish have been stolen by the Israeli Naval Forces. Also, the fishing nets and equipments were confiscated.

IOF continued to impose a sea blockade on the Gaza Strip and prevented fishermen from working for long spans of time during the reporting period. Furthermore, IOF reduced the fishing area to 3 nautical miles off the Gaza coast, despite agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority that the area should be 20 nautical miles. As a result, fishermen were prevented from reaching the richer deep waters, thus reducing production and fishermen's income.

Under the Oslo Accords, the Gaza Strip's seashore, which is 42 kilometers long, was divided into area known as K, M and L. Area K extends up to 20 nautical miles in North Gaza and expands by 1.5 nautical mile in the south and it is prohibited to be entered by Palestinian fishermen. As a result, fishermen were prevented from reaching the richer deep waters, thus reducing production and fishermen's income.

Palestinian fishermen in Gaza continue to be subject to unreasonable restrictions and attacks by the Israeli occupation forces. These restrictions have only further exacerbated hardships imposed upon Gaza's fishing industry, comprised of over 50,000 fishermen and their families. It has substantially increased the poverty and unemployment rates among not only fishermen but also individuals and groups whose living is in some way connected to the fishing industry.

The three-mile limit is not enough to accommodate Gaza's more than 50,000 fishermen and serves only to deepen their poverty and that of their families. Fishermen are Gaza's poorest sector—about 80% from them suffer from unemployment. It should be noted that these arrests

are considered as political arrest in order to exert pressure on the fisherman and to confiscate his boat.

6.3 Impact of Israeli Military Decisions on Fishermen

All decisions that were issued by Israel are unilateral decisions and they are applied against the civilians who live near the border lines. Also, the targeting of fishermen, and their property, including seaports, boats, and fishing equipment, constitutes serious violations of all international conventions and laws.

The economy of Gaza also depends primarily on fishing. On the other hand, the so-called 'buffer zone' had its impact on 45% of families in the Gaza Strip, who have lost their source of income or livelihood live under the poverty line. Moreover, From the Israeli perspective, the buffer zone is a security barrier established on Palestinian areas on the pretext of security reasons and measures in the light of stealing the Palestinian citizens' rights in the Gaza Strip.

7.3 Impact of Siege on Fishermen sector:

The siege had had its devastating impact on all aspects of life of citizens in the Gaza Strip, particularly on health, education, and economical sectors. This crippling siege represents the international community conspiracy against the population in the Gaza Strip.

As a result of the blockade, tunnels have become a vital supply artery for Gaza. But these Tunnels continue to claim lives as a number of civilians were killed and others injured while they were working inside tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. Despite the risks, hundreds of tunnels exist along the border between Egypt and Gaza. They are used for smuggling goods to Gaza, which has been blockaded by Israel for more than three years. the smuggled goods include tons of fish that has been entering Gaza through the tunnels as The sea blockade has caused damage to Gaza fishing industry. To fill the gap, traders are importing quantities of fish through tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border and with a lower price.

4- Conclusion

1.4 Analytical view on the reality of violations

The "buffer zone" between Israel and the Gaza Strip is a military no-go area that extends along the entire northern and eastern perimeter of the Gaza Strip adjacent to Israel, but inside

Gaza Strip. Israel's imposition of the buffer zone, and the lethal restrictions that go with it, is illegal.

1967 borders, also known as green line, is the internationally recognized border between the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel. These borders are recognized by the international community and supported by international law, which emphasized the "inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force"

The international community does not recognize Israeli sovereignty over any part of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. The construction of buffer zone areas is likely to involve seizure of additional Palestinian land and/or denial of access to other Palestinian land in this area. These areas are described as collective punishment, and amount to the level of war crimes.

The maritime border issues in the coastal areas of the Gaza Strip are linked with the Dead Sea. Therefore, our maritime border should be demarcated not only with Israel but also with the neighboring countries that are located on the sea as Egypt, Cyprus, and Jordan. Also, our rights in the areas within the border should be ensured, including its natural resources. Also, we should obtain our full maritime rights under international law, which authorizes to a coastal state to control several marine areas. Each region has its rights and responsibilities and ultimately we will need an agreement on the way of managing the joint resources with the neighboring countries.

