



Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
The United States of America

November 13, 2024

Lloyd J. Austin
Secretary of Defense
The United States of America

Dear Secretaries,

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our deep appreciation to the United States of America for everything it has done to support Israel since October 7, 2023. That support includes President Biden's historic visit to Israel in the early days of the war, providing Israel with critical security assistance, authorizing American force projection in the region, invaluable diplomatic support at the United Nations, and so much more. Israel will be forever grateful.

Since Israel began its campaign to dismantle Hamas's military capabilities in Gaza and end its political rule there, Israel has been accused of a host of false charges, including targeting innocents in Gaza and deliberately starving the population in Gaza.

The facts belie these spurious claims. Israel has taken measures to keep innocent Palestinians out of harm's way that are unprecedented in the history of urban warfare, dropping millions of leaflets, sending millions of text messages and making hundreds of thousands of phone calls to get people away from areas of intense hostilities.

Since the beginning of the war, Israel has also facilitated the entry of 1.1 million tons of aid into Gaza, including more than 880,000 tons of food, delivered by approximately 56,000 trucks. Although the number of trucks entering Gaza in September and October 2024 decreased, this was largely due to operational reasons and specific intelligence warnings of attacks that were being planned at the crossings and using the humanitarian aid delivery system.

As affirmed in statements by Israel's Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, as well as highlighted in previous security cabinet decisions, Israel's policy is to allow and facilitate humanitarian assistance into the Gaza Strip.

Israel remains fully committed to this policy. This commitment, which was also noted in your letter from October 13th, 2024, was evident in the successful Polio vaccination campaign in Gaza that was conducted in the last month.

We would also like to emphasize that while our countries are committed to increasing humanitarian assistance in Gaza, we also share an interest in ensuring that terrorist organizations do not benefit from this assistance, which would both strengthen Hamas rule and prolong the war.

By working closely together since the beginning of the war, our two countries have addressed many humanitarian concerns. We appreciate your support and advice, and are committed to continuing to work together to improve the humanitarian situation on the ground.

In this spirit, we would like to respond to the concerns raised in your letter from October 13, 2024 and inform you of the steps Israel is taking to address those concerns.

1. Increasing humanitarian aid to the Strip:

- **Amount of aid:** The Security Cabinet instructed the Ministry of Defense to facilitate the entry of at least 250 aid trucks a day, and to verify that enough trucks enter Northern Gaza. Moreover, the Prime Minister instructed the Ministry of Defense to make every effort to reach the goal of 350 aid trucks a day as soon as possible. As you can see from Annex A, Israel has been able to increase the supply of trucks over the past month, and we are currently enabling over 200 trucks to enter every day.

Until now, the main reason that the goal of 350 trucks of aid per day hasn't been reached is the inability of UN agencies and international organizations to send an adequate number of trucks for inspection at the crossing points. For its part, Israel has supported this humanitarian surge by expanding the hours in which the Crossing Points Authority are operating, as well as taking the following steps to increase aid delivery through the crossing points:

- i. **Erez West (Zikim):** Aid coming through the Port of Ashdod and the Jordanian route is directed to this crossing. The crossing point is now open 6 days a week and Jordan has agreed to provide additional drivers for forklifts. The IDF completed road repairs to support access to and from Erez West crossing point.
 - ii. **Erez East:** Activity at the crossing point is temporarily paused due to operational activity and will resume as needed.
 - iii. **Gate 96:** Israel has authorized convoys of 50 aid-trucks to go through Gate 96 five times a week.
 - iv. **Kissufim:** The IDF opened the Kissufim Crossing Point on November 12th, 2024. This crossing point will enable the delivery of between 70 and 100 trucks a day of goods to arrive into Gaza from Egypt, after scanning at Kerem Shalom. This crossing point will also enable the swift delivery of aid to the Mawasi humanitarian zone on a route which should dramatically reduce the risk of looting.
 - v. **Kerem Shalom:** This main crossing point continues to facilitate the entry of aid from various sources (Egypt, Jordan, international organizations, Israel, Judea and Samaria, Ashdod Port). The main challenge for increasing the flow of aid from this crossing remains distributing the aid within Gaza once the goods have entered Kerem Shalom.
- **Dual-use items:** COGAT, in coordination with the ISA, has removed 30 items from the dual-use restricted items list.
 - **Entry of commercial goods into Gaza:** The entry of commercial goods was paused because Hamas was profiting from the commercial routes and using those proceeds to strengthen its rule in the Gaza strip, which contradicts the war goals set by Israeli cabinet. Nevertheless, if the entry of humanitarian aid in non-commercial channels should prove insufficient, Israel will not object to the entry of humanitarian goods through commercial channels in the future, as long as the interests of the State of Israel are not harmed. Israel welcomes further discussion on this matter with the U.S.
 - **Entry of closed trucks and containers:** For security reasons, Israel has not allowed the entry of closed trucks and containers into Gaza, which can be used to facilitate the movement of terrorists and perpetrate

terror attacks. Israel is currently examining the possibility of allowing containers to enter Gaza via the Karni crossing directly to JLOTS and back in a manner that does not threaten Israel's security.

2. Movements of civilians inside Gaza:

- **Northern Gaza:** Israel affirms that it had no and has no policy of forced evacuation of civilians from anywhere in the Gaza Strip, including northern Gaza. At no point has Israel issued "Evacuation Orders" anywhere in the Gaza Strip throughout the war. Rather, Israel warns the civilians population in a certain area, prior to operating in that area, in accordance with the Laws of Armed Conflict, and urges them to distance themselves from areas of intense hostilities.

No civilian is forced to leave, and the population that chooses to remain in these areas is taken into consideration in the operational planning, including the facilitation of humanitarian assistance

The claim that the so-called "Generals' Plan" was either approved by the political and military ranks or is being implemented by Israel is completely false. Israel does not limit the entry or provision of humanitarian assistance anywhere in the Gaza Strip and certainly does not do so in an attempt to coerce the evacuation of civilians.

