



Economic Recovery in the Gaza Strip:  
Promoting Choice, Resilience and Dignity (Phase II)  
PalTrade Monthly Update of GAZA CROSSINGS  
**November 2016**

**Palestine Trade Center**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY OF TRADE ACTIVITY IN NOVEMBER 2016..... 3

2. INTRODUCTION..... 4

3. IMPORTS & INCOMING TRUCKLOADS ..... 5

4. EXPORTS & OUTGOING TRUCKLOADS FROM GAZA ..... 8

.5 FUEL ..... 9

6. ANNEXES..... 11

## 1. SUMMARY OF TRADE ACTIVITY IN NOVEMBER 2016

The tables below summarize key data obtained by PalTrade regarding the movement of goods between the West Bank and Gaza Strip during November 2016:

**Table 1: Operational Status/Day**

| Crossing | Karem Abu Salem (KS) cargo | Rafah pedestrian | Previous Month (KS) | COMMENTS |
|----------|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Working  | 22                         | 5                | 14                  |          |
| Weekend  | 8                          | 0                | 9                   |          |
| Closed   | 0                          | 25               | 8                   |          |

**Table 2: Amount of Goods Entering the Gaza Strip by Crossing**

| Goods Entering Gaza by Crossing  | Truckloads    |
|--|---------------|
| <b><i>Karem Abu Salem</i></b>  |               |
| General goods ( <i>excluding construction materials for intl org &amp; fuel. It includes construction material for GRM</i> ) | 11,328        |
| Basic construction materials for projects implemented by international organizations (not only ABC)                          | 231           |
| Fuel (All types of fuel)   | 933           |
| Total truckloads entering Gaza through Karem Abu Salem   | 12,492        |
| <b><i>Rafah</i></b>  |               |
| Total truckloads entering Gaza through Rafah   | 172           |
| <b><i>Irez</i></b>   |               |
| Total truckloads entering Gaza through Irez  | 157           |
| <b>Total truckloads entering the Gaza Strip</b>  | <b>12,821</b> |

**Table 3: Fuel and Gas imports through Karem Abu Salem**

| Fuel and Gas imports through Karam Abu Salem | Truckloads |
|--|------------|
| Fuel entered Gaza                            | 486        |
| Industrial fuel for the power plan           | 166        |
| Cooking gas entered Gaza                     | 281        |

**Table 4: Amount of Goods Entering the Gaza Strip by Category**

| Goods Entering Gaza by Category        | Truckloads |
|--|------------|
| Total truckloads of humanitarian goods | 795        |
| Total truckloads of commercial goods   | 11,093     |
| Total truckloads of food items         | 2,329.5    |
| Total truckloads of non-food items     | 9,558.5    |
| Total truckloads of Fuel               | 933        |

**Table 5: Exit of Goods through Karem Abu Salem**

| Exit of Goods through Karem Abu Salem | Truckloads |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Exports to international markets      | 45         |
| Exports to Israel                     | 81         |
| Transfer of Goods to West Bank        | 124        |

## 2. INTRODUCTION

There are a total of three operational terminals connecting the Gaza Strip to adjacent territories. Beit Hanoun/ Erez, and Rafah are passenger crossing connecting Gaza Strip to Israel and Egypt respectively. Karem Abu Salem / Kerem Shalom (KS) is the only operational trade terminal serving the Gaza Strip.

Historically, there were six trade terminals along the Gaza Strip (GS) border that included: Al Montar / Karni, Sufa, Karem Abu Salem / Kerem Shalom (KS), Nahal Oz, Beit Hanoun / Erez, and Rafah. Four of these crossings have been closed to commercial movement; only KS and Beit Hanoun / Erez remain open for cargo and passengers movement to the Gaza Strip through Israel respectively.<sup>1</sup> Rafah is the only Palestinian- Egyptian that mainly acts as a passenger terminal with occasional cargo shipment of construction materials on exceptional basis requiring prior coordination.

The movement of goods into GS<sup>2</sup> increased by more than %80 in 2015 compared to the preceding year of 2014. This is a significant development by any measurement given the fact that imported commodities dropped by more than 35% in earlier years<sup>3</sup> when compared to rates in 2006.<sup>4</sup>

In 2015 an estimated 94,640 trucks entered the GS representing a 83% increase comparing to the same period in 2014 (In 2014, an estimated 51,679 trucks entered the GS). The noted increase is due to higher imports of construction materials needed for reconstruction following recent war in summer of 2014. The general decrease in the movement of goods in recent years is mainly due to Israeli administrative and regulatory restrictions, generally deteriorating economic conditions, as well as the internal political divisions between the GS that have made procedures more complex and costly.<sup>5</sup>

The movement of goods out of the Gaza has seen a very sharp decline over the last decade. In 2014 some 136 truckloads exited Gaza to the outside markets. This volume of exports represents a mere 3% of total exports in 2006 and less than 1% of total exports in the year 2000. In 2015 1353 truckloads of exports exited Gaza, representing a 494% increase comparing to the same period in 2014, this is largely due to exceptional resumption of selected vegetable exports to

<sup>1</sup> Closure of crossings: Sufa Crossing has been closed since April 20, 2011; Karni crossing has been closed since June 11, 2007; Karni grain conveyor has been closed since March 2011; Karni cement lane has been closed since 29 October 2008; Nahal Oz has been closed since early 2010; and Erez has been closed since 2005.

