



Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights



Annual Narrative Report

Core Program: Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

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1. Introduction

Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights (Al Mezan) is proud to present its annual narrative report for the year 2011. The report provides description and analysis of the human rights conditions under which the Centre worked in 2011 and the Centre's operations under its mandate, as presented in the strategic plan and annual plan of action for 2011. The reported year is the final year of implementation of Al Mezan's three-year program strategy (2009–2011).

The report presents a brief summary of developments relating to human rights and living conditions in the Gaza Strip (Gaza), and the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) generally, during the year. The remainder of the report covers the activities and results with respect to the program and projects in accordance with the Annual Plan of Action for 2011. Separate sections cover the Centre's actions and activities during 2011, a summary of the results achieved, and challenges encountered. This report is intended to Al Mezan's Board of Directors, the donors of the Centre during the reported period, and the public.

1.1.1 CONTEXT: HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN GAZA DURING 2011

2011 saw continued violations of human rights and unmet humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip. These abuses constitute violations of several regimes of international law, in particular international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). The ongoing human rights crisis in Gaza stems especially from the following institutionalized factors.

- Israel continues to exercise effective external control over Gaza. The occupation remains the primary source of human rights violations and the principal cause of the generalized human rights crisis. Israel's continued siege on the Strip results in dire socioeconomic conditions and constrained access of the population to goods and services essential for human well-being and dignity. In connection with the siege, Israel continues to restrict Palestinian freedom of movement within Gazan territory, in particular through the imposition of a "buffer zone" of uncertain depth along the northern and eastern borders and the restriction of maritime activity to a box extending three nautical miles from the Gazan coast. Israeli occupation forces (IOF) regularly use lethal force to maintain the maritime blockade and the depopulated zone along the borders, resulting in the displacement and impoverishment of thousands, notably fishermen and owners of agricultural lands in the north and east. The IOF continues to carry out frequent military operations in Gaza, characterized by persistent violation of IHL.
- The prospects for a just peace remain far beyond the horizon. In the meantime, the persistence of the occupation amounts to an ongoing violation of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, which is a bedrock principle of international law and decent world order. Palestinian society will only be able to establish an atmosphere conducive to institutional respect for human rights under conditions of full self-determination. Therefore it is predictable that the general climate of human rights violations will persist as long as the occupation remains. Nonetheless,



influential actors in the “international community” have continued to prioritize an indefinite “peace process” rather than an end to the occupation and enforcement of international law.

- The crisis of accountability and general culture of impunity among both the IOF and Palestinian armed factions continues. Israel has to date failed to take any real steps towards accountability for the grave international crimes committed during Operation Cast Lead. Given this state of impunity, the prospect of further massive violations of IHL and IHRL by Israel remains a palpable threat.
- In a significant positive development, the Palestinian reconciliation process begun in the spring has resulted in a substantial decline in inter-factional human rights violations. Killings and other public violence associated with the political split between Hamas and Fatah have ceased, and the general security climate for the population at large has improved. Nonetheless, grave violations of human rights attributable to the factional split and associated deterioration in the rule of law have continued at a reduced level, including persistent practices of unlawful detention and torture, and attacks on people and property by marginal and/or unidentified armed factions.

The two subsections below, organized by perpetrator, cover human rights violations during 2011 in greater detail. (Statistics provided, unless cited to another source, are aggregated from Al Mezan’s field research and cover the period from 1 January – 31 December 2011.)

1.1.2 VIOLATIONS OF IHL AND IHRL COMMITTED BY OCCUPATION FORCES

The IOF continued to carry out regular military operations throughout Gaza in 2011, both within and beyond the “buffer zone” imposed along the borders. Israel continued to exercise full control over Gaza’s airspace, maritime access, and all overland access points save for the Rafah crossing on the southern border. Rafah is a small terminal which is meant to handle people and does not have the infrastructure to accommodate sizable movement of goods. Egypt maintained restrictive and arbitrary control over movement of people through Rafah throughout the year, despite the announcement of a “permanent opening” of the border in mid-2011.

The Right to Life & Bodily Integrity

Killings & Injuries: IOF military operations in 2011 included aerial bombardment, artillery shelling, limited land incursions using tanks and bulldozers, maritime assaults, and extensive live fire, particularly in the “buffer zone.” Al Mezan documented a total of 328 instances of Israeli attacks using bombs, artillery, or live fire in 2011. There were significant escalations of IOF military attacks throughout the Gaza Strip in August, October, and December.¹ Deaths and injuries due to these attacks have been frequent. According to Al Mezan’s field

¹ See e.g. Al Mezan, “IOF Launch 13 Airstrikes on Gaza, Al Mezan Condemns IOF Escalation and Calls International Community to Intervene and Protect Civilians,” press release 68/2011, 19 August 2011, [online](#); “Three Persons Killed in Israeli Aggression on Gaza; International Community Remains Silent,” press release 81/2011, 31 October 2011, [online](#); and “IOF Kills Palestinian and Escalates Its Attacks on Gaza Strip; Al Mezan Condemns New Israeli Escalation and Calls on International Community to Promptly Intervene,” press release 90/2011, 9 December 2011, [online](#).



research, 112 Gazan residents were killed and 472 injured as a result of these attacks, including 13 deaths and 117 injuries among minors. 50 of the dead (44.6%) and 419 of the injured (88.8%) were civilians. The large majority of casualties were outside the “buffer zone.” IOF attacks in the latter area, including land incursions, accounted for less than one-fifth of killings (20 deaths, 17.9% of the total) and injuries (72 cases, 15.3%) during 2011.

Lethal Measures to Enforce the “Buffer Zone”: The IOF-declared “buffer zone” runs along the entire length of the Israeli-controlled eastern and northern land borders of Gaza, extending to an uncertain depth inside the Strip. Though the officially declared range of the “buffer zone” is 300 meters, in practice Gazans are prevented by lethal means from accessing lands up to two kilometers from the border in certain areas. The inaccessible and/or hazardous zone amounts to nearly one-fifth of the Strip’s landmass. Palestinians and internationals entering this area—which comprises much of Gaza’s most valuable agricultural land—are fired on indiscriminately, resulting in regular instances of death and injury. Civilians are frequently shot while collecting scrap and rubble from structures destroyed by the IOF in the border area for resale as construction materials. Thousands of farmers have effectively been dispossessed of their lands.² Seven civilians, five of them children, were killed in the “buffer zone” during 2011, along with 13 combatants; 72 Gazan residents were injured in the border areas. Minors account for a shockingly disproportionate number of those injured, 76.4% of the total figure (55 cases).

Lethal Measures to Enforce the Siege at Sea: The IOF continues to forbid absolutely the import and export of goods via the Gazan coastline, a situation which has obtained since the occupation began in 1967. Since 2009 the IOF has denied Palestinian vessels all access to Gaza’s territorial waters beyond a narrow band of three nautical miles along the shore, the most severe tightening to date of a naval quarantine that has been imposed for many years. Though the general naval siege has foreclosed any development of a Gazan maritime export industry, there is a substantial local fishing industry which has been devastated by the imposition of the more recent three-mile quarantine. This delimitation is violently enforced by the Israeli navy, which systematically fires on Gazan fishermen who attempt to move beyond the restricted zone.³ Fishermen are frequently terrified and sometimes wounded or killed by these assaults at sea. In 2011 Al Mezan documented 60 attacks on Gazan fishing vessels, resulting in six injuries to fishermen. Dozens of fishermen were detained at sea; see “Unlawful Detention” below.

Deaths Due to Prevention of Access to Medical Care: Israel continues to hold effective power over the lives and health of thousands of Palestinians in need of medical care through its nearly total control of Gaza’s borders. Many Gazan civilians whose lives could be saved with proper medical treatment in hospitals abroad—particularly in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, which are constituent and inseparable parts of Palestine under international

² For a recent review of this topic, see Al Mezan, “Factsheet: Displacement in the ‘Buffer Zone’ Three Years after Operation Cast Lead,” 1 January 2012, [online](#).

³ See e.g. Al Mezan, “IOF Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen Continue; Al Mezan Condemns the IOF Arrest of 11 Fishermen and Calls on International Community to End Israel’s Violations,” press release 88/2011, 30 November 2011, [online](#).



law—have died due to Israel’s refusal to grant permits to travel through the Erez crossing. Al Mezan has documented three cases of patients who died in this way during 2011.⁴ In a disturbing development, since 2008 Israel has begun using the promise of medical access to the outside world through Erez as a ruse with which to lure patients it wishes to arrest and interrogate.⁵ Al Mezan documented two cases of patients arrested in this fashion in 2011.

The Right to Property & Physical Security

Destruction of Property: The IOF continued its military attacks on property throughout the Gaza Strip in 2011, including frequent attacks targeting civilian objects. IOF violence throughout the Strip damaged 153 residential homes, 21 industrial establishments, 23 commercial establishments, and 18 vehicles. Of these, ten houses, five industrial establishments, and four vehicles were completely destroyed. In addition, 8,410 m² of agricultural land were razed in Israeli operations, affecting the economic livelihood of 101 people, most of them children. Of the homes damaged, only a small fraction (5.9%, nine units) were located in the “buffer zone,” though four of the ten units completely destroyed were in the border areas. Nine fishing vessels were confiscated by the IOF in Gazan waters.

Unlawful Detention: Israel continues to detain Gazan citizens arbitrarily and without legal cause, in contravention of international law. Though detention of residents of occupied territory is not absolutely forbidden under IHL, it is strictly regulated. IOF detention policies systematically overstep the strictures of IHL, and also disregard the protections enshrined in IHRL, and are therefore illegal under international law. The IOF detained 27 Gazans in 2011, three of them minors, in addition to the maritime arrest of 41 fishermen, six of whom were minors.

Conditions of Detention: Israel continues to impose a blanket denial of the right to receive family visits on Palestinian detainees from Gaza, a policy now entering its fifth year. Phone calls to and from family are also generally denied, as is contact with lawyers based in Gaza. As a result, Gazans in Israeli prisons must rely on lawyers from Israel or the West Bank for legal representation, typically at substantially greater cost. Living conditions in detention facilities are inadequate in a number of respects. Meals are insufficient in both quantity and quality. Prisoners are not provided with proper clothing and cleaning equipment for their living quarters. Medical care is given grudgingly and is often inadequate. Lighting and ventilation are also poor. Imposition of solitary confinement is particularly problematic due to its severe effects on the mental health of prisoners. In some cases, indefinite solitary

⁴ Al Mezan, “Gaza Patient Dies Due to Deprivation of Access to Treatment: Al Mezan Condemns the Collective Punishment of Gaza Population and Calls International Intervention,” press release 53/2011, 27 July 2011, [online](#).

⁵ Al Mezan, Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel (Adalah), and Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, “Human rights organizations: ‘The ISA (Shabak) summons sick patients to the Erez Crossing and detains them, preventing them from receiving medical treatment,’” joint press release, 1 March 2010, [online](#). See e.g. “Israeli Court Sentences Gazan Patient to Five Years after Detention at Erez: Al Mezan Condemns the Ruling and Calls for an End to the Coercion of Patients,” press release 57/2011, 7 July 2011, [online](#), for a 2011 case.



confinement rises to the level of torture.⁶ Palestinians held in Israeli prisons have gone on hunger strike several times in 2011 in protest against their conditions of detention.⁷

Torture, Abuse, and Degrading Treatment: Israel continues to abuse Gazan detainees as part of a general practice of cruel, inhuman, and/or degrading treatment, in some cases rising to the level of torture. Al Mezan documented 68 cases of IOF torture or cruel, inhuman, and/or degrading treatment in 2011. Israeli military and security personnel enjoy complete immunity for abusive acts against Palestinian detainees. The Committee Against Torture noted in its most recent review of Israeli compliance with the Convention Against Torture that there had not been a single criminal investigation, let alone prosecution, of an agent of the Israel Security Agency (also known as the General Security Service or “Shabak”) from 2001 to 2008, despite the lodging of over 600 official complaints during these years.⁸

The Right to Personal & Political Freedom

The Right to Self-Determination: Israel continued to exercise a large degree of control over Gazans’ lives while denying them any form of political participation in 2011. Through its extensive control over Gaza’s access to the outside world, particularly economic access, Israel largely controls the life prospects of the population. This is not only a matter of the rights to travel, pursue education, receive medical treatment, and seek economic opportunities abroad, but also of the internal ability of Gaza to provide for its people. Israel’s stranglehold on the Gazan economy forecloses the possibility of normal development. When Gazans are also denied any political say over the policies affecting their lives, this becomes a violation of the right to self-determination promised in the UN Charter.

Freedom of Movement: Israel continued to retain absolute control over Gazans’ entry and exit via air or sea, and over all points along the land border except for Rafah crossing, during 2011. It remained virtually impossible for Gazans to reach Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem or the West Bank, which are constituent and indivisible parts of the Palestinian territory under international law. The denial of freedom of movement has deleterious effects on Gaza’s health and educational systems particularly, and on its economic and political institutions in general. The Rafah crossing is controlled by Egypt, which until recently fully coordinated its policy of near-closure with Israel. 2011 saw a substantial improvement in freedom of movement through Rafah due to Egypt’s political realignment following the January 25 revolution. However, passage through Rafah continued to be limited in volume and subject to arbitrary, non-transparent, and abusive exercise of power by Egyptian authorities.

⁶ For more on this topic, see Al Mezan, Adalah, and Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, “Solitary Confinement of Prisoners and Detainees in Israeli Prisons,” joint position paper, 26 June 2011, [online](#).

⁷ For a recent statement on prisoners’ rights and hunger strikes, see Al Mezan, Adalah, and Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, “Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, Adalah and Al Mezan support the demands of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike,” joint press release, 30 September 2011, [online](#).