- **Humanitarian pauses:** As was true during the recent Polio vaccination campaign, humanitarian pauses are and will continue to be implemented throughout the Gaza Strip to address humanitarian needs. When implementing these pauses, Israel is providing advance notification to the civilian population.
- **Humanitarian Zone in Mawasi:** The Humanitarian Zone has already been expanded by 25%. Israel's cabinet has also instructed the Ministry of Defense to develop a plan that will enable those in the humanitarian zone to move inland to additional designated areas in anticipation of the winter season. **See Annex B for additional information regarding the humanitarian zone.**

3. Optimize crossing operations:

- **Crossing points:** On November 12th, 2024, Israel opened a fifth crossing point, Kissufim. The IDF is enabling the entry of aid through all 5 crossing points in a manner which minimizes the material support that is provided to terrorist organizations in Gaza.

- **Port of Ashdod:** Israel's cabinet has instructed the Defense Ministry, Finance Ministry and Ministry of Transportation to enable, as needed, the clearance of humanitarian assistance through the port of Ashdod in an expedited process. That policy has begun to be implemented. For example, on October 31th, a ship from the UAE docked in the port of Ashdod and unloaded 2231 pallets of aid, including food, water and medical equipment bound for Gaza Strip.

4. **Winter related humanitarian steps:**

- **UN Plan for Winter:** Israel has already begun implementing the UN plan for winter and will continue to do so in coordination with UN agencies. Steps to implement the plan include:
 1. Repairing roads in northern Gaza that facilitate the movement of goods from the Erez Crossing Point.
 2. Facilitating the entry of winter-specific aid
 3. Facilitating the entry of vaccinations for winter-related diseases.
 4. Approving the building of enclosed logistical complexes near the crossings (Kerem Shalom, Kissufim, Erez).
 5. **See Annex C for more complete details on aid plans for the winter.**

5. **Facilitating the Jordan Armed Forces aid corridor:**

- **Custom requirements:** Israel has waived the customs requirements for the UN and issues regarding the JAF aid corridor into Gaza through the northern crossings have been resolved.
- **Purchase of trucks:** The U.S. decision to purchase 200 trucks for the JAF will allow for an increase in the amount of aid entering Northern Gaza.
- **Joint project at Karni:** The IDF is examining a joint project with the JAF to increase the amount of aid flow into Gaza. The project includes the establishment of a logistical center near the Karni Crossing Point, which will allow for the entry of up to 200 trucks a day to be delivered to the logistical center and would be done in coordination with the WFP.

See Annex D for additional data regarding the entry of Jordanian aid convoys.

6. Increasing protection of aid workers, convoys and humanitarian sites

- **Steps to increase protection:** Israel will continue its efforts to enhance the security of fixed humanitarian sites and movements. Along with the continued operation of the JCB, 100 geo-location devices have been approved for installation atop UN vehicles for the purpose of easing coordination with humanitarian convoys. In addition, the IDF has re-validated aid sites in its systems and is continuing its efforts, along with the UN, to improve the marking on vehicles.
- **Communication on the ground:** Israel has enabled CLA officers to communicate with humanitarian convoys. The IDF supplied satellite phones to officers on the ground to enable them to facilitate the convoys directly.
- **Movement of humanitarian teams:** The movement of humanitarian teams from Southern to Northern Gaza has been facilitated by Israel. Israel's does not have a policy of creating a division between aid entering Southern or Northern Gaza.
- **Civilian harm incidents:** Regarding the CHIRG mechanism, preliminary discussions concerning its structure and methodology were already held between the State Department and local Embassy vis-a-vis the Israeli MFA and MoD. The Israeli side is open to this exchange and the parties are in the process of coordinating the first session.

7. Oversight of detention facilities:

Israel is committed to its international law obligations related to the conduct of hostilities against Hamas and other terrorist organizations in Gaza.

Israel is fully obligated to treat detainees in accordance with international law, including its obligations to ensure the adequate provision of food, water, and medical treatment. Abuse of detainees of any type is strictly prohibited. Israel's legal obligations under domestic and international law are expressed in Israeli national laws and regulations, as well as in numerous directives, procedures and orders that bind the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) and the IDF.

As part of Israel's commitment to the rule of law, it implements different mechanisms of oversight and enforcement in relation to the treatment of detainees.

First, detentions – including wartime detentions of enemy militants – are subject to a judicial process under Israeli law, and each case of detention is supervised by independent courts in the civilian judicial system. Additionally, under Israeli law, detainees have the right to meet with legal counsel. In addition to the mandatory review of individual detentions, the Israeli Supreme Court has been handling petitions filed by public petitioners on various overarching issues related to detentions.

Second, there are various administrative mechanisms tasked with supervising compliance by the relevant authorities. For example, there is an 'official visitor' mechanism for supervising IPS and IDF detention facilities by senior officials external to the organizations, as well as internal mechanisms of supervision or complaint filing.

During the war, additional ad-hoc mechanisms were put in place, such as a special external advisory committee appointed by the IDF Chief of Staff that reviewed all IDF detention facilities. Recently, an additional mechanism has been approved by Israel's Security Cabinet. It would include an independent team consisting of a former Israeli Judge and two foreign observers, who would be tasked with visiting and conducting reviews of IPS and IDF detention facilities. Israel is willing to immediately engage with the US on the terms of reference and function of this independent team, as well as discuss the prospects of direct US involvement.

Third, Israel has an independent and effective enforcement system for examination and investigation of suspected violations of the law. There is currently a number of ongoing criminal investigations with regard to the treatment of Gazan detainees, and in appropriate cases, staff members have been indicted or dismissed.

As these mechanisms illustrate, Israel does not operate unsupervised detention facilities or deprive detainees of any possibility to connect with the outside world.