<sup>2</sup> The Palestinian territories are the WB and the GS. The GS constitutes more than 45% of the population.

<sup>3</sup> Total imports ranged between 26,838 TL in 2008 up to 65,122 TL in 2013).

<sup>4</sup> According to the Ministry of National Economy, the estimated number of truckloads imported into the GS in 2006 totaled approximately 81,825 trucks.

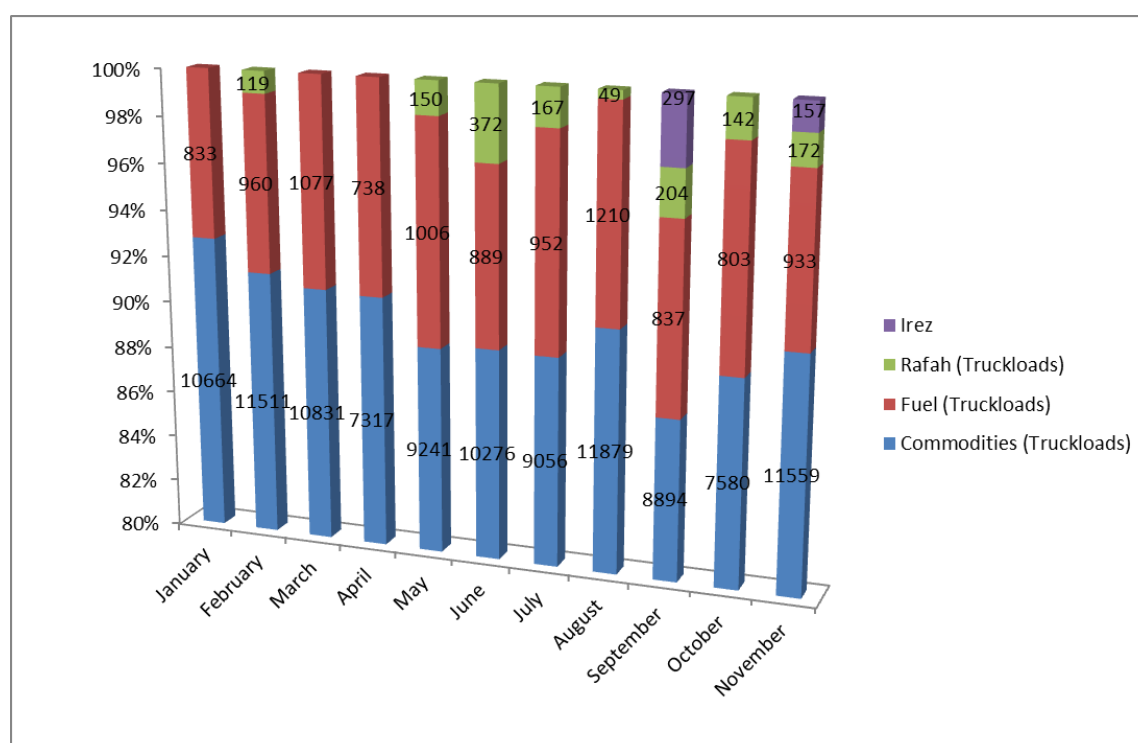
<sup>5</sup> Two different economic references are used in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel to deal with the shortage due to the current Shmita year as well as to significant export activity to the West Bank, regional markets such as Jordan and the gulf states.

The purpose of this monthly report is to provide information to all relevant stakeholders in the private and public sectors that would enable them to carry out advocacy activities, develop strategies to overcome obstacles to trade, and identify opportunities in different sectors. Ultimately, the report aims to strengthen business relations between the GS and the outside world, increase internal trade flows, and decrease trade costs.

### 3. IMPORTS & INCOMING TRUCKLOADS

In November 2016, KS crossing was operational for 22 days out of the 22 days that is scheduled for operations.<sup>6</sup> A total of **12,492** truckloads entered the GS during November 2016 through KS including 933 truckloads of fuel. At the same time some 172 TL destined to the PS entered the GS through Rafah crossing in an exceptional five days opening and 157 TL destined to the PS entered the GS through Irez crossing. Figure 1 below shows total imports to Gaza during 2016.



