

Talking points for fifth CSC meeting 15 02 2007

1. Update on acquiring olive grove

- Issue has to be resolved quickly as it is delaying progress. Greater pressure should be applied on all parties to get results.

2. Update on land ownership of parcels around Karni

- This issue is even more urgent because without it the USSC team cannot plan the infrastructure improvements in and around the crossing.
- Ask PO for update on status of information.
- Greater pressure should be applied on all parties to get results within a maximum of one week.

3. USSC team update on Karni work; after answering questions from CSC the USSC team will leave

- Make clear to USSC team that the Palestinian side is ready and keen to move forward on improving performance at Karni but unfortunately there is little they can do before the necessary equipment and training programs are in place. The USSC has been promising results for the past few months but we need concrete answers on when to expect the equipment and training [i.e. their verbal commitment is not enough].
- The bulk of the requested equipment hasn't been provided yet to the PG.

4. Endorsing the summary of the last CSC meeting and review follow up issues:

a. Update on WB crossing needs

- Some data was provided but more specific data is needed.
- Also, the Israeli team dealing with this issue seems to have the mandate to talk only about infrastructure on Palestinian side (i.e. not on Israeli infrastructure nor on management and procedures). Therefore, the CSC should decide whether to continue engaging regardless or insist that unless Israelis with greater mandate (i.e. ministries) are involved in discussions and are mandated to address Palestinian concerns the Palestinian side will not engage on WB crossings.

b. Update on the definition of excepted categories at Rafah and discussion of any comments CSC members have on the paper circulated in the last meeting

- Approve circulated paper after including any comments that CSC members might have had.
- No meeting was held with the Israelis or the EU on this. Need an update from any of the CSC members on whether there have been any meetings or whether there are other tracks dealing with this issue.

c. Nazmi's assessment of the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the population registry delivered to Saeb from Mishlev

- Previous Israeli lists were inaccurate and/or incomplete; e.g. did not include Palestinians whose IDs Israel had revoked. If Nazmi's assessment is that the list is inaccurate or incomplete the Palestinians need to draft a response letter to the Israeli side and cc the EUBAM.

5. Update on goods of concern working group

- Palestinian side does not have the equipment or the expertise to handle goods of concern.
- Palestinian side needs to get the equipment and training before it can commit to implementing this clause up to international standards.
- Provision of both equipment and training are an EUBAM responsibility as per the AMA. In the meeting held with EUBAM it was pointed out that they do not have the expertise in house and therefore the Palestinian side needs to press this issue with the head of EUBAM.

6. Specifying roles of Naser Sarraj and Hatem Yousef

- Naser for trade. Hatem for customs. They need to be included in [head] the subworking groups accordingly:
 - Goods of concern, Hazem and Hatem
 - Hazardous materials, Hatem and Hazem
 - West Bank crossings, President's Office and Naser
- Need to ensure they get thoroughly briefed (NSU can do that)
- Need to ensure they have permits to attend all meetings.
- Need to ensure that all interested Palestinian parties (both within the CSC and outside) include Naser and Hatem respectively when issues that concern trade or customs are raised.

7. Discussion of crisis management and relationship with Egyptian side

- Problems are rooted mainly in the irregular opening of Rafah and bad communications between all the parties. Having an Egyptian officer in the liaison office would address this concern but the Egyptians refuse to do so and refuse to let EUBAM on their side. Therefore, need to push more forcefully for Egyptian participation in the LO.
- The EUBAM often asks to be evacuated based on Israeli “security” information that is not shared with the Palestinians. It is important that the Palestinian side make clear to EUBAM that according to the AMA the decision to close Rafah or suspend operations is a Palestinian decision (except if there is a specific technical malfunctions). Therefore if the Palestinians are not convinced that the security alert is genuine while the EUBAM still decides it doesn’t want to take the risk then the Palestinians will be under no obligation to close the crossing and their continued operation will not be deemed a breach of the AMA.
- The Palestinian side should focus on getting Israel to sign the customs protocol and operate Kerem Shalom because that will address almost all the problems being faced at Rafah.
- Also, the normalization of the operation of Rafah would also decrease problems significantly.
- Specific issues the members feel need to be addressed?