With regard to the ICRC, via meetings and correspondence, Israel maintains an ongoing dialogue with the ICRC at various levels. This dialogue covers humanitarian issues, the situation of the hostages and a variety of other matters.

During the war, Israel has made some adjustments to its highly-developed connections with the ICRC, usually in light of certain ICRC conduct toward

Israel during the war, including conduct which was in violation of the organization's own principles of impartiality and confidentiality.

It is also important to note that in the first hostage deal reached in November 2023, in which the United States, Qatar and Egypt served as guarantors, it was agreed that the ICRC would be allowed to visit all remaining hostages and provide them with necessary medicines. Despite these guarantees, this did not happen and there has been little, if any, international outrage over this flagrant violation of the agreement, even as the medical condition of the remaining hostages continues to deteriorate in what has now been more than a year in captivity.

The current status of visitation of detention facilities by the ICRC does not have to do with Israel's commitment to international law, but with other policy considerations. This issue has been the subject of a petition that is currently pending before the Israeli Supreme Court.

8. UNRWA:

Legislation regarding UNRWA were passed by the Knesset on October 28th by a vote of 92 to 10 and 87 to 9. Though this legislation was not initiated by the government, it is binding, with almost all of its provisions to take effect 90 days after the bill's publication.

With regard to the involvement of UNRWA employees in terrorist activity, the issue is far broader than direct participation of more than a dozen UNRWA employees in the October 7th atrocities. Israel has conveyed voluminous evidence to donor countries, including the United States, regarding the deep penetration of UNRWA by Hamas. This information was also provided to the investigative bodies that were established by the UN, despite the fact that neither the Colona Commission nor the OIOS investigation were tasked with an adequate mandate to address Israel's concerns about the links between Hamas and UNRWA. To our dismay, this evidence has been largely ignored not only by UNRWA, but also by the UN Secretary General and by many of the agency's donor countries.

The failure of the international community to seriously address the extensive body of evidence attesting to the profound infiltration of UNRWA by Hamas or to seriously consider alternatives to UNRWA for the provision of humanitarian assistance in Gaza played a significant role in the decision by Israel's legislature to overwhelmingly support this decision.

Notwithstanding the above, Israel can assure you of its deep commitment to ensuring that the humanitarian response in Gaza comports with Israel's commitments made in our March 2024 assurances, pursuant to National Security Memorandum 20 (NSM-20).

We would welcome a discussion with the United States on how to best smooth the transition of the provision of humanitarian assistance to organizations other than UNRWA before the rest of the laws' provisions take effect.

In this regard, the Security Cabinet instructed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to formulate alternatives to UNRWA in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria and present them to the political echelon, while a previous government decision instructed the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs and Heritage to provide alternatives to the services that are provided today by UNRWA in Jerusalem.

Israel is working with alternative organizations active in the field to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches those in need in Gaza. Similarly, we share your view of the importance of ensuring continuity in the provision of educational and social services to Palestinians in Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem.

With regard to beneficiaries of UNRWA's services in Jerusalem, we hereby confirm that these will be provided by the Jerusalem municipal authorities. With regard to beneficiaries of UNRWA's services in Judea and Samaria, insofar as necessary, we are committed to facilitating the coordinated transfer of service provision heretofore provided by UNRWA to any of the multitude of schools and social service providers either affiliated with the Palestinian Authority, or to the many other organizations active in the area. We believe such a coordinated transfer of service provision is in the best interests of many affected Palestinians.

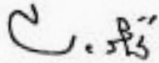
9. Additional steps:

- **"Kela" Electricity Line:** Israel will authorize and activate the Kela Electricity Line to enable the distillation plant in Southern Gaza to operate, which should allow the distillation plant to provide 20,000 cubic meter of water per day (an increase from the current amount of 5,000 cubic meters).
- **Evacuation of the sick and injured:** Israel will continue the evacuation of the sick and injured among the population to third countries for the purpose of receiving better treatment, according to the instruction of the Prime Minister and subject to security considerations **See Annex F for additional information on the evacuation of sick and injured Gazans to third countries.**
- **Funds to ICRC hospital:** Israel will transfer 750,000 NIS in cash to the ICRC for the purpose of easing the activity of the ICRC hospital in Gaza. 500,000 NIS have already been transferred.

In conclusion, Israel reiterates its commitment to improving humanitarian conditions in Gaza and welcomes continued dialogue with your government on how best to fulfill that commitment. We believe this dialogue is essential both to ensure an accurate understanding of the conditions on the ground, as well as to address humanitarian issues in a timely and effective manner.

We look forward to continuing to work together in the future.