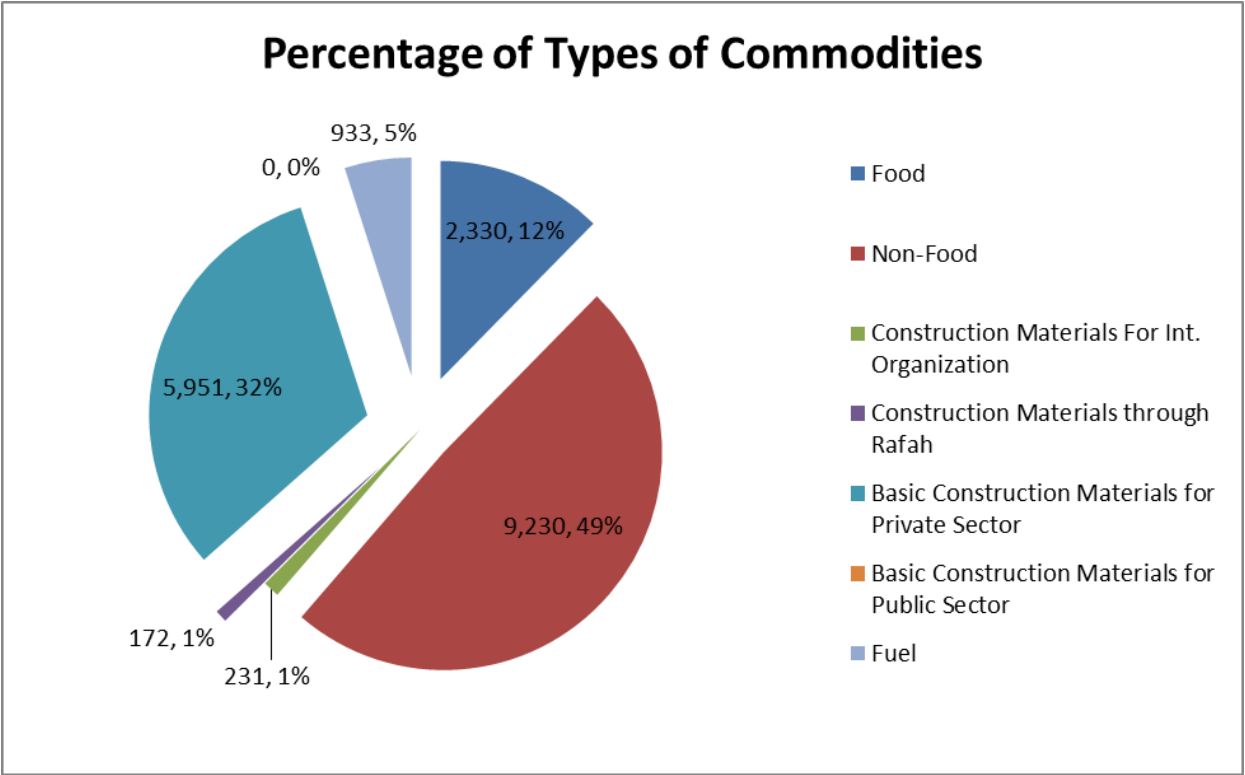
**Figure 1: Total Imports to Gaza in 2016**

Out of the 12,821 truckloads that entered the GS in November, 231 truckloads entered through KS and consisted of basic construction materials for projects implemented by international organizations, of which 122 truckloads consisted of basic construction materials designated for the Qatari projects.<sup>7</sup> Please see Annex 1 for more details on the number of truckloads for types

<sup>6</sup> Crossings are scheduled to close on Fridays, Saturdays and holidays.

<sup>7</sup> In 2015 15896 truckloads of construction materials entered the Gaza strip for the use of Qatari projects (1566 truckloads through KS in addition to 130 truckloads through Rafah), while 3657 truckloads of construction materials entered the Gaza Strip through Rafah for Qatari projects in 2014.

of basic construction materials that entered the Gaza Strip. Figure 2 below shows the percentage of types of commodities by category.<sup>8</sup> The total number of truckloads that entered the GS during November is approximately %4 more than the monthly average of truckloads that entered the GS before the imposition of the blockade in 2007 (approximately 12,350 truckloads) and %48 more than the monthly average of truckloads that entered the GS in 2015 (8692 truckloads). In contrast, it's also %1 less than the number of truckloads that entered the GS during the same month in 2015.