The resolution 242 (1967) Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security, Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter. And it also demands the Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice, on the request of the UN General Assembly, delivered its Advisory Opinion (ICJ AO) stating that the construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) violates international law.

Table shows the Number of Fishermen and Tools of Fishing Sector in Gaza

Geographical Area	No. of Fishermen	No. of boats
North Gaza	200	275
Gaza	1900	582
Middle	500	170
Khan Younis	700	107
Rafah	400	115
Total	3700	149

Table of Israeli Violations against Fisherman and their Property in the Gaza Strip

Month	Shooting	Killed	Injured	No. of Arrests	Confiscation of Fishing Equipment	Total violations
June 2010	1					1
July 2010	3		1	1	1	6
August 2010						
September 2010	2	1				3
October 2010						
November 2010	1		1			2
December 2010	2		1	1	1	5
January 2011	1			2	1	4
February 2011	3		2	3	1	9
March 2011	2		1	1	2	6
April 2011	3		1			4
May 2011	5					5
June 2011	5		1	1	2	9
July 2011	13					13
August 2011	4		1	1	1	7
September 2011	6		2	1	2	11
October 2011	5				2	7
November 2011	3			1	3	7
Total	59	1	11	12	16	99

2.5 Results and Recommendations

The current human rights and humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip are very dangerous. The current humanitarian suffering is resulted due to several reasons as imposing siege on the Gaza Strip, continual Israeli violations after the latest offensive on the Strip, the settlement building and apartheid wall in the West Bank, in addition to the silence of international community towards all these crimes, in the complete absence of accountability, Israel has benefited from the climate of impunity.

Israel violations to human rights and international humanitarian law during 2010 and 2011 constitute serious crimes as the IOF deliberately attacks civilians and destroy their property in an unjustified manner and under the pretext of security reasons. All these practices are clear violation to the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949

Israel has used its arsenal against unarmed Palestinian civilians, including children, women and elderly people. During 2011, 68 civilians were killed, including eight children and a woman.

Israel has continuously closed all border crossings to the Gaza Strip for over four years. The illegal Israeli-imposed closure of the Gaza Strip, which has steadily tightened since June 2007, has had a disastrous impact on the humanitarian and economic situation in the Gaza Strip. IOF have also continued to adopt a policy aimed at preventing Palestinian patients to receive medical treatment in hospitals in Israel or in the West Bank, including Jerusalem. As a result, 267 citizens from the Gaza Strip were died during the previous three years.

Al Dameer Association for Human Rights views with great concern the dangerous situation of human rights and the current humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. In order to put an end to violations committed against human rights and international humanitarian law, Al Dameer calls on the follows:

1. The international community, particularly, the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to immediately intervene and pressurize IOF to stop all violations perpetrated against Palestinian civilians and their property.
2. Assures on the responsibilities of the International Community: the rule of law should be in the forefront of international relations. Also, all states should reconsider their relationship with Israel after committing grave violations to international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in addition committing crimes against humanity.
3. 4- All states should exert pressure on Israel to lift the blockade and to immediately allow the import of all necessary reconstruction materials, especially the raw materials needed for the reconstruction
4. Calls on the international community to intervene in order to provide international protection to the Palestinian civilians in the OPT in accordance to international conventions on human rights and international humanitarian law agreements.

End

Annex no. (1) Number of Palestinian killed during the Previous Three Years

Year	Grand Total	Males above 18 years old	Females above 18 years old	Children below 18 years old	Citizens killed in each governorate				
					North	Gaza	Middle	Khan Younis	Rafah
2009	1072	637	103	332	445	450	70	60	47
2010	68	59	01	08	10	13	15	21	09
2011	110	96	00	14	16	46	09	10	28