⁸ Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 19 of the Convention: Concluding Observations of the Committee against Torture – Israel, Committee Against Torture, 42nd session (27 April – 15 May 2009), 23 June 2009, UN doc. no. CAT/C/ISR/CO/4 (available [online](#); PDF format), ¶ 21.



Despite significant improvements in 2011, the Rafah terminal does not currently meet the needs of the high number of Gazans wishing to travel in either direction.

The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

Employment, Food Security, Access to Goods, and Functioning of the Economy: The economic siege remained the principal barrier to economic well-being in Gaza during 2011. Availability of consumer goods increased during the year, due in part to the slight easing of the siege which followed the May 2010 *Mavi Marmara* incident, but principally to the tunnel smuggling economy that has formed in the southern Gaza Strip. Recent reports indicate that 37.4% of Gazans are unemployed (as of the end of 2010) and 52% are food-insecure (as of March 2011).⁹ The economy cannot recover, function normally, or provide for social needs under the Israeli siege. Import of construction materials is banned absolutely. Official Israeli policy also currently bans entry of “certain fertilizers . . . , specific types of metal profiles, ball bearings, lathes and their parts; composite materials; hunting knives and machetes; optical equipment, such as lasers . . . ; certain navigation aides; diving equipment; parachutes, gliders and other nonmotorized airborne vehicles; flares and fireworks; avionics and flight control equipment; . . . rock drills and equipment drawing water from excavated sites[,] . . . epoxy and vinyl ester resins; hardeners for epoxy resins containing amides or amines; accelerators for vinyl esters . . . water purification solutions at concentrations higher than 11%[;] . . . vessels,” etc.¹⁰ All of these items are principally civilian in nature, regardless of any imaginative military applications that may be dreamed up. Much of this equipment (e.g. ball bearings, lathes, and metal and composite materials) is necessary for standard industrial and technological processes in modern societies.

Housing: Operation Cast Lead’s legacy of extensive destruction of homes, coupled with the siege on construction materials and natural population growth, has left Gaza in dire need of additional housing units. Though a recent shift in focus to importation of construction materials through the tunnel economy improved access to building inputs, the inadequate housing situation remained fundamentally unchanged in 2011. Tens of thousands of people remain displaced from homes destroyed by the IOF over the past decade.¹¹

Education: The educational sector continues to suffer from the same restrictions on construction materials that have crippled the housing sector and many industries. Schools are overburdened and overcrowded; the great majority operate on a shift system to cope with the excess of students in relation to available resources. Construction of new schools to cope with these problems is severely hampered by the siege.¹² The educational system is further damaged by the prohibition of movement between Gaza and the West Bank, which

⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – occupied Palestinian territory (OCHA), *Easing the Blockade: Assessing the Humanitarian Impact on the Population of the Gaza Strip*, March 2011 (available [online](#); PDF format), pp. 2, 10; see also pp. 5, 6.

¹⁰ Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “List of Controlled Entry Items,” 4 July 2010, [online](#). Some capitalizations from this document have been silently emended for ease of reading.

¹¹ See letters to various EU and UN officials posted under Al Mezan, “Support Lifting the Ban on Re-Building Gaza,” [online](#) (page undated but posted to Al Mezan website in December 2011).

¹² See e.g. *ibid.* and Al Mezan, “Factsheet: The State of General Education in the Gaza Strip at the Beginning of the New Academic Year,” 25 September 2011, [online](#).



affects individual students as well as the collective capacities and performance of national educational institutions. The comprehensive ban on educational travel remained in place during 2011, despite specific interventions by Al Mezan (among other groups) on behalf of individual students.¹³

Infrastructure: 2011 saw no improvement in access to infrastructural inputs granted to Gaza. The principal conduit for materials needed to maintain infrastructure remains the tunnel industry. Gaza's infrastructure generally is in a state of severe deterioration following a decade of Israeli attacks, with the most extensive destruction, still not fully repaired, seen during Operation Cast Lead. Roads, the electricity network, water and waste treatments systems, medical institutions, and other civilian sectors cannot be rebuilt or function normally under Israel's economic siege.¹⁴ 2011 also saw further incidents of IOF destruction of infrastructure.¹⁵

Health Sector: The health sector suffers the effects of the siege in the same way as other infrastructure sectors, with compounded effects from the deterioration of electrical and water treatment systems, which has direct health implications. 2011 saw no substantial change in this field. The ban on travel to the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including travel to receive medical education, results in a dearth of qualified healthcare staff and perpetuation of the existing gaps in Gaza's medical services. Areas particularly affected by lack of capacity and personnel include cardiovascular diseases, oncology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, and neurosurgery.¹⁶ Israel impedes referral of patients abroad for medical treatment; see "Deaths Due to Prevention of Access to Medical Care" above.

1.1.3 VIOLATIONS OF IHL AND IHRL COMMITTED BY INTERNAL PARTIES

Serious internal violations of human rights persisted in 2011, despite the initiation of a reconciliation process between Hamas and Fatah in the spring. The reconciliation agreement, though its implementation has stalled, helped to dramatically reduce factional violence. However, violence in various forms associated with weakness in the rule of law continued throughout the year, as did political abuses by security forces.

The Right to Physical Security & Governmental Protection

Internal Violence and Security Chaos: 2011 saw a large number of incidents of internal violence and manifestations of security chaos, resulting in the death of 53 Gazans, ten of them minors, and 175 injuries, including 49 minors. The sources and manifestations of internal violence are varied, but all can ultimately be traced to the weakness of the rule of law in Gaza and the security chaos that percolates in this vacuum. Human rights abuses arising from governmental failure to protect citizens and guarantee the rule of law included:

¹³ See e.g. Al Mezan, "Violation of Gazan Students' Rights Must End Now; Al Mezan: Israel Must Allow Gazan Students to Reach West Bank Universities," press release 83/2011, 2 November 2011, [online](#).

¹⁴ See Al Mezan advocacy letters, *op. cit.* at note 11.

¹⁵ See e.g. press release 68/2011, *op. cit.* at note 1 (reporting IOF destruction of a wastewater pumping station).

¹⁶ See e.g. OCHA, *op. cit.* at note 9, pp. 19–20, and Al Mezan advocacy letters, *op. cit.* at note 11.



violence stemming from family feuds, which claimed 21 lives in 2011, including one child; negligent live fire from training sites belonging to armed factions, which killed six people and injured 20, including four minors injured; other mishandling of weapons,¹⁷ which killed 17, eight of them children, and injured 65, 24 children; explosions caused by unknown objects believed to be of internal manufacture¹⁸ killed one person and injured 16, eight minors; and explosion of rockets fired at Israel inside Gaza, which claimed two lives, one a child, and injured 24, eight children. (On “honor” killings, see “Women’s Rights” section below.) Periodic attacks including anonymous bombings and intimidation, property destruction, and physical assault by masked gunmen, attributable to small, often unidentified fringe groups and vigilantes, have continued to disrupt the fabric of Gazan life.¹⁹ In an event that caught international attention, the Italian solidarity activist Vittorio Arrigoni was kidnapped and killed in April of this year by a radical Islamist fringe group, an act that was previously unprecedented in Gaza.²⁰

Unlawful Detention & Political Harassment and Summonses: The Gaza government continued to unlawfully detain citizens in 2011, practicing arbitrary arrests, detention without *habeas corpus*, and prosecution of civilians before military courts.²¹ Summonses are frequently issued to political activists and members of the former Fatah security forces to appear in government offices, particularly by the Internal Security Apparatus. Typically these summonses carry no explanation and are not supported by any accusation of a criminal act. Al Mezan documented the issuance of 441 such summonses in 2011, directed to 216 people. (Frequently the same person will be repeatedly summoned before the Internal Security Apparatus; 72 individuals were repeatedly summoned in 2011.) At least, 63 people were arrested on political grounds during the year.

Conditions of Detention: Prison conditions are characterized by overcrowding and inadequate medical care. Prisoners are often not permitted to see a doctor unless their health has seriously deteriorated; otherwise, health complaints are generally met with an

¹⁷ This category includes accidents involving privately owned firearms, internal firing from unknown sources, weapon storage accidents, and firing of arms into the air on celebratory occasions.

¹⁸ In addition to explosions presumably caused by mishandling of bomb materials or grenades, Gazans and particularly children are occasionally injured by unidentified objects they find on the ground. Some such objects are pieces of Israeli ordinance which were dropped but did not explode during IOF military attacks. The circumstances of internal explosions are not always clear, but the casualty figures listed here are for incidents believed attributable to explosives of internal Gazan manufacture, rather than Israeli ordinance.

¹⁹ See e.g. “Al Mezan Condemns Detonating Explosive Device near a House in Gaza and Calls for Investigation,” press release 5/2011, 3 February 2011, [online](#); “Al Mezan Condemns Shooting of a Man in Rafah and Calls for Investigation,” press release 7/2011, 14 February 2011, [online](#); “Al Mezan Condemns Attack on House and Threat to a Doctor,” press release 10/2011, 27 February 2011, [online](#); “Al Mezan Calls for Investigating the Explosion near the UNSCO in Gaza City,” press release 53/2011, 26 June 2011, [online](#).

²⁰ See “Al Mezan Expresses Shock by the Heinous Murder of Peace Activist Vittorio Arrigoni; Calls for Bringing Murderers to Justice,” press release 24/2011, 15 April 2011, [online](#), for Al Mezan’s statement on this incident.

²¹ See e.g. Al Mezan, “Al Mezan Calls for End to Political Summonses and Detentions, Respect for Law, and Strengthening of Procedures Conducive to Palestinian Reconciliation,” press release 96/2011, 29 December 2011, [online](#); “Gaza Government Executes Two Persons; Al Mezan Calls for Respect for Law,” press release 61/2011, 26 July 2011, [online](#).



offer of painkillers or sedatives. Prisoners are not given enough time during family visits, and telephone access to family members is sometimes withheld as a form of punishment. The most serious human rights violations during detention occur immediately after arrest, before the detainee has entered the judicial process; see next section.

During 2011, Al Mezan increased the positive dialogue with government officials on these issues. The year saw better access to detention centres, police stations and courts for monitoring and relaying specific complaints, which were treated more positively. Overall, improvement in the treatment of detainees, detention conditions and fair trial were noticed during the year.

Torture, Abuse, and Degrading Treatment: Abuse and torture during detention by Gaza authorities were widespread in 2011. Al Mezan documented 155 cases of torture or cruel, inhuman, and/or degrading treatment by government security forces during the year. There were several cases in 2011 of detainees who died in detention before they entered the judicial system, under circumstances that, *prima facie*, can only be explained by torture. Al Mezan documented four deaths under detention, and one case of serious injury in which a detainee with no prior health problems was transferred from detention to hospital in critical condition, suffering from cerebral bleeding.²²

Al Mezan made dozens of complaints to the authorities on torture and abuse during 2011. The positive dialogues mentioned above also tackled the treatment of persons deprived of their freedom. Complaints were dealt with positively and in several cases we received communications with feedback; including that torturers were identified, fired from their jobs and punished according to the law. This represents a very important step forward in the work towards protecting human rights in Gaza, which will be strengthened under a unity government.

The Right to Personal & Political Freedom

Freedom of Expression & Peaceful Assembly: The Gaza government continued its pattern of disrespect for freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly in 2011, shuttering N.G.O.s, banning public rallies, and harassing, intimidating, detaining, abusing, and beating activists, students, and journalists. Journalists and human rights workers had documentation and equipment confiscated and destroyed by security forces.²³ In March, government security forces violently dispersed a major protest in Gaza City calling for Palestinian unity and an end to the factional split; scores of people were injured. At the

²² See e.g. Al Mezan, “Al Mezan Calls for Investigating Abu Ghanem Case and Ensuring Respect of the Law and Rules Regarding the Due Process and Treatment of Detainees,” press release 50/2011, 31 May 2011, [online](#); “Ensuring Aspects of Justice Is No Less Important than Justice Itself: Al Mezan Calls for Investigation of the Death of Al-A’raj in Detention and for Law Enforcement Officers to Respect the Law,” press release 54/2011, 27 June 2011, [online](#).

²³ See e.g. Al Mezan, “Al Mezan Condemns Attacks against Journalists and Breaking into Press Offices in Gaza,” press release 17/2011, 20 March 2011, [online](#).



same protest and on the following day, Al Mezan's own field workers were assaulted and harassed by government security forces and Hamas civilian partisans.²⁴

Freedom of Movement: The Gaza government continued to prevent some residents from traveling abroad in 2011. Current or former Fatah officials and activists are most often prevented from traveling,²⁵ but ordinary citizens have also been denied exit in recent years. At Rafah crossing, the government's arbitrary denial of exit compounds the difficulties already faced by travelers due to the tight and likewise arbitrary controls exercised by Egypt. Bureaucratic procedures on both the Gazan and Egyptian sides of the border are overly difficult and non-transparent. Travel continues to depend in part on private connections and social influence, rather than the legal rights and personal needs of travelers. The result is that passage through Rafah remains uncertain and subject to the arbitrary abuse of power. Al Mezan documented 18 cases of citizens denied exit in 2011.

The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

Employment, Social Security, & Labor Conditions: The Gazan government did not take effective measures to alleviate poverty and unemployment in 2011. There is no system of social security against unemployment in place, and the government's failure to properly monitor wages and working conditions has contributed to poor and sometimes abusive conditions of employment. This is particularly true of the tunnel industry; see next section.

