



# PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

## 24 AUGUST – 6 SEPTEMBER

### Key issues

- Although during the reporting period there were no demolitions, the six week lull during Ramadan in Area C demolitions came to an end on 8 September, with the demolition of Palestinian structures by the Israeli authorities, including residences as well as water and electricity infrastructure. This occurred in spite of recent media reports indicating an alleged suspension of demolitions, citing inequality in the enforcement of planning rules on Palestinians compared to Israeli settlers. Since the beginning of 2011, a total of 755 Palestinians have lost their homes in these circumstances, more than in any of the previous three years.
- The demolition of three houses in the Migron settlement outpost on 5 September by the Israeli authorities triggered a number of “price tag” retaliation attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinians communities, including the burning of the first floor of a mosque. One of the main factors underlying the phenomenon of settler violence is the absence of adequate law enforcement, both in terms of preventive measures, as well as measures aimed at holding perpetrators accountable.

## WEST BANK

### Israeli settlers exact a ‘price’ for demolitions in illegal settlement outpost

In the days leading up to, and then immediately following, the demolition of three Israeli residences in the settlement outpost of Migron (Ramallah) by Israeli authorities on 5 September, 17 incidents of vandalism by Israeli-settlers resulted in more than 120 trees being either damaged or destroyed throughout the West Bank. In addition, there were two reported acts of arson, including the burning of the first floor of a mosque in the village of Qusra, and the setting of fires in areas near houses in the village of Jalud, both in the Nablus Governorate. The vandals left graffiti in the damaged mosque suggesting that the arson was a ‘price tag’ incident, done in response to demolitions in the outpost. In addition, on the same day as the outpost demolitions, a Palestinian university professor was injured in the head, shoulder and stomach when Israeli settlers stoned his vehicle as he drove along the Nablus-Ramallah road, near the Israeli settlements of Ofarim and Bet Ariye.

#### Settler-related incidents:

Incidents resulting in Palestinian injuries or property damage:

in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 253 vs. 207

Palestinians injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 123 vs. 71

Settlers injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 21 vs. 32

In addition, more than half of Palestinians injured by the Israeli military during the reporting period were in incidents involving Israeli settlers. In one of the incidents, on 26 August, a 23-year-old man was shot and injured with live ammunition during a confrontation between Palestinians and Israeli settlers, after the latter vandalized trees in the village of Qusra (Nablus). In another confrontation on 2 September in the village of Jalud (Nablus) that erupted after settlers attempted to set fire to some houses, 15 Palestinians were treated for inhaling tear gas fired by Israeli forces.

## Other military activity

Of the remaining Palestinians injured in the course of Israeli military activities, ten occurred in clashes that erupted in the context of protests against settlement expansion, land confiscation and access restrictions; three of those injured were children (ages: 9, 11, 13), who were physically assaulted.

In one search and arrest operation, on August 28, Israeli forces caused damages in four houses and physically assaulted a 35-year-old man. During this two week reporting period, 93 search operations were conducted in the West Bank leading to the arrest of 71 Palestinians.

Also of note during this period, five Palestinians were physically assaulted by Israeli forces at checkpoints, two of which were flying checkpoints. According to a report on West Bank access released this week by OCHA, the average number of flying checkpoints reported per month has significantly increased from less than 350 in previous years (July 2007 – June 2010) to close to 500 over the last 12 months (June 2010 – July 2011).

## Israeli issuance of demolition orders continues

No demolitions of structures in Area C or East Jerusalem were recorded during the reporting period. However, Israeli forces delivered 17 stop work orders during the period, the first stage in the demolition process, affecting 17 structures located in Area C of the Qalqiliya and Tubas governorates. If implemented, 53 people, including at least 17 children, will be affected.

The last demolition in the oPt occurred on 24 July 2011 in Area C. According to unconfirmed media reports, the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) will temporarily suspend the demolition of Palestinian-owned structures built without a permit in Area C, reportedly because there has been no similar enforcement of building violations in Israeli settlements. Thus far in 2011, the Israeli authorities have demolished 387 Palestinian-owned structures

### Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed in two week period: 0

Killed in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 8 vs. 8

Injured this reporting period: 29; 10 in demonstrations

Of whom were children: 3

Injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 1,045 vs. 820

in the oPt, including 140 residential structures, displacing 755 people, including 409 children. Over 95 percent of these demolitions have occurred in Area C. (See Key Issues section above for latest developments.)

