# Al Mezan Center for Human Rights

## Annual Narrative Report

**Gaza, March 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Title</th>
<th>Al Mezan Core Programme 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights - Gaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address (main office)</td>
<td>5/102-1 Al Mena, Omar El-Mukhtar Street, (close to Akila Gas Station) Western Rimal, Gaza City, The Gaza Strip, P.O. Box. 5270.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of registration</td>
<td>May 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Persons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issam Younis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:issam@mezan.org">issam@mezan.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahmoud Abu Rahma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications &amp; Int'l Relations Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mahmoud@mezan.org">mahmoud@mezan.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile: 0599 609 310</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported Period</td>
<td>1 January – 31 December 2008 (Program Year 3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of contents

General and Contact Information ......................................................... 2  
Preface ...................................................................................................... 3  
1. Introduction: Human Rights Conditions in Gaza in 2008 ....................... 5  
1.1 Background - The Situation Leading Up to 2008 .............................. 5  
1.2 Respect and Protection of Human Protections during 2008 ................. 10  
2. Organizational Profile ........................................................................ 33  
3. Implementation Progress .................................................................... 35  
3.1 Core Program: Promotion and Protection of Human Rights ................ 35  
3.1.1 Outcomes/results ......................................................................... 35  
3.1.2 Obstacles and difficulties ............................................................... 39  
3.1.3 Summary of Activities: 2006-2008 .............................................. 41  
3.2 Project Activities ............................................................................. 66  
4. Financial Issues .................................................................................. 71  

Attachments:  
Financial Statements
General and Contact Information

Contact details:
Main Office Address: 5/102-1, Habosh Road, Omar El-Mukhtar Street, Western Rimal Gaza City, the Gaza Strip.
Telephone: +972 (0)8 245-3555  Fax: +972 (0)8 245-3554
Jabalia Office: Main St., Jabalia Camp, the Gaza Strip; P.O. Box 2714,
Telephone: +972 (0)8 282-0447  Fax: +972 (0)8 282-0442
Email: info@mezan.org

Board Members

Dr. Kamal Al Sharafi (Chairperson), Former head of PLC oversight committee for human rights
Mr. Talal Aukal (Vice Chairperson), Journalist and political analyst
Mrs. Andaleeb Shehadeh (Member), Women rights activist
Mr. Nafez Al Madhoun (Member) Lawyer
Dr. Ali Abu Zuhri (Member), President of the Al Aqsa University
Mr. Jamil Serhan, Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights, Gaza Director

Al Mezan Donor Partners in 2008

Core Programme Donors:
The Netherlands Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority (NRO)
Kerkinactie / ICCO
Donors of former Secretariat for Good Governance and Human Rights NGO's – Mu'assassat (represented by the Danish Representative Office to the PA)
The Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian Authority
NGO Development Center (NDC)

Projects Donors:
The Ford Foundation: Organizational Capacity-Building
Diakonia: Promotion of IHL in Gaza by Education/Information
CARE International GWB: Promotion of Free Expression and Media Work in Gaza
Trocaire: Enhancing Respect for HR: Freedom of Movement in Gaza
The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC): Technological Capacity Building

Membership*

• Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)
• EcolOmic, Social and Cultural Rights Network (ESCR Network)
• Habitat International Coalition - Housing and Land Rights Network
• Coalition for Accountability and Integrity
• Middle East and North Africa Network to Stop the Use of Children as soldiers
• MENA Network to Stop the Proliferation and Misuse of Small Arms & Light Weapons
• The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
• The Inter-Agency Working Group on SC Res. 1612 in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
• United Against Torture Coalition (UAT)
• The Protection Sector Working Group (Chaired by OHCHR)

* Al Mezan's application to obtain the consultative status at ECOSOC is in progress.
Preface

Al Mezan Center for Human Rights (Al Mezan) is pleased to introduce its Annual Narrative Report 2008. The drafting of the report was delayed this year due to the Israeli military operation, Operation Cast Lead, from 27 December 2008 until 18 January 2009 and its aftermath. This operation destroyed thousands of buildings and killed thousands of civilians throughout the Gaza Strip. Even with the close of the Offensive, the Israeli blockade continues, and therefore relief efforts have been very hard to carry out. The hesitation of the international community to engage in humanitarian projects with Hamas is seriously affecting the ability to improve the situation on the ground. Improvement is dependent on improved efforts from Israel, the internal Palestinian governing bodies and the international community.

In response to the impact of the Israeli siege and unprecedented internal unrest, Al Mezan Center has teamed up with Al-Haq to carry out the increasingly needed documentation and legal intervention. It has also increased its coordination with numerous human rights organizations in the OPT, Israel and internationally, particularly with Adalah-The Legal Center for the Rights of the Arab Minority Rights in Israel. Coordination with the United Nations agencies operating in OPT, and particularly those focusing on documentation and accountability, has also increased.

This report is intended for the public as well as all stakeholders; including Al Mezan Center's partners and the international human rights community. It provides a general picture of the current status of human rights in the OPT, and in Gaza in particular, and it also provides an account of the activities of Al Mezan during 2008.

The reported year, 2008, marks the last of three years that made up the period of Al Mezan's 3-year program strategy (2006-2008). With it, the duration of that strategy ends. In the Activities section in this report, the Center provides an account of the activities it carried out under this strategy during each of the three years.

2008 brought both difficulties and achievements: Al Mezan and its peer human rights organizations successfully tackled serious issues, particularly political detention. Al Mezan's director won the Weimar Human Rights Award in recognition of his role at Al Mezan, which continues to defend human rights in all circumstances. A truce (Tahdi'a) brokered by Egypt brought some stability to Gaza and lowered the number of victims of military attacks. The United Nations presence and its interventions have increased, which also has produced positive results. Nevertheless, these have focused to a large extent on the humanitarian aspects of the crisis; i.e. dealing with the symptoms, not its root causes. The internal split manifested itself in many ways, and was worsened by retaliatory attacks by Hamas and Fatah led governments, as well as by international conditionality. The truce between Israel and Hamas did not improve the living conditions, economy or access of the Palestinian population. Its breach on 4 November 2008 by the Israeli army led to a series of violent incursions which ultimately led to Operation Cast Lead, an unprecedented event since the Israeli occupation of the OPT in 1967.
These developments require increased human rights interventions to ensure better respect and promotion of the human rights of the Palestinian population in the OPT; a task which Al Mezan continues to work on with its peer human rights organizations in the OPT.
1. Introduction: Human Rights Conditions in Gaza in 2008

1.1 Background - The Situation Leading Up to 2008
The Gaza Strip (Gaza) is part of the territory Israel occupied in June 1967 together with the West Bank (including East Jerusalem). Following Israel's implementation of the Unilateral Disengagement Plan in September 2005, Israel has retained effective control of Gaza's land crossings (including Rafah), air space, and territorial waters. In the Disengagement Plan, Israel voiced its interest in maintaining control over Gaza and expanding its settlements in the West Bank with the view that portions of the latter will be annexed to its territory in the future. Israel's interests lie mainly in the lands where major Jewish colonies, or settlements, are built; west of the Separation Wall, in the Jordan Valley, and east of the West Bank. Israel continues to emphasize that East Jerusalem is part of its unified capital. If Israel succeeds in annexing this land, only half of the area of the West Bank will be left for a promised Palestinian state. There the Palestinian population will be scattered in three main enclaves, separated by colonies and apartheid roads connecting them. This act will set a precedent in the modern world; a state will have acquired territory by force and moved part of its population into it, which contradicts international law's explicit prohibition of this practice. The possibility of the Palestinian people realizing their right to self-determination meaningfully will therefore be impossible.

The Second Intifada began in September 2000 after the collapse of American-led negotiations between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel. Violence snowballed throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and the responses by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) to civilians throwing stones were severely violent. The highest child mortality rate from IOF fire was recorded in clashes between demonstrators and the IOF in the first two months of the Intifada.\(^1\) Clashes grew more violent, and the IOF used extreme lethal force, including helicopter gunships, F-16 fighters, tanks, missiles and artillery. The IOF started a large-scale campaign of systematic home demolitions and land razing. Additionally, the IOF bombarded most of the Palestinian police and security installations in Gaza. Despite these violent tactics, the most persistent feature of Israel's measures during the Intifada has been the policy of blockade, which has continued since the end of the Second Intifada in November 2006. Israel implemented strict closure policies that limit any goods entering Gaza without the Israeli government’s permission, and a complete restriction on all Palestinians from entering or leaving the Strip. The conclusion of the Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) in November 2005 under the auspices of the Quartet failed to curtail closures and the siege. The result of the strict restriction of movement is an almost total destruction of the economy, extremely high rate of dependence on international aid for subsistence and health, and a poverty rate exceeding 80% in the Gaza Strip.

As the siege drags on Palestinian resistance has grown more violent. For several years militants have been firing homemade rockets into areas of southern Israel close to the

---

\(^1\) 32 out of 95 Palestinians killed by IOF during the first two months of the Second Intifada were children; compared with 102 children in 2008, for example.
The IOF launched dozens of incursions and targeted assassinations intended by Israeli officials to stop the launching of such projectiles. During times of truce, whether announced by the President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and armed groups unilaterally or announced jointly with Israel, the projectiles were either reduced or stopped altogether.

Following the victory of Hamas in the January 2006 legislative elections, Israel and the international community imposed financial and diplomatic sanctions against the PNA. The EU initiated a Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) so that humanitarian assistance could be channeled without communication with Hamas or Hamas controlled ministries. Israel froze Palestinian custom duty monies, which Israel collects from Palestinian trade through its ports, and toughened its closures and siege on the OPT.

In addition to the problems that Gazans have been facing as a result of Israel’s closure policies and the international community’s lack of recognition of Hamas, there has been internal strife, particularly in Gaza. Fighting escalated between the former ruling party Fatah and the new ruling group Hamas started after the elections. Internal fighting led to hundreds of Gazans being abducted, imprisoned, tortured and murdered. Armed clashes spread through the streets and in 2006 alone, 262 people were killed and 1,217 wounded as a result of these clashes. In 2007, the number grew to 512 and 2,688 respectively. On 8 February 2007, Hamas and Fatah (and PNA) leaders signed an agreement in Mecca in response to an initiative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They agreed to create a national unity government and initiate negotiations to settle matters of disagreement, in particular, issues related to the political and security situation in the OPT. Infighting continued, and hardship increased as Israel and the donor community continued to impose financial sanctions on the PNA. The attempt at unity failed. It was dismantled just two months later. On 14 June 2007, Hamas military wing launched a large-scale attack against the PNA's security apparatuses throughout the Gaza Strip and gained control at the expense of many civilian lives. This internal unrest coupled with the siege on Gaza has made the lives of Gazans harder, and caused the human rights situation to further worsen.

Following the consolidation of Hamas’ control in Gaza, street fighting drew to a close. However, the Government in Gaza is committing numerous human rights violations as a way of intimidating the opposition. As a result of Hamas’ control over Gaza, the PNA's president issued a series of decrees suspending articles in the Basic Law, dissolving the National Unity Government, forming a temporary government led by Mr. Salam Fayyad, and declaring Gaza a 'rebcl territory'. Israel closed all border crossings; starting an all out siege that would continue for many months to come and cause a severe humanitarian crisis. This included the Rafah Crossing, which included the withdrawal of the EU-BAM monitoring mission from the border. Israel then stepped up its measures to prohibit the movement of all exports and limit imports to a short list of essential goods and

---

2 Palestinian armed groups have fired over ten thousand rockets since January 2001. As of March 2009, these attacks have lead to the death of 25 Israelis, with over 700 being wounded, according to SderotMedia.com.

3 These numbers were documented by Al Mezan Center for Human Rights.

4 The EU-BAM mission monitored the AMA after the Disengagement Plan in 2005.
humanitarian assistance. This list included flour, sugar, oil, hygiene materials, dairy products, and fruit. These goods were allowed to enter Gaza through humanitarian organizations and the private sector, but only on those days when one or more border crossings were open. Gazans have been faced with scarcity of essential materials; including fuel and cooking gas, which has infringed upon all aspects of their life.

On 19 September 2007, Israel labeled Gaza an 'enemy entity' and approved a series of measures to further tighten the siege. The Israeli government placed more Gazan individuals as well as groups on the prohibited list for movement and passed legislation to limit the amount of fuel, electricity and food supplies allowed to enter Gaza from Israel. The international community, joined by Israel, recognized the temporary government in the West Bank, announced that its boycott of Hamas would continue, and decided to limit its humanitarian assistance to Gaza.

In November 2007, the United States hosted an international meeting in Annapolis. Representatives of the PNA, Israel, many Arab states as well as other countries and international organizations were present. At the meeting, it was announced that the negotiations on the final status issues to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict would commence, with the intent to successfully negotiate solution by the end of 2008. The parties reaffirmed their aims to isolate Hamas, continue to uphold sanctions and provide humanitarian assistance to the population. Once again, a new peace process started without reference to the body of international law and human rights as its framework. In fact, under the goal of isolating Hamas a series of collective punishment measures that affected all of Gaza's population has entrenched.

The result of the policies discussed above led to the crippling of the Gazan economy. The construction and industrial sector collapsed, as well as international trade. The rights to health and clean water have been continually violated by Israeli imposed sanctions on the import of fuel. Those sanctions lowered Gaza's production of electricity causing it to halt completely some times, placing its 1.5 million residents in the dark for hours at a time. Attempts by human rights organizations to remove the restrictions on fuel supplies by legal interventions have failed.

Ten organizations, including Al Mezan, approached the Israeli High Court in November 2007 with an appeal requesting a stop to the IOF's reduction of electricity and fuel supplies to Gaza. Nevertheless, the Court decided to take a political, rather than legal, position and permitted sanctions that 'legalized' human rights violations. The Court, while

---

5 Israeli growers depend on the Palestinian population to sustain their profits, thus, the government allowed fruit into Gaza until the total closure on January 18. This decision coincides with the slow growing season, when farmers produce less. Gazans also depend on this fruit to sustain a balanced diet, which becomes difficult in the winter months and especially under the total blockade. This particularly affects the health of pregnant women and children.

6 This is one result of Israel's suspension of Gaza's custom code in July 2007, which is necessary for goods to be imported from Israeli ports.

7 Without electricity or fuel to run generators, hospitals cannot sustain life-support systems and water pumps cannot run to sustain sanitation standards.
refusing to consider the legal arguments of the appealing organizations during the hearings, adopted without any critical consideration the legal views of the Israeli government. It announced that Israel's 'military rule' in Gaza ended and that the IOF bore no obligations towards Gaza.

