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occupied Palestinian territory

THE HUMANITARIAN MONITOR

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October Overview

Events in October highlighted a chronic feature of the human dignity crisis affecting the population of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt): the pervasive absence of the rule of law and lack of accountability.

The olive harvest, which officially began in October, was repeatedly disrupted by violent attacks from Israeli settlers. During the month, over 3,700 olive trees were burned, uprooted, killed with chemicals or otherwise vandalized. To protect farmers who need to harvest olives in their land next to Israeli settlements, the Israeli authorities have allocated specific periods of times, during which farmers can work under IDF protection. However, this measure not only puts the onus on the Palestinian farmers to adapt to Israeli access restrictions rather than on the violent settlers, but it has also proven largely ineffective in preventing property attacks, most of which occur outside the times allocated to the protection of Palestinian farmers. According to an Israeli human rights organization (Yesh Din), over 90 per cent of complaints regarding settler violence filed with the Israeli police in recent years have been closed without indictment.



Olive groves of the Palestinian villages of Tel and Far'ata, allegedly set on fire by Israelis from Havat Gil'ad settlement (Nablus). Photo by Yesh Din, October 2010

The persistent attacks of Israeli settlers occur in the context of the Israeli government's continued refusal to abide by its duty under international humanitarian law to halt the transfer of its civilians to the oPt. In addition to the protection concerns outlined above, the expansion of settler presence in the West Bank has resulted in a reduction in the areas available to Palestinians, as well as in increasing restrictions to their freedom of movement, resulting in greater humanitarian vulnerability.

In the Gaza Strip, most of the olive groves that existed in areas up to 1,500 meters from the fence with Israel (17 percent of Gaza's territory), were

ISSUES COVERED THIS MONTH

West Bank: Palestinian-Israeli tensions in the West Bank remain elevated • Sharp increase in settler attacks in the context of the olive harvest • Reported rise in West Bank demolition orders

Gaza Strip: Israeli air strikes and access restrictions continue to result in casualties • 'Cast Lead' killing investigated • The blockade continues; production and reconstruction remain confined • Humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip

Issues across the oPt: Allegations of abuse of Palestinian detainees • 10th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325

uprooted during Israel's 'Cast Lead' offensive and the incursions conducted on a regular basis since then (including 19 this month). Access to the remaining trees in these areas is prevented by Israeli forces, through the opening of 'warning fire' of live rounds. In October, 11 civilians were injured in these areas, including one elderly farmer who was picking olives. None of these cases has led to the opening of an investigation.

Perhaps the most striking absence of accountability in recent years has been the failure to investigate allegations of serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law during the "Cast Lead" offensive. This month, front page media reported that a criminal investigation was recently opened into the circumstances of one attack that resulted in the killing of 21 members of the same extended family, all of whom were civilians. While this is a positive step, the vast majority of allegations remain uninvestigated. Of the few criminal investigations opened by the Israeli authorities, only three have resulted in indictments, of only four low ranking soldiers. On the Palestinian side, the Hamas authorities have yet to undertake credible investigations into allegations involving Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians.

Lack of accountability within the framework of international law has been a main feature of Israel's control of Gaza. Despite the recent increase in the volume and variety of imports, the entire population of Gaza remains subjected to collective punishment. The bulk of the population remains 'locked in' as a result of the general ban on the movement of people through the crossing with Israel and Egypt. While the latter (Rafah) has been operating on a daily basis since last July, only limited categories of people are allowed to cross. Moreover, the sweeping restrictions on the import of basic construction materials and on the export of goods continued to impede economic recovery, as well as the ability to address immense, and growing, housing and infrastructure needs.

Although a few building projects to be carried out by international organizations were recently approved by the Israeli authorities, very little progress has been achieved in their implementation. Currently, the largest constraint is the limited capacity of the crossing facility used for the transfer of gravel (a conveyer belt at Karni Crossing), which operates only two days a week. A prior commitment by the Israeli authorities to extend its operation remains unimplemented.

Also this month, two Israeli human rights organizations (B'Tselem and Hamoked), issued a joint report highlighting allegations of mistreatment of Palestinian detainees held in an Israeli interrogation center (Petah Tikva). Of note, none (zero) of the 645 complaints submitted by Palestinian detainees concerning abuses by interrogators since 2001 has led to the opening of a criminal investigation. Hamas continues to deny the Israeli soldier captured in 2006 (Gil'ad Shalit) the basic right to be visited by the ICRC.

Holding individuals and states accountable to international law is an essential condition to restore dignity to victims of abuses and denial of basic human rights.

West Bank

Palestinian-Israeli tensions in the West Bank remain elevated

Demonstrations and settler violence continue to result in high number of Palestinians injured; thousands of Palestinian-owned olive trees destroyed by Israeli settlers during olive harvest

The level of tension in the West Bank remained high in October, with three Palestinians killed in the context of Israeli-Palestinian violence, and 127 others injured; three Israelis were injured, including two members of Israeli security forces, and one Israeli settler.¹

On 3 October, Israeli forces shot and killed a Palestinian civilian attempting to enter East Jerusalem without an Israeli-issued permit. The circumstances behind the shooting remain disputed, and the Israeli authorities have launched an investigation. The remaining fatalities were two men affiliated with the armed wing of the Hamas movement (Izz Idin al Qassam), killed in the course of an exchange of fire with Israeli forces in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron City. The two were suspected of involvement in the killing of four Israeli settlers in Hebron in August. During the armed clash, Israeli bulldozers partially demolished a three-storey building where the armed Palestinians were hiding, displacing three people and affecting 24 others.