Sincerely,



Israel Katz

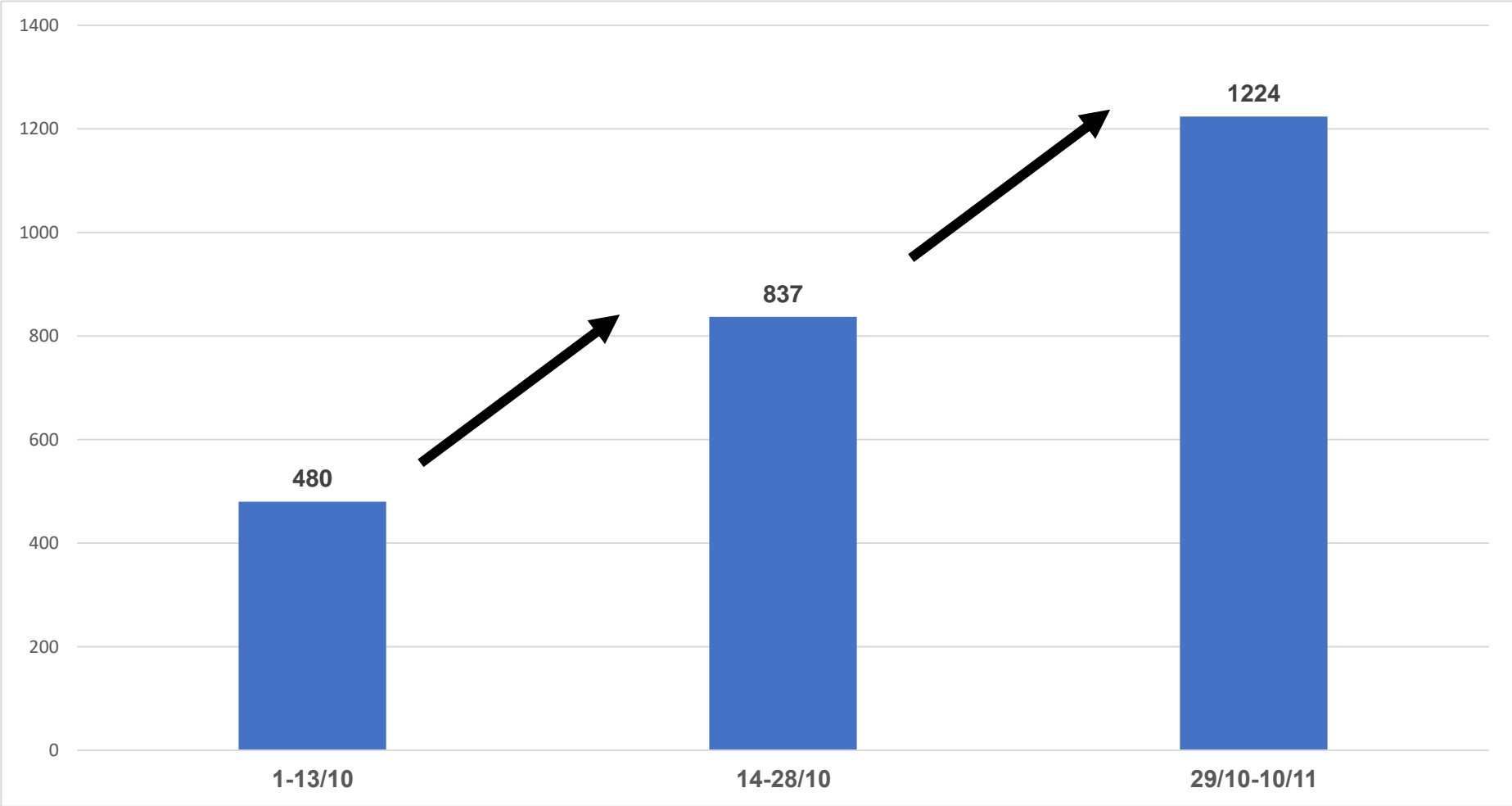
Minister of Defense



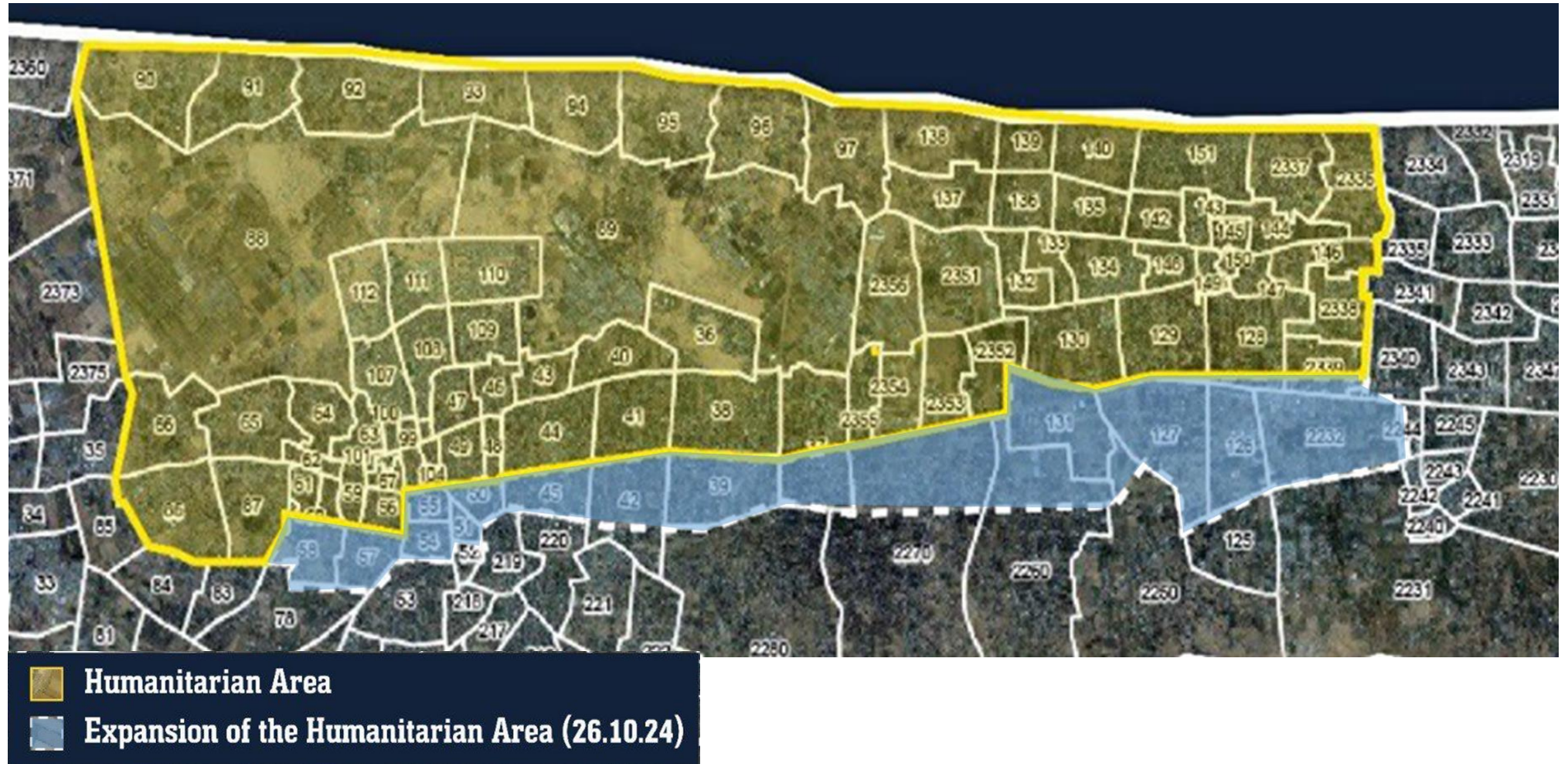
Ron Dermer

Minister of Strategic Affairs

Annex A - Increase in the Amount of Aid Trucks



Annex B – Expansion of the Humanitarian Zone in Mawasi



Annex C – List of approved Items for the UN Winter Plan

Large tents

Hand warmers

Water and swage
maintenance
equipment

Tents elevation
platforms

Portable distillation
units

Dietary supplements
for animals

Sleeping bags

Winter-specified
vaccines

Rainwater storage
systems

Portable toilets

Sewage and
wastewater systems

