



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

22 - 28 June 2011

West Bank

19 injured by Israeli forces

This week, Israeli forces injured 19 Palestinians, the majority of them in weekly demonstrations. Thus far in 2011, 841 Palestinians have been injured by Israeli forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, around half of them during protests; this is a 14 percent increase compared to the equivalent period in 2010.

15 Palestinians were injured during weekly demonstrations against the construction of the Barrier in Bil'in village and the expansion of Hallamish settlement on Nabi Saleh's land in the Ramallah governorate, and against restrictions on access to land in the vicinity of Karnei Tzur settlement in the Hebron governorate. Another four Palestinians and an Israeli soldier were injured in clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces during search and arrest operations in the villages of Al 'Isawiya (East Jerusalem) and Beit Ummar (Hebron governorate). Overall this week, Israeli forces conducted over 70 search-and-arrest operations throughout the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem; a decline compared to the weekly average for such operations since the beginning of 2011 (90).

Also this week, an Israeli military jeep hit a Palestinian child in Silwan village in East Jerusalem, leaving him with concussion. The incident took place during a demonstration against settler activities that followed the Friday prayer. Israeli forces detained the child allegedly for stone-throwing and released him after one day.

Settler violence continued

During the reporting period, OCHA documented five settler attacks that resulted in one Palestinian injury and damage to property. Another incident led to the injury of a settler by Palestinians.

On 22 June, Israeli settlers attempted to take over a Palestinian house in Beit Safafa in East Jerusalem, claiming ownership over the land on which the house is built. During the incident, settlers clashed with the residents and physically assaulted them, injuring one. Israeli police intervened and removed the settlers and detained three Palestinians. Over the past two years, settlers have taken over seven housing units, including buildings, rooms and apartments, by various means of purchase, claim of ownership and forced evictions in East Jerusalem, displacing 13 families. In a separate incident that resulted in no injuries, settlers clashed with farmers near the Qedumim settlement (Qaqiliya governorate), preventing them from working on their land. Also this week, Palestinians physically assaulted and injured an Israeli man and damaged his vehicle after he accidentally entered the village of Al 'Isawiya (East Jerusalem).

In another two incidents during the period, settlers reportedly cut down and uprooted over 70 olive trees and grape vines in the villages of Sinjil (Ramallah governorate) and Khallet Zakariya (Bethlehem governorate). Over 3,000 trees belonging to Palestinians have been damaged by settlers since the beginning of the year. In a separate incident, a settler vehicle ran into a flock of sheep belonging to a Palestinian shepherd near Road 60 in the Hebron governorate, killing two of the sheep. Also, Israeli settlers reportedly sprayed anti-Islam graffiti on the walls of a number of Palestinian houses in Beitillu village (Ramallah governorate).

The wave of Area C demolitions continues

During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities demolished 58 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C of the West Bank due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits. Fifty-two (52) of the affected structures were demolished in the villages of Barta'a Ash Sharqiya and Khirbet Al Muntar Al Sharqiya, which are located in the closed military zone between the Barrier and the Green Line (the "Seam Zone") in the Jenin governorate. The structures included 50 charcoal workshops and stores and two shelters, affecting the livelihoods of over 18 families, comprising at least 70 people. Also, the Israeli authorities demolished six residential shacks, animal shelters and cisterns in the Ar Rashayida Bedouin community (Bethlehem governorate), affecting five families. The number of demolitions per week in Area C more than doubled in June (33) compared to the weekly average of demolitions that took place since the beginning of the year (15).

In East Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities demolished a stall and confiscated its contents in the Old City. This is the first demolition in East Jerusalem in four weeks. Since the beginning of 2011, 352 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem and Area C, displacing 691 people. This represents more than three times the number of demolitions and four times the number of people displaced compared to the equivalent period in 2010.

Also during the period, Israeli forces issued demolition and stop-work orders against at least 20 Palestinian-owned structures, including residences, animal shelters and a public park under construction, in the governorates of Bethlehem, Nablus, Ramallah, Qalqiliya and Jericho.

Gaza Strip

Calm in Gaza continues

During the week, there were no reports of Israeli air strikes, rocket firing by Palestinian armed factions or any conflict-related casualties. Since the beginning of 2011, 51 Palestinians (22 civilians) and two Israelis (one civilian) have been killed in the context of Israeli-Palestinian violence in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, and 283 Palestinians (255 civilians), and nine Israelis (five civilians) have been injured. A total of 35 Palestinians killed and 128 others were injured in the same period in 2010.

Israeli restrictions on access to areas along the fence separating Gaza and Israel and to fishing zones beyond three nautical miles from the shore continue. This week, Israeli forces opened fire at demonstrators protesting access restrictions in the vicinity of the fence as they approached the fence, east of Beit Hanoun. No injuries were reported. Also, in three incidents, Israeli naval forces opened fire at Palestinian fishing boats. During one of the incidents, one boat was damaged and two fishermen were arrested and taken for interrogation. They were released on the same day. On 21 June, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) received a response from the Israeli authorities on three complaints that the center submitted on behalf of Palestinian fishermen whose boats were confiscated. The response included new procedures, according to which affected fishermen will be required to pay transportation expenses to have their vessels returned. Such measures further undermine the livelihoods of fishermen, already devastated due to access restrictions to the sea (beyond three nautical miles from the shore).

