



News Release – For Immediate Release – May 13, 2008

Human Rights Groups Petition Supreme Court:

## Israel is Preventing Fuel Supply to Gaza Strip, Violating Supreme Court Decision

- **Israel is blocking even the insufficient fuel supply required by the court; is harming vital humanitarian services – in violation of court order.**
- **Rights Groups Demand: Stop Fuel Restrictions, Stop Collective Punishment.**

Tues., May 13, 2008 – Nine human rights organizations, Israeli and Palestinian, petitioned Israel's Supreme Court today demanding that the Defense Minister stop restricting fuel supply to the Gaza Strip as part of a policy of collective punishment. Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement submitted the petition on behalf of the groups. The groups claim that since an April 9, 2008 attack on the Nahal Oz fuel depot that killed two Israeli citizens, the Defense Minister has reduced fuel supply to dangerous levels, below even the minimal, insufficient quantities required by the Supreme Court.

- **Industrial diesel for Gaza's power plant:** Israel has allowed just 69% of supply ordered by the court – and just 43% of the amount needed – causing power outages of up to 16 hours/day and causing a two-day closure of the power plant.
- **Petrol for transportation:** Israel has allowed just 40% of supply ordered by the court – and just 8% of the amount needed – preventing patients from reaching hospitals, students from reaching studies, and aid workers from traveling.
- **Diesel for generators, wells, transportation:** Israel has allowed just 25% of the supply ordered by the court – and just 15% of the amount needed – causing garbage to pile in the streets, disruption of hospital services, and the pumping of 50-60 million liters of raw or partially treated sewage each day into the sea.

**The rights groups petitioning the court today are:** Gisha - Legal Center for Freedom of Movement \* Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel \* Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights \* B'Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories \* Gaza Community Mental Health Programme \* HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual \* Mezan Center for Human Rights \* The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights \* The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel.

Last October, human rights groups petitioned Israel's Supreme Court against fuel and electricity cuts to Gaza. In a January 2008 decision widely condemned by human rights groups as authorizing collective punishment, the court rejected the petition but ordered the state to supply specified quantities of fuel – supplies which have been mostly blocked since April 9. The rights groups claim that Israel, as the occupying power in Gaza, is violating its duties under international law to Gaza residents, who are prevented from receiving fuel except via Israeli-controlled crossings.

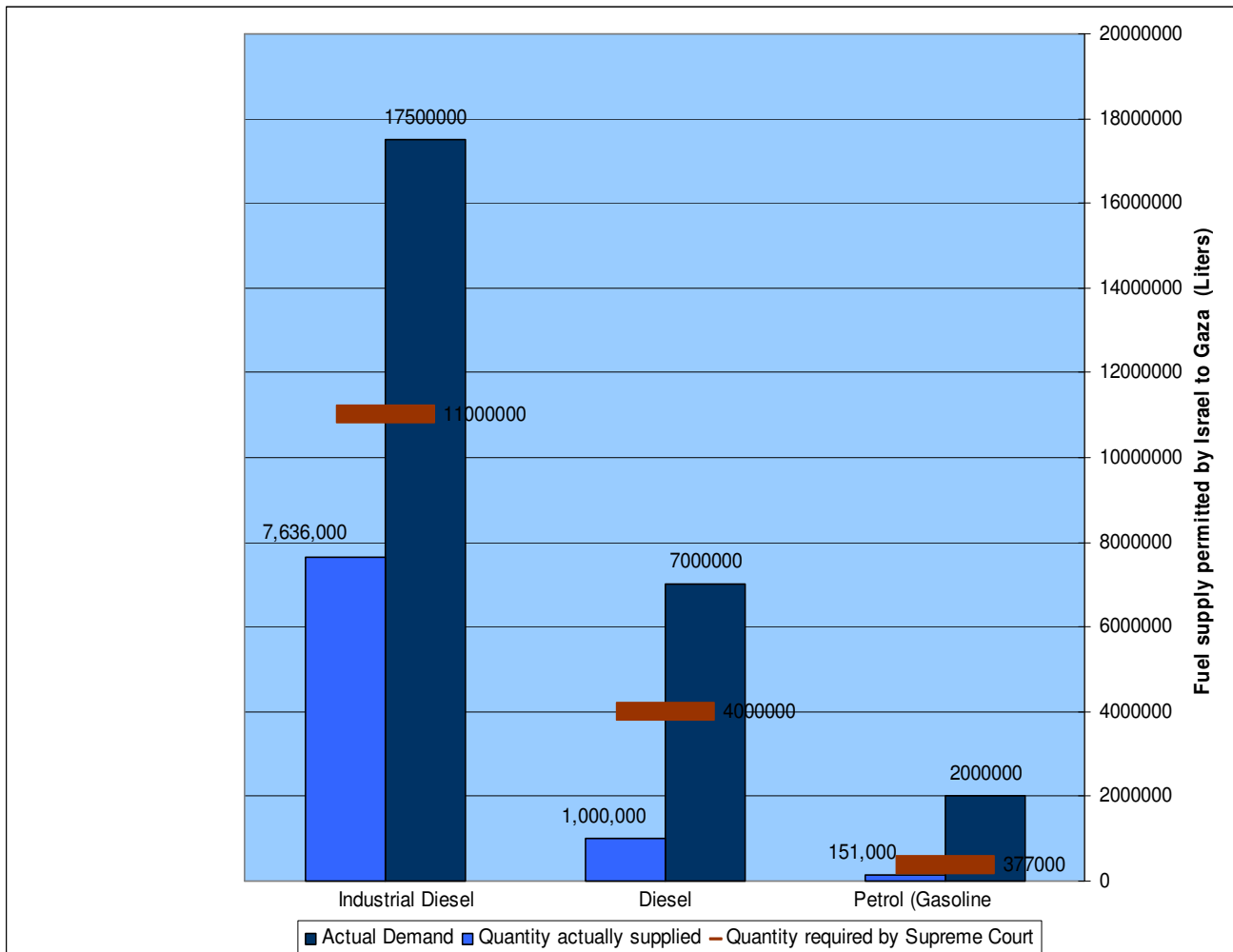
According to Sari Bashi, Gisha's Director: "Four months ago, Israel's Supreme Court issued a dangerous and illegal decision authorizing collective punishment but requiring 'minimal' supplies of fuel to Gaza. The Defense Minister has violated even those minimal, insufficient orders – with grave consequences for Gaza residents. Gisha condemns attacks on Israeli civilians, attacks which violate the international law prohibition against deliberately harming civilians. But Israel may not deliberately harm Palestinian civilians in response, by depriving them of vital fuel supplies."

Addendum to Press Release:

**Massive fuel cuts imposed by Israel, beginning October 28, 2007 but worsening April 9, 2008, have paralyzed Gaza's infrastructure and humanitarian institutions.**

**This is not a "manufactured crisis" – The Arithmetic is Clear:**

Fuel supply permitted by Israel to Gaza:  
5-week period April 6, 2008 – May 10, 2008



<u>Type of Fuel</u>	<u>Actual Demand (liters)*</u>	<u>Quantity required by Supreme Court (liters)</u>	<u>Quantity actually supplied (liters)</u>
Petrol (Gasoline)	2 million	377,000	151,000
Diesel	7 million	4 million	1 million
Industrial Diesel	17.5 million	11 million	7.6 million

\*For petrol and diesel, based on quantities ordered prior to October 28, 2007 fuel cuts (400,000 liters/week petrol; 1.4 million liters/week diesel). For industrial diesel, based on amount needed to operate power plant at current capacity (3.5 million liters/week).