Personal protective
gear

Shelters equipment

Annex C - Repairments of Roads by the International Community

Preparation for Winter

Construction of portable storage units at the crossing points

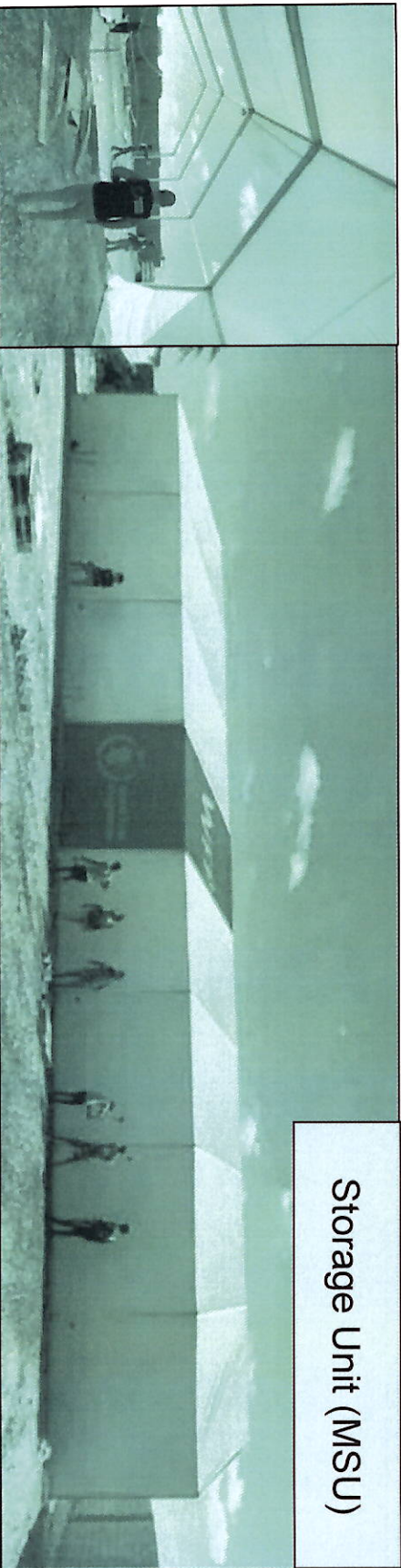
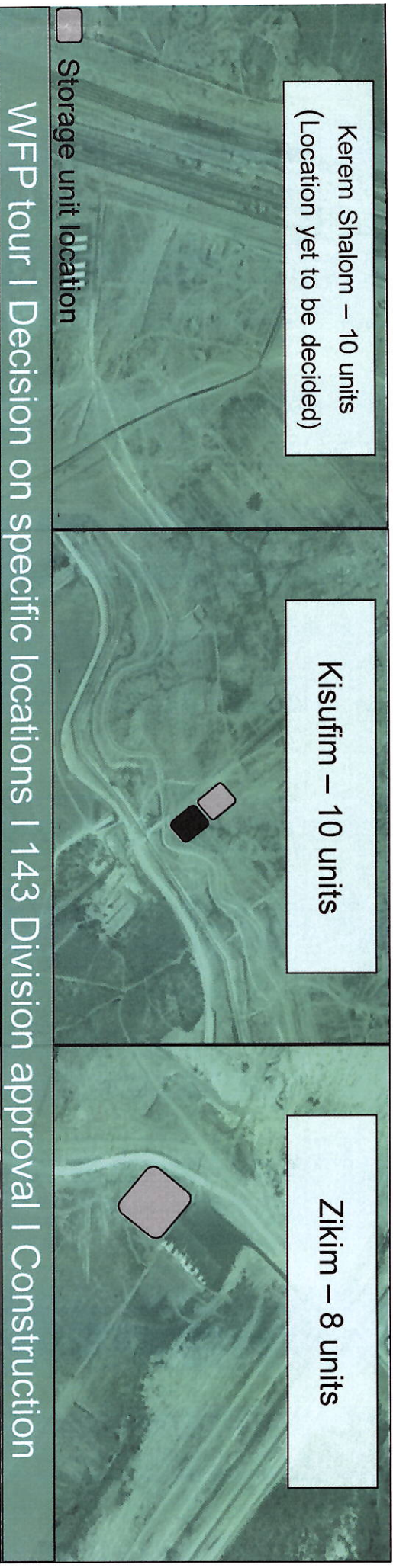
Repairment of Kerem Shalom-Tancher road

Repairment of Jabalia road

Repairment of Gaza City road

Repairment of Kisufim road

Preparation for winter – Construction of Portable Storage Units at the Crossing points



Storage Unit (MSU)

- Goal of storage units is to shelter goods against the weather
- Units to include office and restrooms

