מרכז לשמירה על הזכות לנוע (ע"ר)
Legal Center for Freedom of Movement
مركز للدفاع عن حرية الحركة
Gisha

News Release, Thursday, January 1, 2009-For Immediate Release

Israeli Human Rights Groups to Defense Minister:

Stop Draining Gaza of Fuel and Electricity

- Gaza's electrical system on verge of collapse
- Long power outages in hospitals, water wells
- Prevention of supply violates Supreme Court order

Thursday, January 1, 2009: **Ten Israeli human rights groups issued an urgent appeal to Israel's Defense Minister today demanding that Israel's military stop draining Gaza of fuel and electricity - and restore fuel supplies to hospitals, water wells, and other vital humanitarian institutions**. Gaza residents are suffering power outages of up to 20 hours per day and more in some areas, due to the blockage of industrial diesel for Gaza's power plant. The plant has been closed since Monday, Dec. 29.

Gaza's main hospital, Shifa, has been experiencing power outages of more than 20 hours per day, forcing medical teams to rely on back-up generators not designed for continuous use – just as they are trying to care for the more than 1,500 people injured in the attacks. Without electricity to pump water, 60% of Gaza residents on average receive clean water once in 5-7 days, and some people have been without water supply for 10 days.

The human rights groups urgently appealed to the Defense Minister, demanding that he re-open the Israeli-controlled Nahal Oz Crossing, the only crossing through which industrial diesel can be sent to Gaza. For the past two months, **Israel has allowed supply of just 18% of the industrial diesel needed by Gaza's power plant and just 28% of the supply ordered by Israel's Supreme Court** (*see attached graphs*). No supply has been permitted since the start of the military operation Saturday. The industrial diesel is funded by the European Union and can only be used for Gaza's power plant.

"**Gaza's electricity system is at the point of collapse, just when electricity is most needed to operate hospitals, water wells and additional vital infrastructur**e," the groups said. They noted in their letter that under international humanitarian law and Israeli precedent, responsibility for the needs of the civilian population, including fuel and electricity, is placed squarely on the shoulders of the military commander:

"**This shortage was well known to Israeli security officials, because Israeli security officials caused the shortage, deliberately, beginning October 28, 2007, and we repeatedly warned them of it**. It was to be expected, then, that the military operation would exacerbate the shortage, to the point of substantial and immediate harm to the health, physical well-being and dignity of Gaza Strip residents. The military commander … must now supply what is missing, fully and immediately," the groups wrote.

Signing the letter are: Adalah * Association for Civil Rights in Israel * Bimkom * B'Tselem * Gisha * HaMoked * Physicians for Human Rights-Israel * The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel * Rabbis for Human Rights * Yesh Din

For additional details or interviews: Sari Bashi, Director, Gisha: 03-6244120 (ext. 102) or 054-8172103 (sari@gisha.org) or Keren Tamir, Spokeswoman, Gisha, 0528-919190.

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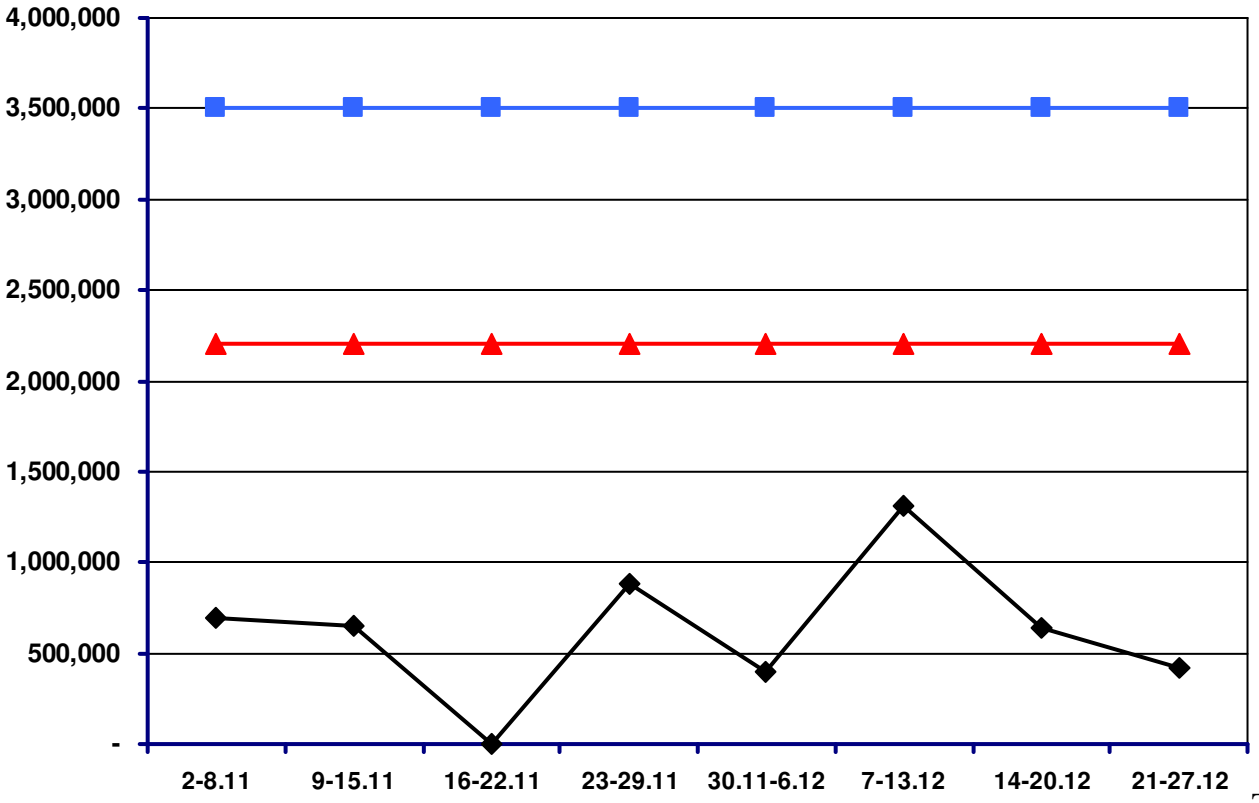
Industrial Diesel* Supply to Gaza's Power Station, Nov.-Dec. 2008



The industrial diesel, paid for by the European Union and delivered directly to Gaza's power plant, can only be supplied via the Nahal Oz Crossing with Israel and can only be used for Gaza's power plant.

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Power Station Operation since Closure of Fuel Crossing on Nov. 5, 2008

November 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
[redacted] 9	[redacted] 10	[redacted] 11	[redacted] 12	[redacted] 13	[redacted] 14	[redacted] 15
[redacted] 16	[redacted] 17	[redacted] 18	[redacted] 19	[redacted] 20	[redacted] 21	[redacted] 22
[redacted] 23	[redacted] 24	[redacted] 25	[redacted] 26	[redacted] 27	[redacted] 28	[redacted] 29
[redacted] 30						

[redacted] Operated at 30% capacity (one of three turbines)

[redacted] Shut down entirely

[Continued on next page]

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December 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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