



EU BAM Rafah

European Union Border Assistance Mission Rafah

April 2007

Basic Information on EU BAM

- EU BAM's mandate comes from the "Agreed Arrangement on the European Union Border Assistance Mission at the Rafah Crossing Point on the Gaza-Egypt Border", which is a protocol based upon the "Agreement on Movement and Access" reached by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority on 15 November 2005. Through this Agreement the EU was invited to play a third party role
- According to the Agreed Arrangement on the EU BAM at the Rafah Crossing Point (RCP) on the Gaza-Egypt Border, the Mission's role is to monitor, to mentor, to verify and to evaluate the performance of the PA border control, security and customs officials who do all the work at the terminal.
- EU BAM was officially launched on 25 November 2005. Amongst other personalities, the ceremony was attended by PA President Mahmoud Abbas; EU Special Representative for the Middle East Marc Otte; former US Security Coordinator William Ward; Head of Egyptian Information Services Omar Suleiman and EU BAM's Head of Mission Lt. General Pietro Pistolese.
- The Council of the European Union decided on 13 November 2006 to extend the European Border Assistance Mission for the Rafah Crossing Point for a further six months, till 24 May 2007.
- In the initial phase about 75 Police officers from 17 member States have been deployed. In the first year of operation, a total of 98 monitors from Member States have worked with EU BAM.
- Between the opening of RCP on 25 November 2005 and 25 June 2006, a total of nearly 280,000 people were processed through the crossing, an average of 1,318 every day of effective operations.
- Since the crisis of 25 June 2006, RCP has been closed for normal operations. Since then, the Mission has been on immediate standby to resume operations, and considerable efforts have been made to enable the crossing to open as often as possible under the circumstances. Considerable efforts have also been made (and continue to be made) to mediate the resumption of normal operations.
- EU BAM efforts resulted in RCP being open for 64 days since 25 June 2006, allowing nearly 120,573 people to cross. EU BAM made special efforts to facilitate the passage of humanitarian cases and pilgrims. A total of 400,000 persons have thus been processed through RCP between the start of the mission and April 2007.
- EU BAM continues to work very hard in consultation with the Parties to try and secure a return to normal operations at RCP; monitors remain at a high state of readiness in order that teams can be deployed at short notice when necessary.