Repairment of Kerem Shalom-Tancher Road

Scope of work: 7 km, several weeks to complete

Kerem Shalom

Tancher

6219631459837



Repairment of Jabalia Road

Scope of work: 4km, several weeks to complete



Jabalia

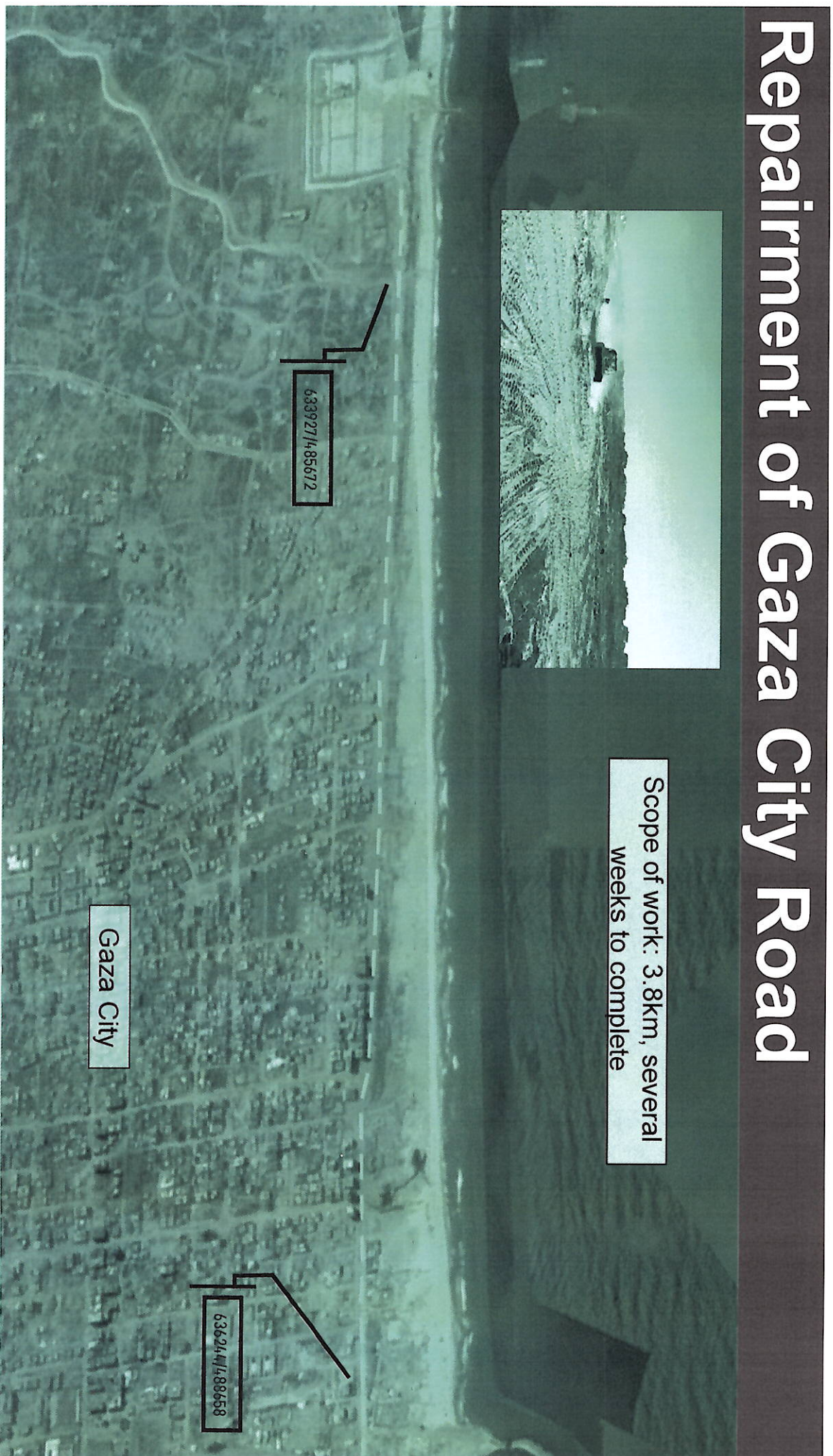
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Repairment of Gaza City Road