In Gaza, there are four parties that bear responsibility for the situation that is described above, and the continuation of grave human rights violations in 2008:

- **Israel**: As an occupying power, Israel is the main duty-bearer with long-standing international legal obligations. The level of the IOF's control over Gaza, its ability to affect the enjoyment of human rights and its continuous presence inside Gaza's land, air and coast are indicative of such control. According to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Israel has binding human rights and humanitarian obligations towards the OPT's population as upheld under IHL and human rights treaties, including ICCPR, ICESCR and CEDAW.\(^8\)

- **The Palestinian National Authority**: Regardless of the legal standing of the two Palestinian governments, they bear human rights obligations as non-state actors in the position to ameliorate the status of human rights. At a minimum, the PNA is responsible for the conducts of its personnel, who are entrusted with maintaining the security of the population in the areas they control, and providing services that are essential for the enjoyment of human rights. The scope of the PNA's obligations is dependent of the level of interference by Israel and the international community in the PNA's efforts to perform its duties in a way that effectively undermines these efforts.

- **Hamas**: As the *de facto* authority over the Gaza Strip since mid-June 2007, Hamas bears outstanding responsibility to ensure that the human rights of the Gazan population are being upheld. Since Israel controls Gaza's borders and the PNA continues to provide funding for the public sector, the parameters of its obligations are not clearly determined because of the complexity of the political, security, financial and administrative situations. At a minimum however, Hamas bears a clear responsibility to ensure proper behavior of its security forces and armed groups and to refrain from interfering with the provision of services for the population.

- **The international community**: The international community, including individual states and international organizations share the burden in protecting the human rights of the Palestinians in Gaza. The international community has the obligation to pressure Israel to lift its siege and occupation of Gaza in order to

---

\(^8\) The International Court of Justice decided that certain human rights instruments are applicable in the case of occupation. In Para. 104 of its Advisory Opinion on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory of 2004, the Court ruled that "the protection of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights does not cease in times of war, except by operation of Article 4 of the Covenant whereby certain provisions may be derogated from in a time of national emergency". It also concluded that the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as other applicable IHL, are applicable in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
ameliorate the living standards of the population as well as to make sure that Israel does not target Gazan civilians during military operations.
1.2 Respect and Protection of Human Protections during 2008:

2008 proved to be the worst that Gaza has experienced in decades in terms of human rights and humanitarian conditions. The continued siege that Israel has imposed on Gaza has crippled the economy, causing mass unemployment, poverty and aid dependency. International trade has collapsed, and limited goods are available, causing the prices of basic necessities to skyrocket. In addition there are continued attacks from Israel, including those attacks and incursions that led to the offensive on Gaza in December 08/January 09 – codenamed Operation Cast Lead. This offensive destroyed thousands of civilians’ homes, infrastructure, including much damage to the water sector, and the mass destruction of agricultural land. Internally, the security of the Gaza Government, which is led by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), has been arresting and in some cases torturing members of the opposition parties and severely restricting freedom of expression. As a result the Gazan population is living under constant threat internally and from Israel. In addition the limited amount of food, medicine and equipment coming into Gaza, are leading to the restriction of the ability of Gazans to exercise their human rights and in some cases these restrictions haves lead to the death of civilians. Except for emergency humanitarian cases, the IOF refused to grant permission for any Palestinian to leave the Gaza Strip. However, even in some cases where individuals needed access to health services outside Gaza, Israel did not grant permission for them to leave, sometimes resulting in their death.

The beginning of the year is representative of the continued violence in Gaza; in January 79 Palestinians- including multiple civilians, four children and eight women- were killed by the IOF. On 17 January 2008 Israel imposed even harsher restrictions on Gaza, sealing it off completely from all people, goods and supplies entering or exiting the Strip. After a lack of pressure from the international community, thousands of Palestinian women marched to the Rafah Crossing on 22 January demanding that Egypt open its border. For a few days Gazans were able to bring in food and much needed supplies before the border was closed again. After this short break in the siege the IOF returned to their policy of a full closure of the borders and an embargo on Gaza's airspace and territorial waters. Severe electricity cuts do to Israel limiting the amount of fuel and electricity led to municipalities not being able to pump or treat water, and hospitals were unable preserve vaccines or even operate at minimal levels. Humanitarian agencies were severely limited in the amount and type of aid that they could bring in. These measures were part of Israel’s response to collectively punish Gazans; allegedly for home-made rockets being fired into Israel.

The number of Israeli incursions, extra-judicial killings, artillery attacks and detentions increased significantly in the first half of 2008. In the first quarter of 2008 the number of Palestinians by the killed approaches those killed during the entire 2007. The number of child victims particularly increased.9 From 27 February – 3 March 2008, the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) carried out a large military operation in Gaza (code-named

---

Operation Warm Winter). The operation caused grave loss of civilian life and damage to property. 107 Palestinians were killed including 27 children and six women, and over 200 were injured; more than one fourth of whom were children. At that time, Al Mezan reported that "IOF attacks caused the deaths of 236 Palestinians since the beginning of 2008, including 37 children and 16 women".10

The situation worsened over the course of 2008 due to the siege, but the peak of violence and the worst human rights and humanitarian conditions Gaza has survived in modern history came as a result of the Israel offensive in December 08/January 2009. A carefully observed truce between the Palestinian resistance factions and Israel, which was brokered by Egypt, was seriously breached on 4 November 2008, when the IOF carried out a major incursion into the Gaza Strip, killing six Palestinians and destroying property.11 Frequent breaches of the truce, including by the IOF's refraining from lifting the siege imposed on Gaza, have led to a new escalation. On 27 December 2008 Israel initiated a wide-scale military offensive (referred to as Operation Cast Lead) that lasted for 22 days. At least, 1,410 Palestinians were killed (324 children and 109 women) as a result of injuries they sustained during the attacks and at least 4,004 were injured (860 children and 448 women). Thousands of houses were destroyed as a result of targeted air strikes and demolitions carried by the IOF, as well as hundreds of crucial public facilities, including police stations, the PLC building, the main prison in Gaza and civilian ministry buildings. Over 4,000 dunams of land was leveled and dozens of water-wells were destroyed. Multiple schools, hospitals and clinics were targeted and attacked and in total 226 schools. According to WHO, from among 122 health facilities assessed, about 48% found damaged or destroyed. This includes 15 hospitals and 41 Primary Health centers (PHC) partially damaged; 2 PHC centers destroyed; 29 ambulances partially damaged or destroyed during Operation Cast Lead.12 Military attacks caused severe damages to the water, electricity and telephone lines, causing very long blackout and water cuts for hundreds of thousands of civilians. During this operation, it is estimated that half a million Palestinians were displaced.13 Tens of thousands of those have had their homes destroyed by the IOF. There is little hope that they will have access to proper housing soon, as Israel continues to foil the re-construction efforts by restricting humanitarian access and, particularly, construction materials. Moreover, international aid directed at re-construction has been conditioned during the Sharm Al-Sheikh Summit on March 2, 2009.

The following report examines the excessive human rights violation in Gaza that are a result of Israeli policies, internal abusive governance and the lack of willingness of the international community to protect the rights of the Gazan population.

10 See REPORT ON IOF'S OPERATION WARM WINTER IN THE GAZA STRIP 27 FEBRUARY – MARCH 3, 2008.
13 56% of Gaza's population are children (under the age of 18).
The policies adopted by the Israeli government and the IOF on Gaza and the Gazan citizens have lead to major abrogation of human rights over the past decades, and to the greatest degree so far in 2008. The following are the rights that have been the most affected by the Israeli siege and recent offensive.

**The Right to Life:**

The IOF's military operations in Gaza, most notably Operation Cast Lead claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians. The table below demonstrates the increasing violence being used against the Gazans by the IOF. The period of 2008 is separated to emphasis the damage done because of the Israeli offensive that started on December 27.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of civilians including men:</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Palestinians killed by the IOF in the Gaza Strip between 2006 and 2008

These deaths were a result of Israeli fire during incursions into Gaza, attacks against public and private properties, or assassinations of activists and resistance members.\(^{14}\) The number of civilian deaths is so high because of the restrictions on the entry of materials necessary for sustaining health, including spare parts for hospital equipment, water and sanitation, and essential medicine. The paucity of materials available in hospitals, combined with the shortages on electricity and clean water, has rendering hospitals unable to provide tertiary care, leaving many to die. Israel also severely limits the amount of Gazans allowed to exit the Strip to seek medical care externally and as a result many Gazans have become increasingly sick. In addition, Israel sometimes attaches

Khalid Abdel-Rahman Hussein Abu Shamala, a 38 year-old man was suffering severe portal vein thrombosis and underwent surgery at Ain Shams Specialized Hospital in Cairo to prevent the vein from closing by inserting a plastic tube. Because of the seriousness of his condition, he needed further treatment after the surgery and was referred to a specialist at Tel HaShomer Hospital in July 2008. On September 9, at which time his health had seriously deteriorated and he was visibly in a very bad condition, he traveled to Erez and was interviewed by the Shin Bet. He was initially told that he would be given permission to go to Israel, however shortly afterwards he was contacted by an Israeli security agent and told to return to Erez for a second round of questioning, at which point he was told that in order to get permission to enter Israel he must cooperate by passing on information about people from his local community. Upon his refusal he tried to return to Cairo, but because of the closure of the Rafah checkpoint, he was unable to reach the hospital in time and passed away on 28 November 2008.

---

\(^{14}\) Fifteen extra-legal assassinations took place in Gaza in 2008 prior to Cast Lead Operation; in which sixteen targeted persons and five bystanders were killed.
conditions to allowing patients to exit Gaza for medical reasons, like demanding that they become informants for the Shin Bet (national Israel secret service). According to the Ministry of Health of the Government in Gaza at least 300 patients died from reasons directly related to the closure since 2006. Al Mezan Center has verified that at least 32 of those died after Israel refused to issue permits for them to access specialized, life-saving hospital care in Israel or abroad.

The increased amount of civilian casualties, especially during Operation Cast Lead, shows Israel’s continual and increasing disregard to protect and maintain basic humanitarian standards. Operation Cast Lead demonstrates the IOF having adopted multiple policies that directly endanger civilians. It often gave families less than 5 minutes warning before bombing their houses, sometimes fired missiles in the corner of buildings full of civilians as a ‘warning’ to get them to vacate the premises. It engaged in the use of human shields, thereby putting civilians in directly danger. Ultimately the IOF turned the entire Gaza Strip into a battlefield, bombing buildings like hospitals, UNRWA schools and the UN headquarters, demonstrating that there was no safe zone, and yet it did not let civilians leave the Strip to seek safety. The total death toll of the offensive, which ended on 18 January, stands at 1,359. 15 23 were medical personnel, who were systematically attacked and obstructed, causing the decease of hundreds of civilians who could have had a chance to live if ambulances could reach them quickly.16

In addition to the direct attacks on the lives of civilians, the poverty and malnutrition resulting from the closure, and severely exacerbated by the military attacks, put the lives of the Gazan population at risk. The cumulative cost of lives has not been accurately been measured yet.

**Freedom of movement/access:**

Israel controls the movement of all people and goods from entering and exiting the Gaza Strip. 2008 was a year of strict closure policy, with very few exceptions to let individuals pass through the borders. As was mentioned in certain medical emergencies individuals are allowed out, but this is not always the case.

---

15 By the time of issuing this report, Al Mezan has not finished its full documentation of the casualties; however, its findings indicate that the total number of casualties remains between 1350 and 1400; including 300 to 350 children.


---
In terms of the amount and type of goods allowed into Gaza, the Israeli Supreme Court in its November 2008 decision on restricting electricity into Gaza ruled that the state only bears the responsibility to allow in the minimal level of humanitarian aid and basic goods. The impact has been detrimental on the economy, because of the shortage of imports and complete lack of exports. Since the beginning of the siege, Gaza’s economy has been weakened every year, and 2008 showed the complete collapse of any remaining economy. At a more fundamental level the shortage of goods, most notably medicine and other basic necessities is severely affecting the health of the Gazan population.

The severe shortage of drinking water affected the entire population, especially families living in high buildings and more remote areas. The lack of fuel is another major problem, and has caused gas shortages for drivers, forced them to resort to using cooking oil at certain times. In addition gas needed for cooking has become a rare commodity.

The following tables exemplify the limitations that Israel has imposed on goods and people traveling in and out of Gaza. According to data gatherer by OCHA, the IOF closed Gaza's border crossing for most of the time. The following table shows the number of days of closure and the amounts of goods allowed into Gaza during 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crossing Point</th>
<th># of days open</th>
<th># of days closed</th>
<th># of people/trucks permitted entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erez</td>
<td>158 (partially for emergency access only)</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>7,228 persons (inc. emergency cases, journalists and humanitarian workers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karni (Al Muntar)</td>
<td>47 (partially)</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>6,248 trucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofa</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>6,064 trucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafah</td>
<td>108 (partially)</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>10,221 persons (left Gaza)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerem Shalom</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>4,950 trucks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Closure of Gaza's Border Crossings by IOF during 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crossing Point</th>
<th>Aug 2000 (percentage of days closed)</th>
<th>Sept 2007</th>
<th>Sept 2008 (percentage of days closed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karni (goods)</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erez (workers)</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufa (aggregates)</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafah (passenger)</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafah (commercial)</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nahal Oz (fuel)</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 This information is taken Al Mezan's monitoring of the crossing points.
Table 2: Closure of Gaza's Border Crossings by IOF Aug-2000, Sep-2007, and Oct-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kerem Shalom</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>43%</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This table is based on OCHA's monitoring of the Gaza Strip's crossing points.
Israel has additionally imposed restrictions not only on incoming humanitarian aid but on international teams of human rights experts.

These strict closure policies were followed throughout 2008; however, they were imposed even more severely during the Israeli Cast Lead offensive. There was no electricity for more than two weeks days, many water pumps were bombed, leading to many areas having no clean water, and very limited amounts of humanitarian aid was allowed in. During the offensive Israel turned the entire Gaza Strip into a battlefield and not only limited incoming aid, it also did not provide a safe place for citizens to seek refuge, and did not let Gazans exit the Strip. According to Richard Falk, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, this in and of itself constitutes a war crime. Under the laws of war and the laws of siege, the attacking army must allow civilians to exit the battle zone.

In terms of movement within the Gaza Strip, during each incursion the IOF destroys considerable segments of the roads and because of the siege, and Israel is not allowing the materials needed to repair the roads. As a result, the condition

In his statement to Al Mezan’s lawyer in Israel, Mohammed Kassab describes his arrest by IOF soldiers from his house in Az-Zeitoun neighborhood in Gaza City on 8 January 2009: “The soldiers broke into the house. They stopped us at gunpoint and then handcuffed and blindfolded all of us. A soldier was asking me about booby traps in the area. He asked harshly and loudly and I told him I knew nothing like that. I begged the soldiers not to hurt me, but every soldier that passed me kicked me with his army shoes. They then put me in the bathroom for two days, after which they transported us by bus to a place where I heard the sounds of planes. They took me, my father and two brothers. When we arrived that place, we were put on the ground. It was made of concrete. We were examined by a medic or a doctor. Then they put us into a caravan. It was a closed room without a toilet, beds or blankets. It was dark. There was only a small window on the top of a wall. An intelligence detective, who identified himself as Tony, came and interrogated me. He insisted that I tell him about bombs and tunnels. He threatened me that he would kill my kids. I told him I was a public servant working for the Palestinian Authority and have no political interests. I was transferred to Ashkelon prison after the interrogation.
of the road system in Gaza is extremely bad and was considerably worsened during the recent Cast Lead offensive.