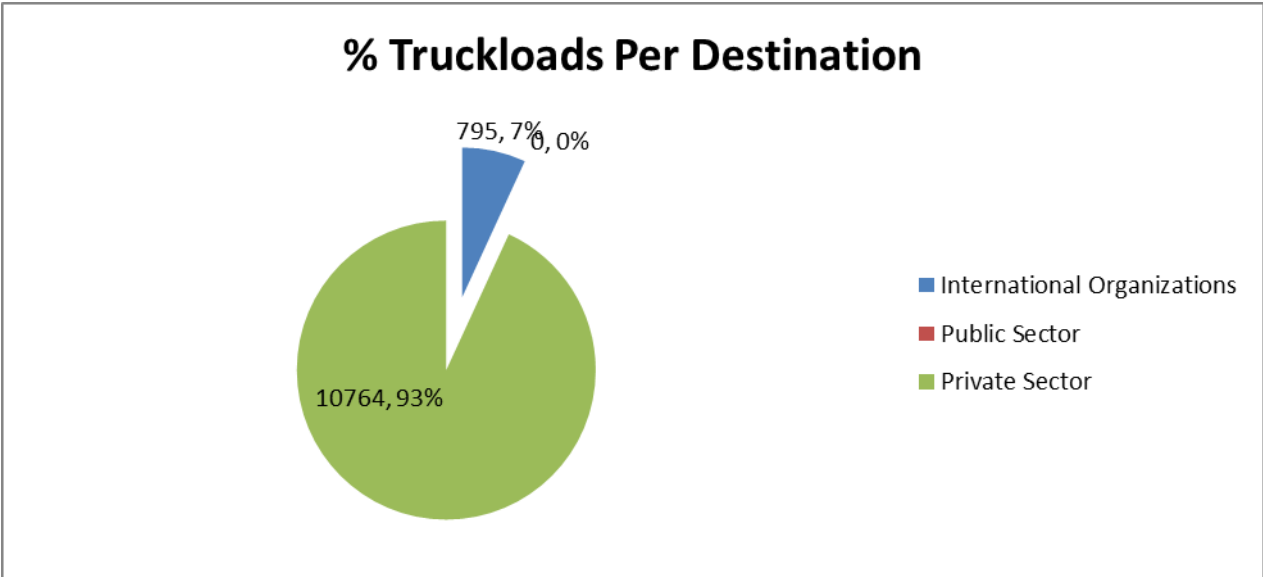


**Figure 2: Percentage of types of commodities – November 2016**

The volume of goods that entered the GS through KS is 43% more than the monthly average of 7900 truckloads that entered the GS in 2015. Also, the volume of basic construction materials designated for the Qatari projects 122 is approximately 17% more than the 24 truckloads that entered during the previous month of October, 91% less than the monthly average of 1300 truckloads that entered in 2015 and 89% less than the 1154 truckloads during November 2015.

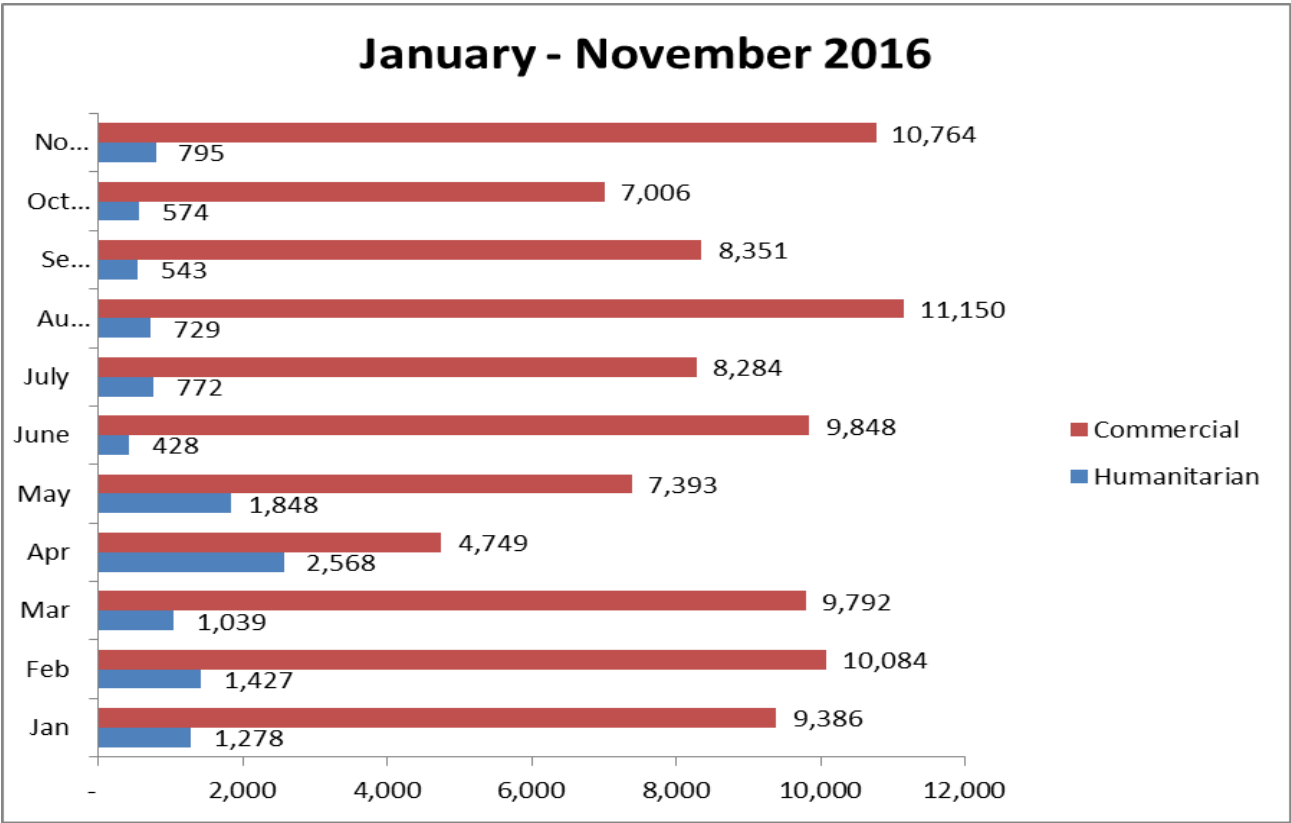
The 10,764 truckloads of goods that entered the GS through KS and were destined for the private sector represent approximately 93% of the total truckloads of goods that entered GS through KS. This volume of goods is 54% more than the number of truckloads of goods that entered to private sector through KS in the month of October, and is 64% more than the average number of truckload of goods that entered the GS for the Private sector in 2015 (5656 truckloads). Figure 3 below shows the percentage of goods distended to private sector vis a vis other international and public sector.

