

Protection of Civilians

Reporting Period: 13-26 March 2018

Biweekly highlights

- **Three Israelis, including two soldiers and one settler, as well as a Palestinian perpetrator, were killed in two reported Palestinian attacks in the West Bank.** On 16 March, a 26-year-old Palestinian man drove his vehicle into a group of Israeli soldiers near the Mevo Dotan settlement (Jenin), killing two of them; he continued driving and ran over another group of soldiers injuring two, before being arrested by Israeli forces. While according to Palestinian eye witnesses this appeared to be a car accident, Israeli media sources indicated that the driver confessed that it was a deliberate attack. On 18 March, in the Old City of Jerusalem, a 28-year-old Palestinian man stabbed and killed a 32-year-old Israeli male settler. The perpetrator, from 'Aqraba village (Nablus), was shot and killed on the spot by an Israeli police officer and his body has been withheld by the Israeli authorities. Since the beginning of 2018, five Israelis and two Palestinian perpetrators have been killed during Palestinian attacks or alleged attacks.
- **Tensions rose along the perimeter fence surrounding Gaza following multiple attacks, clashes and other violent incidents.** On 15 and 17 March, explosive devices were detonated near the fence in northern Gaza, reportedly by members of Palestinian armed groups targeting Israeli soldiers, resulting in no injuries. On 24 March, four Palestinians infiltrated into Israel through the fence, reportedly causing damage to engineering equipment used by the Israeli military, and returned to Gaza unharmed. In response to these incidents, Israeli forces launched multiple airstrikes and fired tank shells into Gaza, reportedly targeting military sites, resulting in no casualties. Additionally, on twelve occasions Palestinian protestors clashed with Israeli forces near the fence, resulting in 43 Palestinian injuries, of whom 13 were children, including 31 by live ammunition.
- **Also in Gaza, on at least 35 occasions, Israeli forces opened warning fire to enforce the Access Restricted Areas (ARA) on land and sea, disrupting the livelihoods of Palestinian farmers and fishermen, but resulting in no injuries reported.** Since the beginning of 2018, there have been at least 181 incidents of opening of fire at farmers and fishermen in the ARA, resulting in two fatalities and 13 injuries. On another nine occasions during the reporting period, Israeli forces carried out land-leveling and digging inside Gaza, near the perimeter fence. In another incident, three Palestinian men, including two patients travelling for medical treatment, were detained by Israeli forces at Erez crossing.
- **The main political parties in Gaza have called for a series of mass protests along the perimeter fence, starting on 30 March, which would entail the marching of demonstrators towards Israel.** Several sites along the fence began to be prepared for the erection of tents to host the demonstrators. Although the organizers have called for non-violent demonstrations, there is concern that the events could deteriorate into violent clashes with Israeli forces, resulting in large numbers of casualties. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights urged all “to respect the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression” and called on Israel “to abide by its obligations under human rights law and exercise utmost restraint in the use of force during law enforcement operations”
- **In the West Bank, 646 Palestinians, including 181 children, were injured by Israeli forces during multiple protests and clashes.** The vast majority of injuries (89 per cent) were in the context of weekly protests against access restrictions and settlement expansion, as well as in demonstrations against the United States’ recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital on 6 December 2017. Another 59 injuries occurred during clashes that erupted following six search and arrest operations, out of a total of 176 such

operations carried out during the reporting period. The largest number of injuries was recorded during clashes in Qalqiliya city, followed by Kafr Qalil and Al Lubban ash Sharqiya villages (both Nablus) and Abu Dis town (Jerusalem). Of all the injuries, 38 were caused by live ammunition, 99 by rubber bullets and 507 by medically-treated tear-gas inhalation or direct hits by tear gas canisters. Of concern, a 13-year-old Palestinian boy was shot with a rubber bullet in the eye by Israeli forces during clashes at Burin school (Nablus), triggering a suspension of classes for the rest of the day.