Tunnel Economy: The Israeli siege has led to the creation of a vast smuggling economy through tunnels along the southern border, which bring in goods that are unavailable or inadequately supplied through the IOF-controlled border terminals. Conditions of work in the tunnels are extremely hazardous and result in scores of deaths due to tunnel collapses, gas leaks, explosions, electrocution, and other accidents. 30 workers were killed by accidents in the tunnels during 2011, including three minors. Another 63 were injured, three of them minors. Though the very existence of this industry is attributable to the Israeli siege, accidents in the tunnels are an internal phenomenon for which the government must share a large degree of the blame due to its failure to establish a regime of labor regulations and monitoring to protect tunnel workers.

Health Sector: The ongoing shortfall in medical supplies has been exacerbated by the factional split between the West Bank Palestinian Authority and the Gazan government. Medical shortages in 2011 were attributable in part to political infighting between the two

²⁴ Al Mezan and Al Dameer Association for Human Rights, "Attacks against Peaceful Assembly in Al Kateeba Square Condemned; Violation of the Law and must Be Investigated," joint press release, 16 March 2011, [online](#); Al Mezan, "Al Mezan Condemns the Assaults by Gaza Security on Its Field Worker and Journalists," press release 16/2011, 17 March 2011, [online](#).

²⁵ See e.g. Al Mezan, "Gaza's Government Prevents Members of Fatah Revolutionary Council from Traveling via Erez Crossing," news item, 23 October 2011, [online](#).



Palestinian governments, though other factors, including budgetary constraints, were also to blame.²⁶

Women's Rights

Palestinian women continued to face distinctive social hardships in 2011. Women face great obstacles in achieving full equality and human dignity within Gazan society. Verbal and physical abuse of women are common, and a number of women have been killed in connection with so-called "honor crimes." Al Mezan documented two "honor" killings in 2011.²⁷

²⁶ World Health Organization – occupied Palestinian territory, "Update: Access to essential drugs and disposables in Gaza Strip, 2011," 6 January 2012 (available [online](#); PDF format), p. 1; Al Mezan, "Al Mezan Calls Upon the International Community and International Organizations to Promptly Intervene to Secure Health Sector Needs in the Gaza Strip," press release, 9 June 2011, [online](#).

²⁷ See e.g. Al Mezan, "Al Mezan Condemns Killing of Woman in Gaza on 'Family Honor' Grounds; Calls for Perpetrators to Be Brought to Justice," press release 93/2011, 26 December 2011, [online](#); and see Al Mezan, "On International Woman's Day Al Mezan Congratulates Palestinian Women, Calls for their Protection, Respect of their Rights, and Enhancement of their Social Position," press release 14/2011, 7 March 2011, [online](#), for a general statement on women's issues.



I. Mission, Vision and Goals

As stated in Al Mezan's 3-Year Program Strategy Document 2009-2011, its mission is *“to promote, protect and prevent violations of human rights in general and economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights in particular as enshrined in the international human rights system; to provide effective aid to those victims of such violations; and to enhance the quality of life of the community in marginalized sectors of the Gaza Strip”*.

We envision a *Palestinian free, sovereign society where all women, men and children enjoy the benefits of social justice, human rights, the merit of the rule of law and good governance fully and equally.*

The Centre's goals can be stated as follows:

- To protect and promote human rights in the OPT, and especially in the Gaza Strip, through its problem-solving approach.
- To work towards the realization of Palestinians' individual and collective human rights, including the right to self-determination, through channels of international law.
- To enhance democracy and citizen participation in the OPT, and press towards good governance that respects human rights.

As mentioned in its program strategy 2006-2008, Al Mezan aims to achieve these broad goals through building capacity of its management and implementation of a multifaceted core program. Projects are to be considered as long as they do not contravene with the Centre's mission and goals, and whether they respond to needs not covered in the program.

II. Specific features of objectives/outputs

1. Monitoring and documenting daily human rights violations;
2. Obtaining and making available data and information on human rights violations to all the parties who can contribute to the promotion and protection of these rights;
3. Providing information to UN bodies and international human rights organizations on violations of economic, social and cultural rights in the Gaza Strip through advocacy tools and ongoing communication;
4. Contributing to professional reporting, studying and researching of the human rights conditions in OPT;
5. Monitoring, researching and producing analytical reports on the situation relating to ESC rights in the Gaza Strip and of the PNA annual budget to make recommendations to the appropriate decision-making bodies;
6. Contributing to the protection of human rights through access to human rights mechanisms and networking at the local, national and international levels;
7. Providing legal aid and advice to victims of human rights violations, with special focus on cases related to ESC rights;
8. Making available channels of redress for victims;
9. Monitoring draft laws or proposals and advocate for their compliance with internationally recognized international and human rights standards to both PLC members and members of the Government;



10. Raising awareness among the local community or specific target groups of their rights and legal issues in general;
11. Raising awareness in the local community about ESC rights and PNA budgetary policies as a tool of ensuring better enjoyment of these rights
12. Raising public awareness of human rights (especially ESC rights), democracy and the rule of law;
13. Involving more Palestinians in the decision-making process by empowering the local community and providing instances for public accountability;
14. Coordinating with local NGOs and media and disseminating information and principles relevant to human rights and the rule of law.

III. Structure

Al Mezan has continued to function with its same general structure with its Board of Director effectively involved in developing and overseeing policy and management, and a five-unit structure: the Administrative Unit, Field Work Unit, Legal Assistance Unit, Training and Mass Communications Unit, and Research and Technical Assistance Unit. A Planning and Follow-Up Committee, comprises the Director and four heads of units, conducts the day-to-day management and follow-up, public relations and fund-raising, monitoring and evaluation.



2. Program progress: 1 January – 31 December 2011

2.1 Overall achievement

This section reports on the progress achieved in the implementation of the activities as in Al Mezan's Plan of Action 2011. During the reporting period, Al Mezan achieved progress in all of the activities items, with actions aimed at contributing to ensuring better respect and protection of human rights in the Gaza Strip. The implemented activities are listed below.

During 2011, Al Mezan faced challenges that influenced the implementation of certain activities. We also found new opportunities that could be used to advance human rights respect in the Gaza Strip. Normally, Al Mezan does not reduce or delay the activities that make up the basis of intervention; i.e. monitoring and documenting violations and provision of legal assistance and advice to their victims. Other activities were rescheduled as necessary.

During the reported period, Al Mezan continued its extensive monitoring and documentation of human rights violations in the Gaza Strip, which enabled the Centre to report on these violations, but also to make individual and joint interventions into them in Gaza, Israel and abroad. The documentation also served interventions and reporting by other agencies; for which sake Al Mezan provided information hundreds of times to these agencies and to the media. Moreover, Al Mezan continued its awareness and training activities to build the capacity of community members as well as civil society organizations to challenge human rights violations in non-violent means.

Internally, Al Mezan's documentation indicates that aspects of the state of lack of security are still prevailing in the Gaza Strip. In addition, the reporting period witnessed a new low regarding respecting basic rights and freedoms of Gaza population. Dozens of Palestinians and one foreign citizen were killed in internal incidents and more were injured during this year; including in incidents related to smuggling tunnels in Rafah; launching of rockets; disputes between clans and incidents of mishandling of weapons. Moreover, at least three Palestinians died while in the custody of the security forces in Gaza. In March 2011, tens of thousands in Gaza took to the streets demanding Palestinian unity; however, they were treated with violence and many were beaten, arrested or intimidated.

Demand by the local community on Al Mezan services has continued to exist; including the legal advice and assistance services. Al Mezan's lawyers received and intervened with hundreds of complaints during the reporting period. Demand on training and awareness services increased sharply in 2011; therefore, several additional projects involving training were implemented. In the new strategic plan for the coming three years, an increase in the awareness and training work has been approved; including training on the regional level. Demand on information increased during the reporting period and Al Mezan responded to hundreds of requests for information on human rights by UN agencies, international organizations and the media.

Al Mezan continued its close cooperation with human rights organizations in oPt, Israel and internationally. It has also continued to work closely with the United Nations agencies and other international humanitarian and development organizations active in the Gaza Strip.

In November, Al Mezan launched a process of external evaluation and strategic planning for the coming three years. This exercise is expected to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness at the management and programming levels.



2.2 Progress in implementing the activities (1 Jan – 31 Dec 2010)

During the reporting period, Al Mezan carried out the following activities:

Activity 1: Adequate resource management, internal communication and monitoring, and sustained capability to pursue its mission; and goals

- During the reporting period, the Administrative Unit organized three meetings for the Board of Directors and the General Assembly, 47 meetings for the Planning and Follow-up Committee (PFC), and 11 all-staff meetings. The Board and GA approved Al Mezan's narrative and financial reports for the year 2010 and the plan of action, finances and the projects for the year 2011. They also considered the external evaluation for the last strategic plan (2009-2011) and strategic planning for the coming three years (2012-2014). PFC considered internal reports, plans and activities and implemented the external evaluation and strategic plan with a team of external consultants.
- During the reporting period, Al Mezan raised USD 472,833 core funding and USD 590,158 project funding, for seven projects. No private donations were made during this period.
- During the reporting period Al Mezan drafted eleven project proposals. Two projects were not approved, while nine others were approved.
- In November 2011, Al Mezan launched an external evaluation and strategic planning processing, which involved meetings with the Board of Director, the management, staff members and stakeholders. The external consultant team presented a draft evaluation report and strategic plan for the years 2012-2014.
- The reporting period saw recruitment of ten new staff members for projects. No permanent staff members were recruited for the core program. However, one staff member started a non-paid leave to pursue higher education abroad. Four interns joined Al Mezan during this period, two of whom continued to work on projects. Moreover, Al Mezan benefited from two job creation projects implemented by the Palestinian NGOs Network and Islamic Relief, under which 5 temporary staff members supported the Centre's work for periods ranging between 3 and 6 months. Overall, 27 staff members were on the payroll of the core program, 11 on projects and 5 were temporary.

Activity 2: Strengthen liaising, networking and HR advocacy domestically and internationally

- Al Mezan's Director²⁸ and Coordinator of Communications had 149 meetings with representatives of intergovernmental organizations, international organizations and diplomatic missions of courtiers concerned with the human rights situation in oPt.
- Meetings were also held 101 times with representatives of the local authorities and civil society in the Gaza Strip; including deputy minister of education, minister of interior, minister of health and other bodies.
- The Director took part in two international meetings on Palestinian reconciliation, held in Istanbul, Turkey, by CMI. He presented working papers on the impact of the internal split on the justice system in oPt and recommendations to re-unite the system in the future.
- The Director took part in a consultation seminar in Tunisia, in which representatives of Arab countries presented the human rights contexts in their countries. Mr. Younis spoke about Palestine. The audience of the consultation was the heads of missions of Germany in the Arab region. The seminar was organized by the German and Tunisian Ministries of Foreign Affairs.
- The Director also presented a paper in a workshop on human rights in the Arab region, organized by the Arab Organization for Human Rights in Cairo.

²⁸ The Director had 80 meetings with diplomats, UN officials and representatives of international civil society organizations.



- The Director also participated in a workshop on transitional justice in the Arab region in Cairo.
- The Coordinator of the Research and Technical Assistance Unit, Lawyer Adnan Al-Hajjar, took part in the First Legal Conference in Cairo, organized by Cairo University.
- Samir
- The Coordinator of Communications took part the preparations for an advocacy mission in Germany; during which meetings were held with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Human Rights Committee in the Bundstag, representatives of various political parties and foundations, and the media in Berlin. The mission focussed on Gaza siege, settlements and the enclaving of Palestinians in oPt; including discriminatory practices against them.
- He also took part in an advocacy meeting organized by EMHRN in Brussels, in which several human rights NGOs and networks interested in oPt took part. A second mission was planned; however, the Centre was unable to take part due to lack of visa to enter Belgium during the mission.
- Al Mezan's Director met with representatives of the Gaza Government 26 times; including with the Minister of Justice, representatives of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Health. The meetings focussed on the human rights violations in Gaza as well as the obligation to investigate and punish violations of human rights and IHL, both internally and in the context of the conflict with Israel. The meetings with the Ministries of Justice and Interior focused on the work of courts in Gaza, the need to allow for monitoring courts, and the measures needed to strengthen fair trial and effective remedies, even outside of courts. Officials were highly responsive. Al Mezan was promised better access to detention centers, police stations and courts. Moreover, they promised to process complaints from Al Mezan and other NGOs with care and make the efforts needed to deter violations and, if necessary punish them.
- The coordinator of the Training and Mass Communications Unit participated in a meeting for the EMHRN Human Rights Education Working Group, held in Malta in January 2011.
- UN advocacy: Al Mezan initiated and/or took part in the following UN advocacy activities during the reporting period:

February 2011: Written statement to the Human Rights Council's 16th session, agenda item 7, entitled "Towards Ending Impunity and Protecting Human Rights in the occupied Palestinian territory".

February: Joint Written Statement to the UN Human Rights Council (circulated by the UN Secretary General, A/HRC/16/NGO/91), "Joint written statement submitted by Al-Haq, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status". The statement is entitled "Palestinians must be fully included in the United Nation's "Era of Accountability".²⁹

March 2011: Joint oral statement entitled "Justice and accountability in a new Middle East: A renewed call for victims of the Gaza Conflict".

March 2011: Joint Oral Statement initiated by Badil under Agenda Item 3 at the HRC 16th session during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

May 2011: Joint (unpublished) Letter to the Stadsregio Arnhem Nijmegen public transport tender by ten Palestinian human rights organisations oPt, urging Stadsregio Arnhem Nijmegen to exclude French multinational Veolia from the upcoming €1 billion public transport tender for Arnhem Nijmegen and from all future contracts on grounds of grave misconduct in the OPT.

March: Briefing Note: Palestinian Prisoners' Rights, March 2011 by Adalah, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel and Al Mezan to the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the

²⁹ See <http://www.mezan.org/upload/11796.pdf>.