<sup>8</sup> The types of commodities were agreed upon by the Ministry of National Economy, OCHA, UNSCO, and Paltrade.



**Figure 3:** Percentage of Truckloads as per destination for the month of November

Of the total number of goods that entered the GS, 795 truckloads (7%) of humanitarian aid – including food, medical supplies, and construction materials for the Qatari projects and international organizations – crossed into Gaza through the KS. Consumer items continue to make up a significant portion of imported goods; for example, food products represent approximately 19% of total imports. Figure 4 below shows the breakdown of commercial goods vis-à-vis humanitarian aid during 2016. The increasing percentage of commercial goods is mainly due to the rise in number and volume of quantities of construction materials entering the Gaza Strip for reconstruction purposes. This is coupled with a decrease in the amount of construction materials that enter Gaza for the Qatari Projects. (Please see annexes for details)



**Figure 4:** Percentage of humanitarian and commercial truckloads entering Gaza October

The Government of Israel continues to impose administrative and regulatory restrictions on goods destined for the GS. For instance, there are restrictions on the entry of basic construction materials for the private sector and there is a ban on the entry of imported items listed as dual-use which have undermined the delivery of construction materials, humanitarian goods, and medical equipment, etc. also, the entry of goods in shipping containers has been prohibited since 2007.

However during this month, GoI allowed the entry of 5951 truckloads of basic construction materials including 1937 truckloads of cement, 3715 truckloads of aggregates, 299 truckloads of steel bars under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism<sup>9</sup> compared to 3621 entered during the previous month. Also, 231 truckloads of basic construction materials designated for the international organization's projects were allowed to enter; and 122 truckloads of basic construction materials entered for the Qatari construction projects. According to the Palestinian Federation of Industries, it is estimated that Gaza currently requires up to 8,000 tons of cement per day (200 Truckload).

#### **4. EXPORTS & OUTGOING TRUCKLOADS FROM GAZA**

Despite relaxing of measure on Exports from Gaza, the volume of exports remains relatively low in comparison to pre blockade figures. Within the last quarter of the year 2015 Israel has allowed marketing of ironworks, furniture and textile from Gaza in Israel For the first time since 2007. The Government of Israel has allowed the shipment of a limited number of products (agricultural products, furniture and textile) to exit Gaza for the West Bank markets since November 2014, after seven years of ban of exports to WB. In March of 2015, Israel began allowing entrance of tomatoes and eggplants from Gaza to Israeli markets due to the Shmita year. Shipments of agriculture produce out of Gaza to Israeli markets remain restricted to exports of vegetables (tomatoes, and eggplants).

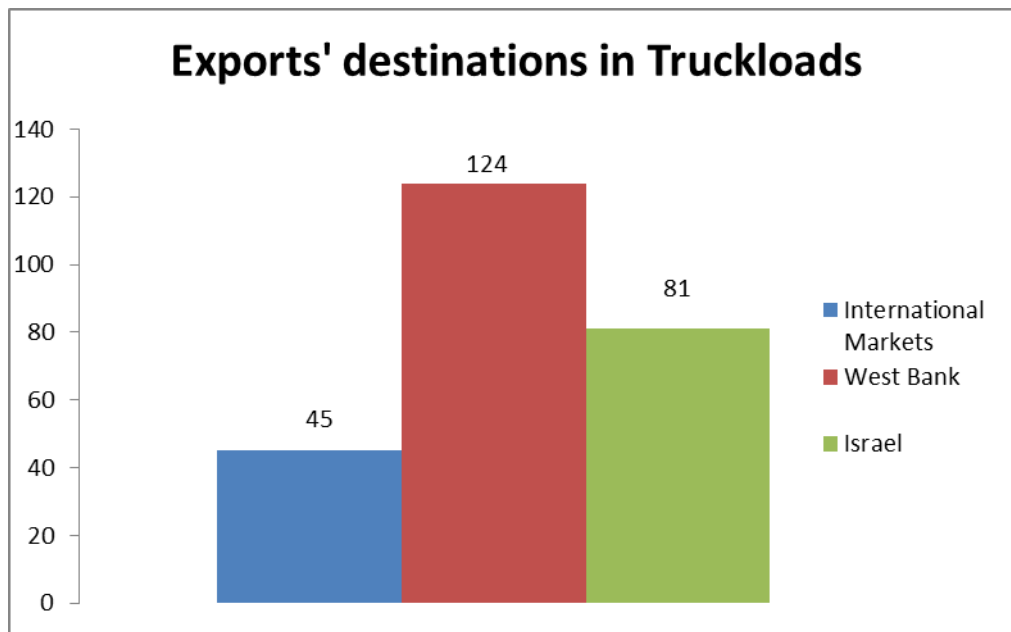
During November, 250 truckloads of goods exited Gaza, of which 124 truckloads were destined to the West Bank: 98 truckloads of agricultural produce, 1 truckload of fish, 3 truckloads of furniture, 14 truckloads of dates, 3 truckloads of clothes and 5 truckloads of cows leather. In addition to that 45 truckloads of vegetables were allowed to exit for international markets. A total of 81 truckloads were allowed to Exit to Israel during this month of which 29.5 truckloads of tomatoes, 0.5 truckload of eggplant, 12 truckloads of Aluminum scrap, and 39 truckloads of iron scrap. Comparatively, During October, 114 truckloads of goods exited Gaza, of which 65 truckloads were destined to the West Bank: 48 truckloads of agricultural produce, 4 truckloads of furniture, 5 truckloads of dates, 3 truckloads of clothes and 5 truckloads of cows leather. In addition to that 12 truckloads of vegetables were allowed to exit for international markets. A total of 37 truckloads were allowed to Exit to Israel during this month of which 8 truckloads of tomatoes, 1 truckload of eggplant, 6 truckloads of Aluminum scrap, and 22 truckloads of iron scrap.