Palestinian construction is effectively prohibited in some 70 percent of Area C, in areas that have been allocated for the use of Israeli settlements or the Israeli military (including areas closed by the Israeli military for training). In the remaining 30 percent, there are a range of other restrictions that greatly reduce the possibility of obtaining a building permit. In practice, Palestinian construction is normally permitted only within the boundaries of a plan approved by the ICA, which covers less than one percent of Area C, much of which is already built-up. While the ICA has heavily restricted Palestinian construction in Area C, it has established parallel practices for Israeli settlements that have facilitated their expansion, including approving detailed plans for almost all Israeli settlements.

## Access to East Jerusalem for Friday prayers

There was a significant improvement in the flow of people into East Jerusalem over the previous week. According to the Israeli authorities, roughly 100,000 Palestinian worshipers from other parts of the West Bank entered Jerusalem through checkpoints for the last Friday of Ramadan (26 August), to pray in Al Aqsa mosque. In the previous week, only roughly 60,000 people entered East Jerusalem, as many permit holders had been denied entry following the escalation in violence in southern Israel and the Gaza Strip. Despite this improvement, the majority of the Palestinian population, including 40 percent of the West Bank and all Gazans, continued to be barred from entry into East Jerusalem..

# GAZA STRIP

## Violence in the Gaza Strip and Southern Israel continued- 13 Palestinians killed

During the reporting period, violence in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel continued, although much decreased after Israel and Palestinian armed groups reached an informal understanding on the restoration of the calm (Tahdia'a) on 28 August. However, prior to this, on 24 and 25 August, there were intense Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip and rocket and mortar fire by Palestinian armed factions towards southern Israel, which affected civilians and civilian property in both areas.

Overall, during the reporting period, 13 Palestinians were killed, including eight civilians, one of whom was a child, and 38 others were injured, including approximately 34 civilians, along with the injury of one Israeli child. The Israeli airstrikes targeted tunnel areas south of Rafah, killing four workers and injuring four others, and also targeted and destroyed a three-storey sports centre north of Beit Lahiya. During these attacks, dozens of nearby houses, three retail stores, a kindergarten and an UNRWA school were damaged.

Also, on 29 August, a 13-year-old Palestinian child died of wounds sustained on 21 August, when an Israeli Air Force drone fired a missile towards a group of farmers working their land, north of Beit Lahiya.

## Tunnels under Gaza Egypt border

In addition to the four fatalities and four injuries by Israeli air strikes targeting tunnels under the Gaza and Egypt border on 24 August (reported above), one Palestinian worker was electrocuted while working inside a tunnel on 4 September.

### Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this two week period: 13  
Of whom children: 1  
Killed in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 79 vs. 44  
Injured this week: 38  
Of whom children: 17  
Injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 375 vs. 225

Since 3 September, there has been a reported increase in Egyptian security forces activities targeting tunnels under the border line. Between 3 - 6 September, Egyptian security forces reportedly either blocked or destroyed eleven tunnels.

## Movement through Rafah Crossing

A daily average of 643 people left Gaza to Egypt (mostly for pilgrimage to Mecca), and another 618 entered Gaza per day during the reporting period. A total of 142 people were denied entry to Egypt for unspecified reasons. Although patients, students, foreign passport holders and those with visas to other countries, are currently allowed to enter Egypt, the crossing is experiencing a backlog, with nearly 25,000 to 30,000 people registered and waiting to exit in the coming months.

### Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

#### Imports:

Truckloads that entered Gaza this week: 1,114  
Of which carrying food: 59%  
Weekly average since the beginning of 2011: 962  
Weekly average before the blockade: 2,807

#### Exports:

Truckloads that left this week: 0  
Weekly average since the beginning of 2011: 6  
Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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