Palestinian People, which was holding its meeting on 7-8 March 2011 in Vienna on Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention facilities. It was also being presented to the EU Parliament Sub-Committee on Human Rights in advance of its meeting on 15 March 2011 in Brussels on the question of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, and in particular Palestinian children.³⁰

October: Joint Open Letter: calling for an end to the collective punishment of Palestinian political prisoners held in Israeli prisons following a series of collective and punitive measures taken by the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) against Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons in recent months, prompting the latter to launch a campaign of disobedience, including a hunger strike, on 27 September 2011. The letter was signed by nine Palestinian NGOs in oPt, who, then, made up the members of the Palestinian Council of Human Rights NGOs.³¹

October: Urgent Appeal by Al Mezan, Physicians for Human Rights - Israel, and Adalah to the Special Rapporteur on torture to intervene to protect fundamental rights of Palestinian detainees and prisoners on hunger strike.³²

May: Meeting with an assistant of UN Special Rapporteur Richard Falk on the human rights situation of Palestinian children upon invitation via the OHCHR in Gaza. Al Mezan provided information that contributed to the Special Rapporteur's statement and report on the matter.³³

December: Meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression during a visit to oPt. Al Mezan provided the SR with information about the violations of free expression and peaceful assembly perpetrated by the IOF and the authorities in Gaza.

January- December: Participation in 37 meetings within the UN clusters; including the Protection Cluster, the Child Protection Network and the 1612 MRM on children and armed conflict. Al Mezan provided inputs and information on human rights violations according to its documentation and made consultations on responses to them with UN agencies, humanitarian and human rights NGOs. Al Mezan advocated for UN interventions into violations and proposed initiatives to strengthen accountability for IHL violations in Gaza.

March: Al Mezan had consultations with OHCHR on documenting human rights and IHL violations in the Access Restricted Areas (including the Buffer Zone) in Gaza. Al Mezan took an active part in the development of a documentation mechanism, to be led by OHCHR, of these violations.

- In cooperation with human rights organizations, Al Mezan was part of 22 Joint Press releases, statements, letters and interventions, as follows:

6 January: Joint Press Release with Adalah and PHR-I on the death of a patient, demanding an investigation by Israel.³⁴

7 February: Joint Press Release with Palestinian NGOs on the Knesset draft law allowing parliamentary investigation of human rights NGOs in Israel.³⁵

21 February: Joint Press Release with Adalah and PHR-I on the arrest of a patient's companion at Erez Crossing after the Israeli security issued a permit for him to escort the patient to hospital, demanding Israel to quit this policy.³⁶

16 March: Joint Press Release with Al Dameer Association for Human Rights, condemning the Gaza security attack on demonstrators in Al Kateeba Square in Gaza city on 15 March 2011, and demanding investigation into the violations of human rights it resulting from the attack.³⁷

³⁰ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11648&ddname=torture&id_dept=30&id2=9&p=center.

³¹ See <http://www.mezan.org/upload/12697.pdf>.

³² See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12743&ddname=torture&id_dept=26&id2=9&p=center.

³³ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12305&ddname=children&id2=8&id_dept=12&p=center.

³⁴ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11315&ddname=torture&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

³⁵ http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11438&ddname=Human%20Rights&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

³⁶ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11524&ddname=torture&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

³⁷ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11700&ddname=&id_dept=9&id2=9&p=center.



25 March: Joint Press Release with ten Palestinian human rights NGOs issued a joint statement welcoming the Human Rights Council resolution that advances justice for victims of Israel's December 2008 – January 2009 offensive on the Gaza Strip and refers the UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict be sent to the UN General Assembly for further action, including submission to the UN Security Council.³⁸

31 March: Joint Press Release with Al Dameer and Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP), marking eight years of the killing of Rachel Corrie, a UN peace activist, in Rafah by an Israeli army bulldozer, and calling for securing justice to her family and other victims of human rights and IHL violations.³⁹

17 April: Joint Press Release by Al Mezan and 11 Palestinian human rights NGOs on the Palestinian Prisoners' Day, focusing on ill-treatment of Palestinians who have been detained, sometimes without charge or trial.⁴⁰

20 April: Joint Press Release with Al Dameer and Al-Haq, condemning the death of a Palestinian citizen, Adel Rezeq, in the custody of the security in Gaza, and demanding investigation in the circumstance of the death; especially the suspicion that he was tortured and abused.⁴¹

26 June: Joint Press Release with Adalah and PHR-I, marking the International Day Against Torture, in which they demanded that Israel immediately end use of solitary confinement of prisoners.⁴²

July: Joint Press Release by Al Mezan and Al Dameer, calling on the Minister of Interior in Gaza to reconsider his decision dissolving Sharek Youth Forum.⁴³

August: Joint Press Release: by Al Mezan and Adalah, who represented a group of fishermen in Israel, on the Israeli navy's releasing of boats confiscated from Gaza fishermen; however, without equipment and engines. Fishermen refused to take the boats.⁴⁴

August: Al Mezan, Adalah, and Physicians for Human Rights – Israel (PHR) issued a briefing paper to the EU Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, regarding the EU-Israel Informal Human Rights Working Group, which convened in September 2011. The paper highlighted torture and ill treatment.⁴⁵

August: Joint Written Statement to the UN Human Rights Council 18th Regular Session by Badil, Al Mezan, DCI-Ps and Ensan.⁴⁶ The statement highlighted Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank and called for intervention to bring it to a halt.

September: Joint Press Release: on appealing to Israeli District Court for independent doctor to visit Al Jazeera journalist Samer Allawi detained for 23 days without charge by the Israeli GSS.⁴⁷

September: Joint Press Release: by Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, Adalah and Al Mezan, voicing support to the demands of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike.⁴⁸

October: Joint Press Release: by Palestinian Human Rights organizations who welcome the prisoners swap agreement between Israel and Hamas, and in support of the legitimate demands of prisoners who still remained on hunger strike.⁴⁹

October: Joint Press Release: by Adalah, PCHR, Al Mezan and PHR-I on petitioning against the Israeli ban on Gaza residents from entering Israel to access the courts in Israel for tort cases against the Israeli Security Forces.⁵⁰

³⁸ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11765&ddname=castlead&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

³⁹ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11826&ddname=Crimes&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴⁰ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12020&ddname=detention&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴¹ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12034&ddname=local%20detention&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴² http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12249&ddname=torture&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴³ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12347&ddname=Association&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴⁴ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12421&ddname=fishermen&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴⁵ See <http://www.mezan.org/upload/12481.pdf>.

⁴⁶ See <http://www.mezan.org/upload/12483.pdf>.

⁴⁷ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12482&ddname=detention&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴⁸ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12641&ddname=torture&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁴⁹ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12764&ddname=detention&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁵⁰ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12848&ddname=crossings&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.



October: Joint Letter from eight human rights NGOs to Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy regarding Palestinian prisoners' rights, who were downgraded prior to a hunger strike that, at that point – started to put the life of many of them in danger.⁵¹

17 February: Joint Intervention with the European Union by 15 Palestinian and Israeli human rights NGOs in view of the EU-Israel Association Council on 21 February 2011, expressing grave concerns about the continuous deterioration of the human rights situation; particularly by Israel's protracted policies aimed at entrenching the illegal annexation of East Jerusalem.⁵²

24 February: Joint Letter to the US President. Barrack Obama by 12 Palestinian human rights NGOs, expressing dismay at the US veto of UN Security Council resolution of settlements.⁵³

6 April: Joint Letter to Justice Richard Goldstone, entitled "Open Letter from Palestinian Human Rights Organisations: Where does Justice for Victims come in?" In the letter, ten Palestinian human rights NGOs express regret for Justice Goldstone's statements in an Op-ed published on 1 April 2011 and give opinion on the issue of accountability and justice in light of the developments; including the report of the Committee of Experts.⁵⁴

4 February: Joint Open Letter from 13 Palestinian and Israeli Human Rights Organisations to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanetham Pillay, on her first official visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.⁵⁵

- During the reported period, the Legal Assistance Unit met with officials in the Gaza authorities 33 times; during which Al Mezan's lawyers conveyed complaints and discussed patterns of human rights violations that required attention and called for effective follow-up of the complaints and for securing justice and accountability. Two of the meetings were with the head of the Higher Council of Judiciary (Gaza's parallel top judicial body), Mr. Abdel-Ra'ouf Al Halabi. The meeting focussed on the working of Gaza courts and Al Mezan's observations on it. Al Mezan also requested access to courts regularly by lawyers for the purpose of observation, which was granted. Al Mezan started to monitor courts proceedings to ensure that they live up to the standards of fair trial. Our lawyers; who also met with practising lawyers; judges and court, noticed that there has been significant improvement in the work of the courts in the Gaza Strip. This observation was supported by the assertions Al Mezan's management received during meetings with government officials; including the Minister of Justice and Minister of Interior.
- Al Mezan met with officials and sent communications to government departments on behalf of residents of houses built on government-owned land in Khan Younis district. The intervention was initiated to prevent the then expected eviction of hundreds of families in the district. A meeting was also organized between the families and government officials. As a result of this intervention, government officials pledged to refrain from as many evictions as possible, but also to ensure that people's rights to land and housing would not be violated if evictions occurred in the future in the district.
- Consultation with the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network on the developments with Palestinian unity negotiations and the need to secure respect for human rights as a result of any unity deal.⁵⁶ Al Mezan also had consultations with EMHRN regarding two advocacy missions: 1) on accountability for human rights and IHL violations (UK) and 2) Israeli blockade, enslaving and accountability (Germany).

⁵¹ The letter was signed by Al Mezan, PCHR, Addameer and another five NGOs. See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12787&ddname=detention&id_dept=26&id2=9&p=center.

⁵² See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11495&ddname=Human%20Rights&id_dept=31&id2=9&p=center.

⁵³ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11560&ddname=Human%20Rights&id_dept=26&id2=9&p=center.

⁵⁴ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11855&ddname=goldstone_res&id_dept=26&id2=9&p=center.

⁵⁵ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11414&ddname=goldstone&id_dept=26&id2=9&p=center.

⁵⁶ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12110&ddname=Human%20Rights&id2=8&id_dept=12&p=center.



- Consultations and meetings with the UNICEF-led 1612 Working Group in oPt, which issued several bulletins on Children Affected by Armed Conflict Israel & the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt).⁵⁷
- Consultations with, and provision of information to, Diakonia on the violations of IHL in the Access Restricted Area (Buffer Zone), which was used in a report by Diakonia on the subject.⁵⁸
- Al Mezan, jointly with Adalah and PHR-I, issued several position papers and briefings on torture and ill treatment issues.
- International Expert Workshop on “Securing Accountability for Torture and CIDT: New Trends and Comparative Lessons” on 4 -5 April 2011, by Adalah, Physicians for Human Rights – Israel (PHR), and Al Mezan in Jerusalem. The workshop, funded by the European Union, focused on securing accountability for victims of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment (CIDT). International and local experts spoke in the workshop; including Professor Manfred Nowak, the former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture (2004-2010) and Dr. Stephen Xenakis, a psychiatrist, a retired Brigadier General in the US Army Medical Corps.⁵⁹
- Al Mezan issued 96 press releases during the reporting period; including on violations by the IOF or Palestinian actors. Moreover, Al Mezan issued 101 news briefings, highlighting events, activities, or the release of reports.
- Al Mezan’s appearances in local and international media occurred 307 times during the reported period. Its work and statement were widely covered by major media lets. The coverage of the local media of Al Mezan’s work and advocacy statement also increased during the reported period.
- Al Mezan assisted 19 international delegations visiting Gaza in touring Gaza and having a close look at the human rights and humanitarian conditions. One of the delegations was a group of five German journalists who were invited to Gaza by Medico International – Germany in coordination with Al Mezan. The delegation met with academics, officials, political and civil society activists, and journalists in Gaza.
- In following up the findings of its research, reports and advocacy workshops, Al Mezan met with officials 21 times, during which it provided information, recommendations and technical assistance concerning the human rights aspects of the problems and solutions.
- During six visits to detention facilities in the Gaza Strip, Al Mezan staff provided specific observations and recommendations to the relevant authorities, which helped solve many problems faced by the people detained in these facilities.
- In 2011, Al Mezan started to support the efforts of the Arab organization for Human Rights (AOHR), Cairo, to disseminate information about human rights violations in the Arab region in the wake of the Arab peoples’ uprisings. The support included translation, launching a webpage for the AOHR on Al Mezan’s website, and dissemination of their reports and statements.⁶⁰ The AOHR has then re-built its capacity to disseminate its communications and Al Mezan stopped translating and circulating their communications.

Activity 3: Effective monitoring and documentation of HR violations, referral, and databases

The following chart provides the key figures regarding the monitoring and documentation and referral activities during the reported period:

⁵⁷ See January-February 2011 Bulletin at

http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12107&ddname=children&id2=8&id_dept=12&p=center, and May 2011 Bulletin at http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12208&ddname=children&id2=8&id_dept=12&p=center.

⁵⁸ Report available at Diakonia in print.

⁵⁹ See http://www.adalah.org/eng/pressreleases/pr.php?file=10_04_11. This workshop was organized with project funding provided by the European Union; however, Al Mezan’s core staff contributed to it.

⁶⁰ The English language webpage is available at http://www.mezan.org/en/dis_aohr.php?id_dept=79&dname=aohr.