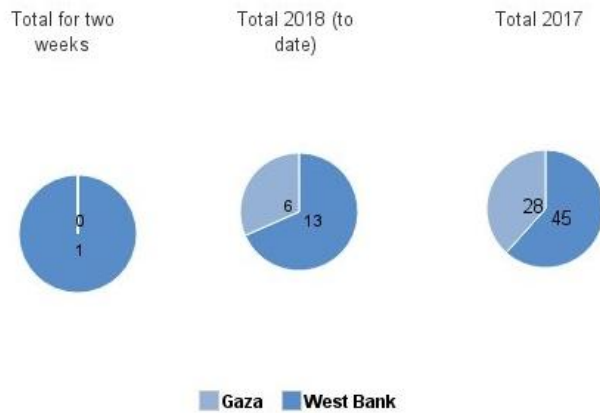
- **Two Palestinian policemen and another two Palestinian men were killed during armed clashes that erupted in an arrest operation by Palestinian forces in An Nuseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip on 22 March.** The operation was reportedly aimed at capturing the perpetrators of an attack that occurred on 13 March, when an explosive device was detonated next to a convoy carrying the Palestinian Prime Minister and other senior officials, shortly after the vehicles entered the Gaza Strip, injuring seven Palestinian security staff.
- **In the town of Qabatiya (Jenin), the Israeli authorities sealed with concrete one room on punitive grounds, affecting six Palestinians.** The room was part of the family home of one of the Palestinian perpetrators of an attack that took place on October 2017 in Kafr Qasem, within Israel, where one Israeli settler was killed.
- **Twelve other structures were demolished or seized in Area C and East Jerusalem on grounds of lack of Israeli-issued building permits, displacing 18 Palestinians, including six children, and affecting another 14 people.** Nine of the targeted structures were in East Jerusalem (Jabal al Mukabir, Ath Thuri, and Al Watta) and the other three structures in Area C of Kafr Malik and Silwad villages (both in Ramallah).
- **Eleven Israeli settler attacks resulting in Palestinian injuries or property damage were reported.** In five separate incidents, five Palestinian farmers were physically assaulted and injured by Israeli settlers while working on their land in the villages of Turmus'ayya (Ramallah), Immatin (Qalqiliya), At Tuwani (Hebron) Huwwara and Burin (both in Nablus); in the latter incident, a tractor was also damaged. Additionally, a 16-year-old Palestinian boy was physically assaulted and injured in East Jerusalem. In Hizma town and Beit Ikhsa village (both in Jerusalem) Israeli settlers vandalized five Palestinian-owned vehicles and sprayed racist and price tag graffiti on the walls of a Palestinian house. In three separate incidents, Israeli settlers cut off 17 Palestinian-owned trees in the villages of Qaryut (Nablus) and Al Jab'a (Bethlehem), and stole livestock belonging to a farmer from 'Urif village (Nablus). In As Sawiya and Madama (Nablus), Kardala and Khirbet Tell el Himma (Tubas), and A Seefer and At Tuwani (Hebron), settlers opened fire or threw stones at Palestinian farmers working near settlement areas, with no injuries reported. **The weekly average of settler attacks resulting in Palestinian casualties or property damage since the beginning of 2018, witnessed a 50 and 67 per cent increase compared to 2017 and 2016, respectively.**
- **At least twelve incidents of stone and Molotov cocktail throwing by Palestinians against Israeli-plated vehicles were reported across the West Bank, according to Israeli media reports, resulting in damage to three vehicles.** The incidents were reported in the Hebron and Bethlehem areas. In addition, damage was reported to the light rail in the Shu'fat area of East Jerusalem.
- **On 27 March, Israeli settlers, under the protection of Israeli forces, occupied two uninhabited houses in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron city (H2), claiming to have purchased the properties; Palestinians have denied these claims.** One of the houses was previously occupied by settlers in January 2016 and later evacuated, following a decision from the Israeli High Court of Justice (HCJ). The close proximity of these properties to the Ibrahimi Mosque raise concerns about potential access restrictions to

this religious site, as well as additional tensions and clashes in the area. On 22 March, in the same area, Israeli settlers evacuated parts of a Palestinian-owned building (Abu Rajab), which were taken over in July 2017, also following an HCJ ruling.

