



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

30 June - 6 July 2010

West Bank

Significant decline in Palestinian injuries by Israeli forces

Five Palestinians were injured by Israeli forces this week compared to at least 43 last week. The majority of last week's injuries were sustained during clashes between Palestinian residents and Israeli forces in the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. In addition, two children (aged 8 and 12) were injured when an UXO (Unexploded ordnance) exploded in the Qalqiliya governorate. So far in 2010, seven Palestinians and two members of the Israeli security forces have been killed in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Another 742 Palestinians and 101 Israeli soldiers and policemen have been injured in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

A Palestinian was wounded in a weekly demonstration that took place against the construction of the Barrier in the area of Beit Jala (Bethlehem governorate). A number of other protests were held this week against Barrier construction and the expansion of Hallamish settlement in the Ramallah governorate and against the continued denial of access to agricultural areas near the settlement of Karmi Zur in the Hebron governorate. All latter demonstrations ended without casualties.

Dozens of Palestinians held a peaceful demonstration in East Jerusalem on 1 July against the arrest of Mohammed Abu Tir, the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) member from Jerusalem, allegedly affiliated with Hamas. Abu Tir was arrested after failing to comply with an Israeli court order to leave the city after his permanent residency in Jerusalem was revoked in June, together with that of three other members of the PLC, including a former minister. The Israeli authorities based the revocations on the basis of the PLC members' "disloyalty" to the State of Israel.

Two Palestinians were wounded when Palestinians clashed with Israeli forces in Shu'fat refugee camp (East Jerusalem). Two other men were injured this week in the Nablus governorate: one was physically assaulted by Israeli soldiers near the settlement of Shave Shomron, the other was shot by soldiers after allegedly attempting to flee Israeli soldiers checking vehicles at the Za'tara/Tappuah checkpoint.

Overall, Israeli forces conducted 97 search operations inside Palestinian towns and villages, slightly less than this year's weekly average (99).

Israeli settler violence

Israeli settler violence this week resulted in one Palestinian injury, and another three incidents ended with damage to property. While most of last week's injuries by Israeli forces in East Jerusalem (Silwan) occurred in the context of incidents involving settlers, no casualties inflicted by Israeli settlers were recorded in the previous two weeks. OCHA records 144 settler-related incidents that have led to either Palestinian casualties or damage to property this year, compared to 72 incidents for the same period last year.

Israeli settlers from the settlement outpost of Mitzpe Ya'ir (Hebron governorate) physically assaulted and wounded a Palestinian man while he was herding his flock near the outpost. Also in Hebron, settlers from the Tel Rumeida settlement in the Israeli controlled area of Hebron City uprooted five Palestinian-owned almond trees. Three vehicles also sustained damage in incidents involving settlers throwing stones and a Molotov cocktail at Palestinian-plated cars travelling in Qalqiliya and Hebron governorates.

Israeli media reported that an Israeli settler was wounded when Palestinians threw stones at his vehicle while driving near Azzun village (Qalqiliya governorate). On another occasion, Palestinians stoned Israeli-plated vehicles driving on West Bank roads in the Hebron area, causing minor damage to a car.

Area C demolitions continue to undermine livelihoods

On 1 July, the Israeli authorities demolished 12 animal shelters belonging to 12 families (72 members) in Khirbet Ar Ras Ahmar, an Area C herder community in the Jordan Valley. Two weeks ago, the families received evacuation orders against some of these structures on the grounds that they were located in areas closed for military training purposes ("firing zones"). The Israeli military had previously demolished 15 residential tents, 30 animal pens and 18 traditional 'taboun' ovens in the same community and on the same grounds in June 2009, forcibly displacing 120 people. Approximately 18 percent of the West Bank has been declared closed military areas by the Israeli military, most of it within the Jordan Valley. Herder communities in Area C are amongst the most vulnerable sectors of the Palestinian population in the West Bank. A recent UN assessment identified these communities as exhibiting high levels of food insecurity (79 percent) and acute child malnutrition (6 percent), due to the gradual erosion of their livelihoods.

Also this week, Israeli authorities demolished 12 fruit and vegetable stalls located in Area C alongside Road 60, in the Hebron governorate. Demolitions took place on the grounds of "lack of permit", and affected the livelihood of seven traders. Against the same background, Israeli authorities issued 28 stop-work orders against Palestinian-owned structures in the villages of Kafr ad Dik and Haris in the Salfit governorate, Furush Beit Dajan in the Nablus governorate and Mikhmas in the Ramallah governorate. Twenty-two of these structures were intended for residential purposes. The Israeli authorities also removed water pipes irrigating 20 dunums of land in Al Beqa' area in Hebron based on the allegation that the pipes were illegally connected to the main water network.

Israeli authorities have demolished 94 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C so far this year, displacing 129 people. 163 structures were demolished in the same period in 2009, displacing 319 people.

Also this week, a Palestinian man demolished a room in his home in the Old City of East Jerusalem after receiving a demolition order and to avoid paying fines. The demolition affected five people, including three children. Five Palestinian-structures have been demolished by their owners in a similar context in East Jerusalem since the start of the year.

