



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

29 September – 5 October 2010

West Bank

One Palestinian killed and seven injured by Israeli forces

On 3 October, an Israeli border policeman shot and killed a Palestinian man, who was attempting to enter East Jerusalem to work without an Israeli-issued permit. The precise circumstances of the shooting remain disputed. The Police Investigations Department of the Israeli Ministry of Justice has opened an investigation into the case.

Seven Palestinians were injured this week by Israeli forces in various incidents. Four, including a 16-year old boy, were injured in clashes with Israeli forces during the weekly demonstrations in Beit Ummar village (Hebron), against the denial of Palestinian access to agricultural land next to Karmi Zur settlement. Other demonstrations held this week against Barrier construction, settlement expansion, and access restrictions ended without injuries.

Two additional injuries took place during search and arrest operations carried out by Israeli forces in the Silwan neighborhood of East Jerusalem, and in Dhahriya (Hebron). Overall, Israeli forces conducted 73 search and arrest operations across the West Bank this week, well below the weekly average this year (93).

Since the beginning of 2010, 12 Palestinians and two Israeli military or police force members have been killed in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the West Bank. The same period last year witnessed 17 Palestinian and three Israeli fatalities respectively. In addition, 938 Palestinians and 114 Israeli soldiers and policemen have been injured since the beginning of the year, compared to 699 and 50 respectively in the equivalent period in 2009.

Settler violence: 3 Palestinians injured; rise in attacks against olive groves

Three Palestinians, including a child, and one Israeli settler were injured this week in the context of settler-related incidents. There were also nine reported incidents resulting in damage to Palestinian property, and one resulting in damage to Israeli property.

In one of three incidents resulting in Palestinian injuries, an armed guard from Talmon settlement (Ramallah) opened fire at a farmer harvesting his land near the adjacent 'Ein Qiniya village, injuring him; Israeli forces who arrived at the scene subsequently detained the guard.

On 4 October, a mosque in Beit Fajjar village (Bethlehem) was vandalized and set on fire. Mosque carpeting and copies of the Quran were burnt, and some of the structure's pillars sustained damage. Graffiti of the star of David and Hebrew slogans saying "price tag" and "revenge" were spray painted on the inside walls of the mosque. While the identity of the assailants remains unknown, according to the Israeli media, the Israeli Police suspect the attack was perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the context of efforts to prevent a 'renewal of a freeze' on settlement building. This is the fifth attack on a mosque recorded in the West Bank since the beginning of the year.

On the eve of the olive harvest season, and similar to previous years, an increase in acts of vandalism against olive groves was recorded throughout the week: in three separate incidents in the Nablus and Ramallah areas, more than 115 olive and 30 almond trees were set ablaze, allegedly by Israeli settlers. Israeli settlers from Ariel herding sheep next to Jamma'in (Nablus) and Yasuf (Salfit) were reported damaging Palestinian olive trees. Israeli settlers were reported stealing olive harvesting equipment in the village of Ras Karkar (Ramallah), while settlers from 'Adei 'Ad settlement outpost were spotted harvesting olive trees belonging to farmers from Al Mighayyer and Turmus'ayya villages (Ramallah).

A demolition and an eviction order

The Jerusalem municipality demolished a commercial structure in the Beit Safafa neighborhood of East Jerusalem this week, due to the lack of a building permit. The demolition affected the livelihood of 21 people, including 13 children. Since the beginning of the year, Israeli authorities have demolished 32 Palestinian-owned structures in East Jerusalem, including five that were residential. The equivalent period last year witnessed 50 structures demolished, of which 36 were residential.

While no demolitions were reported during the week in Area C, Israeli authorities issued an eviction order against 66 dunums of agricultural land belonging to an extended family of 300 persons in the Nablus governorate, on the grounds that it is 'state land'.

