

February 6, 2024

*Via FedEx*

Mr. Itay Raphael  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ratio Petroleum  
85 Yehuda Halevi St.  
Tel Aviv, Israel 6579614

Dear Mr. Raphael:

This firm represents Al-Haq, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights on certain international law matters. It has recently come to our attention that your company was among those that Israel's Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure purported to award six licenses in so-called "Zone G" offshore Israel and Palestine. The relevant announcement was made on 29 October 2023, three weeks after the start of the war in Gaza.

We write to inform you that Israel's Zone G substantially overlaps with maritime areas the State of Palestine claims in accordance with the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. This significant overlap is depicted on the map attached hereto for your reference. In fact, roughly 62% of Zone G lies within Palestine's claimed Exclusive Economic Zone. Because of the overlap, Israel cannot have validly awarded you any exploration rights and you cannot validly have acquired any such rights.

That being the case, we urge you to refrain from signing any of the license documents. In the alternative, we urge you to desist from undertaking any activities in areas of Zone G that Palestine claims, as any such activities would constitute a flagrant violation of international law. Indeed, we understand Israel itself to share the same view. In its 2020 *note verbale* to the United Nations protesting Palestine's maritime claims, Israel stated that "it will not allow any non-consensual or unauthorized activities, including by third actors, in its [claimed] maritime areas ...". Palestine too has the same right to block non-consensual and unauthorized activities in its maritime zones and asserted as much in its 2022 response to the United Nations.

You should be aware that this situation has already been brought to the attention of the Israeli Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure by Adalah ("justice" in Arabic), an independent human rights organization and legal center based in Haifa, Israel.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.adalah.org/uploads/uploads/Letter\\_Tender\\_Gas\\_Gaza\\_Eng.pdf](https://www.adalah.org/uploads/uploads/Letter_Tender_Gas_Gaza_Eng.pdf) & [https://www.adalah.org/uploads/uploads/Letter\\_Tender\\_Gas\\_Gaza\\_Hebrew.pdf](https://www.adalah.org/uploads/uploads/Letter_Tender_Gas_Gaza_Hebrew.pdf).

We observe that Israel appears intent on placing the risk of this situation squarely on your shoulders. Among other things, Section 17.1 of the Model License Agreement available on the Israeli Ministry of Energy's website expressly states:

The licence holder acknowledges and agrees that the area described above is part of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the State of Israel, which has not yet been fully delimited. If during the term of the Licence or during the period of any petroleum right granted following issue of this Licence (licence or lease) an area or areas are deducted from the area described above, the licence area or the other right area will be decreased accordingly without any compensation to the rights holder.

Further still, any attempt to explore for and exploit natural resources claimed by Palestine risks breaching international humanitarian law ("IHL"), including the law of occupation. Under that law, Israel has no right to exploit Palestine's natural resources, including offshore resources, for its own benefit. You should be aware that the International Criminal Court currently has an active investigation open into international crimes committed in territory of the State of Palestine, and has jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute any individual(s) it finds responsible for committing war crimes, including pillage. Complicity in war crimes like pillage is also a serious criminal offence and corporate actors can be subject to individual criminal liability. Moreover, IHL has been incorporated into the domestic law of many States and envisages the direct liability of individuals, including business executives and managers. Complicity in violations of IHL can also expose companies like yours—and your managers and staff—to the risk of civil actions for damages.

We note that your home country, Israel, is a member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development ("OECD") and has subscribed to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct ("Guidelines"). The Guidelines include the recommendation that enterprises such as yours respect "the international human rights obligations of the countries in which they operate". All OECD member States, including Israel, have also established National Contact Points for Responsible Business Conduct ("NCPs") to help ensure respect for the Guidelines. The NCP process includes a mechanism for grievances to be heard. My clients are prepared to use all legal mechanisms to the fullest extent available unless your company refrains from activities in Palestinian waters.

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You will also be aware that at this moment in history Israel's actions in Palestine are receiving needed scrutiny; much of the world is focused on the illegality and injustice of Israel's continued occupation of Palestine. In this context, your company faces significant reputational risk should it persist in assisting Israel in illegally benefitting from natural resources pertaining to Palestine and its people. Our clients will pursue all legal means available, including before the United Nations and international media, to bring your company's complicity with Israel's illegal actions to the world's attention.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. My clients and I stand ready to engage in constructive dialogue on these issues with you should you so wish.

Al-Haq, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights reserve their rights in all respects.

Sincerely yours,

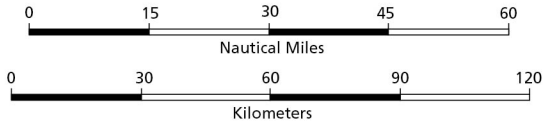


Lawrence H. Martin

Enclosure

# ISRAEL'S ZONE G INTRUDES ON MARITIME AREAS CLAIMED BY PALESTINE

Mercator Projection, Datum: WGS-84  
(Scale accurate at 33°N)



Prepared by: International Mapping

