



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

15 - 21 September 2010

LATEST DEVELOPMENT

- 22 September: One Palestinian was killed and another was critically injured after clashes erupted in Silwan in East Jerusalem, between Palestinian residents and Israeli private security guards employed by the Israeli Ministry of Housing to protect the Israeli settlers living in this Palestinian neighbourhood. Following this incident, additional clashes broke out between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in different parts of East Jerusalem, resulting in 28 Palestinian injuries. The situation remains very tense throughout the city.

West Bank

One militant killed and 12 civilians injured by Israeli forces

This week, Israeli forces killed one Palestinian militant and injured 12 Palestinian civilians, including three children, in different incidents throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Since the beginning of 2010, nine Palestinians and two soldiers have been killed in the context of violent incidents involving Israeli forces in the West Bank, compared to 16 and two fatalities during the equivalent period in 2009. In addition, 821 Palestinians and 113 Israeli soldiers and policemen have been injured in this context since the beginning of the year, compared to 633 and 24 in the equivalent period in 2009.

In the course of a midnight raid carried out on 17 September in the Nur Shams Refugee Camp (Tulkarm governorate), Israeli forces killed a 38 year-old Palestinian militant affiliated with Hamas. According to the Israeli military spokesperson, as quoted by the Israeli media, the soldiers opened fire while the man was "running suspiciously toward the [IDF] force, refusing to heed the soldiers' request to stop." According to an investigation by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), the Palestinian was killed while asleep in his home. Around 16 other Palestinians were arrested during the operation.

Seven of this week's Palestinian injuries were sustained during clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces in Al 'Isawiya village in East Jerusalem. The clashes occurred after Israeli forces closed the entrance of the village with cement blocks during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur (18 September). Another five Palestinians, including two children, and two Israeli and international activists were wounded during weekly demonstrations against the construction of the Barrier in Bil'in village (Ramallah governorate); and against the denial of Palestinian access to agricultural land near Karmeit Zur settlement (Hebron governorate). Also this week, Israeli forces physically assaulted a 13 year-old girl at a Barrier checkpoint in the Bethlehem governorate when they denied access to three girls en route from school to their home.

Incidents in context of settler violence

This week, OCHA documented six incidents involving Israeli settlers that resulted in Palestinian injuries (one) or damage to property (five). Overall, a total of 199 incidents resulting in Palestinian injuries or property damage have taken place in 2010, compared to 105 incidents reported in the same period last year.

During a clash between Palestinian residents of Burin village (Nablus governorate) and Israeli settlers from the nearby settlement of Yitzhar, two Palestinians and, according to the Israeli media, one Israeli settler, were injured. Separate confrontations between Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the Israeli controlled area of Hebron City (H2) ended without injuries.

In two of the incidents involving damage to property, Israeli settlers burnt 50 olive trees belonging to the village of Kafr Qaddum (Qalqiliya governorate); and Israeli settlers uprooted over 180 mature and newly-planted grapevines in the areas of Al Buweira (Hebron governorate) and Al Khader (Bethlehem governorate). Also, residents of 'Asira al Qibliya village (Nablus governorate) reported that Israeli settlers burnt dozens of bales of hay.

Area C and East Jerusalem demolitions resumed

After a respite that lasted more than 30 days, this week OCHA recorded the demolition of eight structures in East Jerusalem and Area C of the West Bank.

In East Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities demolished seven Palestinian-owned structures in the At Tur neighbourhood due to lack of building permits, affecting four Palestinian families. The structures included two animal shacks, one concrete structure used as storage and a pigeon coop, a stone wall, and two empty animal shacks. In the course of the demolition, Israeli bulldozers conducted land leveling and uprooted 15 trees of various kinds, and destroyed three water containers and several tons of animal feed. At least one of the owners had received a notice from the Jerusalem Municipality one month ago, stating that he was keeping animals "illegally". In 2010, the Israeli authorities have demolished 31 Palestinian-owned structures in East Jerusalem, of which five were houses, displacing 25 people; an additional six structures have been demolished by their owners, displacing 22 people.

In Area C of the West Bank, the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) demolished a large shack in the Bedouin community of Um al Obor in the Jordan Valley. The building was located on one dunum of land and used to keep hundreds of cows and sheep. The demolition affected the livelihood of the entire community, comprising 11 households (60 people, including 34 children). According to a community representative, the Israeli officials burnt 30 trucks of organic fertilizers and confiscated metal bars (estimated at a value of 190,000 Israeli shekels). Three days before the demolition, the community received an eviction order from the INPA on the grounds that they are present in a "nature reserve". Since the beginning of 2010, 248 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in Area C, displacing 293 people. In comparison, 186 structures were demolished in the same period in 2009 and 319 persons displaced.

In the same context, the Israeli authorities delivered stop-work orders against 35 structures in four Area C communities in the governorates of Salfit, Qalqiliya and Hebron, putting over 90 people at risk of displacement and threatening the livelihoods of dozens of others. In the Hebron governorate, a demolition order was issued against an agricultural well owned by two families. Also, an evacuation order was issued against Palestinians rehabilitating 44 dunums of land in the area of Fer'a (Hebron governorate) on grounds that the land is "State Land".

Substandard schools in Area C

According to a joint UNICEF-Ministry of Education and Higher Education fact sheet on education, at least 24 out of total 135 Palestinian Authority (PA) schools serving 10,000 vulnerable students in Area C, were found to be substandard and are housed in unsafe spaces, including tents, caravans, basic cement buildings, and tin shacks. They fall short of basic safety and hygiene standards, with little

protection from either the summer heat or winter cold, and are in critical need of humanitarian assistance. In addition, at least 42 out of the 135 Government schools have poor and inadequate water and sanitation facilities. The school year started on 15 September and, there are 38,000 students in grades 1-12, attending 147 Government and UNRWA schools in Area C. Construction or expansion requires a permit from the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA), which is difficult to very difficult to obtain.