Activity	Number of times	Notes
Documenting incidents involving violations	2,275	One incident could contain more than one violation and multiple victims. Another 85 cases were documented under the Combating Torture project.
Number of questionnaire forms filled in and supported with documents	5,645 ⁶¹	Questionnaire forms are filled for individuals. Another 85 questionnaire forms were documented under the Combating Torture project.
Number of cases inputted in the database	3,379	This includes the questionnaires above and brief documentation of incidents not covered by questionnaires
Field visits	1,382	Visiting locations of violations and interviewing victims and witnesses
Documentation of detention cases	1,090	Including 58 detained by the Israeli forces (9 children) and 1032 by the Palestinian authorities in Gaza; the vast majority of whom were summoned frequently and kept for varying periods in custody.
Referrals to Al Mezan Legal Assistance Unit	186	
Referrals externally	202	
Written affidavits/witness testimonies	311	
Provision of information	1,087	
Meetings with victims/people at risk in the field	9	To collect information about a violation or a risk and discuss interventions with the people interactively.
Design new questionnaire forms	4	Questionnaire forms for the 1612 database, which deals with violations against children under armed conflict.

- The above mentioned five meetings with victims included the following:
- 1) On 11 January, the North Gaza district field worker met with 28 people from the district who had fell victims to Israeli attacks during Operation Cast lead. The meeting aimed to follow on their cases and inform them of the developments on Al Mezan's interventions in Israel, the UN and internationally. The meeting was held at Al Mezan's branch office in Jabalia refugee camp. The feedback from the participants was useful for reporting and disseminating information about the situation of the victims two years after the Operation.
 - 2) On 1 February 2011, the field worker in Middle Gaza district organized a meeting with a group of residents of An-Nuseirat refugee camp. The participants were among the people whose houses were affected by the rainfall in the camp due to the weak water and sanitation network in the camp. The Centre used the information obtained in the meeting to follow on their complaints with the local authorities in the district in order to avoid floods of homes in the camp in the future. By the end of the reporting period,

⁶¹ Including 51 for persons killed by IOF, 104 demolished or damaged homes by IOF, 5 cases of demolition of land by IOF, destruction of 44 public facilities by IOF, destruction of 8 vehicles, 4 industrial plant and 19 commerce stores by IOF, 382 cases of internal violence (including 208 on incidents of attacks on free expression), and daily questionnaires for the opening or closing of crossing points. One questionnaire was also filled for a case of death sentence by courts in Gaza.



problems in certain blocks in the camp were solved. The Centre is still following the problem in rest of the blocks.

- 3) On 7 February 2011, the field worker in Middle Gaza district organized a meeting with a group of fishermen and fishery unionists from the district. The meeting discussed problems faced by fishermen in the district with regard to the failure of the local authorities; including the lack of a road to the boats haven in the district. The fishermen informed Al Mezan that the haven is too small for the boats and is too close to the shore, which causes damages to the boats frequently. Al Mezan followed their case with the local authorities, who started to act on the problem; including by widening the haven, making levelling works to expand it and install its offices with electricity. Fishermen also complained that some of them were arbitrarily banned from their work by the local authorities. Their complaint has been referred to Al Mezan's Legal Aid Unit for intervention.
- 4) On 18 April 2011, the field worker in North Gaza district organized a meeting with 14 people whose homes were destroyed by the local authorities in the district. They provided specific information about their cases and were referred to the Legal Aid Unit, which started to correspond with the relevant government bodies to intervene in their case.
- 5) On 6 June 2011, the field worker in Middle Gaza district organized a meeting with residents of Al Moghraqa village, south to Gaza city. They were all living in houses close to the Gaza Valley, which has been used as a stream for sewage water in the district; therefore causing serious health risks for the residents; especially in the summer. The Centre followed their complaints with the local authorities in the district, who took measures to prevent some of the risks on health before the summer.
- 6) On 25 September, the field worker in Khan Younis district met with a group of the Al-Jayeh neighbourhood to follow on the problems they face due to frequent, unequal electricity cuts. The meeting elected a committee to follow the problem with the relevant authorities in coordination with Al Mezan. Al Mezan supports popular groupings that aim to promote and/or defend economic and social rights and has been supporting this group.
- 7) On 5 October, the field worker in North Gaza district organized a field meeting with a group of farmers whose lands are close to the borderline with Israel. Over 20 farmers attended the meeting, in which they spoke about their vulnerabilities due to Israeli attacks on them, and how they see the role of Al Mezan in protecting them.
- 8) On 12 October, the field worker in Khan Younis district met with a group of residents of neighborhoods who were under the threat of forced eviction by the authorities in Gaza because their homes are built on government-owned land. The meeting elected a committee to coordinate protection actions with Al Mezan. Several interventions were planned and implemented jointly on this issue by Al Mezan and the committee.
- 9) On 18 October, the field worker in North Gaza district organized a meeting with a group of fishermen in the As-Salateen area. About 42 fishermen attended and spoke about the violations of their rights by the Israeli naval forces. They also discussed Al Mezan's role to assist them in protecting their rights and coordination with Al Mezan in the future.

Activity 4: Maintained research & reporting on HR violations with focus on ESCR for use in information and advocacy

Al Mezan drafted and published 53 reports, 5 position papers and 10 factsheets during the reported period. 26 of the reports were documentation reports, 4 economic and social reports, and 23 internal situation reports. The following section provides greater details on them:

- 1) Documentation reports (26 reports):
 - One yearly documentation report about the Israel's violations of international human rights and humanitarian law during 2010, with information about the losses in human



life and property resulting from them. The report presents the results of Al Mezan's documentation of IOF violations in the Gaza Strip.

- Twelve monthly documentation reports on the IOF violations between January and December 2011.
 - Three quarterly and semi-annual reports on the IOF violations in the Gaza Strip. An annual documentation reports will cover 2011, which is to be issued in 2012.
 - Eleven monthly documentation reports on the violations of human rights perpetrated by Palestinian actors in the Gaza Strip. These reports cover cases of death due to abnormal conditions; including by the authorities or in tunnels, cases of arbitrary detention; including political detention, cases of repressing freedom of expression and/or peaceful assembly, honor killings, misuse of small arms and light weapons, and the prevention of travel by the Palestinian authorities.
 - One special field report on IOF military operations in Gaza during the period 6 and 8 April 2011; during which the IOF launched intensive attacks on the Gaza Strip, killing and wounding 61 persons.
- 2) Economic and Social Rights Reports (Four reports): These reports are produced by the Centre's Research and Technical Assistance Unit, which issued the following reports during the reported period:
- **Legislation and the impact of internal split on it in Palestine:** the report describes the legislation process in oPt and the problems it has experienced since the start of the internal split when legislators started to deviate from the legal standards provided by the Palestinian Basic Law and the Executive started to decree new laws under the paralysis of the Palestinian Legislative Council. The report anticipates the challenges this issue poses as the efforts to achieve Palestinian unity started.
 - **The impact of Palestinian split on the justice system:** this report is also an effort to raise the serious problems and challenges caused by Palestinian internal split, which also represent challenges facing unity and have great bearings on the rule of law and human rights in oPt. The report sought to explore the way the two Palestinian justice systems have functioned under the split, pose questions about the status of courts and the rulings they have made during the past four years, and propose some solutions to certain relevant problems.
 - **The social dimensions of taxation in the Gaza Strip:** The report discusses the relevant financial policies of the Gaza and Ramallah governments in general, and particularly tax policies and their effects on the economic and social situation in the Gaza Strip. In addition, the report briefly covers the economic basics of tax theory, and explains the modern social role of taxation. It also reviews the tax policies followed by the Israeli occupation authorities prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, which did not fulfil the obligations placed on Israel by the international humanitarian law. The report also analyzes, where available, the annual budgets of the Gaza and Ramallah governments and adds some commentary. The report presents recommendations to both Palestinian governments.
 - **Forced eviction in Gaza in a decade:** The report reviews IOF destruction of homes and households in the Gaza Strip and the obstacles faced by forcibly evicted civilians; especially the inability to build new homes or repara their homes. The report shows that between September 2000 and the start of Operation Cast Lead, about 72,000 (7%) of Gaza's residents had their homes destroyed or damaged and were forced into displacement. Moreover, another 74,000 people faced temporary or permanent displacement due to destruction of farmed land and other property that is part of families' households. About 70,000 Palestinians had their homes demolished or damaged during Operation Cast and after, and more land was demolished. Yet, the siege of Gaza has prevented effective recovery or rebuilding. With a high level of natural



growth among Gaza population, the pressure placed on the housing sector has been enormous, causing serious violation to this right.

- 3) Position Papers: Five position papers were issued during the reporting period. Three were issued by Al Mezan and two by Al Mezan, Adalah and PHR-I, as follows:
- A paper on Al Mezan's position from the Palestinian Authority's intention to hold local elections in the West Bank. The paper argues that elections, while normally important and necessary, should not be held under a state of internal political split. First, it would naturally exclude Gaza and, therefore, deepen the division between Gaza and the West Bank. Moreover, the serious violations of human rights and disrespect of freedoms in both Gaza and the West Bank due to the divide have created an atmosphere that is not elections-friendly, where basic rights that are necessary for fair, democratic elections, such as free expression, peaceful assembly and free political participation, are oppressed. In such a situation, elections can contribute to the problem, rather than the solution. Al Mezan called for fair, democratic elections to be held as soon as possible under internal unity. The full text of the paper is available in Arabic and English on Al Mezan's website.⁶²
 - On 14 March 2011, and ahead of the announced demonstrations calling for Palestinian unity in the oPt, Al Mezan released a position paper on the right to peaceful assembly in Palestinian law and human rights standards. The timing of the release of this paper was significant, as it was aimed to encourage peaceful assembly and warn of attacks on it. The paper aimed to raise public awareness among the population of the content and particularities of the right to peaceful assembly and its interrelations with other rights, such as the freedom of expression. The paper also represents an opportunity for Al Mezan to denounce the violation on this right and basic freedoms by the Palestinian authorities in the oPt, which has weakened Palestinian society's participation; including the young generations. The paper called for securing respect to peaceful assembly and calls on Palestinians to exercise it within the boundaries of Palestinian law, which provides a wide margin for it. This paper is available in English at Al Mezan's website.⁶³
 - On 16 November, a position paper was issued on the problems in electricity supplies in Gaza. The paper describes the problems faced by the Gaza population and explores the roles of the different suppliers; including Israel, Egypt and the two Palestinian governments, in it. It calls for bringing the electricity problems to an end as they impact seriously on a variety of human rights for the population. The paper is available in Arabic on Al Mezan's website.⁶⁴
 - Joint Position Paper by Al Mezan' Adalah and PHR-I on the solitary confinement of prisoners and detainees in prison facilities in Israel, which is carried out in various ways and for various purposes, but has severe impact on the prisoners. The paper explores the torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment built into this policy.⁶⁵
 - Joint Paper by Al Mezan, Adalah and PHR-I on the false confessions by Palestinian children and adolescents under coercion in interrogations by the Israeli security forces.⁶⁶
- 4) Factsheets: Ten factsheets were issued during the reporting period, as follows:
- Factsheet on the impact of the Israeli siege on the human rights and humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip.

⁶² See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11599&ddname=electtions%202011&id_dept=51&id2=9&p=center.

⁶³ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=11599&ddname=electtions%202011&id_dept=51&id2=9&p=center.

⁶⁴ See http://www.mezan.org/ar/details.php?id=12934&ddname=power&id_dept=51&id2=9&p=center.

⁶⁵ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12248&ddname=torture&id_dept=51&id2=9&p=center.

⁶⁶ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12994&ddname=torture&id_dept=51&id2=9&p=center.



- Factsheet on the Al-Yarmouk solid waste dump in Gaza city and its impacts on the right to health.
- Factsheet on filtered water and its problems in the Gaza Strip.
- Factsheet on the spread of insects in Gaza and the health problems the problem poses on public health.
- Factsheet on the Displacement in the “Buffer Zone” Three Years after Operation Cast Lead.⁶⁷
- Factsheet on Israel Abuses of Child Fishers in Gaza: The Need for Protection.⁶⁸
- Factsheet on Access to Education in the Gaza Strip under armed conflict.⁶⁹
- Fact Sheet on Children in the Gaza Strip's Access to Medical Care.⁷⁰
- Factsheet: on the State of General Education in the Gaza Strip at the Beginning of the New Academic Year.⁷¹
- Factsheet on the impact of the rapid exhaustion of sand dunes on environment in Gaza.⁷²

5) Situation Reports (23 reports):

Drafted by the Field Work Unit, these reports provide detailed information about specific human rights situations in the Gaza Strip for reporting and follow-up. Their purpose is therefore twofold: 1) to document the case properly and gather full information about it, and 2) to supply the Centre with the materials needed for informed interventions by the other units. During the reported period, 19 such reports were drafted by field workers. Seven of the reports focused on IOF military attacks on certain areas in the Gaza Strip. One report was on the IOF closing of Karni crossing and its possible impacts on the human rights and humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip. Another report dealt with the crisis of cooking gas, electricity and availability of grain in Gaza due to the Israeli siege. Other reports dealt with problems caused by policies or acts initiated by the authorities in Gaza that caused forced evictions in Rafah, health problems due to lack of sewage and garbage collection in Middle Gaza district, lack on investigations into attacks on citizens, and attacks on peaceful assemblies and freedoms following the signing of the unity deal between Fateh and Hamas. Other reports provided inputs on meetings with personnel of schools located near the border with Israel and the impacts on Israeli attacks on education.

