

[on letterhead of the Gaza CLA]

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Humanitarian 14	desk June	- 4574 2017

To:
Omnia Zoubi, Gisha
Fax: 03-6244130

Re: Your letter regarding the entry of [REDACTED] (ID No. [REDACTED]), his wife [REDACTED] (ID No. [REDACTED]) and their five children from Gaza to Israel for the purpose of an interview at the American consulate

Yours: 1546, dated May 28, 2017 and June 12, 2017

Ours: Humanitarian desk – 4574 dated June 4, 2017

1. We hereby inform you that the competent officials have decided **not to approve** the entry of any of your clients in reference, given the directive issued by the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) last week instituting a moratorium, for the present time, on permits for Gaza residents to enter Israel for the purpose of interviews at the American embassy/consulate.
2. In recent months, there have been clear indications that entry for the purpose of visa interviews at the American embassy/consulate in Jerusalem has served as a loophole Gaza residents have exploited in order to remain in Israel unlawfully. An investigation has revealed that scores of illegal aliens from Gaza had entered Israel under the pretext of an interview at the US consulate and abused the permit given for this purpose to remain in Israel illegally.
3. As you are aware, Gaza residents have no vested right to enter Israel for any purpose whatsoever, and the State of Israel is under no obligation whatsoever to allow Gaza residents to enter Israel, including for the purpose of a visa interview as described in your letter.
4. Therefore, the COGAT has decided not to permit Palestinians to enter Israel for the purpose of such interviews at present, in order to avoid the continued abuse of such permits. The issue will continue to be reviewed in the interim, pending a decision to the contrary.

5. It is important to note that the relevant agencies, including the Palestinian Civilian Affairs Committee in the Gaza Strip and the American diplomatic missions in Israel, have been informed of this decision
6. Needless to say, the occurrence of illegal presence by Gaza residents in Israel presents significant security threats, in addition to constituting a criminal offense. Therefore, the authorities must do everything possible to prevent and reduce any such illegal presence, including by avoiding loopholes that are clearly exploited.
7. FYI

S i n c e r e l y
Public Liaison Officer
Hadar Zur Second Lieutenant
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