Scope of work: 3.8km, several weeks to complete



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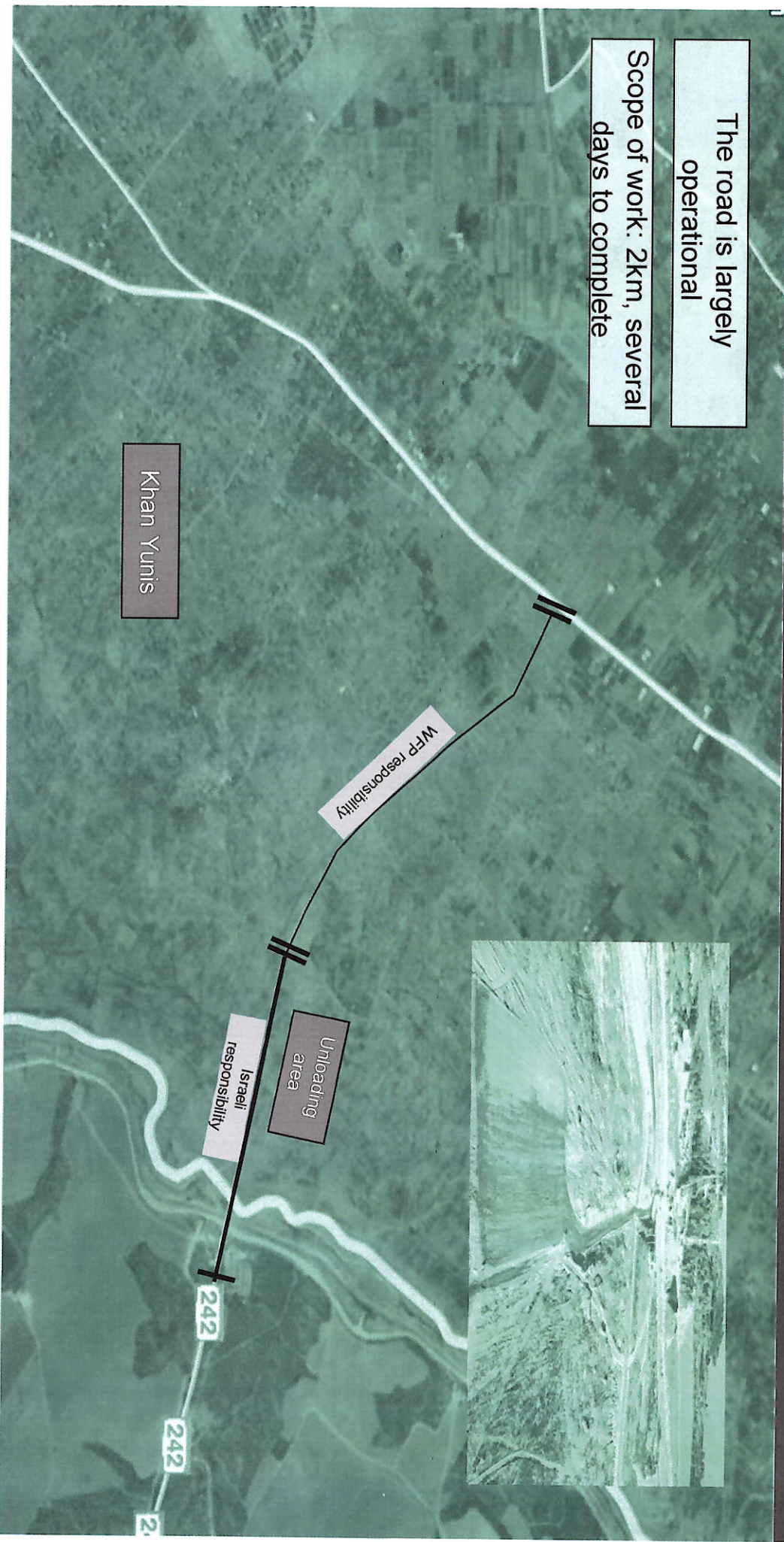
Gaza City