Activity 5: Provision of legal assistance, advice and representation for victims

The following activities were carried out during the reporting period:

- 1) Legal representation of Palestinian prisoners: 29 new cases of prisoners were dealt with during the reporting period. Seven people who were arrested at Erez Crossing (5 patients, 1 merchant, and 1 person accompanying a patient). Moreover, 8 of the detainees were residents of neighbourhoods close to the border between Gaza and Israel, who were arrested during IOF incursions into their neighbourhoods. Another five were arrested when they were near the border fence; mainly rubble collectors and farmers. Seven of the cases were fishermen who were arrested in the sea. Two others were arrested when they were trying to smuggle into Israel to work there. The Legal Assistance Unit also continued to follow 84 cases of prisoners from the previous years. In all, the lawyers in Israel appeared 224 times in court sessions concerning prisoners.
- 2) Cases in Israel: One case was brought before the Israeli High Court of Justice during the reporting period in the form of a joint petition on behalf of victims of Israeli military attacks seeking compensation for damages; however, denied access to tort court

⁶⁷ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=13210&ddname=bufferzone&id_dept=22&id2=9&p=center.

⁶⁸ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=13207&ddname=fisherman&id_dept=22&id2=9&p=center.

⁶⁹ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=13198&ddname=education&id_dept=22&id2=9&p=center.

⁷⁰ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=13131&ddname=children&id_dept=22&id2=9&p=center.

⁷¹ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=12791&ddname=education&id_dept=22&id2=9&p=center.

⁷² See http://www.mezan.org/ar/details.php?id=12752&ddname=environment&id_dept=22&id2=9&p=center.



proceedings inside Israel. Eight other cases were filed with Israeli courts; six of which were compensation proceedings for victims of IOF attacks during Operation Cast Lead, one appeal petition for a prisoner who was sentenced for 9.5 years in prison, and one appeal on behalf of a Palestinian prisoner suffering serious health problems in jail.

- 3) Complaints with the Israeli authorities: Al Mezan received 167 complaints against the Israeli authorities. All the cases were documented by Al Mezan. 53 of them were followed by Al Mezan; including cases of patients, beneficiaries of insurance allowances, and prisoners who have special circumstances (disappearance and detention beyond the imprisonment sentence). Al Mezan has also followed complaints from fishermen against attacks on them or confiscating their boats by the Israeli navy. Moreover, other complaints involved attacks on civilians collecting rubble near the border, and attacks by IOF of civilian targets in Gaza; including attacks on homes, farmers and an ambulance near the border between Gaza and Israel. Two of the complaints Al Mezan received dealt with forced disappearances of Gaza residents. Al Mezan filed 13 complaints with requests for criminal investigations with the Israeli authorities. Another complaint was filed by Adalah regarding the death of a patient while waiting for the Israeli response for a permit to cross Erez and access a hospital. The rest of the cases were referred for legal, or other types of, intervention by PHR-I (52 cases of access to healthcare); Adalah (11 cases of fishermen); and Gisha 11 cases.
- 4) Complaints against Palestinian authorities: the Legal Assistance Unit dealt with 161 complaints; including 151 against Palestinian government bodies in the Gaza Strip, 8 against the West Bank, and 2 against UNRWA. The complaints against the Palestinian Authority's government in Ramallah were all against arbitrary denial of issuance of passports for Gaza residents, which prevented them from travel; including for medical treatment. The complaints against the authorities in Gaza included 69 complaints against arbitrary detention and allegations of abuse and/or torture. Nine other cases involved preventing citizens from travel, either by returning them from Rafah crossing or confiscating their passports on opinion grounds. The rest of the cases against Gaza authorities included: complaints involving attacks on peaceful assembly, attacks on journalists; complaints conditions of imprisonment and family visits to prisoners in Gaza; arbitrary demolition or eviction from property; medical negligence leading to death or disability; refraining from referring patients to hospitals outside Gaza; refraining from provision of assistance to victims of Israeli attacks; confiscation of novels; detention and abuse of juveniles; harassment or closing of NGOs; and detention by non-authorized bodies (the Tunnels Committee). Other cases involved continuous, arbitrary summoning of six of opponent political activists. The complaints against UNRWA involved a request by a family of a girl who was injured during the Summer Games to secure healthcare for her, which UNRWA responded to positively; and a case of a refugee victim of Israeli attacks on homes; whom UNRWA refused to provide relief aid to in par with other refugees with similar conditions. UNRWA has not answered Al Mezan's correspondence regarding the latter case by the end of the reporting period.
- 5) Provision of Legal Advice: during the reported period, the Legal Assistance Unit provided legal advice to victims or people at risk 638 times. In addition, under the combating and prevention of torture project, Al Mezan's lawyers provided legal advice 156 times.

Activity 6: Enhance awareness in HR, IHL and democracy

This activity is a joint task for all of Al Mezan's Units, but is led by the Training and Mass Communications Unit (TMCU). During the reported period the TMCU concluded or launched 12 training courses, 16 awareness and advocacy workshops, 45 lectures and two Face-the-Public meeting. Two of the trainings were for volunteer students in Pass-the Word Program, who organized 33 awareness courses in their universities. Two human rights prizes were also organized successfully. About 40,000 school children and 35,000 university students participated in the Human Rights prizes. Overall, 2,728 people (1,086 children, 752 men, and 890 women)



benefited from the awareness and training activities under the general program in 2011. Approximately 2,000 others benefitted from awareness activities under projects. The following provides more details about these activities:

- 1) Training/awareness courses on human rights and IHL: 12 training and awareness courses were concluded or launched during the reported period, as follows:
 - **Five trainings for community groups and professionals**; including: Training course for Civil Society Organizations (CBOs) on the monitoring and documentation of violations of children rights in conflict situations; Training course on human rights and IHL in cooperation with the Mukhtars (community leaders) Association in Gaza; Training on human rights and IHL for 21 volunteers with Sharek in North Gaza district; Training course on human rights standards for young leaders in cooperation with ICRC; Training on child and women rights for a group of 29 women at the East Gaza Society; Training course on human rights and IHL for 23 social workers, Training on the protection of free expression and the media in human rights for a group of young journalists; Training on the protection of women and children in IHL and IHRL for 29 women in Gaza city; Training on the protection of free expression and the media in human rights for 36 journalism students at Palestine University in Gaza; Training on IHL and IHRL for graduate lawyers; Training on women's rights in IHRL and IHL for a group of women activists in CBOS in the rural communities in Beit Hanoun; and Training on the protection of women under IHRL for a group of women in a rural community in Beit Hanoun.
 - **Two courses for the Pass-the-Word Program**: These courses targeted students who volunteer in this program. The first course aims to provide them to information on human rights and IHL so that they use it in their voluntary awareness-raising within their campuses. The second course aims to provide them with the medium to pass human rights and IHL knowledge to their peers through open group discussion sessions. This year, 24 volunteer students took part in these trainings.
 - **Lawyer training**: This annual training course lasts for about six months during which young lawyers received 134 training hours. The training was initiated during the first half of 2011 and completed in the second half. Twenty lawyers participated in the sessions regularly.

In addition, other trainings were organized by the Centre under other projects; including:

- **Three trainings on torture and ill treatment**: These courses were organized under the 'Prevention and Combating Torture of Palestinians by Israel'; a project supported by the EU and implemented jointly by Al Mezan, Adalah and PHR-I. Al Mezan's staff assisted the project's team in implementing them. They targeted a group of lawyers, a group of human rights activists and a group of health professionals. They aimed to provide the groups with information and skills to document and assist victims of torture.
 - **Fifteen training courses on the 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism**: Thirteen of these courses targeted 29 schools located in the high risk areas close to the border between Gaza and Israel. Teachers and community protection committees' members were trained on the mechanism under a project supported by UNESCO. Another two courses targeted CBOs working on child rights in high-risk areas in the Gaza Strip under a project with support from Save the Children - UK.
- 2) Lectures and discussion sessions: the TMCU organized 45 lectures and awareness sessions for school children, parents and teachers, focusing on child rights, child protection and the right to education.
 - 3) Pass-the-Word Program: Under this Program (see training provided for students under the program above in this section), volunteer students formed 33 groups in their universities and led group-discussion awareness sessions on human rights and IHL with



them. Each of these awareness courses is composed of five discussion sessions. 574 students took part in these sessions.

- 4) Workshops: Twenty-two workshops were organized during the reporting period; including Sixteen training workshops that were organized by the TMCU. Two other workshops were organized by the LAU and four by the Research and Technical Assistance Unit. The latter workshops raised ESCR issues in Gaza in order to disseminate awareness and explore and advocate for solutions for certain ESCR problems.
- 5) Face-the-Public Program: Two open meeting were organized during the reporting period. The first meeting raised problems faced by fishermen in Middle-Gaza district; a case that was spotted by the Field Work Unit and referred to the TMCU for follow up. The second meeting raised the issue of pending evictions by the Gaza authorities of families who live in houses built on government-owned lands. It brought together a group of residents and representatives of the authorities in order to discuss the problem and find solutions that would evade people violations of their rights.
- 6) Library services: Al Mezan's Library continued to develop. A branch of the library was open in the main office in Gaza city. The branch specializes in human rights and law and was opened to facilitate university students' access to sources in these two areas; especially as the major universities are located in Gaza city. It is expected to strengthen research in these areas. During the reporting period, 1,936 people benefited from the library. Of those, 366 school children and 49 teachers. 23 schools organized visits with children and teachers to the library. Visitors borrowed 2,896 sources. The total number of sources in the library has remained above 9,500 sources. About 500 new sources were added during the reported period; including donations.
- 7) The Legal Guide Series: Two Legal Guides were issued during the reported period. The first guide was on the Palestinian law of public meetings (peaceful assembly). The second is an updated version of the Civil Service Guide, which had been issued in 2007. The Legal Guide simplifies Palestinian laws in order for ordinary people to understand their contents.
- 8) Other education and awareness activities: Al Mezan's staff took part in 217 events that were organized by other organizations and institutions in the Gaza Strip. In these events, staff members addressed audiences and spoke about human rights standards and the rule of law, both domestically and internationally, advocating for respecting and protecting human rights.
- 9) Al Mezan's web site (www.mezan.org): the web site was updated on a daily basis with information, press releases and statements, reports, news briefings, and daily news about developments relevant to the human rights situation in Gaza. The number of people who visited the web site during the reported period was 46,330. As part of developing its media work, Al Mezan opened new pages on facebook and twitter, and a YouTube channel.



2.3 Outcomes/Results:

1) Monitoring and Documentation:

- Improved capacity: Al Mezan increased its capacity to respond to human rights situations; shouldering successfully heavy loads of violations by IOF and Palestinian non-state actors. During the reported period, it succeeded in documenting thousands of cases of violation that fall under its mandate. The field workers received specialized training in Gaza and in Tunisia. Staff members also received advanced IHL training organized by PHAP in Geneva. The databases, which support reporting, referral and exchange of data, were further improved and expanded to cover more specialized areas, such as children and armed conflict.
- Provision of Information: Al Mezan provided information for several interested entities who conduct research and/or intervention into human rights violations in Gaza. The information was used in reports by UN agencies; especially OCHA, UNICEF and WHO, and humanitarian NGOs as well as the media. Information was also provided to the Gaza authorities during meetings and through communicating complaints to them about human rights violations documented by Al Mezan. This year saw significant improvement in government responsiveness to complaints and following up information about abuses with a view to punish and/or prevent them.
- Assisting responses to violations or special situations: Al Mezan's documentation helped resolve several situations in Gaza. In Middle Gaza district, fishermen problems were partly solved due to direct interventions. The problem of drinking water was raised strongly, with research results indicating serious problems with filtered water that was assumed completely fit for human consumption. Environment issues were raised and brought to the attention of the authorities and international community for interventions to improve the situation. Intervention on behalf of patients helped dozens access healthcare outside Gaza. In Khan Younis, Al Mezan's interventions focused on housing and property rights and resulted with direct protection of communities that were faced with potential eviction. The large media coverage and direct intervention by Al Mezan is leading to positive changes in policy; including at the level of achieving Palestinian unity, which could directly impact positively on the human rights situation, and protecting people at risk of arbitrary detention and abuse. Al Mezan's documentation of violations helped interventions in several cases where people were subjected to degrading treatment, arbitrary detention, and denial of humanitarian access in Gaza; including the prolonged ill treatment of political activists. Al Mezan's documentation and legal analyses also assisted large responses by civil society against policies that oppress association rights and free expression in Gaza. Visits to prisons succeeded in resolving many legal problems for people who were deprived of their freedom; including access to legal counsel, family visits; access to health and education.
- Referrals: The Field Work Unit referred 186 cases to the Legal Assistance Unit and other units at Al Mezan. Another 202 cases were referred to other organizations.
- Documentation leading to protection/prevention: Al Mezan's field workers documented violations and attacks in the Gaza Strip, which led to successful interventions. The summoning, harassment and abuse of political activists in Gaza security increased in the first four months of 2011. The security summoned activists weekly; sometimes multiple times every week. Al Mezan advised them and followed their cases with the competent authorities in Gaza; after which the summons and arbitrary detention stopped. Documentation by field workers led to solving two problems related to housing, health, water and sanitation, which had affected people's health Gaza. The documentation of violations of housing rights led to successful interventions; especially in Khan Younis district. Documentation of IHL violations in the course of IOF attacks on civilian targets in Gaza and the victims' access to justice also led to new legal interventions in Israel, which will hopefully lead to better access to justice for the victims.

