

# GAZA STRIP

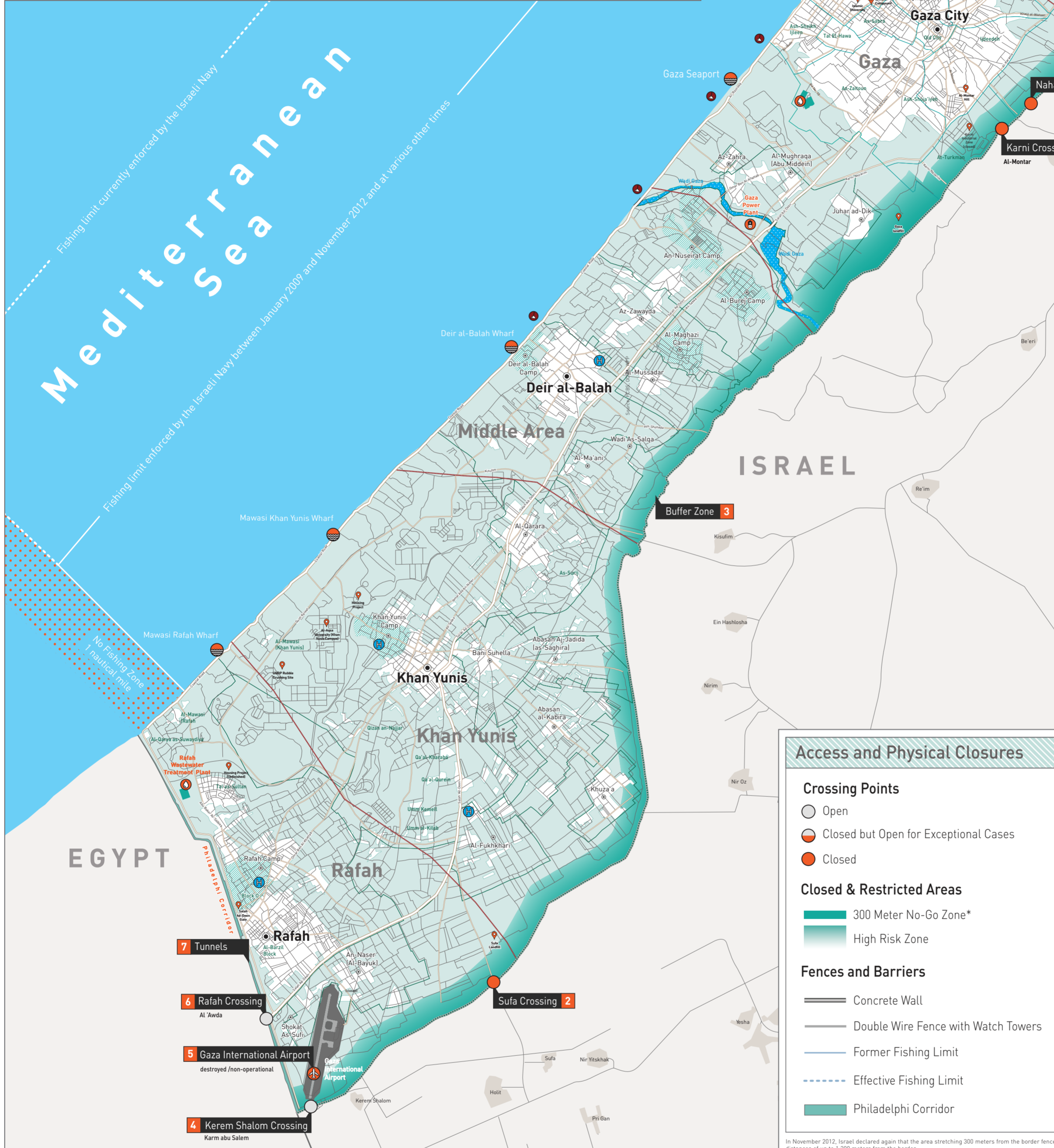
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## Mapping Movement and Access

The Gaza Strip, a part of Mandatory Palestine, was created by the armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt in 1949. From that time until 1967 the Strip was under Egyptian control and its connection to the West Bank and Israel was cut off. In 1967, the connection was renewed when the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were occupied by Israel. The 1993 Oslo Accords defined the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as a single territorial unit in whose borders freedom of movement would be permitted. However, since 1991 the Gaza Strip has gradually been closed off; since 2007 its residents have only been able to exit and enter it in exceptional cases.