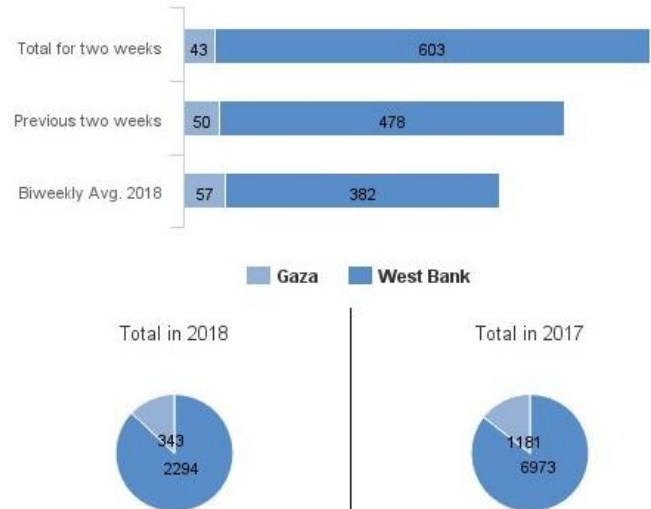
- **On 24 March, Gaza's sole Power Plant (GPP) shut down after exhausting its fuel reserves, extending power cuts to 20 hours per day.** This occurred following a disruption in the import of fuel from Egypt since 21 January. The operation of one out of two turbines of the GPP resumed on 26 March following the renewal of fuel deliveries. The severe electricity crisis has continued to undermine the delivery of essential services, including health, water and sanitation, directly impacting the lives of 2 million people living in Gaza.
- **During the reporting period, the Egyptian-controlled Rafah Crossing was opened for three days (23-25 March); one day in both directions and two days in one direction, allowing 830 Palestinians to enter Gaza and 620 to exit.** According to the Palestinian authorities in Gaza, more than 23,000 people, including humanitarian cases, are registered and waiting to cross Rafah. Since the beginning of 2018, the crossing has been opened on only ten days; five days in both directions and five days in one direction.

Palestinian casualties in the occupied Palestinian territory (including East Jerusalem)