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Repairment of Kisufim Road

The road is largely operational

Scope of work: 2km, several days to complete



Khan Yunis

WFP responsibility

Unloading area

Israeli responsibility

242

242

242



Repairment of a hole in the Coastal Road

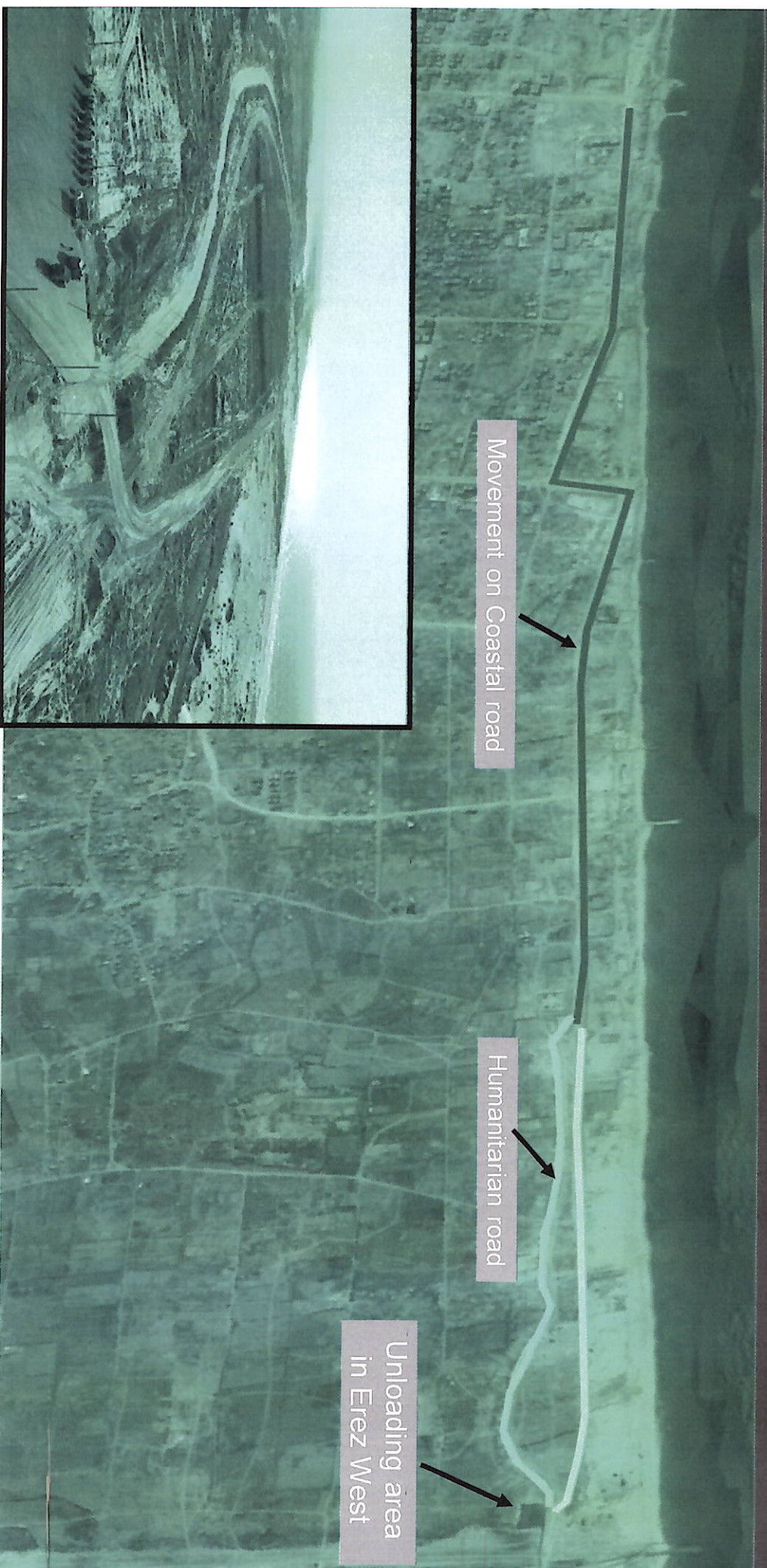


Before

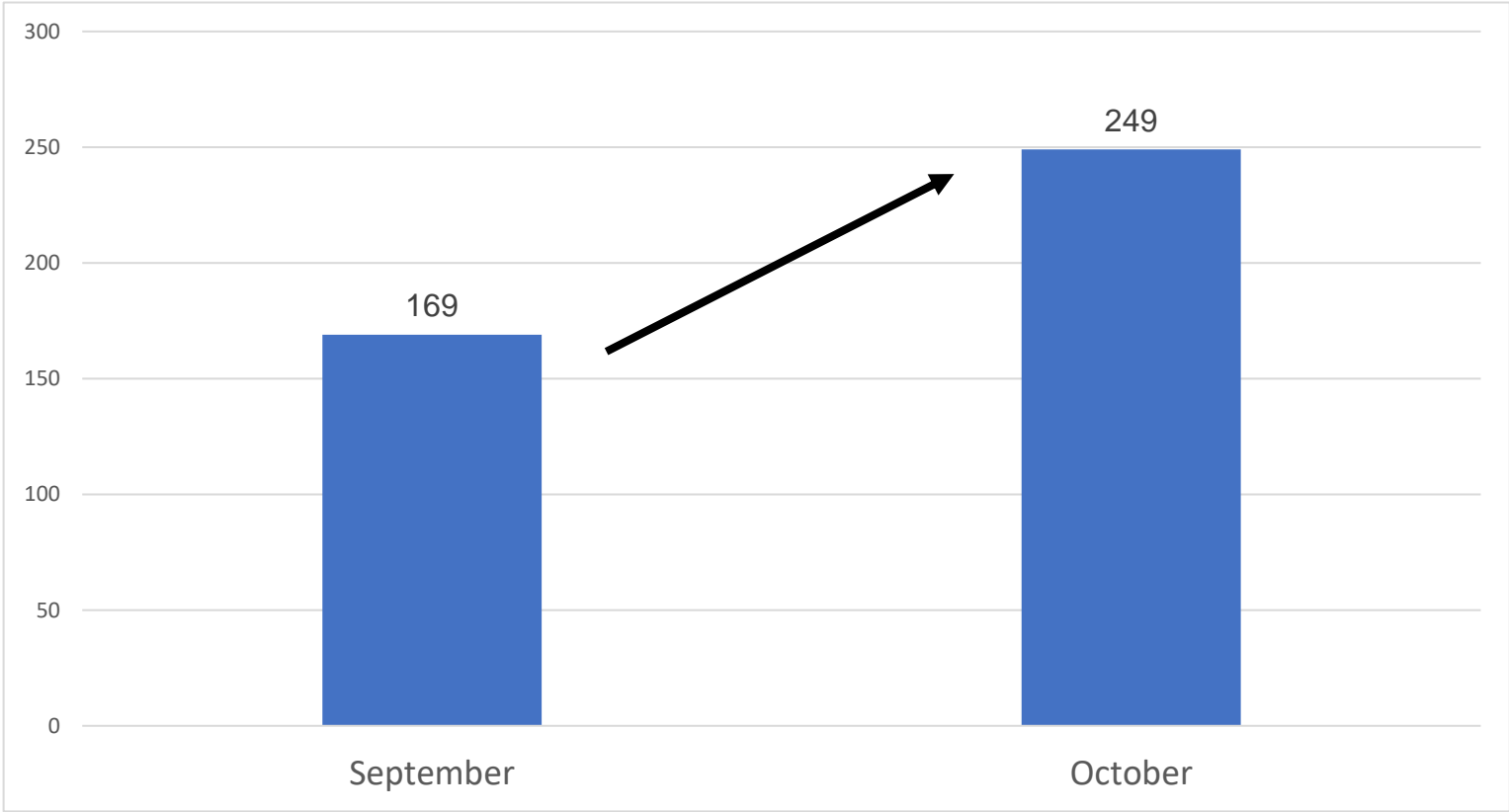


After

Establishing Operational Road Apart from Humanitarian Road



Annex D – Increase in Amount of Aid Trucks Entered on JAF Convoys



Annex E – List of Evacuations Operations to Third Countries

Evacuation to Egypt (U.S. request) 27.06 68 patients and companions	Evacuation to the UAE - 1st pulse 30.7 148 patients and companions	Evacuation to Jordan (U.S. request) 15.08 26 patients and companions	Evacuation to Jordan (U.S. request) 26.08 17 patients and companions
Evacuation of a sick enfant to Jordan 29.08 5 patients and companions	Evacuation to the UAE - 2nd pulse 11.09 252 patients and companions	Evacuation of a family to Jordan 15.09 8 patients and companions	Evacuation to the EU 30.09 32 patients and companions
Evacuation to Iraq 01.10 1 patient	Evacuation to Jordan (U.S. request) 06.10 6 patients and companions	Jordanian Army evacuation 14.10 2 patients and companions	Evacuation to Jordan (U.S. request) 22.10 11 patients and companions
Evacuation to Jordan 29.10 1 patient and companion	Evacuation to Jordan 05.11 1 patient	Evacuation to the EU 06.11 21 patients and companions	Evacuation to the UAE - 3rd pulse 06.11 210 patients and companions
Evacuation to Jordan (U.S. request) 13.11 TBD	Overall: 16 evacuations, 307 patients and 501 companions; 808 people		