General closure imposed on two days

The Israeli authorities imposed a two-day general closure on the West Bank (17 and 18 September), on the occasion of the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. All Palestinians holding West Bank IDs, including those with valid permits, except staff of international organizations, medical staff and teachers, were prevented from entering Israel and East Jerusalem during these days.

Gaza Strip

Escalation results in one Palestinian killed and four injured

During the reporting period, Israeli forces killed one Palestinian civilian and injured four others. In 2010, 47 Palestinians (including 20 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 191 Palestinians (including 166 civilians) and eight Israeli soldiers have been injured.

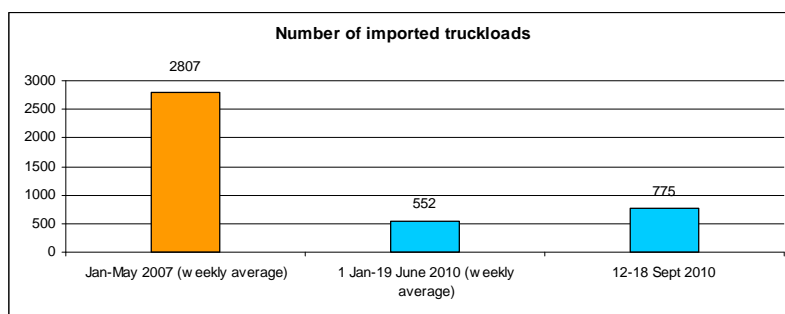
Following an increase in firing of rockets and mortars by Palestinian factions towards southern Israel, the Israeli Air Force carried out a number of air strikes inside Gaza. As a result of one of the strikes targeting tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border, one Palestinian man who was working inside was killed and three others were injured. Thirteen (13) other people were also injured this week following the collapse of tunnels. Other airstrikes targeted a military base in the Rafah area and a factory for manufacturing water pipes in the Khan Yunis area; the latter was severely damaged. No casualties or damages were reported due to the Palestinian attacks.

Another Palestinian was injured during the reporting period, when Israeli forces opened 'warning' fire towards people collecting scrap materials near the fence dividing Israel and the Gaza Strip in the Beit Lahiya area. In 2010, 38 Palestinians have been injured in similar circumstances. Also, Israeli forces launched incursions a few hundred metres inside Gaza on six different occasions, and withdrew after leveling land. Since late 2008, Palestinians are totally or partially prevented from accessing areas located up to 1,500 meters from the fence, constituting 17 percent of Gaza's territory. Access to sea areas beyond three nautical miles from the coast is also barred. This week, the Israeli navy fired 'warning' shots towards Palestinian fishing boats in three separate incidents, forcing them ashore.

Gaza crossings: the impact of recently-applied easings remains limited

While the volume of imports into the Gaza Strip has significantly increased since late June 2010, the entry of construction materials required to address the enormous housing and infrastructure needs of the population continued to be almost totally banned. Moreover, despite some signs of reactivity in the private sector, sustainable growth is not expected due to the ongoing ban on exports and the difficulties on the import of machinery and equipment.

During the reporting period (12-18 September) Gaza imports declined slightly compared to the previous week (775 vs. 807 truckloads), following the reduced opening of the crossings (four out of five days) due to the Israeli holiday of Yom Kipur. This



week's total number of truckloads represented only 28 percent of the weekly average of truckloads that entered during the first five months of 2007 (2,807), before the imposition of the blockade, but 40 percent higher than the weekly number of truckloads that entered in 2010, prior to the easings. New items that entered this week included various industrial machinery, vehicles and spare parts and accessories for cars, which entered for the first time since June 2007.

Thousands of students in Gaza affected by a shortage of classrooms

As the new 2010-2011 school year started in Gaza (14 September), thousands of children remain affected as a result of a significant shortage of classrooms, stemming mainly from lack of building materials to construct additional educational facilities. The United Nations for Relief Works Agency (UNRWA), which runs over 230 schools in the Gaza Strip (almost 36 percent of total schools), reports that approximately 40,000 children in the Gaza Strip were unable to enroll in its schools due to acute classroom shortage. The agency estimates there is a need for an additional 100 new schools to meet the increasing numbers of students; no new school has been built since the commencement of the Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip in 2007. The affected students are accommodated in Government and private schools which, similar to UNRWA schools, are overcrowded. Approximately 80 percent of them operate double-shifts, along with about 90 percent of the UNRWA schools (UNICEF-Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education joint fact sheet on education). As a result of double-shifting, schools are forced to reduce working hours by up to 30 percent and to cancel extracurricular activities, thus affecting the quality of education.

Electricity cuts throughout Gaza remain in place: 4-6 hours per day

This week, there was a slight decline in industrial fuel imports compared to the previous one (1.98 vs. 2.1 million litres). This week's amount of fuel constituted around half of the estimated weekly needs of fuel to operate the power plant at full capacity (80 megawatts (MW)). As a result, the majority of the population in Gaza continues to experience power outages of 4-6 hours per day, a relative improvement compared to the average of 8-12 hours of power outages, which were common until late August 2010. Power cuts affect daily life throughout the Gaza Strip, including the provision of essential services including water supply, sewage treatment and removal, and the functioning of health services, thus affecting medical treatment.