

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

EU Border Assistance Mission at Rafah Crossing Point (EUBAM RAFAH)

Updated: March 2012

Mission background

Israel and the Palestinian Authority concluded an "Agreement on Movement and Access" (AMA), including agreed principles for the Rafah crossing (Gaza), on 15 November 2005. The Council of the EU welcomed the Agreement on 21 November 2005 and agreed that the EU should undertake the proposed third-party role at the Rafah Crossing Point at the border between the Gaza strip and Egypt. Therefore, the Council launched the EU Border Assistance Mission, code-named EUBAM Rafah, in order to monitor the operations at the crossing point.

The operational phase of the mission began on 24 November 2005. On 13 June 2007, following the Hamas take over in the Gaza Strip, the EUBAM Head of Mission declared a temporary suspension of operations at the Rafah Crossing Point (RCP). In 19 December 2011, the Council extended the mandate of the mission until 30th June 2012. The mission had previously been extended several times.



Visit of the Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas

Mandate and objectives

The aim of the EU mission is to provide a third party presence at the Rafah Crossing Point in order to contribute to the opening and operation of the crossing point according to the AMA and to build up confidence between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.



Rafah Crossing Point - Daily work

Mission achievements

During the 19 months (End of November 2005 until June 2007) when the EU monitors were present at the terminal, a total of 443 975 passengers crossed through the Rafah Crossing Point.

Since 25 June 2006, following political developments in the region, the Rafah Crossing Point has been closed for normal operations and open on an exceptional basis only. Considerable efforts were made to mediate the resumption of normal operations, at least to ensure that the crossing was open as often as possible. EUBAM's efforts resulted in the Crossing Point being open

for 83 days between 25 June 2006 and 13 June 2007, allowing nearly 165 000 people to cross.

Mission State of Play

Despite the suspension of operations at the RCP in June 2007, EUBAM has maintained its capacity to redeploy to the RCP. On 23 May 2011, the Council reconfirmed EU's readiness to reactivate the EUBAM Rafah Mission, once political and security conditions allow, in order to ensure the EU third party role at the Rafah crossing point, as set out in the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access. The RCP was opened by Egypt on 28 May 2011 and has been operating outside the scope of the AMA ever since and beyond international standards. So far, none of the stakeholders has formally requested the EU to reactivate EUBAM Rafah, but the Mission has a redeployment plan to increase rapidly its strength in case the conditions would allow.



Visit of the EU HR Catherine Ashton

Cooperation with stakeholders

The Mission retains its expertise in Border Management and Customs Operations and is regularly approached to share its expertise with other stakeholders involved in the issue of Border and Crossing. The Mission continues to liaise with the parties on a regular basis and at the operational level. EUBAM staff also provides technical support to EUPOL COPPS, the European Union Co-ordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support, based in Ramallah. EUBAM Rafah continues to attract attention and receives regularly

visitors or delegation (EU Member States, international organisations, researchers, journalists) and participates in public events.

MISSION FACTS AND FIGURES

Theatre: Rafah CP (Gaza)
Headquarters: Ashkelon
Starting Date: 24 November 2005
Head of mission: Colonel Alain FAUGERAS
Mission strength: 9 EU staff and 8 local staff
Mission budget: EUR 970.000 until 30th June 2012
Contributing states: 7 EU member states



www.consilium.europa.eu/eubam-rafah and
www.eubam-rafah.eu

"The European Union, as part of the Quartet, is committed to assisting and facilitating the implementation of the Roadmap, which lays out reciprocal steps by the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority in the political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution-building fields, that will result in the emergence of an independent, democratic, and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours".

COUNCIL JOINT ACTION 2005/889/CFSP of 12 December 2005 on establishing a European Union Border Assistance Mission for the Rafah Crossing Point

*The European Union's **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)** includes the gradual framing of a common defence policy which might in time lead to a common defence. The CSDP allows the Union to develop its civilian and military capacities for crisis management and conflict prevention at international level, thus helping to maintain peace and international security, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The CSDP includes a strong conflict prevention component.*

*Based in Brussels, the **Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC)** is the permanent structure responsible for an autonomous operational conduct of civilian CSDP operations. Under the political control and strategic direction of the Political and Security Committee and the overall authority of the High Representative, the CPCC ensures the effective planning and conduct of civilian CSDP crisis management operations, as well as the proper implementation of all mission-related tasks.*

More information and background documents available on:
www.consilium.europa.eu/csdp and eeas.europa.eu