Tunnel-related incidents continue

This week, while no casualties were reported in tunnel-related incidents, the Egyptian authorities located and sealed off three tunnels under Egypt-Gaza border, which were used to transfer electrical

equipment, gas cylinders and fuel. Since the beginning of 2011, 16 Palestinians have been killed and 27 others have been injured in tunnel-related incidents, including air strikes, tunnel collapses and electrocution. A total of 46 Palestinians were killed and 89 others injured in 2010. While tunnel activity has declined since the Israeli decision to ease the blockade on 20 June 2010, it remains a main source for a variety of goods, including construction materials and fuel, which are still restricted through the official crossings with Israel.

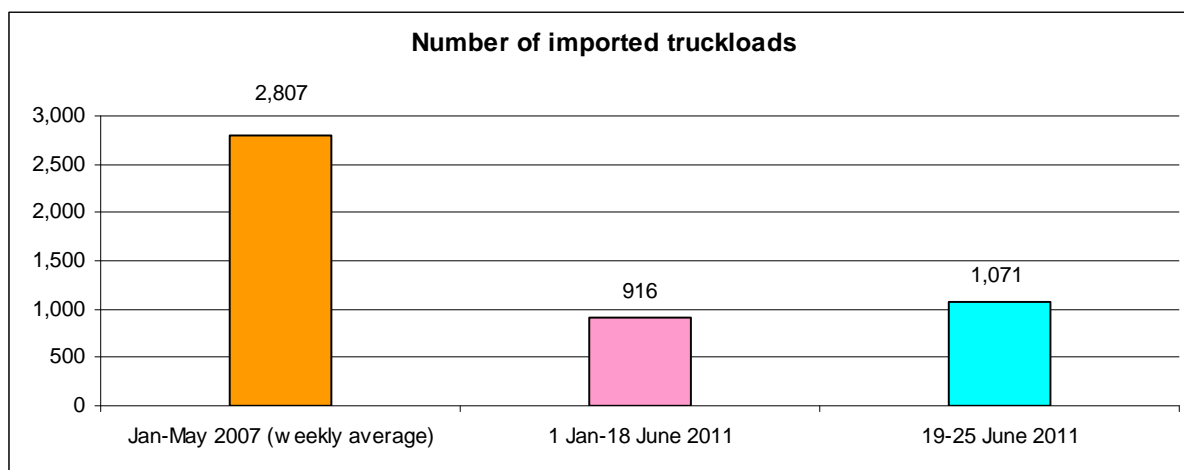
Restrictions on movement of Gazans through Rafah Crossing continue

During the reporting period, a daily average of only 524 people left Gaza to Egypt and another 654 entered Gaza per day, with around 200 denied entry to Egypt. This is despite new changes announced by the Egyptian authorities on 23 May, which included an increase in the crossing's working hours and opening days (from five to six days a week) and a slight increase in the number of people allowed to exit Gaza (from 350 to more than 500). According to the Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza, there are now approximately 20,000 Gazans, including patients, students and foreign passport holders, registered to travel through the crossing in the coming months.

Gaza crossings with Israel; new humanitarian construction projects approved

A total of 1,071 truckloads of goods entered Gaza this week (19-25 June), around 17 per cent above the weekly average of truckloads that entered since the beginning of the year (916). This week's figure, however, represents only 38 per cent of the weekly average of 2,807 truckloads that entered Gaza during the first five months of 2007, prior to the imposition of the blockade. Most goods that enter Gaza continue to be consumer products, with food constituting around 49 per cent of imports, compared to less than 20 percent before the blockade.

More than 100 truckloads carrying over 7,070 tonnes of gravel entered through the new facility recently opened at the Kerem Shalom Crossing. Entry of basic construction materials, including aggregates, cement and steel bars, remains restricted to a limited number of projects approved by Israel. This week, the Israeli authorities approved the implementation of 20 more humanitarian construction projects run by UNRWA, bringing the total value of approved UNRWA programmes to US\$183 million, or 28 percent of the total value of planned projects. The projects included two housing projects of 1,200 units and 18 schools, bringing the total number of schools that are approved for construction to 42 (out of 75 submitted school projects). While this step is welcome, it is still far below the housing and infrastructure needs in Gaza, which remain very high. All



humanitarian construction projects need prior approval from the Israeli authorities. Also, a total of 129 truckloads of other construction materials including tiles, pipes and paints were allowed in this week for commercial purposes. Restricted construction materials continue to be transferred into Gaza in considerable quantities via tunnels under the border with Egypt.

Cooking gas shortages continue

This week, 785 tones of cooking gas entered the Gaza Strip, representing 65 per cent of the weekly required amount of 1,200 tonnes. Shortages of cooking gas continue to affect daily life in the Gaza Strip; the Gas Stations Owners Association in Gaza reports that nearly half of the 28 cooking gas stations are partially operating due to the continuing lack of cooking gas, while a rationing system remains in place.

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