It should be noted that Israel has openly declared that the siege of Gaza would continue until its captured soldier was released. This simply reflects a policy of collective punishment of the entire population in Gaza for political reasons.

**Freedom from torture and cruel and inhumane treatment:**

Hundreds of Palestinians were arrested by the IOF in Gaza before the Cast Lead offensive, during 2008. Often civilians and children were arrested and many were then taken back to jails in Israel. During their arrest, prisoners are often caused by Israeli soldiers, being subjected to racial slurs and physical abuse.

Gazans that are taken to Israeli prisons suffer severe discrimination compared to their Israeli peers. They are rarely granted their rights under the Geneva Conventions and since 2006 none have been allowed visits from their family members in Gaza. It is important to note that during the Cast Lead offensive Gazan prisoners were not given the opportunity to make phone calls to inquire about the whereabouts of their loved ones. In 2002 Israel passed the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law (5762-2002) that was challenged but upheld by the Israeli Supreme Court in June 2008. This law strips all civilians that Israel deems combatants in Israeli jails of the basic rights that are guaranteed in the Fourth Geneva Convention. In many cases, this law was applied retroactively; therefore keeping prisoners who had served prison sentence to stay in Israeli custody without trial.²⁰

²⁰ Contrary to Israeli children (under -18s), Israel considers Palestinians under -16 as children. But those are also routinely arrested.

²⁰ A recent case that Al Mezan documented is a man from Rafah who had served five years in prison, after which he was declared as an unlawful combatant and kept in prison.
The continued incursions and the siege being imposed on the Gazan population as well as the operations arrived out by the IOF during the Cast Lead offensive that targeted innocent civilians is not only collective punishment but collective torture on the Gazan population.

**Freedom of religion:**

The restriction on movement denies Gaza population's access to holy sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The impact of these restrictions is most obvious during the Muslim pilgrimage season every year. The IOF routinely refuses to allow hundreds of pilgrims to leave Gaza for Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Throughout 2008 religious monuments were hit by Israeli attacks. During Operation Cast Lead at least 40 mosques were destroyed, several cemeteries were also hit.
Socio-economic conditions:

As mentioned above, the economy in Gaza has disintegrated. The private sector, which is the main source of employment, has been reduced to nothing. Socio-economic indicators provide that poverty and unemployment rates remained very high over in Gaza. Over 50% of the population who can work are unemployed; many of whom quit seeking employment as a result of despair. Poverty is also a serious problem, with over 80% living under the official poverty line. Over 43% of the population lives in extreme poverty.

The region’s complete dependency on foreign aid undermines the growth of any potential economy in the future; in 2008 85% of the Gaza's population was dependent on humanitarian aid to meet their basic needs. In addition, price inflation has shot up as a result of the scarcity of basic goods and materials.

The limits of imports and exports have destroyed much of the Gaza economy. In addition incursions and other Israeli policies have been interfering with the Gazan population's ability to produce enough food to feed their own population. IOF incursions destroy valuable land, during 2008 alone - prior to the start of Operation Cast Lead on 27 December 2008 - over 1,982.5 dunams\(^2\) of agricultural land were destroyed with tanks and bulldozers ripping out all of the crops. Another industry hit hard by the current Israeli policies is the fishing industry.\(^3\) Israel has officially limited the distance that fisherman can travel into the sea from 21 nautical miles (39km) in previous years to 6 (11km), however in reality even boats 3nm (5.5km) from the coast are fired upon. Even within this close distance to the shore, Israeli ships often open fire on fishing boats, sometimes capturing fishermen, forcing them to strip and swim back to their boats and dumping sewage on them. Some fishermen have been arrested as well and taken in Israeli prisons.

\(^{2}\) One dunam equals 1,000 square meters.

\(^{3}\) Approximately 4,000 dunams of land was also razed during Operation cast Lead.
Housing conditions worsened considerably during 2008, especially during the Cast Lead offensive, when tens of thousands of houses were destroyed and/or damaged. Additional damage to houses has been caused by fuel shortages, the fuel being needed to pump clean water into homes and provide sanitation services. Thousands of homes are at the risk of being ruined by sewage floods, a flood took place on 27 March 2007, killing five people and ruining 270 houses, because of the lack of sewage treatment facilities due to the lack of continuous electricity from Israel.

### Table 2: Palestinian homes demolished by the IOF in the Gaza Strip between 2006 and 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homes Destroyed</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008 (Jan. 1- Dec. 26)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 2008, the IOF expanded the security zone along Gaza's border with Israel. IOF's attacks on civilians, their homes and farms caused families to leave their homes and abandon their farms; therefore, displacement of civilians also increased.
Because of the Israeli blockade, the construction materials needed to repair and build homes is not available; causing major overcrowding in what is already one of the most densely populated areas in the world.

The worst consequence of the collapsed economy is the increase in the trade of the tunnels that connect Rafah to Egypt. Because this is the only way to obtain most products, men risk their lives daily to transport goods from Egypt through tunnels that often collapse. Al Mezan estimates that from January to October of 2008 39 men died while trying to transport goods through the tunnels. Dozens were also injured.

While tunnels helped ensure availability of necessities, they caused a sharp increase in prices due to the high cost of smuggling goods. The Israeli closure and the tunnel trade have seriously undermined legitimate trade in Gaza.

**Health:**

Due to the power shortages the Gaza Power Plant had to be shut down multiple times during 2008 and as a result, hospitals and clinics were greatly affected. Not only did they suffer from suspension of surgery sections and ICUs, but also from the damage of thousands of vaccines and serums that are preserved in fridges. There are acute shortages of medicine; as of January 2008, 105 of a list of 460 essential medications were no longer in stock in Gaza's central pharmacy – over the course of the year the situation deteriorated significantly. Due to all of the shortages, advanced health care is virtually non-existent in the Gaza Strip. Because of the lack of accessible medical treatment for Gazans in Gaza, for many Gazans the only way to recover from illness is by receiving medical treatment abroad. As mentioned above however, Israel is restrictive in granting the citizens permission to leave, even in medical emergencies.
Operation Cast Lead started when the health sector in Gaza was suffering from the consequences of the Israeli siege. In the first hour of IOF’s intensive bombardment of Gaza on 27 December 2008 over 1,000 people were brought to hospitals. Thousands others poured in hospitals in the coming three weeks. Hospitals could not deal with this high load of cases due to the lack of personnel, equipment, beds and medicines. Injured people were treated in hospital corridors. Patients were sent home as early as possible. Thousands were not served, including women who were asked to give birth at home during the crisis.

The IOF’s bombardment of two hospitals, drug stores and primary health centers deepened the health crisis in Gaza.23

Power failure and lack of spare parts also disturbed the cycles of the sewage treatment plants and as a result thousands of liters of raw sewage have been pumped into the Mediterranean Sea and into land that lets the polluted water seep through and permanent damage Gaza’s underground aquifers, Gaza’s main source of clean water. A consequence of the siege is the deterioration of the natural environment, which has long term effects on the entire population.

Education:

Gazan students have a very limited ability to pursue uninterrupted primary, secondary and tertiary education. The power cuts and lack of fuel often prevent classes from being able to run in full attendance. Power cuts particularly hurt the education sector at the time of the start of the 2008 school year and the period of mid-term exams. In addition to the shortages, there are continuous attacks on schools, both government and UNRWA, during Israeli incursions. In 2008 before December 27, at least two educational facilities were attacked. Al Mezan’s initial documentation indicates that 309 educational facilities were destroyed or damaged by the IOF during Operation Cast Lead. Of those 226 were schools (7 destroyed completely), 69 kindergartens and 14 higher education institutions.

Children suffer from a severe lack of educational...

23 See supra, note 14.
facilities as well: there were 260 registered kindergarten schools in the Gaza Strip during 2008, two of which are run by the government. The rest are owned and operated by the private sector. Only 28,219 children were enrolled in such programs in 2008. The number of students registered in Gaza's 621 schools in 2008 was 406,981 and each classroom was overcrowded and understaffed, 38.8. Approx. 89%, of UNRWA schools in Gaza work in two shifts, each lasting around four-and-a-half hours. The overcrowding of schools and their need to work in shifts is a result of Israeli blockade not letting in construction materials to build new facilities. According to a recent report by the former Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, John Dugard, "Gaza's children in UNRWA schools lag behind refugee children elsewhere… as a result of the Israeli blockade and military violence". Constantly closures - due to military incursions – and attacks on urban areas also have a damaging affect on the student's ability to master their curricula.

The American International School in Gaza after Operation Cast Lead

The restriction of movement is causing increasing damage to students' right to education. Foreign teachers and professors are no longer allowed to work in Gaza and as a result there is a shortage of well-trained teaching staff. However more serious is the lack of students' ability to seek education outside Gaza. Gaza has limited educational facilities, in particular a shortage of universities. The situation was exacerbating by the bombing of the Islamic University on 29 December 2008, in which the labs building was completely destroyed. Another 13 higher education facilities were damaged or destroyed during Cast Lead offensive. For decades Gazans have attended schools and universities in the West.

26 Al Mezan's documentation.
Bank, and in foreign countries. Now, because of the total restriction of movement students can no longer pursue educational opportunities outside the Strip. In May 2008 five Palestinian students and academics granted scholarships sponsored by the U.S. State Department, including the Fulbright scholarship, were denied permission to leave the Gaza Strip.
1.3.2 Other Non-State Actors: The PNA and Hamas:

The internal tensions between the ruling Hamas party and Fatah in Gaza have been escalating over the last few years. Continuous arrests, detentions and incidences of torture at the hands of the security forces of the Gaza Government plague the lives of Palestinians. Since the 2006 elections the situation for those that oppose the ruling Hamas party has become worse. The situation continued to worsen over the course of 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of violation</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killing</td>
<td>512 (46 children)</td>
<td>172 (16 children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>2,688 (279 children)</td>
<td>514 (46 children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes damaged/destroyed</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs damaged</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government buildings damaged</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbitrary detention*</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaults against journalists</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor killing of women</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Human rights violations resulting from internal violence in Gaza during 2008.

It is important to note that in the West Bank, where Al Mezan does not have physical presence, similar human rights violations are occurring on a daily basis. The PNA’s security forces arrested hundreds of citizens during 2008 and often subjected them to torture and inhumane treatment. Demonstrations were banned or forcefully disbanded. Numerous media outlets and NGOs were ordered to end their activities.

Freedom of expression:
The Gaza Government has extended policies that severely curtail the right of free speech in Gaza. Since 2006 multiple journalists and other members of the community that have expressed criticism against the government have been arrested and detained. Multiple media outlets have been censored or closed down permanently as well.

These cases are just a few examples of a common practice by the government and police forces to suppress any form of criticism or opposition to the current regime.

In October three journalists were arrested for unknown reasons. Another two were arrested for carrying a TV camera in an area where the police was involved with clashes. On Thursday, 16 October 2008, a police force arrested a photojournalist, a sound technician of Ramatan News Agency and a human rights activist. Their arrest was seemingly arbitrary; they were taken to the police station and search. All of their footage and their phones were checked as well before they were released.
The suppression of free speech extends to the ability of people to demonstration as a way of expressing their disagreement with government practices. The Gaza Government has insisted that groups which wish to organize public gatherings and/or demonstrations needed to have a 'license' from the police. This is despite that the Palestinian law does not impose such a requirement. NGOs were also requested to obtain similar licenses from the police in case they planned to organize public gatherings. In some cases, security personnel showed at places where such activities were organized and ordered participants to leave the place.

**Arbitrary detention and torture:**

In 2008 there were hundreds of arrests carried out for political reasons, not because crimes had been committed. Internal security forces arrested many people who allegedly had ties with the Fatah party and did not afford them their rights as guaranteed by Palestinian law or international human rights law. Some of the people arrested were tortured, and some were killed.

In 2008 Hamas released a small group of political prisoners twice as a "goodwill gesture," however it refused to release the remaining prisoners and continued to make political arrests. It released 12 on 8 September, and 19 more on 30 October 2008 however at the same time arrests and violent attacks continued. Gaza Government's security allows human rights organizations to visit the prisoners occasionally; therefore it is difficult to assess their treatment, though those that have been released or visited by Al Mezan's lawyers during detention often complain of torture and other forms of inhumane treatment.

More seriously, human rights organizations have documented that armed groups conducted hundreds of arrests during times of tension. In particular, Hamas' military wing has carried out hundreds of such arrests.

**Personal security:**

The Gaza Government's policies to conduct arbitrary arrests, assaults and kidnappings, as well as clashes ensuing between them and Fatah threaten the security of Gazan civilians. Throughout 2008 there were numerous attacks that resulted in the death of innocent bystanders.

This amount of excessive force is common and detrimental to the local population that is already exposed to constant threats of violence from the IOF.
On several occasions civilians were killed or injured as armed groups affiliated with Hamas carried out training with live ammunition in urban areas. Police and security forces intervention were mostly violent. Investigations into violations by the security of human rights and rules of conducts during arrests and containment were rare. While in some cases it has not been known who stands behind killings and/or attacks, the Gaza Government, as a de facto authority in Gaza bears an obligation, at minimum, to investigate these cases.

The constant violence in Gaza has lead to many civilian deaths as a result of simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

There have been many cases of kidnappings and killings, the reasons for which remain unknown. The bodies usually show signs of torture when found. An example of such incidences is one that occurred on Monday, 15 September 2008: Raed Muhammad al-Harazeen, 32, was kidnapped from his house to the east of Gaza city, killed and found close to his house 90 minutes later. There is no knowledge of why he was targeted or murdered.

**Association and workers rights:**

Gaza Government has been conducting policies to restrict the work of organizations whose mandate it objects to. In June 2008 the security forces began raiding institutions and arresting workers with the help of the Al Qassam Brigades. Over the next month the security forces in Gaza raided the offices of at least 122 institutions, NGOs and political parties; including the office of the PLC member Dr. Zyad Abu Amro; the office of Fatah PLC Bloc; the office of the PLC member Ibrahim Abu An-Naja; and the houses of Fatah chief in Gaza Dr. Zakariya Al-Agha and Dr. Dhohni Al-Whidi; as well as the offices that belong to the PLO and Fatah Movement; the Palestine Press Agency (Wafa), in addition to multiple sports and social clubs. The Abu Dhabi Channel was ordered to close down its office in Gaza as well, but this decision was rescinded. During the raids, material was confiscated, and in some cases offices were completely shut down. Many non-governmental organizations had their computers and furniture taken away.