2) Information and Advocacy:



- Awareness and triggering responses: Al Mezan documentation contributed to raising significant human rights issues during the reporting period. This included the increase of attacks in the Access Restricted Areas in the Gaza Strip, arrest, death and/or abuse of patients at Erez crossing, the water situation in Gaza, political detention, assaults on free expression and association rights in Gaza. This effort has led to interventions by Al Mezan and other actors, which in some cases led to change in policy or solutions to certain problems. Al Mezan has also continued to work on issues it had raised in 2010; including the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israel and Gaza; especially the so-called 'Shalit Bill', a draft law that, if passed by the Israeli parliament (Knesset), would seriously violate the rights and safeguards of Palestinian prisoners in Israel.⁷³ This year saw an increase in the communications Al Mezan made with the Israeli authorities; including to notify them with serious attacks on civilians, which must be done within 60 days according to Israeli law, and demanding investigations into these cases. Documentation of attacks against educational facilities in Gaza led to significant deliberations into the issue within the UN-led Education Cluster, with stronger advocacy focus. Moreover, documenting cases of violation in the Access Restricted Areas (Buffer Zone and the sea) have led to actions by the OHCHR-led Protection Cluster as well as legal interventions on behalf of farmers, fishermen and rubble collectors.
- Networking and liaison: coordination and cooperation with relevant networks and organizations continued during the reported period. Al Mezan is a member of 13 networks and coalitions. The following highlights reflect the positive cooperation between Al Mezan and these bodies, as well as other human rights actors:

EMHRN: Al Mezan took part in planning two advocacy missions in EU member states, providing its inputs as to the priorities and advocacy messages. Al Mezan also took part in two EMHRN Working Group meetings; one for the Palestine, Israel and the Palestinians WG and one for the Human Rights Education WG. As a result of the latter, Al Mezan's Pass-the-Word Program has started to be replicated in Tunisia and Egypt. Moreover, Al Mezan took part in a training workshop on advocacy by EMHRN, which also included liaison with dozens of NGOs and networks involved in the human rights situation in Palestine. Communications with civil society in the Euro-Med region has been strengthened significantly, as a result. Another three information/advocacy events have been planned for the second half of 2011, as a result; one of which in Gaza and two in the EU region. Al Mezan also took an active part in drafting joint statements and interventions through EMHRN. In 2011, EMHRN and APPRODEV started drafting a special report on the EU policy in Israel/Palestine, with the view to shed light on certain means to shift policy towards more protection and promotion of human rights and IHL by the EU. Al Mezan took an active part in the reviewing of the report and supplementing it with information from its documentation. The report is due to be launched in February 2012.

Palestinian Council of Human Rights NGOs: Al Mezan continued its leading role in the Council, which now brings together 11 members from oPt. The Council held seven meetings and worked on several human rights issues during the reporting period; including political detention, supporting internal unity, the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria, and accountability for human rights and IHL violations.

Joint interventions: during the reported period, Al Mezan led and/or contributed to 22 joint statements, letters and press releases. Meetings and consultations with UN agencies, UN mechanisms and humanitarian actors contributed to several other statements, reports and monitoring mechanisms. 2011 also saw joint legal interventions in Israel and in the UK on behalf of victims of human rights and IHL violations in Gaza.

Joint events: Al Mezan took part in several joint events with human rights organizations and UN agencies. This included a joint international workshop on advocacy in Jerusalem and joint advocacy activities in the EU as well as joint workshops with ICRC and UNESCO. Al Mezan

⁷³ See http://www.mezan.org/en/details.php?id=10170&ddname=detention&id_dept=9&id2=9&p=center.



also led a workshop on torture by GCMHP and OHCHR, and a needs assessment for Wesal, a women's NGOs coalition. Al Mezan made presentations in two international seminars in Istanbul on Palestinian unity and in two seminars and a conference on human rights in Cairo. In Gaza, Al Mezan was invited to make presentations on human rights and legal issues over 100 times during 2011.

UN agencies: the reporting period saw an increase in the cooperation with UN agencies; with Al Mezan providing information and engaging in discussions concerning priorities and interventions. Al Mezan also continued to work closely with UNICEF and local NGOs on children and conflict and juvenile justice issues. Through support from UNDP/PAPP, Al Mezan also launched a campaign on the entry of construction materials into Gaza and started to prepare a significant campaign on juvenile justice in Gaza and oPt. As a result, information about children rights violations was submitted to the UN Security Council, and to other bodies; including the EU, and bulletins were produced on the subject by UNICEF with Al Mezan's contribution. Cooperation also developed with UNDP/PAPP and UNESCO, who now support two important projects by Al Mezan.

As mentioned above, Al Mezan's dialogues with the authorities in Gaza increased in 2011. Various significant issues were raised with government officials; including supporting Palestinian unity, the issue of political detentions and multiple summoning of political opponents; especially at those times when the authorities in the West Bank carry out political detentions. The status of access to justice, freedom of expression and association rights were also raised. Many of these issues saw improvement in Gaza and dozens of cases were resolved through this dialogues during the year.

3) Legal Assistance and Advice:

- Ensuring legal representation: Al Mezan provided assistance to all the victims who sought help or were referred to it, or sought its help. In all, the Centre provided legal assistance and advice in 638 cases through the general program, 156 case through the joint project on combating torture, and about 100 under a project in cooperation with the UNDP. These projects helped strengthen Al Mezan's capacity to handle legal assistance cases for a larger number of people in Gaza. In many of these cases multiple victims were represented, e.g. in the people in prisons, the youth movement activists and other political activists.
- Successful interventions: Al Mezan follow up of these cases saw partial success. Al Mezan's lawyers succeeded in meeting persons who were arbitrarily detained without informing their families 27 times. In 59 interventions into arbitrary detention cases, the victims were released. With regard to interventions in Israel, 48 of the cases involved assistance to access healthcare in the West Bank, Israel or Jordan. Another 16 cases involved restriction of humanitarian access; including a class case on behalf of Gaza students who wish to access Palestinian universities in the West Bank. Sixteen cases of fishermen are being represented by Al Mezan and Adalah, who have become close to approaching Israeli courts on behalf of fishermen who were abused, arrested and had their boats confiscated. The Israeli authorities responded to our intervention with regard to releasing eight fishing boats; however, more work needs to be done with regard to the serious damages sustained by the boats, and also to secure the release of many more boats that have been confiscated in 2011. In one case of a detainee in Gaza who was subjected to torture during interrogation, and on whose behalf a letter was sent to the Interior Ministry Comptroller, a reply was received stating that an investigation had been opened and the officer responsible had been dismissed. One prisoner in Israel suffering from a medical condition was released in the Gilad Shalit swap after Al Mezan's intervention.
- Interventions in Israel also involved submitting complaints and requesting investigations into violations of IHRL and IHL. During the reporting period, complaints were made on behalf of 19 cases; five of which involved multiple victims. Intervention on behalf of



seven fishermen have led to positive developments; including the possibility of returning their fishing boats which had been confiscated by the IOF. Other interventions seem to lead to larger legal action; including petitioning Israeli courts on behalf of patients and victims of home demolitions.

- Al Mezan's interventions in the Gaza Strip led to securing justice for victims of abuse and/or assault by law enforcement officers against citizens, but also to holding aggressors accountable for the violations. Al Mezan's interventions led to six investigations by the authorities in Gaza; including cases involving suspicion of torture and ill treatment of people in police custody. Two of the cases ended with suspension of members of the police and punishing them. Other investigations are still ongoing.

4) Awareness and Training:

- Information and skills: In all, 2,728 people (1,086 children, 752 men, and 890 women). About 40,000 school children and 35,000 university students participated in the Human Rights prizes. Approximately 2,000 others benefitted from awareness activities under projects. Assessment of training and awareness courses, for which pre-tests and post-tests were used to determine new learning precisely, showed very high levels of achievement. In following up with beneficiaries to check if the new learning was used in any way, many respondents reported to Al Mezan that they used it; including lawyers, teachers and students. Six lawyers trained by Al Mezan were selected for relevant employment by NGOs in Gaza. A women's coalition whose members benefitted from training by Al Mezan on women's rights, IHL and monitoring of violations, developed projects to strengthen the women's rights sector capabilities in these areas. The reporting period witnessed the most successful participation by students in spreading human rights and IHL knowledge in Gaza's universities, with students forming 24 peers' groups and working with them in three months.



2.4 Obstacles and difficulties:

The reporting period witnessed significant developments in the region, which will have significant bearings on the future of the Palestinian people; including on the human rights and humanitarian conditions in oPt. Arab uprisings insisting on dignity and liberty have had their echo in the oPt, with calls for political unity, respect of human rights and end of the occupation shaping the scene and mobilizing society; especially the young generations. These developments have posed opportunities as well as challenges. Al Mezan has remained vigilant and made initiatives to support the calls for respect of human rights; including the three main slogans mentioned above.

When people took to the street, Al Mezan invested time and effort in following up the developments and making interventions as suitable. Staff members, including field workers and lawyers, were deployed around the Gaza Strip to monitor and intervene when possible. While staff members were exposed to danger; including beating, confiscation of equipment and detention, they still were able to help dozens of people in the street and in detention centres. The youth movement action in Gaza produced much more pressure for Al Mezan and other human rights NGOs in Gaza, for there was a clear need to monitor the situation and make efforts to secure respect for the law and human rights.

The following points provide more details about the challenges faced during 2011; including those emanating from this situation:

- In the course of monitoring in the field, Al Mezan's field workers were faced with threats and risks. They were arrested, threatened and, at three occasions, beaten and had their cameras confiscated by the security forces. Moreover, the field workers have found themselves in dangerous situations due to IOF attacks on the Gaza Strip; especially near the border between Gaza and Israel, where many violations occur.
- The security in Gaza increased the pressure on the media and civil society; especially in March 2011, which was considered a serious matter requiring immediate attention and liaison with human rights NGOs in oPt.
- In March, just days after the start of popular demonstrations in Gaza, the Gaza Strip saw a serious rise in the conflict; with IOF launching dozens of attacks on various areas in Gaza within a few days. Again, most of the attacks failed to observe the principle of the law of armed conflict and required much attention to monitoring and intervention. This period was extremely tense with large scale violations committed by IOF as well as the Palestinian authorities.
- In May, an agreement for Palestinian unity was signed by Palestinian factions in Cairo, and a new unity government is now anticipated within the coming weeks. Al Mezan has had a role to play; especially by monitoring the occurrence of violations that had traditionally been linked with the political divide. There was a positive opportunity to carry out advocacy against these violations under the newly created atmosphere of unity.
- New tasks emerged out of the dynamics produced by the above-mentioned developments; including the need to be proactive and raise serious issues that could strengthen, or otherwise hinder, the path to unity, such as the divided judiciary, the conflicting legislations in the era of split and the violations of Palestinian law and human rights standards.
- The developments in Gaza affected the effective communications between Al Mezan and certain government bodies with which Al Mezan corresponds to communicate



complaints and follow certain types of violations. These bodies have grown less responsive and harder to contact during most of the reporting period.

All these factors created more pressure on Al Mezan. The main two concerns felt by Al Mezan during this period were 1) the need to promote Palestinian unity because it meant an almost immediate halt of a large volume of rights violations in Gaza, and 2) the need to act more on accountability because it is intended to secure better direct protection for civilians and citizens; whether in the context of the conflict or the governance of Gaza by Palestinian entities. The reporting period was tense and required constant vigilance as well as continuous consideration of the human rights-related priorities.

In response, Al Mezan increased its positive dialogue with the government authorities in Gaza. 2011 saw dialogues on a variety of issues; including effective communication with the security agencies to visit detention centres, meet detainees and make interventions on their behalf to secure their protection and access to justice adequately. The second half of the year saw positive improvement on this level.

Other obstacles in 2011 included:

- Increased lack of cooperation from the part of the authorities in Gaza, and lack of communications from the part of the Israeli authorities. Al Mezan's field workers and lawyers had to make double efforts to obtain reliable information, or leads for information, about people in detention, the movement of people through crossing points and people who were injured or killed. The Israeli authorities, while confirming receiving notification forms and complaints demanding investigations, do not reply to most of the communications despite the frequent reminders by our lawyers in Israel. The very long times without reply could be considered denial of effective access to justice, which is added to the several other barriers that are built in in the Israeli justice system. Al Mezan will produce a report about the status of accountability using the cases it worked during in 2011 in March 2012. The document can be useful as an advocacy tool to urge for more effective access to justice for Gazan victims of human rights and IHL violations in Israel.
- The lack of communications with the Palestinian legislative Council, the Attorney-General and the Courts in Gaza. Since November 2007, human rights organizations have stopped appearing before courts in the Gaza Strip. Dealing with the AG is at its lowest, due to the lack of constitutionality of these two bodies. The PLC is not working properly under the political split and; therefore, legislative reform is not a suitable approach to follow. Cases are therefore dealt with on a case-by-case basis with the security agency or the relevant ministries. While there have been successes, this situation makes the success of intervention far less anticipated and on an ad hoc basis. Al Mezan has increased its work with human rights organizations and has advocated for the internal political split, which could enable elections to take place and the courts system to retain its legality in Gaza.
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In the larger region, the uprising situations in Arabs countries have brought about developments. In Egypt, the uprising caused an inevitable, but temporary, full closure of Rafah crossing. However, starting in April, about 700-800 people started to be able to leave Gaza via Rafah; including cases in need of humanitarian access. Al Mezan's work on access to health, education and other vital needs still required attention. During the full closure of Rafah, two staff members were not able to travel for training in Jordan and two others for advocacy work in Europe.



On the positive side, Gaza society has been inspired by the developments in the Arab World and has started to mobilise to demand dignity, rights and unity. There are credible opportunities to build on this situation in the future. Moreover, with the Arab surrounding more open to human rights discourse as well as action, we believe that Gaza human rights NGOs, who have built specialized experience in monitoring and defending human rights in the past decades, can provide significant inputs by supporting Arab civil society's, and perhaps new governments', pursuit of promoting and protecting human rights. This goal requires strong capacities to monitor human rights violations, initiatives to strengthen protection and electoral systems, and make effective interventions. In 2012, Al Mezan will be working further with Arab human rights NGOs to strengthen their capacities in monitoring and legal intervention.