**Width** 5.7-12.5 km / 3.5-7.7 mi  
**Length** 40 km / 24.8 mi  
**Area** 365 km<sup>2</sup> / 141 mi<sup>2</sup>  
**Population** 1,707,437 June 2013  
**Population density** 4,661 people per km<sup>2</sup> / 12,109 per mi<sup>2</sup>

- Population under the age of 18** 900,745 (52.9%) mid 2013
- Unemployment rate** 31% 1st quarter of 2013
- Percentage of population receiving aid at least 70%** 2013
- Literacy rate aged 15 and over** 95% 2011



### Access and Physical Closures

**Crossing Points**

- Open
- Closed but Open for Exceptional Cases
- Closed

**Closed & Restricted Areas**

- 300 Meter No-Go Zone\*
- High Risk Zone

**Fences and Barriers**

- Concrete Wall
- Double Wire Fence with Watch Towers
- Former Fishing Limit
- Effective Fishing Limit
- Philadelphi Corridor

### Gaza Strip

**Locations**

- Bridge
- Hospital
- Landmark
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Sewage Outlet
- Wharf

**Roads**

- Main Road
- Regional Road
- Local Road
- Track

**Boundaries**

- Governorate Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- 1950 Armistice (Green Line)

#### 1 Erez Crossing

The crossing serves individuals traveling between Gaza and the West Bank and Israel. Since 1991, Palestinians have had to obtain a permit in order to travel via Erez. Until the year 2000, thousands of Palestinian laborers traveled through the crossing every month to jobs in Israel. Israel gradually reduced the number of permits it issued until March 2006 when a new policy was introduced, stating that travel would be allowed only in "exceptional humanitarian cases", a policy still in effect today. During the first six months of 2013, the average number of entries into Israel via Erez reached 4,150. Most of those traveling are medical patients and their companions and merchants.

#### 2 Closed Crossings

Karni Crossing was built in 1994 and served as Gaza's main commercial crossing point for goods entering and exiting the Strip. In June 2007, after Hamas took control of Gaza, the crossing was closed with the exception of a conveyor belt that was used to transfer grain and animal feed until it was also closed in March 2011. Sufa Crossing was built in 1994 and was used for the transfer of construction materials to the Gaza Strip. It was closed by Israel in 2008. Nahal Oz Crossing, used to transfer fuel purchased from Israel to Gaza, was closed in early 2010.

#### 3 The "Buffer Zone"

After the 2005 disengagement from Gaza, Israel retained control over an area inside Gaza that it calls the "buffer zone". This 300-meter wide strip of land runs along the border inside Gaza. In practice, at various times and various points along the border, Israel has prohibited access into an area that stretches up to 1,500 meters from the fence. In November 2012, the military announced that it would allow access up to 300 meters from the border, however there have still been incidents in which individuals have been injured and killed in the buffer zone at distances of up to 1,200 meters from the border.

#### 4 Kerem Shalom Crossing

The crossing was opened in 2005 for the transfer of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip. In mid-2007, it began to serve as the main crossing point for goods sold to Gaza and for small quantities of export which exit the Strip. As of March 2011, when the conveyor belt at Karni Crossing ceased being used, it became the sole operational commercial crossing for goods entering and exiting Gaza.

#### 5 Yasser Arafat International Airport

The airport, which was officially opened in 1998, operated until October 2000. In December 2001 and May 2002, Israel bombed the control tower and runway. During Operation Cast Lead in 2009, the airport was further destroyed and presently serves as a site for foraging gravel and other construction materials.

#### 6 Rafah Crossing

Israel opened the crossing in 1982 and in 2005, it was operated for the first time by the Palestinian Authority and Egypt under EU supervision and via indirect Israeli control. After Hamas took control of Gaza in June 2007, the crossing was closed aside from limited openings by Egypt. After the Gaza flotilla incident in May 2010, Egypt opened Rafah on a regular basis for limited categories of travellers. During the first six months of 2013, an average of 40,800 crossings were recorded via Rafah per month, slightly more than during the implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access. In July 2013, as a result of turmoil in Egypt, Egypt limited the operation of the crossing and the number of individuals travelling dropped sharply.

#### 7 Tunnels

The tightening of Israel's closure of the Gaza Strip in 2007 led to a flourishing of trade through tunnels that had been dug under the Gaza-Egypt border. The easing of the closure in mid-2010 brought a change in the types of goods that are transferred via the tunnels. In addition to contraband and weapons, the tunnels are now used mainly for the transfer of fuel and basic construction materials such as gravel, cement and steel, whose import via Kerem Shalom is subject to restrictions. As a result of turmoil in Egypt, in June and July of 2013, activity in most of the tunnels was obstructed.

#### 8 The Fishermen's Port

The port is 4-5 meters deep and is home to the small boats of Gaza's fishermen. Sailing is allowed up to a distance of 6 nautical miles from the coast, whereas the Oslo Accords permitted sailing up to a distance of 20 nautical miles. There is no seaport in the Gaza Strip. Construction began on a seaport, as agreed in the Oslo Accords, in July 2000 but was halted in September after the Second Intifada broke out. In September 2001, Israel destroyed the site and has since not given permission for it to be rebuilt.