These raids coincided with mass arrests of Fatah members and activists. In addition, during the one month period alone Al Mezan documented 153 individuals, including many journalists who had their computers and portable phones confiscated. Many
During the raids in June-July 2008 the Nawar Educational Center in Khan Younis was broken into. The security forces carrying out the raids pulled out seats that were fixed to the floor of the theatre hall, damaged water taps and broke into storage rooms. They destroyed signboards and stole towels and food.

cases were not documented so the number may be much higher. At the same time, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) arrested more than 115 members and supporters of Hamas in the West Bank and raided dozens of non-governmental organizations, political institutions, parliamentary offices and mosques. These acts of retaliation were widely criticized by the Palestinian human rights community. They served to exacerbate a bad situation into a much worse one, creating a climate that helped serious violations and abuses of human rights.

Another problem facing workers in Gaza is the lack of their ability to make use of liberties afforded to them by Palestinian law and relevant human rights standards, such as launching strikes and/or demonstrating.

The issue of the work force becoming divided by political factions is a very real concern. In September 2008 large strikes took place among civil servants in government education, health and public service sectors in the Gaza Strip. The main reason for the relative success of the strike was that employees' feared that if they went to work, their salaries from the PNA in Ramallah would be suspended because Fatah dominated unions had called upon them to strike. Informal threats of suspending the salaries of those employees who would not commit to the strike were spread, deepening the fear among employees. The strike was criticized for being politically motivated and disregarding human rights. The most experienced teachers and health personnel were asked to stay home at a time when they were badly needed. At the same time, the Gaza Government's efforts to foil the strike, which were severe and, occasionally, violent, were also criticized. In the end, Gazans had to deal with the harmful consequences of these problems.

**Health:**

Because of the dissonance between the two governments the delivery of public health services was problematic and often interrupted. Both the PNA and Gaza Government have certain control over the services offered by the Ministry of Health. While most of its subsidies are controlled by Fatah, Gaza Government has direct control over the management of clinics and hospitals. Referrals abroad are therefore controlled by both.
Governments, with coordination with the Israeli authorities for referrals abroad is totally controlled by the PNA (Ramallah). This led to conflicting instructions and the healthcare personnel and civil servants in the sector were forced to strike to demand that the government not interfere in their work, and regular payment of their salaries.

The above-mentioned strike also led to serious problems that stormed the health sector during the first few weeks. A few people died in emergency rooms at hospitals during these weeks; however, it has not been clear that they died as a result of the lack of experienced personnel.

Moreover, there has been little, if any, development regarding ensuring effective monitoring of the quality of healthcare and/or investigation into cases of alleged negligence.

On October 14 2008 riots erupted at Al-Azhar University- the Gaza campus- when over 50 students of the Islamic Bloc (the Hamas student group) broke into the premises of the university and in the center of campus circulated a statement entitled 'Warning Statement No 3.' Clashes ensued between them and other students groups, during which time they broke into the administration building, and caused considerable damage. Shortly afterwards an explosion was heard and the campus was evacuated. The protest was a response to the expulsion of several students in the group who had been expelled for previous demonstrations and not agreeing to follow punishment procedures.

Education:

Violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah as well as strikes involving employees in the education sector over the last several years have meant steady interruptions in the academic year, making it extremely difficult for students to maintain their studies. In addition, the battle of power between Hamas and Fatah has lead to a less functional Ministry of Education in Gaza. As a result of this as well as a lack of funding the schools run by the Ministry of Education are known to be significantly worse in their quality of education.

University campuses have become yet another location of Fatah-Hamas clashes. Each party has a student group represented at Gaza's universities.

Because of the tense political situation, many students have been arrested for expressing their opinions and sentiments and multiple student groups were disbanded, frequently by violent means, because of their affiliations.

Living standards:

The Palestinian authorities' failure to take effective steps to face the deteriorating living conditions in Gaza continued in 2008. This failure was mainly caused by the inability, rather than unwillingness, of these authorities to allocate adequate resources to ameliorate these conditions, especially under the Israeli and international sanctions, and the Israeli blockade that prevented mobilizing funds or moving food and other goods into Gaza. Nonetheless, the authorities also failed to take steps under their control to secure people's access to food and other goods, or to protect marginalized groups. While the prices of
goods increased erratically, Al Mezan observed a lack of supervision or interference by the authorities to protect the poorest Gazans. This led to inflation and monopolization.

The rise in the rate of unemployment also continued in 2008 as a result of the losses sustained by the private sector, and the PNA suspension of over 30,000 of its employees during the second part of the year 2007. This added to the gravity of the socio-economic conditions in Gaza.

Justice and the rule of law:

The police force in Gaza often detains citizens without adhering to the principles of due process. People are often held without any information of why they were arrested. They do not have access to a lawyer and a fair judicial process. This is a result of a lack of commitment from the government to respect the rule of law, as well as the consequence of the PNA instructing its police to halt their activity in the Gaza Strip after the 2006 elections. The Gaza Government in turn took control over judicial institutions and created parallel judicial bodies. All of the factors listed above have created an environment in which the rule of law is not being followed correctly, costing prisoners their rights to a fair justice system.
1.3.3 International community:

The international community continued to passively watch the Israeli siege on Gaza throughout 2008. Donor countries tried to bring humanitarian aid into Gaza, though they were heavily monitored and restricted by the Israeli closure policies. Maxwell Gaylard, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, emphasized that “[C]losures not only hurt the economic well-being of families and communities in the occupied Palestinian territory, they also erode the basic human dignity of the Palestinian population.”

The international community has an obligation to keep challenging Israel's siege of Gaza as well as help support the respect for human rights internally. However, the international community has refused to work with the Gaza Government, or actually with a potential Palestinian unity government such as that that existed in March 2007. By simply providing humanitarian aid but not trying to enforce international mechanisms to prevent systematic violations of human rights means the situation on the ground has not been able to improve.

During the Israeli Cast Lead offensive the world watched while Israel conducted attacks using illegal weapons, targeting civilians, hospitals and schools. The UN Security Council issued a statement calling, "for an immediate halt to all violence", the European Union made similar calls, as did several other countries. The push for a Security Council Resolution for a cease-fire was blocked by the United States. Resolution 1860 calling for an immediate ceasefire and a gradual Israeli withdrawal was passed on January 9, 2009. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has called for independent investigations into possible war crimes committed by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip. The main source of UN outrage however was from the U.N. headquarters hit by the IOF. On January 12, the UNHRC adopted a resolution in which it strongly condemned the ongoing Israeli military operation in Gaza, which had "resulted in massive violations of human rights of the Palestinian people," and "demanded the occupying power, Israel, to immediately withdraw its military forces from Gaza." International organizations insisted on an end to the violence and expressed their criticism as well. However the entire international community kept condemning both sides equally and insisting that both sides shared equal amounts of blame.

These statements criticize the methods that Hamas uses against Israel, even though under international law the people of Gaza have the right to rebel against occupation. They also equate the simplistic weapons and tiny military wing of Hamas with one of the most powerful and well-trained army in the world. Hamas's firing of rockets at civilian areas in Israel is completely condemned by Al Mezan. However, these attacks cannot, and should not, justify graver violations of international law and human rights by Israel. Targeting civilians, hospitals, schools and medical staff, and to engage in other practices that violate

---

international law, regardless of Hamas’ actions. Israel remains bound by the rules of IHL and human rights, the applicability of both of which continue in cases of prolonged occupation and conflict. The international community is also bound by the clear obligation to intervene and prevent grave violations of IHL and human rights. International community is also bound by the clear obligation to respect and ensure respect of these rules by states. Above all, the community of nations is bound by the obligation to ensure that its own decisions and policies do not result with violations of human rights.

Al Mezan and other human rights organizations in OPT and Israel have for years criticized the international interventions; including the 'peace process', for they fail to observe and effectuate the relevant rules of international law and human rights standards. Unfortunately, this trend has continued during 2008.

Despite 2008 being the most difficult year for Gaza’s population, Al Mezan continued its work of documenting, reporting, defending and promoting human rights. Al Mezan condemned, and continues to condemn, all human rights violations and breaches of international law in the OPT, regardless of violator's identity, nationality or political affiliation. Al Mezan believes that the failure of the duty-bearers, including the international community, to uphold the human rights of the Palestinian population in the OPT only serves to permit and encourage daily violations. The international community continues to overlook the human rights cost of its politically motivated decisions and interventions in the OPT. In Al Mezan's view, this attitude must change for human rights and international law to become ingrained in the OPT, the only viable environment for peace and stability in this region. Al Mezan continues to work towards ensuring better respect and protection of human rights in the OPT; including – inter alia – by ensuring that those who ordered and/or committed gross human rights violations and grave breaches of IHL will be held accountable for what they did in accordance with the rules of international law.
2. Organizational Profile:

I. Mission and Goals

As stated in Al Mezan's 3-Year Program Strategy Document 2006-2008, 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”.

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 Directors effectively involved in developing and overseeing policy and management, an Administrative Unit and a Planning and Follow-Up Committee conducting day-to-day management, public relations and fund-raising, monitoring and evaluation, and four units covering all of its program components.

Noteworthy are the following points:
- Recruitment of four staffers for two new projects that were officially launched on 1 January 2008;
- The contract of the translator who was recruited in November 2007 was terminated in the end of the second proportional period, for failing to prove adequate level of performance. Another translator was hired, but quit after the end of his proportional period.
- The Centre decided to recruit an accountant and to promote its accountant to become a Financial Officer. This decision was made following failed attempts to recruit an Administrative and Financial Officer, for lack of appropriate candidates after advertisement. A test and interviews were carried out in August 2008; however, no candidates passed them.
- The international intern left the Centre in June 2008, following seven months of service.
- The Data-Entry officer, who had left on a non-pay leave for three months during the first half of 2008, returned to her post in the second half of the year.
- The Coordinator of the Legal Aid Unit left the Center to assume the position of the Gaza Program director at the PICHRT. A lawyer was recruited to support the Unit's staff.
- The chief Trainer at the Center left and assumed the position of Gaza Program Coordinator at Save the Children Sweden. No replacement has been made for him yet.
3. Implementation Progress:

3.1. Core Program: Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

3.1.1. Outcomes/results

✓ Internal management and communication:
Stronger monitoring of program activities and outcomes through daily and weekly reporting and planning. Upgrading the organization's communications by installing a videoconference facility. 59 meetings were conducted via the videoconference unit, enabling Al Mezan and other NGOs to connect with organizations in the West Bank and abroad. 19 organizations in Gaza benefited from this facility. Communications mechanisms among Al Mezan's staff have been developed and facilitated through setting up a main server connecting the three offices together. This has helped Al Mezan create backups of all its work in a secured and protected place. Successful recruitment of staff and resources. Continued reviewing of plans and modification of activities to respond to needs; including by forming an Emergency Committee and redeployment of staff during crisis. Effective monitoring of implementation of program by introducing new reporting mechanisms. Smooth provision of data and referral: Successful internal provision of data/information for reporting/intervention; 300 referrals; of which 280 were to LAU.

✓ Liaison, advocacy and networking:
Increased coordination with the Palestinian human rights sector; significant increase in joint statements and interventions (inc. advocacy letters and petitions to courts, and scrutinizing on policies relevant to human rights and accountability). Increase in number of projects developed jointly with local, Israeli and international organizations. Increased requests by organizations, international bodies and the media for consultations and meetings. Increase in number of memberships in coalitions, working groups and networks (4 new memberships and eight old maintained). Successful networking on human rights issues with focus on the humanitarian conditions in Gaza (e.g. EMHRN PIP WG decided that Gaza is its main priority), on human rights defenders and children in armed conflict. Al Mezan's application to EMHRN Human Rights Education Working Group was also approved. Increased number of meetings on the human rights situation in OPT. Al Mezan's director won a human rights award following nomination by the humanitarian and human rights officers in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ability to provide information and data to UN fact-finding mission on human rights violations in a special meeting with the mission. Adequate communication with the Centre's donor-partners. Successful, increased provision of data and information about human rights for local and international bodies (over 2,800 times); and increase in appearance of this information in human rights and media reports. Strong presence in the human rights community and increased influence in tackling human rights and law issues. Al Mezan has also been a key actor in the efforts to establish an Palestinian human rights coordination mechanism (the Palestinian Human Rights NGOs Council), which is expected to be initiated in April 2009. Standing for human rights when necessary and challenging critics with solid human rights discourse. Contribution to holding authorities accountable before the public, especially for taking measures to ensure that Palestinians enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights through direct open meetings and private meetings and correspondences.

✓ Fund-Raising and resources:
Funds and resources recruited for the first six months of 2008. Three projects started in January and June 2008 in cooperation with Diakonia, Care and SDC; and one project concluded with Trocaire.
Al Mezan has also engaged with negotiations for new partnerships with the Open Society Institute, the NGO Development Center and Troaciare in order to develop strategic partnerships with them. Four other projects developed jointly with Palestinian and Israeli organizations. An EU funded project is expected to be initiated in April 2009, in partnership with Adalah and PHR-I. following the Cast Lead offensive on Gaza, Al Mezan has also applied for funding with seven donors to support emergency needs. Relations between donors and the human rights sector frequently discussed in meetings to ensure maximum effectiveness and greater protection of human rights. Communications with potential donors initiated.

✓ Capacity-building:
Making use of available opportunities locally for organizational and personnel capacity-building in the form of trainings for lawyers and researchers. In August 2008, a special training course was conducted to train lawyers and trainers from Gaza; including Al Mezan's staff, on IHL education. In terms of management, a human resources management system has been installed. This has reduced the manual workload of administrative activities and ensured maximum effectiveness of these tasks. Al Mezan's database has been developed to include all the questionnaires and affidavits designed by the centre, and ensure more flexibility in entering and accessing the data. Contribution to maintaining communications with organizations outside Gaza for Al Mezan and other human rights organizations via videoconference. With support from the Ford Foundation, a review for the administrative and financial systems took place in 2008. The review aims to support the Center's administrative capacity to meet contemporary international standards. Contribution to long-term community capacity building by training lawyers and field workers.

✓ Monitoring/documentation:
Effective, constant presence in the field and access to data and evidence despite the enormous load of violations and other challenges – e.g. risks of areas of incursion, lack of cooperation of the victims who fear to speak about the harm inflicted on them, and the reservation of responsible authorities and the lack of their collaboration; Internal reporting on thousands of cases of violation; Successful exposure of violations by hourly updating of human rights news on the website; Strong cooperation to develop human rights monitoring in OPT by participation in meetings and workshops and developing training on the issue; strong participation in monitoring of neglected and/or undeveloped areas, such as forced displacement in border areas around the Gaza Strip. Expansion of monitoring program to fully cover freedom of expression and the media and association rights, which comes as a response to new trends of violations in Gaza. Successful control over monitoring and updated documentation on two planes (internal and IOF).29 Documentation is used as an effective threshold to intervention.