Palestinian fatalities by Israeli forces in the oPt

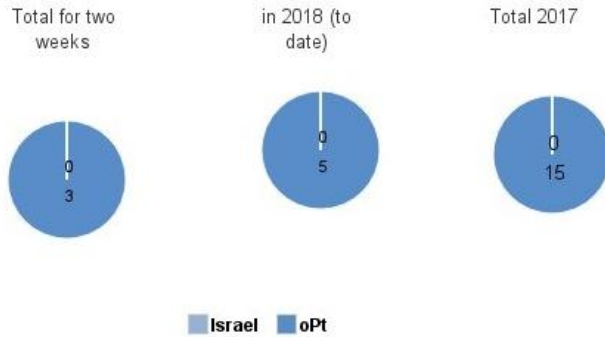


Palestinian injuries by Israeli forces in the oPt

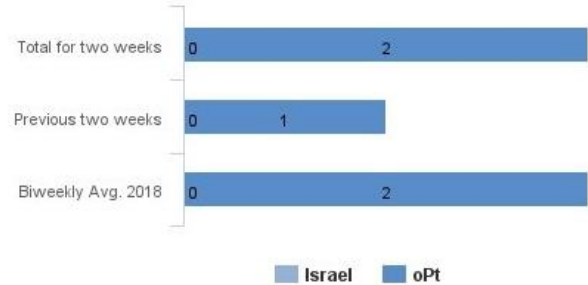


Israeli civilian casualties by Palestinians in the oPt and Israel

Israeli fatalities by Palestinians in the oPt and Israel

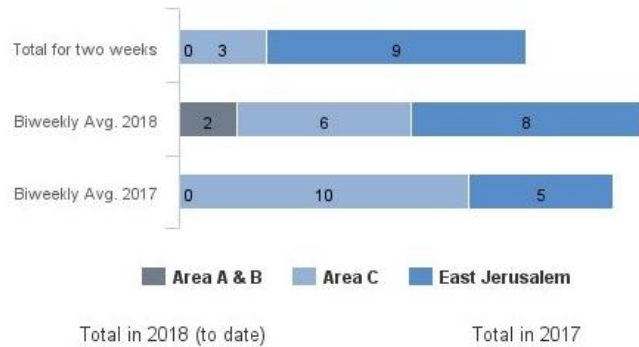


Israeli injuries by Palestinians in the oPt and Israel

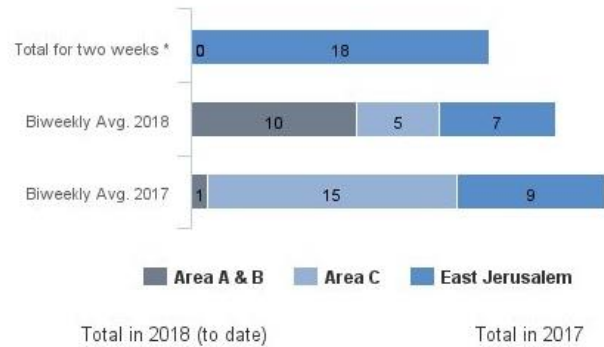


Demolitions and related displacements

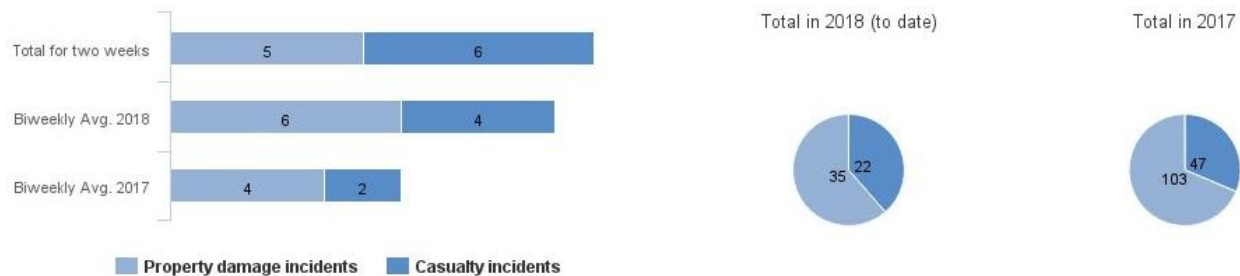
Palestinian-owned structures demolished



Palestinians displaced due to demolitions



Settler-related violence in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem)



Israeli military operations in the occupied Palestinian territory (including East Jerusalem)

Israeli military incursions into Gaza*

* excluding the period of hostilities (7 July- 26 August 2014)

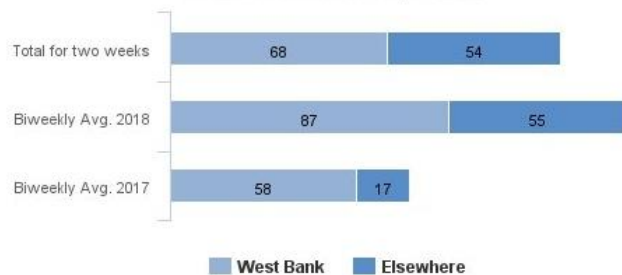


Israeli military search and arrest operations into the West Bank



Movements of goods into and out of Gaza through Kerem Shalom Crossing

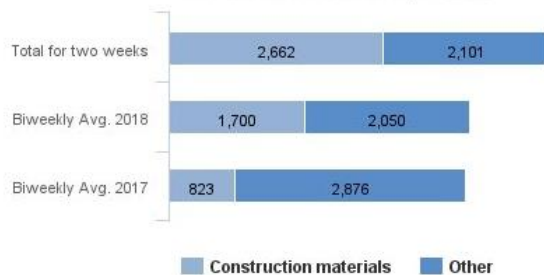
Truckloads leaving Gaza



240

Jan-May 2007 weekly average (before the blockade)

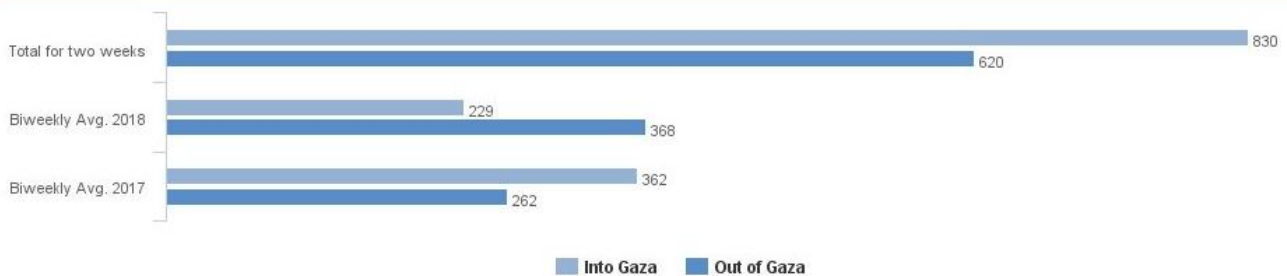
Truckloads entering Gaza



2807

Jan-May 2007 weekly average (before the blockade)

Movement of People via Rafah crossing



Please note that the figures in this report are subject to changes upon the receipt of additional information. For more information, please contact us at ochaopt@un.org