In the year 2015 a total of 1353 truckloads were allowed to exit Gaza for international markets, Israel and West Bank. In 2007, some 5,007 truckloads of a wider range of goods exited to West Bank, Israel and external world. Figure 5 below shows number of truckloads of exports by destination for the months of November 2016.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.unsco.org/Gaza%20Reconstruction%20Mechanism%20Fact%20Sheet%209%20October%202014.pdf>





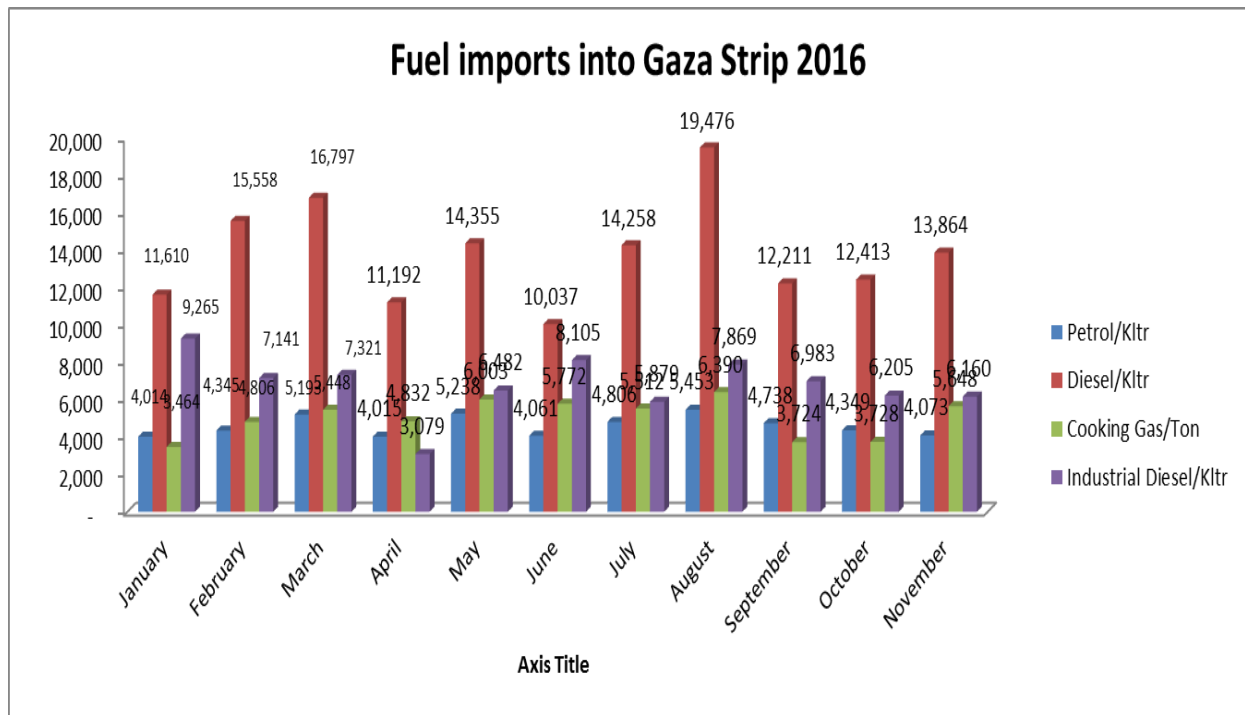
**Figure 5:** Exports' destinations in truckloads

## 5. FUEL

Israel hasn't allowed to entry Qatari fuel during this Month, comparatively 1.27 million liter of the Qatari fuel were allowed to enter during month of April. In the month of August 2015, Israel has allowed resumption of imports of Qatari fuel for the first time in 2015. Since June 2013, less than 21 million liters of Qatari fuel have entered the GS, which is less than 70% of the total 30 million liters of fuel donated by the Government of Qatar.

In November 2016 some 6 million liters of diesel fuel from Israel (destined for GPP) entered through KS, which enabled the plant to continue running at a limited capacity. The plant has been partially operational since June 2006 when it received a direct hit during military operations in Gaza Strip. Due to the absence of cheap Egyptian fuel at local markets, purchase of Israeli-supplied fuel has significantly increased. Overall, around 18 million liters of fuel entered the GS from Israel, including 4 million liters of petrol and 14 million liters of diesel fuel.