✓ Dissemination:
Greater access to audiences in and outside OPT as a result of greater demand for the Centre's input by the media and NGOs providing greater opportunity for spreading awareness and conduct advocacy. Website statistics show steady increase in number of visitors; especially in OPT, Israel and European countries. Successful upgrade of the Center's website, which now includes an interactive blog, bi-weekly poll, daily news, and FAQ. Increased demand on the Centre's services and assistance by the population; particularly for legal assistance in access, imprisonment and ESCR cases. Reporting:

29 It is worth noting that the number of casualties in the first six months of 2008 exceeds the toll of casualties in the year 2007. The same also applies to the last week of 2008; in which the number of casualties exceeded those in the entire 2007. There was also a serious increase in violations cases at both planes during the reported period.
Successful use of data in reporting; Issuance of 117 press releases, nine field reports, five thematic reports, one annual report on ESCR, 27 situation reports, 12 joint statements, 4 joint letters, 56 news briefings; 814 daily news. Maintained, though to a lesser extent, involvement of the local community in social and economic issues at the municipal or central level. The FWU provided data to about human right violations to local and international organization 2,800 times during 2008. Scrutinizing and taking positive, participatory actions to resolve human rights problems faced by the local community. Studies on human rights conducted and information made available to the public and stakeholders. Information and findings used for advocacy, awareness raising and legal representation as appropriate.

✓ Awareness raising/education:

Contribution to spreading information and awareness among various community groups on human rights, domestic law and relevant international standards. Successful focus on IHL through project-based activities that were incorporated in related program activity items. 2,342 people have directly benefited from the TMCU activities during the reporting period. The website recorded 47,205 visits during the reported period. Despite temporary suspensions, the TMCU implemented 844 hours in the course of its awareness/training activities; including courses, workshops, lectures and Pass-the-Word activities. New assessment tools (pre and post tests) were used and showed that learning and skills were acquired. Contribution to awareness work on human rights through training and publication with 34 new training materials developed and distributed. 14 publications and reports were issued during the reporting period. Another 27 brief situation reports were also drafted; one of which widely publicized the course of a campaign and a trial against CATERPILLAR in the USA. Contribution to equipping community groups; especially lawyers, teachers, journalists, activists and students, with skills to help promote and protect human rights throughout their work. 22 students received training that enables them to conduct human rights education activities at universities, 25 lawyers are involved in special training to enable them to conduct legal advocacy on human rights and some 55 teachers were trained to incorporate human rights in their work. Victims' awareness was raised regarding their human rights, violations and redress by field workers during visits to their neighbourhoods. 15 imams received training on child rights and the responsibility of all organs of society for child protection and their own role in spreading awareness and intervening in problems involving child rights in a way that ensure the protection thereof.

- Increased demand by schools for more student visits to the center and more training workshops for children and school parliament students.
- Ten of the volunteer students were selected for jobs as a result of the skills they acquired in Pass-the-Word program. They worked on an UNRWA project involving enhancing women's participation in the political life.
- Five lawyers who received six-month training on developing the legal skills were also selected for positions. They reported to Al Mezan that the legal/human rights training they received at the Center helped them.
- Rafah Municipality positively responded to a problem raised by Al Mezan in its Face-the-Public meeting that was organized in the town to discuss the shortages of water supplies in the town. It dug new water wells and rescheduled the water supplies to correspond with the power supplies in the town to ensure better use of water.
- Increased number of working groups conducted by the Pass-the-Word program's volunteers at university campuses despite the difficult circumstances that negatively affected the general atmosphere and study at their universities.
Two universities in Gaza, Al Azhar and Al Aqsa, informed Al Mezan that they incorporated the declaration on journalists best practices, which was produced in participation of journalists and media students under the 'Promotion of Freedom of Expression and Media Work in Gaza' in 2008.

Legal protection for human rights victims and people at risk:
Effective contribution to ensuring access to professional legal aid and advice for victims of human rights violations. Successful response to emerging types of violations; including political arrest and abusive treatment of prisoners in Gaza, and prisoners with health problems in Israel. Communications and meetings with security personnel in Gaza to discuss policies violating human rights and ensure changing them. Al Mezan was able to visit 120 detainees at the Internal Security Apparatus's detention centres, tracked on their health conditions and made it possible for detainees to communicate with their families over the phone despite severe restrictions imposed on them by the Internal Security's administration. Where required, ensuring access to fair trial in liaison with national and foreign human rights organizations. Contribution to ensuring access to other channels of redress for victims rights of violations; including following up 244 specific complaints and resolving many of them. Ensuring adequate advice and intervention to prevent potential human rights abuses (over 1000 people benefited directly from legal assistance and advice, and trainings delivered by the Al Mezan's lawyers during the reported period, in addition to thousands from among their families and dependents who benefited indirectly from the legal assistance). Focus on expanding protection of human rights through enforcement of international law; including IHL, by petitioning to the Israeli High Court and taking actions to file cases abroad. A Mezan succeeded in its advocacy to reopen civil society organizations that were closed by the Ministry of Interior in Gaza, and in some cases Al Mezan was able to ensure the return of property seized from these organizations. Al Mezan was also able o cancel the decision issued by the Ministry of Interior regarding the dissolution of the Seeds of Hope Society, which consequently resumed its work. Al Mezan's lawyers secured the release of nine Palestinians who were illegally detained by security and police members in Gaza. Following a workshop organized by Al Mezan on labourers' rights, the participants of the workshop initiated a protest demanding better working conditions. In cooperation with Physicians for Human rights -Israel, Al Mezan helped 13 Palestinians get permits to undergo medical treatments in Israeli Hospitals. This represents only a small portion of Gazans who needed access to medical care outside Gaza, but denied such access by IOF, despite intervention.
3.1.2. Obstacles and difficulties:

As mentioned previously in the report, the Gaza Strip saw difficult conditions during the reported period. The political/security conditions became worse, and the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions worsened. These conditions created difficulties that Al Mezan had to cope with in order to maintain its ability to act upon its goals and mission. The following section sheds light on these conditions, how they affected the work of the Centre and, where applicable, how it dealt with it. In general, flexibility and continuous monitoring of the situation were the keys to deal with the situation.

- Serious escalation of violations by IOF and Palestinian stakeholders burdened staff members; especially at the FWU and LAU.
- Dangers threatening life and wellbeing of staff members; especially as they attempt to access people during IOF incursions or locations near the borders to gather data and evidences.
- Hesitation of victims to provide information about violations for fear from harm.
- Gazan lawyers continue to be banned from appearing before Israeli courts; and rarely allowed access to Israel and/or the West Bank. This makes it inevitable to hire Israeli lawyers to do the work in Israel, which requires a great deal of extra monitoring, follow-up and reporting.
- The ongoing suspension of the work of the Palestinian Legislative Council has obstructed Al Mezan from reviewing draft Laws and attending hearing sessions as planned.
- The paralysis of the judicial system in Gaza – since Hamas's takeover it in Gaza illegally in December 2007- made it impossible for Al Mezan to file cases at Gaza's courts. Nevertheless, interventions outside courts have continued to take place.
- The internal division between Hamas and Fateh governments impeded the Al Mezan's ability to deal with certain complaints as it was difficult to identify the destination (Gaza or the West Bank) of some of the correspondences.
- Lack of response from the Israeli authorities regarding complaints relevant to the right to education and the right to free movement has made Al Mezan unable to provide any assistance in this regard, despite intervention of Israeli human rights organizations.
- The internal division and the Israeli blockade obstructed the conduct of researches and studies on certain issues, including studies analyzing the PNA annual budget.
- Lack of fuel and power caused the Centre to stop its car, re-deploy its staff members and suspend activities that involve movement of staff members, trainers and ordinary people in mid-2008. Field workers also faced much difficulty in finding transportation to access locations of violations.
- As a result of the fuel and electricity shortage, the Centre suspended its activities that involve community participation between 29 April and 24 May. Other similar activities were frequently suspended. The shortage was coupled with a general feeling shared by the Centre and the public that it was not the right environment for this kind of activities– as people are spending most of their days just coping with the situation.
- Problems with the internet, which has been affected by electricity cuts and installation of new monitoring equipment in response to decisions made by the government in Gaza. This was particularly problematic during the months of April, May and June. This affected the Centre's ability to use online resources for reported and in uploading daily news, releases and reports.

- Problems related to procurement of equipment and goods necessary for the work because of the lack of these materials in the market, which is a natural result of the blockade. (As a response, Al Mezan formed an Emergency Committee that was charged with making decisions to deal with the crisis; including decision regarding procurement from sources outside Gaza).

- The security, and therefore human rights, situation deteriorated several times because of internal unrest and/or attacks by the IOF on Gaza. This affects the organization's work, for it necessitates shifting the priorities of work to monitoring and trying to help people in danger. Education activities and other activities not of urgent nature are usually rescheduled.

- In January 2008, the Centre closed down its office for eight days; during which it moved into a new office permanently. The reasons behind relocation are threats on the lives of staff members and people who come to the office for help, and the inadequate space in the old office. IOF bombarded the building of the Ministry of Interior on 27 February 2008, but after the Centre had moved into the new office. The old office was destroyed, as was a storage room that the Centre kept in the same building where the office was.

- These conditions caused a series of delays in the recruitment of staff, which required determining dates for tests and interviews, which were put off several times accordingly.

- There were problems emanating from the blockade imposed by IOF on Gaza; especially with regard to the restriction of freedom of movement. In particular, it was difficult to get expert trainers into, or send staff members out of, Gaza for capacity-building activities. Advocacy activities were also weakened by the frequent absence from significant forums and events. (As a response, VC and TC meetings were conducted, but with less impact. Also efforts to pressure for freedom of movements for HRD were stepped up).

- Universities continued to see problems and were affected by the fuel-transportation problems; therefore closed their doors frequently. This particularly affected PW program.

- The security problems that prevailed in the Gaza Strip have made it difficult for Al Mezan to conduct its planned camps for children, which require a safe environment.

- The internal division and changing priorities caused Al Mezan to organize only one meeting out of 4 planned meetings of its face the public program.

- For the first time, Al Mezan faced a temporary problem with one transfer from one of its core donors – Kerkenactie/ICCO – which informed the Centre that they faced much difficulty in making the transaction successfully. The transfer was made successfully later.

- The dissolution of Mu'ssasat secretariat caused a problem in funding the core program during the first months of 2008. Mu'assasat was a main core donor-partner. Nevertheless, the donors of Mu'assasat initiated a temporary mechanism to provide bridge funding, and Al Mezan successfully applied for it. In the second half of 2008, a permanent mechanism was installed and is being managed by the NGO Development Center (NDC). Al Mezan has successfully applied for, and received, core funding through this mechanism.
### 3.1.3. Summary of Activities: 2006-2008

This section summarizes the activities implemented by Al Mezan during the years 2006-2008. Activities are distributed by Unit according to the organization’s structure. For comparison, the activities planned for each year, as in the individual annual plans, appear prior to the activities implemented during each year.

#### 1. Administration Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planed activities 2006</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planed activities 2007</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planned activities 2008</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Notes on 2008 activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervision and coordination of activities and communication between units by Planning and Follow- up Committee through weekly and ad hoc meetings.</td>
<td>Effective coordination and supervision for work programs and programmed activities maintained. 40 meetings held for the Planning and Follow up Committee. Announcement for the Finance and Administrative Officer post was published on three local newspapers, but no one was recruited. Recruitment of staff for</td>
<td>Internal communication/monitoring</td>
<td>Recruitment of staff.</td>
<td>Regular meetings for all staff, PFUC and Board.</td>
<td>39 Meetings held for the PFUC for planning/follow up of activities, and 5 for the Board of Directors, weekly meetings within units. A strategic planning meeting organized to come out with ideas and suggestions for the next three years strategic plan. All staff members participated in this meeting. Three-year strategic plan drafted and sent to donors.</td>
<td>Direction to staff to focus on urgent activities and maintain communication during times of crisis; Decrease in meetings with donor partners affected by the lack of security; Staff members were scheduled to participate in many events outside Gaza, but denied access by IOF; Conferences on budget and internal situation were cancelled; Supplying the library with books was hardly possible owing to the blockade; Increase in appearances in the media; local and int’l TV channels and local radio stations, to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate and liaise with local and international NGOs, UN bodies and media.</td>
<td>Al Mezan sent an application to receive consultative status within the United Nations ECOSOC. Mezan’s membership within EMHRN was fully ratified at a general assembly meeting in</td>
<td>Fund-raising</td>
<td>Budget for core program recruited despite dropping of a core donor; Three projects were initiated in 2007 with support from Trocaire, Diakonia and CARE; Preparations to initiate</td>
<td>Recruitment of staff &amp; services</td>
<td>Two translators released following proportional period; Four project staff members recruited; Preparations to recruit an accountant (test scheduled for early August) following failure to recruit an Admin/Finance Officer</td>
<td>speak about human rights issues. Meetings with diplomatic missions and parliament delegations (inc. EU Parliament); Meetings with UN Secretary General Ban Ki moon, John Holmes, UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Javier Solana; EU Foreign Policy Coordinator, and head of OCHA office in OPT. Director became a member in the Board of Al Azhar University and the GCMHP.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| core program and projects. | implementation of HR projects Producing regular periodic narrative & financial reports. | | | | | |

| Semi-annual reports on the progress of the Mezan's two project "Promotion of IHL and ESCR by Education in Gaza", and "Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Expression and Media Work in Gaza were submitted to project funders. | Annual narrative and financial reports for 2007 and semi-annual reports for 2008 were submitted to core donors. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Madrid during the reporting period                                                                 |
| Al Mezan became member in 8 human rights networks/coalitions.                                                                 |
| - Issuance of 20 joint statements, press releases, urgent appeals, and open letters with international, regional, local and national organizations. |
| three other projects in cooperation with SCUK (on children rights), Adalah and PHR-Israel (on torture), and CARE (on torture). |
| Membership in the HR Protection Working Group (chaired by OHCHR) and in EMHRN HR Education Working Group acquired. Consultative status with ECOSOC followed up, however, not approved yet. |
| - Conducting assessments and evaluations, internal and external |
| - Conduct an assessment of staff needs |
| - Conduct three capacity-building training courses for staff members 30 |
| - Maintain contact with Al Mezan's core and project donors maintained. 11 meetings with donor partners took place. |
| Annual administrative and financial reports of 2005 submitted to donors. briefing procedure was set up - the “partner’s updates” - to give a |
| Staff recruitment |
| One translator replaced; One Research Assistant recruited for TAAU; Two consultants recruited to help with specific tasks in 2007, and two continued work from late 2006; Four individuals were recruited for three months to enter data in the English |
| Conducting assessments and evaluations, internal and external |
| Conduct an assessment of staff needs |
| Conduct three capacity-building training courses for staff members 30 |
| Despite advertisement; 3 volunteer lawyers recruited to be trained, and provide help for, the LAU; Two data-entry officers left on a non-pay leave; one for 3 months and the second for one year; An intern left after 7 months of service. Membership in the HR Protection Working Group (chaired by OHCHR) and in EMHRN HR Education Working Group acquired. Consultative status with ECOSOC followed up, however, not approved yet. |
| - Maintain contact with existing donors, establish contact and meet with potential donors |
| -. Provide regular reports to existing donors on activities and financial issues. |
| - Maintain contact with units and develop new project ideas and proposals |
| Regular contact with Al Mezan’s core and project donors maintained. |
| 11 meetings with donor partners took place. |
| Annual administrative and financial reports of 2005 submitted to donors. |
| briefing procedure was set up - the “partner’s updates” - to give a |
| It is worth noting here that many of these opportunities were sought abroad in the past. Given the reality of prolonged closure, the Center will seek opportunities locally in 2008. In case the closure conditions change positively, opportunities will be sought abroad. |
| as the needs arise | brief update every few weeks on the work of Mezan and the human rights situation in Gaza | database. Failure to recruit an Admin/Finance Officer despite advertisement. | Al Mezan's researchers, field workers, trainer, and projects staff participated in a training course entitled “training of trainers in IHL”
One researcher and one fieldworker participated in a course on UN mechanisms;
One lawyer participated in activities on international jurisdiction;
One project-based fieldworker trained on monitoring and documentation at Al Mezan;
Three volunteer lawyers recruited and trained on legal aid/advice at Al Mezan;
Failure to dispatch staff members abroad and to the WB three times;
Failure to initiate review for internal admin/financial statutes/bylaws
(Successful installation of a videoconference unit; inc. Training of four staff members (project funded);
Project-funded upgrading of databases, internet service, and website; |
### Capacity building for staff and organization

- The Center's director, the international relations and advocacy coordinator, the legal Aid Coordinator, the field work unit coordinator, the training and mass communication unit coordinator, and the Training facilitator participated in 10 events which included training courses, conference and workshops outside the Gaza strip.

