

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

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

Updated: July 2014

Mission background

The Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority concluded an "Agreement on Movement and Access" (AMA) on 15 November 2005, which included agreed principles for the operation of the Rafah Crossing Point (RCP) on the Gaza-Egypt border. The Council of the EU agreed on 21 November 2005 that the EU should undertake the role and fulfil the responsibilities of the third party at the RCP, as envisaged in the AMA. To that end, the Council launched the EU Border Assistance Mission, EUBAM Rafah.



Visit of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas

The operational phase of the mission began on 24 November 2005. On 13 June 2007, following the Hamas takeover in the Gaza Strip, EUBAM Rafah has suspended operations at the RCP. Since then, the mission has maintained its readiness to redeploy to the RCP. On 3 July 2014, the Council extended the mandate of the mission until 30 June 2015.

Mandate and objectives

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



EU monitors during security checks at the RCP – 2006

Mission achievements

During the 19 months (end of November 2005 until June 2007) while the EU monitors were present at the terminal, a total of 443 975 passengers crossed through the RCP.

Between 25 June 2006 and 13 June 2007, following political developments in the region, the RCP was 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 RCP being open for 83 days in the above period, 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 rapidly redeploy to the crossing point. On 23 May 2011, the Council reconfirmed the EU's readiness to reactivate the EUBAM Rafah mission, once political and security conditions allow. The RCP was opened by Egypt on 28 May 2011 and has been operating outside the scope of the AMA ever since. So far, none of the stakeholders has formally requested the EU to reactivate and redeploy EUBAM Rafah. On 10 December 2012, the Council of the EU expressed its readiness to make use of its instruments in support of the parties' efforts, including the possible reactivation, in the appropriate way, of the EUBAM Rafah mission.



EU monitor at the entrance of RCP - 2006

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 Borders and Crossings. The Mission continues to liaise with all relevant parties on a regular basis. EUBAM staff also cooperates at a technical level with EUPOL COPPS, the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories, based in Ramallah. EUBAM Rafah continues to attract attention and receives regularly visitors or delegations (EU Member States,

international organisations, researchers, journalists) and participates in public events.

MISSION FACTS AND FIGURES

Theatre: occupied Palestinian territories
Headquarters: Tel Aviv
Starting Date: 24 November 2005
Acting Head of Mission : Guy Rolin
Mission strength: 4 EU staff and 5 local staff
Mission budget: EUR 940.000 until 30th June 2015
Contributing states: 3 EU member states



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.eeas.europa.eu/csdp