The Gaza Strip imported 5,648 tons of cooking gas from Israel this month, compared to 3,724 tons imported during the previous month. The Gas Station Owners Association (GSOA) indicates that this amount represents about 80% of the estimated needed amount of Gaza at around 7,500 tons. Please see Figure 6 below for the amount of fuel that has entered Gaza Strip during January 2016.



**Figure 6: Fuel into Gaza Strip – 2016**

## 6. Annexes

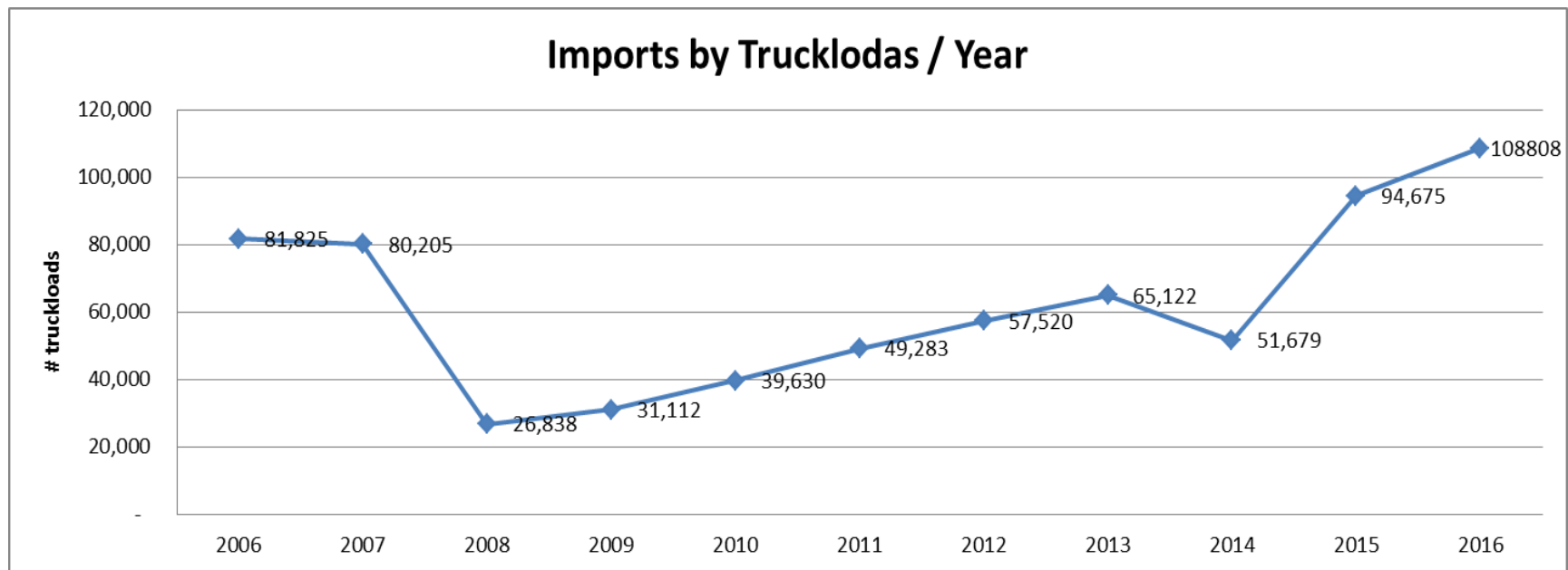
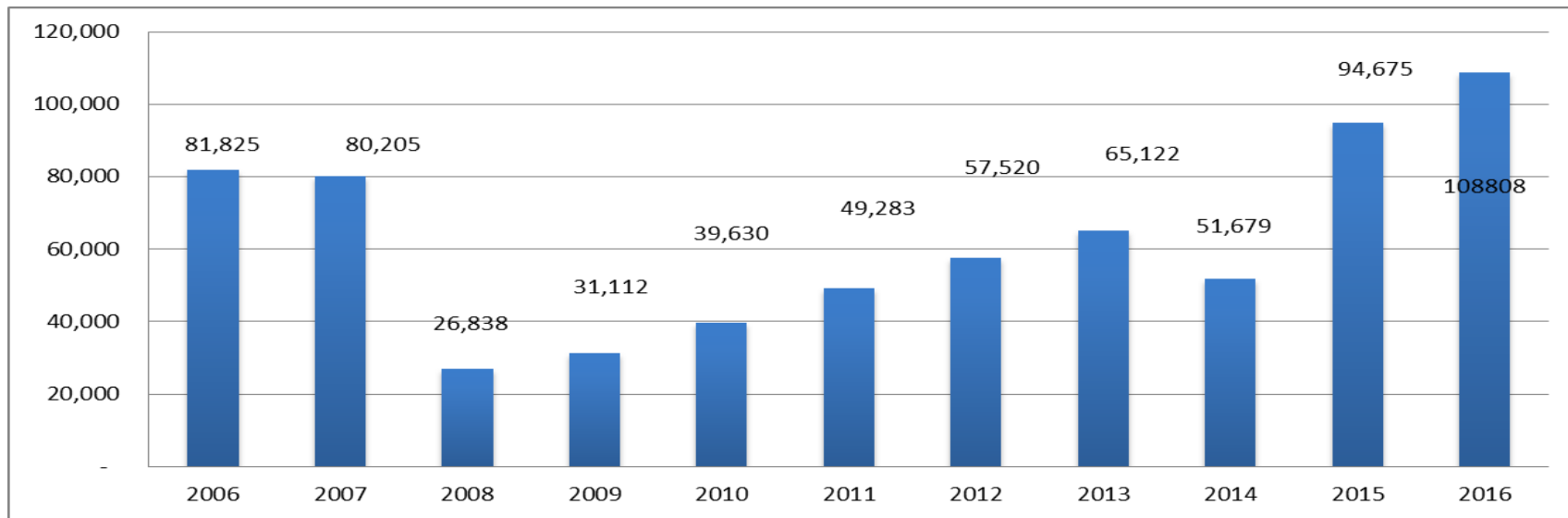
### Annex: I