### Capacity building

- Two fieldworkers participated in courses on IHL; FWU Coordinator participated in a workshop on monitoring priorities in Ramallah;
- Failure to dispatch staff members abroad and to the WB seven times;
- Failure to initiate review for internal admin/financial statutes/bylaws;
- Failure to arrange a capacity building seminar with EMHRN;
- 975 new books purchased for library

### Inviting local and int’l officials, diplomats and NGOs for meetings

- Hosting meetings with them
- Attending to networks membership and activity requirement

### Contributing to HR joint statements and reports

- Contribute to joint HR legal advocacy
- Presentations on HR conditions locally and internationally

### Over 90 meetings with local and international figures and diplomats took place inside and outside Al Mezan.

- Around 200 media interviews with local, Arab, and international media agencies, satellite TVs and radio stations.

### Participation in a meeting over the phone for the EMHRN to draft the network’s new strategic plan.

- Following up the application sent by Al Mezan in 2006 to receive consultative status within the United Nations ECOSOC.
- Contributing actively to
Contribute to joint reporting to UN mechanisms.

- 12 joint statements, press release and urgent appeals issued with international, Israeli and local organizations.

- 4 joint open letters sent to UN human Rights council, EU-Israel Association Council, and the Israeli government regarding human rights violations in the Gaza Strip.

Other advocacy letters were sent by Al Mezan to the United Nations' Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Louise Arbour and the diplomatic missions to the Palestinian National Authority the Israeli gross human rights violations in Gaza.

Contribution to 21 studies/researches conducted by other
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expand the space assigned for the library in Jabalia office, including a children’s corner.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Supplement it with appropriate basic and contemporary sources.</strong></th>
<th><strong>To maintain contact with the local communities, schools and universities.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50 books were donated from other institutions.</td>
<td>730 books were purchased from the Cairo International Book Fair.</td>
<td>248 books were purchased from local bookstores, and a number of others through the British Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library was equipped with six computers connected to the internet.</td>
<td>An advertising campaign among universities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Public relations, networking and advocacy.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hundreds of email exchanges; Numerous videoconference meetings; 93 meetings in Gaza with national and international bodies and diplomatic missions; 5 letters sent to UN and EU bodies; 84 appearances in written and visual media outlets.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Purchase HR related books and sources. Assign and furnish a corner in the main office for library shelves. Receive students groups and encourage them to use the library.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>114 books purchased and 73 donated from other organizations and individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>356 students from schools in North Gaza district visited the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>939 people benefited from the library's services, including 34 persons who received the library's membership. The number of members since the establishment of the library in 2003 has reached 112.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Oversee/ assess outcomes.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Observation of outputs and outcomes continuous through reports and meetings.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Oversee/ assess outcomes.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Stronger internal monitoring and assessment of outcomes/impact through</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Re-assessment and changes in activities decided according to changes in work environment. Three focus group meetings with beneficiaries were conducted in early January 2008 in order to ensure participation in evaluating the Center's work in 2007; One survey (by phone) was conducted for the same purpose by TAAU.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Produce Al Mezan newsletter</td>
<td>3 newsletters issued</td>
<td>Two issues produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise two conferences</td>
<td>Both were cancelled due to the developments in Gaza.</td>
<td>Supervise conferences 1 conference on HR protection in cooperation with the OHCHR. Conference on budget remained irrelevant in 2008; therefore cancelled. Conference on free expression planned but cancelled owing to start of Cast Lead offensive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. Fieldwork Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planed activities 2006</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planed activities 2007</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planed activities 2008</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue gathering data based on the questionnaires that were previously developed; development of new forms in new domains</td>
<td>- Documentation of 4,414 cases based on questionnaires; Total 6,951 documented cases on databases; 2,067 data-gathering field visits; 3 questionnaires developed</td>
<td>Monitor/document cases of violations by: Conduct field visits to meet victims/witnesses and collect data and evidences; Maintain relations with NGOs and other sources; Follow up the media.</td>
<td>9,803 cases inputted into databases; 5,914 questionnaires collected; 2,547 field visits conducted, including 33 field meetings with victims of human rights violations; 1,022 visits to governmental and non-governmental organizations; Ongoing follow-up of the media.</td>
<td>Monitoring and documentation of violations Filed visits to locations of violations Visits to hospitals, schools and victims homes Collect affidavits and evidences</td>
<td>4,905 cases documented &amp; inputted into databases; 1,797 field visits to areas of violations, schools, hospitals, and victims homes conducted, 1,122 visits to relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations; 334 affidavits collected. Thousands of photos and other evidences collected.</td>
<td>Increase in cases documented compared with the same period in 2007; In response to closure, daily monitoring of crossing points using special questionnaires occurred; More focus on detention: 182 cases of arrest by IOF, and 907 by security in Gaza (not all cases documented); Increase in cases referred to legal assistance; mainly as a result of illegal detention by IOF and local authorities; Focus on new issues: human shields in Gaza and displacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update and maintain databases</td>
<td>Databases maintained and updated, focus on ESC rights</td>
<td>Continue gathering data based on the 15 questionnaires that were previously developed; Develop new forms according to needs.</td>
<td>15 questionnaires used regularly (security problems questionnaire was updated to meet the current developments); Preparation for developing a new questionnaire form to be used as a tool to collate data on violations of freedom of expression; 379 affidavits collected;</td>
<td>Develop one new questionnaire form on free expression Conduct field meetings with groups of victims Maintain relations with ordinary people, relevant officials and grassroots activists</td>
<td>15 questionnaires used regularly; Development of a new questionnaire on the freedom of expression for the use of AL Mezan's project &quot;Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Expression and Media Work in Gaza&quot; team to collect data on violations against journalists.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and refer cases to other units/identify victims of corruption</td>
<td>Collecting thousands of photos and other evidences.</td>
<td>Maintain and update databases (including in English)</td>
<td>Collect complete data on violations using questionnaire forms</td>
<td>Refer victims to LAU or TMCU or external bodies</td>
<td>Databases maintained and inputted regularly; Databases content reviewed and verified monthly; Databases upgraded for more efficient usage; 5,821 questionnaires collected; 280 cases referred to LAU; Ongoing follow-up of the media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 86 cases referred to LAU and other units for follow up/only cases of a general nature documented*</td>
<td>Check and update the Center’s database on human rights violations; Regularly maintain database.</td>
<td>Databases maintained and inputted regularly; Databases content reviewed and verified monthly; One new database designed and used; 10 questionnaires were translated to English, 7 of which were entered into English databases (completed)</td>
<td>Responded to 2800 requests for information and statistics about human right violations to local and international organization.</td>
<td>1,409 cases provided to local and international bodies and the media; Hundreds of cases referred to database content on the website; Increase in requests of information; Information used by the media and NGOs over 250 times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publication of 2006 report on impact of IOF/PNA violations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Statistical report issued on the IOF violations of Palestinians' human rights.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Provide primary data and information to local and international organizations seeking to report on HR conditions in OPT based on direct field research.</strong></td>
<td>Provision of HR data and information quickly to local and int'l bodies upon request</td>
<td><strong>Responded to 2800 requests for information and statistics about human right violations to local and international organization.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Produce 2 reports on internal violence one of them since January 2003 and the other one for the year 2006; produce other reports, press releases and</strong></td>
<td><strong>Publication of 2007 report, which includes the facts and figures and the impact of IOF violations.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Annual report on IOF violations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Annual report on internal violations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Two Annual report on IOF and internal violations are due in March 2009.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documentary thematic reports</strong> Statement on adequate housing</td>
<td><strong>2006 report issued in February 2007; 2007 report to be issued in February 2008.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Two reports on movement and</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nine new reports:</strong> - Statistical report on the killing and mining during operation Hot Winter;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In March, the FWU issued a report on the impact of the siege on Gaza; - On 6 April, it issued a quarterly report on the impacts of IOF violations in Gaza; - During 2008, the Unit helped draft and issue 4 reports on freedom of expression; - On 17 June, the Unit issued a report on the use of human shields by IOF in Gaza. - In August, it helped draft and issue a report on the killing of Reuters photojournalist, Fadel Shana'a.

| Statements according to need | 46 short case-based documentation reports issued by fieldworkers Eight working papers on human rights violations and situations 140 press releases produced by FWU Mezan’s first quarterly newsletter in Arabic was produced | Access; impacts on HR | - 117 press releases were drafted and issued by the FWU; 814 daily news on the website; 27 brief situation reports on specific human rights |
| One background research study on the rights of the child in the Gaza Strip | Replaced by project on child rights** | Produce reports, statements; Publications: Press releases and news briefs; One report on internal violence; Ten field reports; One background study on the rights of the child; and other various reports | 158 press releases and 37 news briefings (by all units), and 11 joint statements; 1 interim report on internal violence produced (yearly report to follow in February 2008); 17 field reports; Report on child rights transferred to projected special project on child | Issue 100-150 press releases Issue brief situation reports when required |

** This report is an activity under a project in cooperation with Care International's Tazeer Project. It was co-drafted, overseen and edited by the FWU.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensure the effective implementation for the last leg of the Elections project; produce report on PLC Elections</th>
<th>- activities conducted smoothly according to project aims - subsequent monitoring of university elections upon request - comprehensive report published on Al Mezan elections project</th>
<th>Contribute to dissemination: Media events; Distribution of publications</th>
<th>Besides media events And participations in local events below; fieldworkers routinely distribute publications in districts;</th>
<th>Media participations; local NGOs; Distribution of publications</th>
<th>Fieldworkers routinely distribute publications in districts; Distribution also takes place at offices regularly;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to the annual ESC rights report</td>
<td>- Cooperation continued with TAAU; report published</td>
<td>Identify victims of corruption and misconduct by government officials and refer them to legal assistance</td>
<td>File referred to AMAN Coalition and to be part of joint coordination between AMAN and Mezan; 203 cases referred to LAU and other units for follow up.</td>
<td>Guidance of international delegates and journalists</td>
<td>Guidance of 29 delegations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance of international delegates and</td>
<td>Guidance of 8 delegations</td>
<td>Guidance of international delegates and journalists</td>
<td>Guidance of 13 delegations</td>
<td>Guidance of international delegates and</td>
<td>Guidance of 29 delegations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 reports issued on: - violations against civil society organizations and trade and other unions in the Gaza Strip and West Bank (jointly issued with Al Haq) - the humanitarian implications of Israel's siege and closure of Gaza</td>
<td>Rights;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>journalists</td>
<td>Media events and participation in NGO events</td>
<td>36 media events; 49 participations in local events;</td>
<td>Media participations; local NGOs;</td>
<td>52 media participations 36 participations in local events organized by NGOs and universities;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participation in 35 events on radio and TV stations; all of which on ESC rights and personal security in Gaza - 75 participations in events carried out by other NGOs</td>
<td>Reported in the same table above</td>
<td>Reported in the same table above (app. 1,500 cases of provision of data)</td>
<td>Reported in the same table above</td>
<td>Reported in the same table above (app. 2,800 cases of provision of data)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availing data and information on human rights to local and international bodies</td>
<td>900 cases of providing information to United Nations bodies, media offices, journalists, academics and other units in the Centre</td>
<td>Organization of field meetings with victims of ESC rights violations</td>
<td>33 meetings conducted with groups of victims</td>
<td>7 meetings conducted with groups of victims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of field meetings with victims of ESC rights violations</td>
<td>51 meetings conducted by fieldworkers on ESC rights situations which needed investigation, intervention and informing the victims about their rights and redress channels.</td>
<td>33 meetings conducted with groups of victims</td>
<td>Organization of field meetings with victims of ESC rights violations</td>
<td>7 meetings conducted with groups of victims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 3. Legal Aid Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planed activities 2006</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planed activities 2007</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planed activities 2008</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approximately 15 cases of free of charge legal aid and/or representation in Israeli courts</td>
<td>99 prisoners represented before Israeli courts</td>
<td>Legal representation: Follow-up of cases of past years; 30 cases in Israeli courts; File 50 cases in Palestinian courts; Refer and coordinate cases with Israeli NGOs; 85 cases of out-of-court interventions upon complaints</td>
<td>Followed up on 60 of previous years cases; 112 cases filed at Israeli courts (108 prisoners' cases); 65 cases field at Palestinian courts; 188 interventions outside court (84 complaints raised to Israeli authorities, and 104 others raised to Palestinian authorities)</td>
<td>Respond to requests of legal advice (av. 600 cases)</td>
<td>Represent victims of violations at courts (50 cases before Israeli courts; 50 before Palestinian courts in OPT)</td>
<td>Increase in complaints locally; 3 petitions before Israeli High Court in relation to blockade and collective punishment; Suspension of litigation in Gaza pending legal restoration of the judiciary; Serious increase in political arrests/torture cases; Focus on efforts to visit political prisoners locally;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide legal advice to victims of human rights violations</td>
<td>239 cases of legal advice given to victims across Gaza</td>
<td>Provide legal advice to victims.</td>
<td>732 cases of legal advice in the office through fieldworkers</td>
<td>Receive and follow up av. 100 complaints with Palestinian and</td>
<td>Handling 69 complainants against the Israeli authorities. Those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32 This item has been seriously affected by a long strike in the judiciary system that lasted for months: a halt of the Attorney General's Office work since 13 June 2007, and the taking over of the civil judiciary by the Higher Council of Justice, which was formed by the deposed government in Gaza beginning 26 November 2007. Most of the cases have therefore been rendered pending developments at the political level to resolve these problems.

