The Gaza blockade is a denial of basic human rights in contravention of international law and amounts to collective punishment. The blockade severely restricts imports and exports, as well as the movement of people in and out of Gaza, and access to agricultural land and fishing waters. Gazans are unable to provide for their families and the quality of infrastructure and vital services has deteriorated.

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2. Measures taken to ease the blockade in June 2010 have had little real effect. While imports have increased, they are still only at 45% of the pre-2007 levels. Exports remain tightly restricted and are limited to agricultural produce to Europe, and Gazan businesses cannot access their traditional markets of Israel and the West Bank. Access to land and sea remains highly restricted.

3. While Israel has approved a range of infrastructure projects aimed to improve vital sanitation, education and health services in Gaza, few of these projects have been implemented. This is mainly due to the unwieldy, cumbersome approval process and difficulties in importing materials. This means Gazans have seen no real improvement in the quality of vital services.

4. Thousands of people, many of them children, risk their lives smuggling goods through the tunnels under the border with Egypt every day. The thriving tunnel industry is a direct result of ongoing restrictions on the import of construction materials, the lack of employment opportunities, and the huge reconstruction needs in Gaza.

5. Gazans remain isolated and cut off from the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory. Movement via the Israeli Erez crossing is prohibited for almost all Gazans, despite promises to ease restrictions. The Egyptian Rafah Crossing remains limited to 500 people per day, with hundreds of Palestinians denied passage each week.