More than half of this month's Palestinian injuries (56) occurred during weekly demonstrations in

the West Bank, including 45 in the village of Nabi Salah, and six in the Beit Ummar village (Hebron), protesting access restrictions to agricultural land.² (See also box herein)

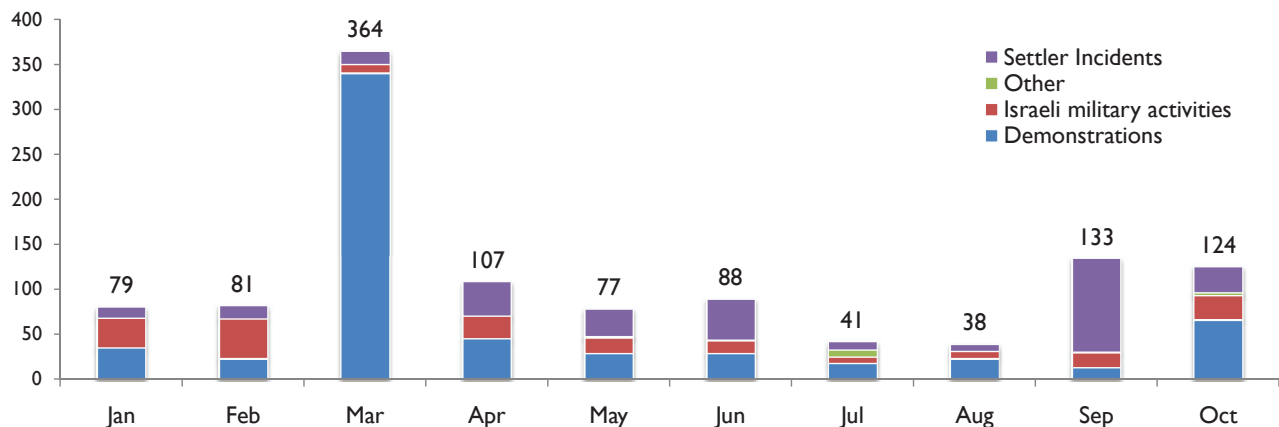
In addition, 23 Palestinians were injured in clashes that occurred in the Silwan neighborhood of East Jerusalem—the most significant of which happened on 15 October: according to local sources, Israeli forces fired tear gas canisters at worshippers performing Friday prayers in the area. The action provoked confrontations with Palestinian residents, resulting in the injury of 15 Palestinians, including one child, the majority by rubber-coated-metal bullets. Violence in Silwan has escalated in recent months between Palestinian residents and Israeli settlers, along with their armed private guards and the Israeli Police. The Municipality's stated intention to demolish a section of the neighborhood (Al Bustan) and displace its Palestinian residents to make way for a recreation park has also contributed to rising tensions.

Sharp increase in settler attacks in the context of the olive harvest

Israeli settler violence outside of East Jerusalem, accounted for most of the remaining injuries (27 injuries).

Coinciding with the beginning of the olive harvest season, there were at least 50 reported incidents of

Direct-Conflict Palestinian injuries in the West Bank, 2010



WEEKLY PROTESTS TRIGGERED BY REDUCED ACCESS TO LAND IN BEIT UMMAR

Since May 2008, the village of Beit Ummar in Hebron district has held weekly demonstrations against access restrictions to land near the settlement of Karmeit Zzur. Prior to this date, daily protests began when in 2006 the Israeli military erected a fence which traps some 600 dunums of the village's agricultural land, mainly cultivated with grapes. Farmers accessing the land need to go through an agricultural gate, which though scheduled to open twice per month, opened only on two days in 2007, and one day in 2008; since then the gate has remained completely closed. Many trees have died due to lack of maintenance, affecting the livelihoods of 12 families (or almost 150 individuals).

Demonstrations are mainly held by the villagers, along with international and Israeli activists in an area next to the gate. They often evolve into clashes, during which Palestinians throw stones and Israeli forces fire tear gas canisters, sound bombs and rubber-coated metal bullets. Since the beginning of the year, 26 Palestinians have been injured in the weekly demonstrations in the village, representing four percent of those injured across the West Bank during the same period.

Palestinian property damage perpetrated by Israeli settlers -- roughly twice the monthly average of such incidents in the previous nine months. More than 3,700 olive trees were burned, uprooted, dried with chemicals or otherwise vandalized.

To try to prevent settler attacks, the Israeli military allocated limited time periods where farmers were allowed to access groves located in the vicinity of some Israeli settlements under IDF protection. This

measure puts the onus on the Palestinian farmers to adapt to the access restrictions rather than addressing settler violence. In practice, most of the attacks during this season have occurred outside the time allocated to the protection of Palestinian farmers, when the soldiers are not present on the ground, resulting in significant property losses. Moreover, according to Yesh Din, an Israeli Human Rights organization, the large majority of complaints by Palestinians with the Israeli authorities are closed without anyone being held accountable.