33 When planning for 2006 took place, it was expected that the detention of Gazans by IOF would decrease following the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. Nonetheless, the cases of detention actually increased and the Center was faced with increasing demand on legal representation services.
Referral of cases to Israeli organizations continued as restrictions on movement and access stepped up by IOF; Prevalence of cases that need access to healthcare in Israel continued; Decrease in the success rates in complaints regarding access brought before the Israeli authorities (6/22); Activities involving PLC were suspended owing to halt of PLC work;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16 cases taken to Palestinian courts on behalf of victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>File 50 cases in Palestinian courts; Maintain a database for the cases followed by LAU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 cases filed at Palestinian courts; Database maintained regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>File 50 cases in Palestinian courts; Maintain a database for the cases followed by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No cases were filed due to HR NGO’s decision to boycott courts in Gaza Database maintained regularly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Raise 175 complaints to Palestinian authorities, including 136 cases on illegal detention by security apparatuses, 23 cases on confiscating property and closure of charity organizations, and 13 cases on violations inside detention centers and other violations to the law.*

**Israeli authorities** (40 and 60 respectively) included 23 complaints on the obstruction on right to movement, 39 on the right to health, and 7 others regarding ill-treatment of prisoners inside Israeli prisons.

This item has been seriously affected by a long strike in the judiciary system that lasted for months: a halt of the Attorney General's Office work since 13 June 2007, and the taking over of the civil judiciary by the Higher Council of Justice, which was formed by the deposed government in Gaza beginning 26 November 2007. Most of the cases have therefore been rendered pending developments at the political level to resolve these problems.
LaU

- Conduct regular visits to prisons and detention centers and meet with detainees/victims
- Correspondences with authorities regarding HR violations; including IOF, PNA and Hamas-led police in Gaza, to inquire about detainees and/or systematic violations

Approximately 85 cases of free of charge, out of court intervention

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

LAU

- Conduct regular visits to prisons and detention centers and meet with detainees/victims
- Correspondences with authorities regarding HR violations; including IOF, PNA and Hamas-led police in Gaza, to inquire about detainees and/or systematic violations

Approximately 85 cases of free of charge, out of court intervention

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

LAU

- Conduct regular visits to prisons and detention centers and meet with detainees/victims
- Correspondences with authorities regarding HR violations; including IOF, PNA and Hamas-led police in Gaza, to inquire about detainees and/or systematic violations

Approximately 85 cases of free of charge, out of court intervention

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

LAU

- Conduct regular visits to prisons and detention centers and meet with detainees/victims
- Correspondences with authorities regarding HR violations; including IOF, PNA and Hamas-led police in Gaza, to inquire about detainees and/or systematic violations

Approximately 85 cases of free of charge, out of court intervention

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

LAU

- Conduct regular visits to prisons and detention centers and meet with detainees/victims
- Correspondences with authorities regarding HR violations; including IOF, PNA and Hamas-led police in Gaza, to inquire about detainees and/or systematic violations

Approximately 85 cases of free of charge, out of court intervention

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;

LAU

- Conduct regular visits to prisons and detention centers and meet with detainees/victims
- Correspondences with authorities regarding HR violations; including IOF, PNA and Hamas-led police in Gaza, to inquire about detainees and/or systematic violations

Approximately 85 cases of free of charge, out of court intervention

- 29 complaints raised to Palestinian authorities
- 53 complaints raised to the Israeli authorities.
- 23 health-related cases referred to PHR-Israel
- 11 right to movement related cases referred to Gisha

Legal awareness/information
- Produce press releases and briefs;
- Produce four publications within the “Legal Guide Series”;
- Organize 4 workshops

Receive and coordinate legal aid for cases of ESC rights violations owing to IOF restrictions

- 3 cases taken to Israeli High Court in cooperation with other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.
- Attend public hearings, workshops and conferences; 5 meetings with PLC committees;
- Work with PLC members to finalize and pass the Basic Education Law

No hearings attended (no PLC sessions conducted during the reporting period);
- 86 participations in workshops/conferences, meetings and media events;
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Produced/Drafted/Issued</th>
<th>Meetings/Events</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with the PLC human rights committee; Activity on education law suspended.</td>
<td>2 meetings</td>
<td>2 meetings</td>
<td>security problems in the region. Meetings with UN and local NGOs regarding the Child Law, and discussions regarding amending it towards better protection and implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce legal simplified guides on Palestinian laws</td>
<td>4 legal guides produced.</td>
<td>Produce legal simplified guides on Palestinian laws</td>
<td>1 legal guide, one working paper, one article, and a second edition of the Palestinian laws series produced; Produce 4 Legal Guides Draft statements and position papers criticizing deviation from HR standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize 2 workshops on PLC draft laws</td>
<td>1 workshop organized, while two others were postponed*</td>
<td>2 workshops organized on:</td>
<td>Organize 4 workshops on legal issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend public hearings at the PLC as well as workshops and conferences led</td>
<td>- 3 PLC hearings attended - 15 media events - 49 NGO events</td>
<td>Attend public hearings and workshops and conferences led by sister NGOs on legal matters</td>
<td>49 events attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce legal simplified guides on Palestinian laws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize 2 workshops on PLC draft laws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend public hearings at the PLC as well as workshops and conferences led</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: *postponed* indicates that the event was delayed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>by sister NGOs on legal matters</th>
<th>organised by Al Mezan and other NGOs</th>
<th>60 participations in workshops/conferences, and meetings, 25 participations in media events.</th>
<th>Speak to the media on human rights and law issues.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organize 7 meetings with specialized committees of PLC members and lawyers.</td>
<td>Two meetings held</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Technical assistance and Advocacy Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planted activities 2006</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planted activities 2007</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planted activities 2008</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research on current and ESC rights topics</td>
<td>Special reports and investigations of the impacts of closures and sanctions on ESC rights are ongoing</td>
<td>Research/reporting on ESCR Continued reporting as decided by PFUC;</td>
<td>8 reports produced upon PFUC recommendation. These reports are on:  - The availability of medicines in the Gaza Strip.  - Food security in the Gaza Strip.  - The Emergency Government's suspension of the salaries of civil servants.  - The movement of people and goods through Gaza's borders.  - The suspension of Gaza's Custom Code.</td>
<td>Study on health conditions (cancer, heart and kidney disease) Study on vocational training in Gaza Study on the conditions of deaf children in Gaza Report on the PNA's budget (based on research, not conference)</td>
<td>5 reports produced upon PFUC recommendation:  - The reduction of fuel supplies by IOF and impact on human rights in Gaza;  - Prices inflation in the Gaza Strip: between the Israeli blockade and the absence of government monitoring;  - Report on people with chronic disease in Gaza under the blockade;  - The conditions of deaf people in Gaza.  - The role Palestinian Banks in Developing</td>
<td>TAAU activities continue to be responsive to developments on the ground; i.e. to highlight human rights situations resulting from the conducts of stakeholders; Activities on the PNA budget were suspended owing to the absence of a budget;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative PNA 2006 budgetary analysis</td>
<td>Reports produced covering the 2005 &amp; 2006 conferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research on current and ESC rights topics</td>
<td>Special reports and investigations of the impacts of closures and sanctions on ESC rights are ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Advocate: coordination and liaison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Produced in March 2008</td>
<td>Research for 2008 report ongoing;</td>
<td>Research for 2008 report ongoing;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Analysis: Workshops to follow each budgetary analytical research</th>
<th>Replaced by one conference on Palestinian economy</th>
<th>Organize 3 workshops on ESCR rights and budgetary issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| The situation of labour unions in the Gaza Strip. The situation of banks in Palestine, as well as a report on the proceedings of the workshop conducted on this matter; | the Economic and Social Conditions in the Gaza Strip | A report on the PNA's budget was impossible to issue due to the internal division and political problems. |

| 5 participations with local media on ESC rights situation 5 conference participations 52 meetings and visits | Liaison Attend workshops/hearings; Maintain contact with the media and government departments; | 3 NGO events attended; 6 participations of media events; 54 interviews of and meetings with PLC, governmental and non-governmental bodies. |

| 9 NGO events attended. No PLC hearings attended. 12 participations of media events; 54 meetings with senior governmental and non-governmental officials on human rights and research issues | Maintain contact with the media and government departments | 5 participations with local media on ESCR rights and budgetary issues 5 conference participations 52 meetings and visits |

| 3 NGO events attended; 6 participations of media events; 54 interviews of and meetings with PLC, governmental and non-governmental bodies. | 4 workshops Organize 4 workshops Send letters to decision-makers with the findings of studies and reports Publish findings in the media | 2 workshops organized on: The inflation of prices in the Gaza Strip. The reality of trade and laborers' unions. |

| The situation of labour unions in the Gaza Strip. The situation of banks in Palestine, as well as a report on the proceedings of the workshop conducted on this matter; | the Economic and Social Conditions in the Gaza Strip | A report on the PNA's budget was impossible to issue due to the internal division and political problems. |

| 5 participations with local media on ESC rights situation 5 conference participations 52 meetings and visits | Liaison Attend workshops/hearings; Maintain contact with the media and government departments; | 3 NGO events attended; 6 participations of media events; 54 interviews of and meetings with PLC, governmental and non-governmental bodies. |

| 9 NGO events attended. No PLC hearings attended. 12 participations of media events; 54 meetings with senior governmental and non-governmental officials on human rights and research issues | Maintain contact with the media and government departments | 5 participations with local media on ESCR rights and budgetary issues 5 conference participations 52 meetings and visits |

| 3 NGO events attended; 6 participations of media events; 54 interviews of and meetings with PLC, governmental and non-governmental bodies. | 4 workshops Organize 4 workshops Send letters to decision-makers with the findings of studies and reports Publish findings in the media | 2 workshops organized on: The inflation of prices in the Gaza Strip. The reality of trade and laborers' unions. |

<p>| The situation of labour unions in the Gaza Strip. The situation of banks in Palestine, as well as a report on the proceedings of the workshop conducted on this matter; | the Economic and Social Conditions in the Gaza Strip | A report on the PNA's budget was impossible to issue due to the internal division and political problems. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Cases/Developed/Performed</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing technical assistance and meetings with legislative and executive bodies</td>
<td>8 cases of technical assistance</td>
<td>Provision of technical assistance based on studies</td>
<td>Provision of technical assistance based on studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop new questionnaires for research</td>
<td>1 questionnaire developed for a study</td>
<td>Develop new questionnaires for research</td>
<td>Develop new questionnaires for research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Analysis: Workshops to follow each budgetary analytical research</td>
<td>Replaced by one conference on Palestinian economy</td>
<td>Organisation for 4th Annual Budget Conference on the draft 2006 PNA budget</td>
<td>Produce a report on Annual Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issuance of press release on ESCR</td>
<td>Two press releases</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No report produced owing to lack of information and cooperation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions since the establishment of the PNA:

35 cases of technical assistance.

No report produced owing to lack of information and cooperation.

Provision of technical assistance based on studies

Develop new questionnaires for research

Provision of technical assistance based on studies

Develop new questionnaires for research

Develop new questionnaires for research

2 questionnaire developed on: Adequate Housing Forced Displacement

Adequate Housing

Forced Displacement

Available of medicines.

Health services provided to citizens

Adequate Housing

Forced Displacement

Produce a report on Annual Budget

No report produced owing to lack of information and cooperation.

Workshops to follow each budgetary analytical research

Postponed due to the absence of the PNA budget for 2007, as a result of the financial boycotting of the PNA.
## 5. Training and Mass Communication Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned activities 2006</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planned activities 2007</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Planned activities 2008</th>
<th>Implemented Activities</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 Training courses</td>
<td>1 six-month training course for lawyers 12 training courses for students, library officers and volunteers</td>
<td>12 training courses for community groups; One 6-month legal training course;</td>
<td>13 courses on human rights and democracy conducted; One training course for lawyers achieved (30 training sessions);</td>
<td>15 training courses</td>
<td>15 training courses on human rights and democracy organized. Another 70 training hours facilitated by the TMCU under two projects &quot;Promotion of IHL and ESCR by Education in Gaza&quot; &quot;Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Expression and Media Work in Gaza&quot; A six month training for lawyers conducted. (34 sessions, a total of 100 training hours)</td>
<td>Awareness/training activities were suspended between 29 April and 24 June owing to fuel and electricity crisis; Lawyers' training course postponed to the second half of 2008; Weak start of PW program owing to disturbed students attendance at universities; however, program initiated and completed. Increased demand by schools to educate children/school parliaments on human rights. Two awareness/education projects implemented in 2008, focusing on free expression and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Lectures and Meetings</td>
<td>14 lectures and meetings implemented</td>
<td>10 Lectures and Meetings</td>
<td>29 lectures (inc. during school visits);</td>
<td>Conduct 15 lectures and discussion meetings on HR</td>
<td>18 lectures conducted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate workshops 4</td>
<td>3 workshops organized</td>
<td>Facilitate 4 workshops;</td>
<td>10 workshops were conducted, five of which were educational as they targeted school children and teachers, while the others were on: • The rights of civil servants within the PNA.</td>
<td>Organize 12 training/awareness courses</td>
<td>12 workshops organized, 10 of which were educational and the other two were on: - &quot;The Document of the Arab League's Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This activity was organized jointly with the OHCHR in Gaza. It included training sessions and consultation as to how human rights NGOs can make use of the mechanism to defend human rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>5 publications</th>
<th>5 publications: 4 on the proceedings of two workshops and two FP meetings, as well as a report on the situation of children in times of armed conflict</th>
<th>Produce training materials</th>
<th>Ministers: Restricting or Neutralizing Free Media?&quot; - The Universal Periodic Review Mechanism, and how can Palestinian NGOs make best use of it,35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 'Face the Public' meetings and follow-up</td>
<td>one Face-the-Public meeting</td>
<td>Organize 5 'Face the Public' meetings (FP);</td>
<td>2 FP meetings were organized on:</td>
<td>Conduct 2 face-the-public meetings on ESCR issues</td>
<td>One Face-the-Public meeting organised on &quot;Drinking Water Crisis in Rafah Governorate, and Potential solutions&quot;. A conference organized in cooperation with the OHCHR in Gaza on JR Protection in OPT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Crisis of Municipalities in the Gaza Strip. The Sewage Problems in Al Jorah Area...Possible and Urgent Solution;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Given the priority of the subject-matter, a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35 This activity was organized jointly with the OHCHR in Gaza. It included training sessions and consultation as to how human rights NGOs can make use of the mechanism to defend human rights.
During the 2007 summer holiday, UNRWA organized summer games and other activities that targeted 250,000 children. As a side effect, all schools, NGOs and clubs were engaged for most of the summer season.

