



## OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

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## Protection of Civilians Weekly Report No. 282

**15-21 October 2008**

### Military activities affecting civilians

This week, two Palestinians were killed and six injured during IDF military operations in the West Bank. A Palestinian from Al Jalazun refugee camp died of wounds inflicted when he was shot with live ammunition by IDF. The incident occurred during a violent clash between Palestinians and the IDF that erupted during the funeral of a 17-year-old boy from the same camp, killed by the IDF on 14 October. According to the IDF, the man was killed while holding a firebomb. Since the beginning of July 08 eight additional Palestinians were injured in clashes with the IDF in the vicinity of this camp and the Bet El settlement. In a separate incident on 16 October, clashes erupted during an overnight IDF search-and-arrest operation in Kafr Malek in the Ramallah district, during which the IDF shot and killed a 22-year-old Palestinian man, while he was allegedly holding a fire bomb.

This week the number of military search operations stayed relatively stable compared to the previous week—86 compared to 84 previously, and less than the 2008 weekly average (104 searches per week). There was however a sharp decline in the number of IDF arrests of Palestinians—compared to the average weekly number of arrests in 2008—102 arrests per week.

### Settler incidents

**Palestinian olive harvesters targeted:** Throughout the week and across the West Bank, skirmishes between Israeli settlers and Palestinian olive harvesters broke out when settlers either attacked Palestinian olive harvesters, or tried to prevent them from reaching their agricultural land, leaving five Palestinians and one foreign national injured in the wake. At least ten incidents of vandalism of olive trees, produce, water cisterns and property by Israeli settlers were reported to OCHA during the week. In one of these incidents, an unusually large group of about 100 Israeli settlers from Qedumim settlement attacked Palestinian farmers and Israeli and international activists picking olives near Kufr Qaddum. In at least four

cases in the Nablus and Qalqiliya governorates, Palestinians were unable to resume harvesting olives until the IDF intervened and evacuated the settlers from the area.

**Settler attack on PRCS ambulance:** On 15 October, a mob of Israeli settlers from Bet El settlement in the Ramallah district attacked and tried to break into a Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulance transporting the body of a Palestinian boy killed by the IDF on 14 October (see above). According to Palestinian witnesses, IDF soldiers that arrived at the site of the incident refrained from acting to stop the attack.

**Curfew imposed following stone throwing at settlers:** the IDF imposed a 21-hour curfew on 'Azzun village in the Qalqiliya governorate and two hours curfew on Az Zawiya village in the Salfit governorate following stone throwing by Palestinian villagers at Israeli vehicles passing on road 55 near these villages.

### West Bank Closure due to Jewish holiday

During the reporting period, on 15 - 21 October, the Israeli Authorities imposed a general closure in the West Bank for the Jewish holiday of Sukkoth. All West Bank ID holders with valid permits were prevented from entering East Jerusalem and Israel, except for emergency medical cases and Palestinian employees of international NGOs and UN agencies. In addition, the perennial problem of long delays and queues continued at checkpoints on major roads throughout the West Bank.

### The Gaza-Ramallah rift: services to Gaza's population further affected

**Health and education strikes:** The ongoing strike by the Palestinian Union of Health Workers and the Ministry of Education teachers, initiated on the background of the tension between the two Palestinian authorities, has been extended to the end of the year. As observed during the previous reporting periods about 25% of hospital staff, 36 % of primary health care centre and 53% of the Ministry of Education teachers adhered to the strike. Also, replacement staff

has been hired and health and education services remain mostly operational, though concerns have been expressed by various organisations, including UNICEF and the WHO, regarding deterioration in the quality of services.

**Water shortage:** the CMWU (Coastal Municipalities Water Utility) continue to suffer from fuel shortage due to the ongoing conflict between the Palestinian Water Authority in Ramallah and Hamas authorities in Gaza. Fuel has not been received since the beginning of August, resulting in the inability of back-up generators to operate properly the water wells, waste water pumping stations, and waste water suction trucks during the frequent Gaza blackouts and brownouts. As much as 50% of CMWU drinking water wells have run out of back-up fuel and more than 250,000 residents of Rafah and Joher El Deak areas are experiencing water shortages. According to the CMWU, the monthly average fuel need for Gaza drinking water and waste water facilities is about 100-150 thousand litres. Since the beginning of the dispute, however, UNRWA has donated 45,000 litres of diesel to the CMWU for emergency use.

### **Gaza crossings activity: Decrease in goods and fuel**

The period from 12 to 18 October witnessed a decrease in the number of imported truckloads from the previous week (557 versus 666 trucks) but an increase compared with the weekly average since September 08. From the beginning of that month, the weekly numbers of truckloads of goods entering the Gaza Strip have been volatile, as trucks going through the crossings increased in the week *leading up* to the Muslim and Jewish holidays, and then sharply declined due to the crossings' closures *during* the holidays. However, despite this volatility the weekly *average* for the past month — roughly 542 is close to the average weekly number of truckloads entering Gaza per week since June 2007 (574 trucks per week).

By contrasts, there was a sharp decline in diesel imports from Israel—from 1,547,000 litres in the previous week, to 83,000 litres this week. Despite the decline, the system of diesel-rationing initially implemented by the Hamas authorities in Gaza has been suspended since 25 September 08, due to

accumulated stores of diesel in Gaza, as well as an increase in fuel availability from Egypt through the tunnels. Again, the same trends seen vis-à-vis commercial non-fuel imports apply: the accumulated stores of diesel is due to a sharp increase in diesel imported into Gaza from Israel in the week immediately leading up to the Jewish holidays in October 08. However, during the holidays, the pipelines were closed.

#### ***This week at a glance:***

##### **Palestinian – Israeli conflict related casualties**

- Total number of Palestinians killed: 2
- Total number of Israelis killed: 0
- Total number of Palestinians injured: 22
  - of whom 3 are children
- Total number of Israelis injured: 6
- One foreign national was injured this week

**Total Israeli military search operations:** 89

**Total number of IDF flying checkpoints:** 43

**Total Israeli military arrests:** 37

##### **Gaza Imports from Israel:**

- Total number truckloads imported: 557, of which:
  - Food items: 429 trucks
  - Non-food items: 128 trucks
- Total fuel imports:
  - Diesel: 83,000 litres (3.9% of weekly needs)
  - Industrial fuel: 2,520,270 (80% of weekly needs)
  - Cooking gas: 635,000 tonnes (36.2% of weekly needs)
  - Petrol: 106,000 litres (15.4% of weekly needs)