Other obstacles which existed in 2011 have also persisted; albeit with lesser intensity. This includes the financial difficulties faced by Al Mezan during the reported period, although the sum of funds raised is significantly higher than 2010, the core funding is still under the required scale, which has led Al Mezan to consider new, more creative ways to cover its expenses. For example, Al Mezan has invested more in raising funds for projects; some of which were implemented by the staff members. While this added to the work pressure for the core staff, it helped Al Mezan secure more funding for the staff and other running costs.



3. Project activities

During the reporting period, the following projects were in progress:

	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
1	Combating and Preventing Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Prisoners held in Israeli Prisons and Palestinian Civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)	1 May 2009 – 30 April 2012	European Union	To combat and prevent torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners incarcerated in Israeli prisons and detention centres and Palestinian civilians in the OPT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring and documentation of torture and cruel, inhuman treatment. - Legal assistance. - Advocacy: challenging policies and practices in courts; reporting to the UN and EU. - 2-day international workshop on combating torture. - 3 position papers and 1 2-year field report - Training and capacity building for lawyers, health personnel and activists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . 41 cases documented involving victims of torture and CIDT, victims of restrictions on movement (esp. patients), victims of home demolitions, victims of violations in access restricted areas; including the sea, and use of human shields. - Feeding two databases for torture and CIDT cases. - Provision of legal advice to 156 victims and families of torture/CIDT. - 87 referrals of cases to other organizations and to lawyers for intervention. - Advocacy activities (position papers, international workshop) and legal interventions in Israel - 2 briefing notes, 3 position papers (false confessions, home demolitions, and solitary confinement), 2 year field report. - Follow-up information to the HRC. - 2-day international workshop on combating torture. 	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
						<p>- 5 training courses (3 to medical professionals and 2 to lawyers).</p> <p>Project success story On 6 March 2011, Al Mezan received the complaint of Faten Kuhail. She suffered from prolapsed disc. She received medical treatment at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City where She had CT scan and other medical tests. Doctors advised her to seek treatment abroad as the needed procedures unavailable in Gaza.</p> <p>On 10 February 2010, she obtained financial coverage from the Ministry of Health. She renewed it several time. The last time was on 26 December 2010. She obtained an appointment with doctors at St. Joseph Hospital in Jerusalem on 9 January 2011.</p> <p>On 2 December 2010, Faten applied for the Health Coordination office in Gaza to obtain permission to travel via Erez crossing.</p> <p>On 9 January 2011, Faten was informed that her application was under consideration.</p>	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
						Al Mezan provided her with legal advice and sent her documents to PHR-I. She was interrogated with Israeli Intelligence Agency on 11 April 2011. She was finally allowed to travel on 15 May 2011 thanks to Al Mezan's intervention.	
2.	Strengthening 1612 Mechanism in Gaza	15 September 2010 - 15 January 2011.	Save the Children UK	The project aims to strengthen accurate monitoring and reporting on 1612 violations in the Gaza Strip by building Al Mezan's capacity to perform this task.	-Establish a specialized internal 1612 mechanism - Reporting to the 1612 Working Group and relevant parties. - Training on 1612 for CBOs in Gaza	- Established a specialized internal 1612 mechanism - Reporting to the 1612 Working Group and relevant parties. - Training on 1612 for CBOs in Gaza	Some activities were delayed due to problems getting the child protection advisor into Gaza.
3.	Child Rights at the Centre: Enhancing National Capacities to Monitor, Document, and Report on Child	1 July – 31 December 2011	Save the Children UK.	Children in the Gaza Strip are better protected through enhanced community and NGO participation and awareness.	- Document and report on MRM violations as part of the MRM in the oPt through strengthening the existing Al Mezan databases around	- Documenting and reporting to UNICEF on MRM violations and continued updating of database. - Contribution to 2 CAAC Bulletins and 2 GHN - Attendance at 3 MRM meetings and 1 child protection meeting. - 3 staff members attended a ToT	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
	Rights Issues in the oPt				<p>armed conflict issues, and to ensure that it can interface directly with the MRM database.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce input to the existing Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism in OPT on a bi-monthly basis as part of the MRM Working Group's regular reporting to the humanitarian community, OSRSG CAAC and Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict SC WG CAAC. - In coordination with the MRM Working Group 4 fact sheets are produced and 	<p>training on MRM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 factsheets on CAAC related issues published and distributed. - 2 trainings for 30 CBOs - 4 participatory workshops for children - Form 5 community committees - 2 workshops for community committees - Inform governments, humanitarians etc of child rights issues in the Gaza Strip, release press statements, news briefs etc. 13 press releases and 7 news briefs were issued. - Ongoing communications with governments regarding child rights violations. - Contribution to ad-hoc requests for information from other NGOs. 	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					<p>circulated internationally on specific MRM thematic issues in the oPt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct 2 trainings with a total of 30 community based organizations and local and international NGOs on the MRM on children and armed conflict in OPT in accordance with the standards outlined in the Global MRM Field Manual and in coordination with the MRM ToT group (UNICEF, UNRWA, OCHA) and related monitoring, reporting, and referrals to human rights field workers. - Conduct at least 4 		



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					participatory, age appropriate talks/workshops for around 100 children, both boys and girls, who are affected, or at risk, in Gaza, to raise their awareness on child rights and protection. - Awareness raising workshops for parents and teachers on children's right and proactive steps that can be taken to protect children. These workshops/meetings form the basis for creating neighbourhood committees concerned with child protection which		



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					contribute to monitoring and reporting of child rights violations. - Al Mezan contributes to informing government and international agencies policy on child protection.		
4.	Strengthening Schools Documentation and Reporting Capacity in Gaza in Relation to Protecting Education	1 st phase: 1 Jan – 30 April 2 nd phase: 1 June – 30 August 3 rd phase: 1 – 30 Nov	UNESCO	To enable accurate monitoring and reporting on 1612 violations in the Gaza Strip's highly vulnerable areas by building on the capacities of teachers in 10 schools to perform this task.	1st phase: - Coordinating meetings with partners (UNESCO, Ministry of Education) - 6 trainings with teachers from government schools. 2nd phase: - Training on 1612 for school teachers in Gaza at 10 government schools	1st phase: - Coordinating meetings with partners (UNESCO, Ministry of Education) - 6 trainings with teachers from government. 2nd phase: - Consultation with UNESCO team in Gaza and the MoE to secure appropriate coordination for the activities and attendance of the target group. - Two training courses on the 1612 MRM for 50 teachers from 7 schools. - Follow up with schools: Al Mezan's	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					<p>- Follow-up on the training: By a) conducting follow-up visits to schools by experienced field workers, and b) organizing one refreshment workshop for representatives of the schools and the community committees in order to ensure quality reporting using the 1612 MRM mechanism in accordance with the training.⁷⁴</p> <p>- Establish a 1612 MRM reporting mechanism within schools, with follow-up by Al Mezan</p>	<p>field workers will visit the seven schools whose staff were trained during this phase in order to establish contact with them and follow on their future reporting.</p> <p>3rd phase:</p> <p>- Conducted 2 trainings (25 hours each over 5 days) for teachers of 7 additional schools that are considered in the high risk areas for 50 teachers and community committees members.</p> <p>- Provided follow-up activities with the trainees in the coming 2 months, free of charge by its field workers. Al Mezan's field workers have already been linked with the Souktel company SMS service and will be able to communicate timely with all the targeted schools.</p>	

⁷⁴ Since this is the second phase of the project, the follow-up will cover the twelve schools which received training in the first phase during the first two-and-a-half months of this phase. The ten schools which will receive training under this second phase will receive follow-up service during the last one-and-a-half month of the second phase of the project.



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					<p>and/or stakeholders.</p> <p>3rd phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct 2 trainings (25 hours each over 5 days) for teachers of 7 additional schools that are considered in the high risk areas for 50 teachers and community committees members. - Provide the follow-up activities with the trainees in the coming 2 months, free of charge by its field workers. Al Mezan's field workers have already been linked with the Souktel company SMS service and will be able to 		



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					communicate timely with all the targeted schools.		
5.	Program for Expansion of Legal Assistance to Victims of Human Rights Violations in Gaza	1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012	UNDP	To contribute to increasing human rights legal protection in the Gaza Strip through better implementation of domestic and international law, especially with regard to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring rights violations for legal intervention - Provision of legal advice/assistance - Deploying four lawyers - Referral of cases to lawyers in Gaza and Israel for intervention with the authorities and UN mechanisms - Group counselling - Prison visits (inc. lectures in prisons) - Ads in local media on juvenile justice - Advocacy (posters, urgent appeals, letters, multimedia) - Campaign on Free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring rights violations for legal intervention: Ongoing activity - Provision of legal advice/assistance: Ongoing activity. - Deploying four lawyers: so far three lawyers have been deployed. - Referral of cases to lawyers in Gaza and Israel for intervention with the authorities and UN mechanisms: Referrals to lawyers in Gaza and to lawyers in Israel. Appeals sent to UN special procedures on 3 different issues. - Group counselling: No group counselling was completed in 2011. - Prison visits (inc. lectures in prisons): eight prison visits, no prison lectures. - Ads in local media on juvenile justice: Not completed in 2011. - Advocacy (posters, urgent appeals, letters, multimedia): letters and urgent appeals to UN and EU bodies on 3 	The project was delayed by 2 months so the effective dates are 1 September 2011 to 31 August 2012.



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					Movement and Access - Meetings with stakeholders and diplomatic missions in Gaza - Young lawyers training - One awareness course - Production of awareness raising materials (one leaflet) - Two workshops on judiciary & legislation unification	different issues. No posters or multimedia were produced in 2011. Correspondence with Gazan authorities. - Campaign on Free Movement and Access: Changed to an advocacy campaign on the siege on construction materials. - Meetings with stakeholders and diplomatic missions in Gaza: attendance at UN led Legal Aid Task Force meeting. Regular meetings with diplomats and UNDP representatives. - Young lawyers training: One workshop in December. - One awareness course: 14 educational presentations, mainly on child rights, to schoolchildren and their parents—11 for students, three for parents, one of which was for mothers affiliated with the Palestinian Women's Union. - Production of awareness raising materials (one leaflet): Not completed in 2011. Two workshops on judiciary & legislation unification: Not completed	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
						in 2011.	
6.	Promotion of International Humanitarian Law and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Gaza by Education.	1 January – 31 December 2011	Diakonia	To contribute to promoting respect for and protection of human rights through education on IHL and ESCR in Gaza.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation and distribution of a brochure and poster - 3 training courses – 2 for lawyers, and 1 for women's rights organisations. - Within the 12 annual trainings given by Al Mezan to raise awareness about human rights 4-6 hours of training are to be dedicated to IHL. - 2 workshops for journalists - 3 workshops for teachers and academics - Purchase 50 books for the library - Facilitate access to the library for researchers and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 poster (1000 copies printed). 1 brochure (1000 copies printed) - 2 training courses for lawyers. 1 training course for women's organisations - 40 hours out of a total of 144 hours of training are dedicated to IHL. - 2 workshops for journalists - 3 workshops for teachers and academics. - In correspondence with book shops in Gaza to obtain lists of new releases to buy 50 new books. - Capacity building of staff member – not yet undertaken. - Pass the word programme – 12 hours training in IHL. 33 volunteers gave 66 hours of voluntary time. - Pre and post tests used to evaluate the project's activities. 	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					<p>other interested people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building of project staff through participation in a training course outside the Gaza Strip. - Pass the word programme. - Use of pre and post-tests to evaluate the project's activities. 		
7.	Promoting Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Gaza Strip The Gaza Strip	1 August – 30 November 2011	Friedrich Ebert Foundation	To ensure the protection of economic, social and cultural rights in the Gaza Strip through raising local and international awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 research reports on ESC rights issues pertaining to the Gaza Strip context. - Promotion of these reports through relevant channels (NGO networks, ReliefWeb, local media, Facebook and Twitter, protection cluster, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issued and promoted two factsheets - Make three public statements - Four awareness workshops on ESCR - Two public meetings on ESCR - Five communications to UN/SP and other entities. 	



	Project title	Start and end dates	donor	Goal/objectives	Planned activities for 2011	Implemented activities for 2011	Notes/comments
					UN human rights bodies). - Workshops with local community groups from all areas of Gaza (women’s groups, trade unions, professional associations, neighbourhood associations) on ESC rights. - Advocacy campaigns with UN human rights bodies based on the issues raised in the research reports.		



4. Financial reports/issues:

The reporting period represents the third (and last) year of Al Mezan's 3-year program strategy 2009-2011.

Some of the changes concerning the Centre's core donors, compared with when the strategy was launched in 2008, continued. Three core donors have started to provide unified funding through the NGO Development Center (NDC), with a much lesser total amount of funding available to Al Mezan from them during the reporting period (approximately 50% of the amount in 2008).

The funding by Al Mezan's donor-partner the Norwegian Representative Office to the PA (NRO), which had been reduced in 2010, has returned to its pre-2010 level in 2011.

Al Mezan has maintained its relationship with all of its partners (please consult the General Information sheet in the beginning of this report). Two donors increased their funding in 2011: Medico International-Germany and the Open Society Institute. The increase in core funding from OSI is also expected to increase in 2012.

Efforts to avoid experiencing another deficit have been taken by Al Mezan; including:

- New recruitment was avoided; except for short-term posts and projects.
- New projects were contracted with donors, with the understanding that Al Mezan would implement them through existing staff. Projects also include overhead and other administrative and running cost funding, which reduce the pressure on the general budget.
- The consolidated budget was reviewed in the end of the reporting period in order to assess the progress in fund-raising. The assessment was generally satisfactory and no significant actual deficit was foreseen.

The enclosed financial statements show in detail the amounts of funding for the core program as well as for projects for the reporting period. Al Mezan takes this opportunity to thank the support of its core and project donors.