| Organization of 1 ‘Pass the Word’ Program | One ‘Pass the Word’ program initiated, Two training courses for Pass-the-Word volunteers 12 awareness courses were conducted by volunteers in campuses | One ‘Pass the Word’ Program (PW); Two courses and three workshops were conducted to qualify the volunteers of PW; 13 courses were achieved by PW volunteers with their peers at campuses; | Organize a sixth version of Pass-the-Word Program for students. Two courses and two workshops were conducted to qualify the volunteers of Pass the word; 19 working groups were achieved by PW volunteers with their peers at campuses of five universities in Gaza. |
| 5 Summer camps | 11 Summer camps for children | 5 Human Rights summer camps; One summer camp36; | Organize HR 5 summer camps for children Summer camps were canceled due to security Chaos in the Gaza strip. |
| N/A | N/A | Liaison: Liaise with local and international bodies and media; Campaigning; Maintaining/creating memberships with HR bodies; Contribute to shadow reports and/or special reports; 37 liaison/coordination meetings; 45 per month correspondences dedicated for liaison and networking; One campaign maintained; 6 Memberships maintained, pursued with ECOSOC; Contribution to EMHRN Annual Review; Annual PIP WG meeting and Campaigning | Liaise with international and local bodies and media; 127 liaison/coordination meetings; (av.) 65 per month correspondences dedicated for liaison and networking; 31 media events/participations; Participation in one |

36 During the 2007 summer holiday, UNRWA organized summer games and other activities that targeted 250,000 children. As a side effect, all schools, NGOs and clubs were engaged for most of the summer season.
| Maintain, update website | Website upgraded and maintained (32,293 hits) | Dissemination/translation | Timely updating of the website (53,146 hits); Putting all press releases, briefings, statements, reports online; Translation of all press releases, statements and 3 reports; 27 media events/participations | Updating al Mezan's website | Timely updating of the website; posting all press releases, news briefings, statements, reports online; Website and databases successfully upgraded (47,205 hits) |  |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|  |

37 This activity comes in line with Al Mezan's active membership in the 1612 Working Group, which is supervised by UNICEF. The WG issued bi-monthly reports to the UNSC, covering Gaza and the West Bank.
3.2. Project activities

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

a. Enhancing Respect for Human Rights: Closure of Gaza's Crossings Project in collaboration with TroCaire

This project started in July 2007 with support from TroCaire with the following goal, objective, and activities:

- **Goal**: To contribute to enhancing promotion and protection for human rights in Gaza through information and advocacy.
- **Objective**: To enhance awareness of human rights violations emanating from restrictions on movement among local and international populations with a view to produce advocacy to help lift them.

**Planned Activities**:
- Write and update a report on the HR implications caused by the closures.
- Develop leaflets and posters highlighting the violations.
- Create a database that tracks closures.
- Write regular letters to various stakeholders on the situation at crossings.
- Conduct a tour in Ireland and other EU countries to directly approach audiences on the problem the project addresses.

**Implemented Activities**:
- Updated documents for the Gaza Still Occupied Campaign (a second update to be carried out in March 2008).
- Designed a database that tracks the land crossing closures between Gaza and Israel, and Gaza and Egypt. A weekly report from the database can be accessed online on the Centre's database at [http://www.mezan.org/site_en/crossings/detail.php](http://www.mezan.org/site_en/crossings/detail.php).
- Produced reports on the consequences of the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip. Two reports were published in one publication in English and in Arabic (also made accessible online in October and December 2007, and in print in January 2007).
- Contacted diplomatic missions, international organizations and EU bodies requesting intervention by the EU to lift movement restrictions.

Under this project, a tour aimed at advocating for human rights in EU countries was planned; however, Al Mezan had to cancel this activity owing to the movement restrictions imposed on the Gaza Strip, which also prevent human rights defenders' access to events and goods outside the Strip. None of Al Mezan's staff members was allowed to leave Gaza during the reported period.

b. Promotion of IHL Education/Information in Gaza in collaboration with Diakonia

This two-year project started on 15 November 2007; however, the recruitment of its staff took place only in the second half of December.

**Goal**:
- To contribute to promoting respect for and protection of human rights through education on IHL and ESCR in Gaza.

**Objectives**:
- To increase the ability of target groups to challenge violations of IHL and ESCR in the Gaza Strip.
To build the capacity of Al Mezan and other individuals and NGOs to discharge IHL education in the Gaza Strip.

To enable target groups to make use of IHL knowledge for the protection of human rights.

To spread knowledge of IHL and ESCR among Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, which intends to increase and demand respect for respect for them;

To equip target groups with skills related to IHL with a view to see them used in courts and statements by officials and NGOs demanding respect of IHL;

To increase coordination between Al Mezan and civil society in order to strengthen and expand IHL education, capacity-building, training and information in the Gaza Strip.

To enhance media covering of IHL.

Planned Activities:

Capacity Building:
- Training the project's staff and Al Mezan's training staff on IHL education.
- Dispatching staff members to receive advanced training on IHL outside the Gaza Strip.
- Installing a videoconference link at Al Mezan's office to help increase its capacity to coordinate with civil society.
- Supplying Al Mezan's library with 150 books on IHL.

Awareness/Information:
- Producing a survey study on the linkages between IHL and ESCR and a study on IHL and development in Gaza.
- Generating twelve handouts on IHL to be used in awareness and training courses.
- Creating leaflets and posters.
- Promoting knowledge of IHL in the media.
- Expand Al Mezan's awareness and training courses to incorporate IHL and organizing 12 workshops and lectures on IHL yearly.

Training:
- Training lawyers on IHL and how to use it in litigation.
- Training teachers on IHL and the spreading knowledge of IHL at schools.
- Training students and spreading knowledge of IHL at universities.

Publication:
- Producing studies, handouts and other information to be put online, circulated and distributed in print.

Implemented Activities:

- Staff Recruitment: Following advertisements for two posts on 27 and 28 October 2007, the Centre recruited two people for the project. They were hired after completing a test on 18 November 2007 and being interviewed on 9 December 2007. Staff members effectively started their work on the project on 1 January 2008.
- Survey Study: a survey study highlighting the linkages between ESCR and IHL has been drafted and its publication is in progress
- 12 manuals/handouts drafted and the published.
- One leaflet designed, printed and distributed.
• IHL was incorporated in the five awareness/training courses implemented under Al Mezan’s core program.  

• Two courses within the Pass-the-Word program, which targets university students, were also expanded. One of these courses is theoretical and aims to equip volunteer students with knowledge about human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The second is aimed at training the group on the moderation of discussion sessions. Volunteers are then expected to organize five-session awareness courses in their universities under Al Mezan’s supervision. Those awareness courses were also amended to include one session on IHL. In the 2008 version of the program, 22 students (12 female) were recruited.

• Four workshops and four lectures were conducted; targeting teachers, lawyers, journalists, medical teams, law students and activists. The team seized the opportunity of a visit by Diakonia and members of its International Advisory board and organized a lecture in which Professor Ian Scobbie spoke about IHL developments concerning Gaza to human rights activists, journalists and lawyers.

• Installation of a videoconference unit at Al Mezan’s office in Gaza.

c. Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Expression and Media Work in Gaza: Tazeez Project in collaboration with Care International – WBG

This one-year project is part of Al Mezan's response to the significant changes in the human rights situation in Gaza. The project's goal, objective, and activities are as follows:

Goal:
• To contribute to promoting and protecting freedom of expression and free press in Gaza.

Objectives:
• To educate journalists on human rights particularly freedom of expression within the framework of Palestinian law and international human rights standards.
• To enhance media coverage of human rights with better content quality and scope.
• To enhance the role of the media and journalists in strengthening human rights and values associated with it, especially tolerance, diversity and the rule of law.
• To strengthen Al Mezan’s monitoring and documentation work in the area of free expression and press.

Planned Activities, distributed with two missions: (1) awareness/training and (2) monitoring and reporting:
• Organize five 30-hour courses for journalists and senior journalism students. This includes the design of training programs and materials.
• Organize workshops with the purpose of adopting a declaration of the press ethics in Gaza.
• Produce and distribute a poster on freedom of expression.
• Design a new questionnaire form for collecting data on violations of free expression and press in the Gaza Strip.
• Design a special database on the same subject matter.
• Collect data and evidences from the field.
• Produce four quarterly reports on the violations of freedom of expression and free press in the Gaza Strip, as well as statements and press releases on these violations.

38 92 people participated in these courses; including journalists, handicapped rehabilitation personnel, religious leaders (Imams), and refugee women. 48 were men and 44 women.
39 196 people participated in these events; 115 of whom were men and 81 women.
Implemented Activities:

- Staff Recruitment: Following advertisements for two posts on 27 and 28 October 2007, the Centre recruited two people for the project. They were hired after completing a test on 18 November 2007 and being interviewed on 9 December 2007. Staff members effectively started their work on the project on 1 January 2008.

- Survey Study: a survey study highlighting the linkages between ESCR and IHL has been drafted and its publication is in progress.

- 12 manuals/handouts drafted and printed.

- One leaflet on IHL designed and distributed.

- IHL was incorporated in the 15 awareness/training courses implemented under Al Mezan's core program.\(^{40}\)

- Two courses within the Pass-the-Word program, which targets university students, were also expanded.

- Four workshops and four lectures were conducted; targeting teachers, lawyers, journalists, medical teams, law students and activists.\(^{41}\) The team seized the opportunity of a visit by Diakonia and members of its International Advisory board and organized a lecture in which Professor Ian Scobbie spoke about IHL developments concerning Gaza to human rights activists, journalists and lawyers.

- AL Mezan incorporated IHL education into all of its awareness and training activities. Together, the expanded and new awareness activities included 264.5 training/awareness hours.

- 1313 people (629 of them women) gained new knowledge in IHL, including students, medical professionals, journalists and lawyers, professors of political science, journalism, science, and Islamic law in Palestinian universities, fieldworkers, and international humanitarian aid workers. Various levels of knowledge were gained, as reflected by the pre-tests and post-tests employed by the project's team.

- Participants were introduced to core IHL principles and standards. Pre- and post-tests indicate that at the conclusion of training activities, most participants were able to:
  - Grasp the main moral, historical and legal framework related to IHL
  - Point to differences and similarities between IHL and ESCR
  - Identify IHL mechanisms of enforcement
  - Grasp the main principles of IHL
  - Become acquainted with the language of IHL (esp. Lawyers and journalists)
  - Understand how IHL applies to the Occupied Palestinian Territories
  - Understand international criminal law and the process of IHL trials
  - Learn about grave breaches and war crimes and the significance of documenting them

- Al Mezan added to its library 58 books related to IHL, in addition to materials obtained from the ICRC. Various agencies and groups, in particular lawyers and students, used Al Mezan's library to access these documents.

- Installation of a videoconference unit at Al Mezan's office in Gaza.

\(^{40}\) 92 people participated in these courses; including journalists, handicapped rehabilitation personnel, religious leaders (Imams), and refugee women. 48 were men and 44 women.

\(^{41}\) 196 people participated in these events; 115 of whom were men and 81 women.
Implemented Activities:

- Recruitment of two staff members; a field worker and a project assistance following advertisement, testing and interviewing.
- Training of the field worker by the FWU.
- Designing of training program and training materials.
- Designing of a special questionnaire and database to document violations against journalists and the media.
- Monitoring and documentation of violations of freedom of speech and media work in Gaza; including by visiting victims and collecting data and evidences from them and from eyewitnesses (at least 160 cases have been documented).
- Producing four report on violations of freedom of expression and media work in the Gaza Strip.
- Producing of press releases denouncing violations against journalists and media workers.
- Organizing five training courses for practicing journalists and students studying media in Gaza.
- Organizing two workshops for journalists, in which they discussed a draft of a 'declaration of journalists best practices in OPT', which they had produced during the five training courses. Journalists adopted the declaration in December 2008. The declaration was incorporated into the teaching materials at Al Azhar and Al Aqsa universities in Gaza.
- According to an agreement with CARE, two extra field workers were recruited and trained to collect information about human rights violations during Cast Lead offensive.
- A conference on free expression was due to take place on 31 December 2008; however, it was cancelled owing to the start of Cast Lead offensive on Gaza.

d. Information Technology Development, in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for International Development (SDC).

This project aims to promote the information/communication system at Al Mezan. It included upgrading of the Centre's databases, web site, internet service and internal network, especially by creating a single server linking the center's three offices around the Gaza Strip. The staff members received training on the use of new databases and web site. It has strengthened the internal flow of information, use of databases and internet service be enhanced by the end of the project; especially after troubles related to the internet service caused problematic effects that undermined the work during the reported period. The project was initiated in May 2008, and was concluded in August 2008.
4. Financial issues:

The financial situation of Al Mezan remained relatively stable during the 2008. This is despite the occurrence of developments that brought about risks. In particular, the dissolution of Mu'assasat secretariat following the bankruptcy of the CDC, the company that was in charge of managing it, caused a problematic situation because Mu'assasat was a major donor-partner with commitments covering the entire period of the 3-Year Program Strategy 2006-2008. Nevertheless, this situation was overcome as the Mu'assasat donors declared that they would honor the commitments made by Mu'assasat. Al Mezan applied, and received, bridging funding from a temporary grant set by the like-minded donors of Mu'assasat, which covered the reported period. A new mechanism, managed by Palestinian non-profit organization NDC has been set and Al Mezan has successfully applied for, and received, core funding for the second part of 2008.

Moreover, for the first time ever, Al Mezan has been informed by its core donor-partner Kerkenactie/ICCO that there have been difficulties in making a transfer of a grant for the fiscal year 2008 in accordance with a signed agreement. The reasons behind this difficulty lied with a single bank, and the transfer was made successfully through another bank, thanks to the efforts of ICCO/Kerinactie. No other problems regarding transfer of funds occurred in 2008.

The Centre continues to seek to expand the pool of its core donor/partner. It has been in contact with potential donors, and will soon start contacts with other potential donors of human rights and the rule of law in OPT. This includes the Open Society Institute (OSI), Trocaire and the Irish Representative Office to the PA.

Enclosed to this narrative report are the financial statements regarding Al Mezan's funding for its core program and project during the reported period. It is worth noting that under the agreement with the donors of Mu'assasat donors (managed by the Danish Representative Office) Al Mezan had presented an audited report and a management letter for its core budget for the first half of 2008. This report was sent to all of the partners. Owing to the developments that followed Cast Lead offensive in Gaza, the auditing process has been postponed. The statements below are not audited. Partners should expect to receive the audited report for 2008 by the end of April 2008.