| #            | Type         | Consignee              | Truckloads |
|--------------|--------------|------------------------|------------|
| 1            | Cement       | UNRWA                  | 48         |
| 2            | White Cement | UNRWA                  | 2          |
| 3            | Cement Silo  | UNRWA                  | 24         |
| 4            | Steel Bars   | UNRWA                  | 8          |
| 5            | Cement       | UNDP                   | 27         |
| 6            | Aggregates   | Qatari projects        | 122        |
| 7            | Cement       | Private Sector         | 1825       |
| 8            | Steel Bars   | Private Sector         | 299        |
| 9            | Aggregates   | Private Sector         | 3715       |
| 10           | Cement Silo  | Private Sector         | 112        |
| 11           | Cement       | Private Sector (Rafah) | 172        |
| Total trucks |              |                        | 6,354      |

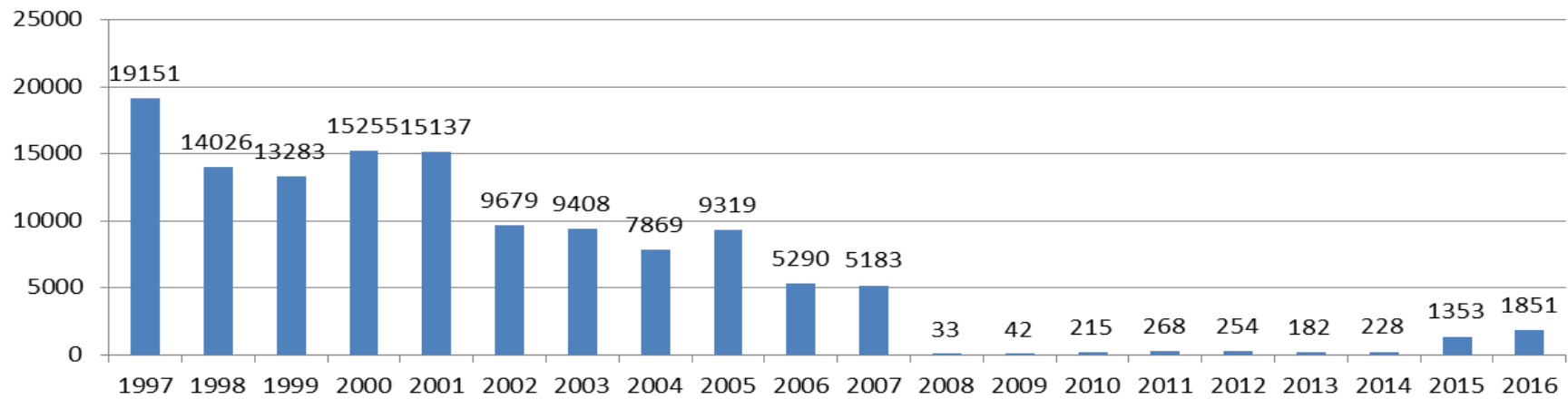
## Annex: II

| Historical Crossings Data    |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| Average monthly imports 2006 | 6820 |
| Average monthly exports 2006 | 440  |

| Volume of Trade by Truckloads |         |         |                |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------|
| Year                          | Imports | Exports | Transfer to WB |
| 2016                          | 108808  | 761     | 1090           |
| 2015                          | 94913   | 622     | 731            |
| 2014                          | 51679   | 136     | 92             |
| 2013                          | 65122   | 182     |                |
| 2012                          | 57520   | 254     |                |
| 2011                          | 49283   | 268     |                |
| 2010                          | 39630   | 215     |                |
| 2009                          | 31111.5 | 42      |                |
| 2008                          | 26838.2 | 33      |                |
| 2007                          | 80205.4 | 5183    |                |
| 2006                          | 81825   | 5290    |                |
| 2005                          |         | 9319    |                |
| 2004                          |         | 7869    |                |
| 2003                          |         | 9408    |                |
| 2002                          |         | 9679    |                |
| 2001                          |         | 15137   |                |
| 2000                          |         | 15255   |                |



### Exports by year / Truckloads



### Exports by year / Truckloads