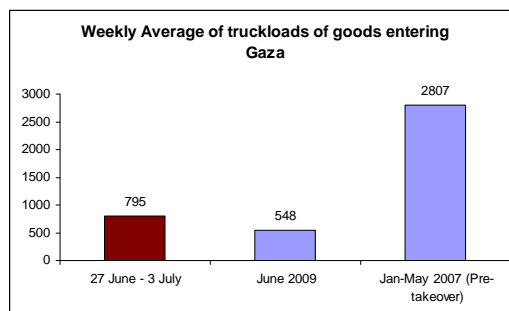
Gaza Strip

Israeli authorities release official list of prohibited items; impact of crossing easings remains negligible

Israeli authorities released the official list of military and “dual use” items, whose import into Gaza will be prohibited or restricted. The release of the list this week follows the 20 June decision of the Government of Israel to ease the Gaza blockade. Under the new regime, items not included on the list are allowed unrestricted entry. Restricted “dual-use” items are specified in two separate lists. One list contains 15 categories of general items prohibited, including fertilizers, fiber-glass based raw materials, drilling equipment, vessels and water disinfectants. The other list contains 19 types of construction materials, including cement, aggregates, concrete blocks, steel elements, asphalt, sealing materials and vehicles used for construction. Materials in the latter list will be allowed entry only for projects under the supervision of the UN and international organizations. The announced easing does not include measures affecting the current restrictions on exports and movement of people.

Since the announcement, the number of truckloads entering Gaza has increased steadily. A total of 795 truckloads entered Gaza between 27 June and 3 July - a 42 percent increase compared to the weekly average allowed in since the start of 2010 (558). This figure however constitutes only 28 percent of the weekly average that entered Gaza during the first five months of 2007 (2,807 truckloads), before the imposition of the blockade. Similar to previous weeks, food and hygiene items made up the majority of imported goods (527 truckloads or 66 percent of total imports). With the exception of a few agricultural and fishing materials, new items allowed into Gaza during the week were limited to consumer goods, mostly food stuffs, packaged for household consumption, and are hence not useful for productive purposes. Increase of imports of consumer goods, without allowing the entry of necessary raw materials, will continue to have a limited impact on the revival of local production.

With the exception of glass, wood and aluminum (allowed for the commercial market in the past few months), only limited amounts of construction materials designed for three projects carried out by international organizations were allowed into Gaza. The entry of each truckload designated for one of these projects continues to be subject to extensive coordination procedures, which have increased administrative costs and significantly slowed down progress. According to the Israeli authorities, the same procedures will be required for the import of “dual use construction materials” needed to implement additional projects under the new regime, thus undermining the sustainability of these projects. In the context of these easings, work to expand the Kerem Shalom crossing has also begun.



Access restrictions on land and sea continue; two boys wounded

Israeli forces injured two Palestinian boys this week, compared to three Palestinians killed and another four injured last week. So far this year, 34 Palestinians (including eleven 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. Another 130 Palestinians (including 113 civilians) and five Israeli soldiers have been injured.

Two boys were wounded in the context of continued Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to land and sea. One boy (aged 13) was shot and injured in an incident on 5 July when Israeli forces opened fire towards a group of Palestinians collecting scrap metal near the Gaza-Israel border. Israeli forces continue to enforce access restrictions in areas near the border by opening “warning” fire towards people approaching or entering these areas. Similar to previous weeks, Israeli tanks and bulldozers launched a number of incursions a few hundred metres inside Gaza and withdrew after conducting land leveling operations.

A second boy (aged 15) was injured in another incident after Israeli forces opened “warning” fire targeting Palestinian fishing boats. On another occasion, the Israeli navy fired at fishing boats, forcing them ashore; no injuries or damage to boats were reported. Palestinian fishermen are prohibited from accessing fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from shore.

Air strikes in the Gaza Strip have also continued. The Israeli Air Force targeted and hit two locations this week including an alleged military base and tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt borders; minor damage was reported.

A Palestinian farmer, along with two children, sustained injuries when an UXO exploded while working on land near the border area.

Palestinian armed factions fired a number of rudimentary rockets towards southern Israel, including military bases located on the border, resulting in no injuries. Israeli media reported that a building in Sderot town, southern Israel, sustained some damage when hit by a rocket.

Electricity generation back to previous levels – daily power cuts of up to eight hours

The Gaza power plant resumed operation on 30 June after receiving a limited shipment of industrial fuel. The plant was forced to shut down completely for four days between 26 and 29 June, after exhausting its fuel reserves last week. As a result, power cuts throughout the Gaza Strip were reduced to their previous precarious levels from 16 to eight hours per day. The current daily demand for electricity this summer ranges between 280 and 300 megawatts (MW), of which no more than 60 percent is supplied. Electricity supply stands now at 167 MW, including 120 MW and 17 MW purchased from Israel and Egypt respectively, and 30 MW produced by the Gaza power plant. Since December 2009, operations at the plant have been steadily declining due to an ongoing crisis in funding that has cut fuel supply. Though 0.90 million litres of fuel entered Gaza this week compared to 0.59 million litres last week, this sum represents only 29 percent of the quantity needed to operate the plant at full capacity. The chronic daily power shortage resulting in intermittent power supply continues to affect all spheres of daily life as well as Gaza’s service provision.