Gaza Strip

Two Palestinians injured near the fence

Two Palestinians were injured in two separate incidents this week when Israeli forces opened fire at people collecting scrap metal near the fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip. Both injuries occurred in the area of Beit Lahiya, in the northern Gaza Strip. Other incidents involving the opening of 'warning' fire by Israeli forces towards people either present in or approaching access restricted areas throughout the week resulted in no injuries. In one such incident, Israeli naval forces opened 'warning fire' towards Palestinian fishing boats west of Gaza City forcing them ashore. Access restricted areas along the perimeter fence and Gaza's coast cover 17 percent of the Gaza Strip's land mass, and 85 percent of maritime areas allocated for Palestinian use according to the Oslo Accords.

This week, Palestinian armed factions launched a number of rudimentary rockets and mortar shells towards southern Israel, including at military bases located along the border; no injuries or damage were reported.

In 2010, 52 Palestinians, including 21 civilians, three Israeli soldiers and one foreign national have been killed in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel. An additional 196 Palestinians, including 171 civilians, and eight Israeli soldiers have been injured.

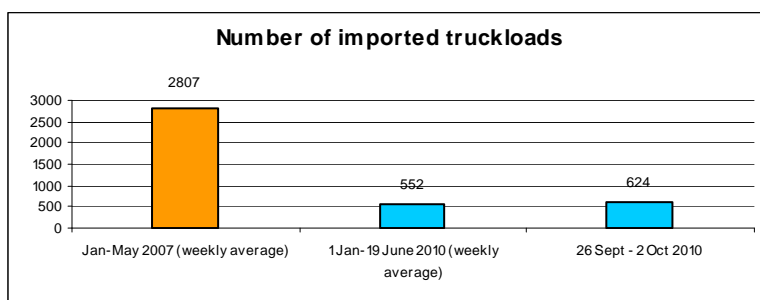
Gaza crossings: Limited impact of Israeli government-declared easings; UN projects delayed

Recent increases in the volume of imports (since 20 June 2010) continue to have a limited impact on the livelihood of the majority of the population of the Gaza Strip. Moreover, despite some signs of reactivation of the private sector, sustainable growth is not expected to take place due to the ongoing ban on imports of construction materials, and on exports by the private sector.

Following verbal approval from the Israeli authorities for 17 of its reconstruction projects, requiring the import of an estimated 1,700 truckloads of construction materials, last week UNRWA submitted a request to bring in the first 47 trucks to begin implementation. So far, however, none of these trucks could enter Gaza due to a number of reasons, including, a capacity shortage at the Karni crossing and Israeli concerns about the location of some of the projects. The 17 projects represent less than 3 percent of UNRWA's reconstruction plan for Gaza.

Imports into Gaza significantly decreased during the reporting period (26 September – 2 October) compared to the previous week (624 vs. 844 truckloads), due to Israeli-imposed closures of commercial crossings, due to the Jewish holiday of Sukkot. The number of truckloads entering Gaza this week constitutes only 22 percent of the weekly average of truckloads that entered during the first five months of 2007 (2,807), before the imposition of the blockade.

Despite an increase in the number of non-food items imported into the Gaza Strip since July 2010, food items continue to comprise the majority of imports (55 percent). Prior to the blockade, these accounted for less than 20 percent of all imports.



Despite an increase in industrial fuel, electricity outages continue

The reporting period (26 September – 2 October) witnessed a significant decline in the import of industrial fuel needed to operate the Gaza Power Plant (GPP). Only 1.15 million litres of fuel entered Gaza, compared to 2.03 million litres the previous week. Due to the fuel shortage, the GPP turned off one of its two operating turbines for most of the week, resulting in power cuts up to 16 hours a day. The electricity provision deficit throughout the Gaza Strip now stands at about 30 percent of estimated demand.

Power cuts greatly affect the daily life of the Gaza Strip’s population. The provision of essential services, including water supply, sewage treatment and the functioning of health services, are all affected by electricity cuts. According to the WASH (Water, sanitation and hygiene) cluster, daily electricity cuts significantly impede access to running water: 20 percent of the population of the Gaza Strip receives running water once every five days (6-8 hrs); 50 percent receives water once every four days (6 hrs); and 30 percent receives water once every two days (6-8 hrs).