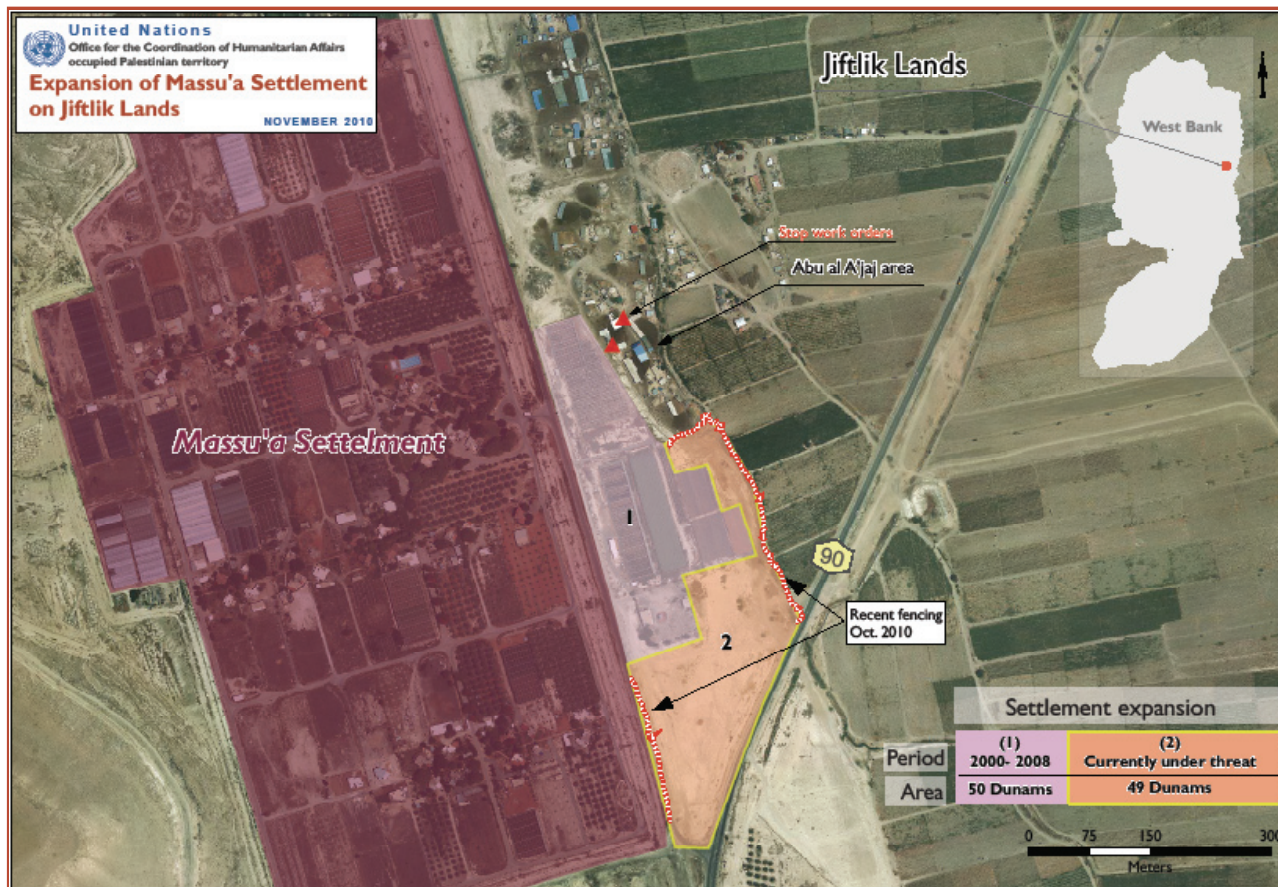
In addition to damage to thousands of trees and theft of produce incurred since the beginning of this olive season, there are widespread reports of trees having been damaged prior to the season, during the months when Palestinian farmers have little or no access to their private agricultural properties. So far this year, more than 2000 trees have been discovered to be damaged, when farmers were allowed to access the area for the first time in several months.³

Also this month, a mosque in Beit Fajjar village (Bethlehem) was vandalized and set on fire, the fifth such occurrence this year. Copies of the Quran were burnt, and some of the structure's pillars sustained damage. Graffiti of the star of David and

Multiple factors challenge the productivity of the olive sector

A report issued this month by Oxfam (GB) addresses some of the key factors undermining productivity in the olive sector. In addition to the access restrictions imposed by the Israeli army and the attacks perpetrated by Israeli settlers, the report identified the following challenges:

- limited support by the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture
- lack of access to affordable credit by most farmers
- absence of an effective coordinating body, which could raise the competitiveness of the sector and its access to external markets
- reduced rainfall (the majority of olive trees are rain-fed)



In October, Israeli settlers from Masu'a settlement (population 140) attempted to take control of approximately 49 dunums of land belonging to the village of Al Jiftlik (population 5,000), located in Area C in the Jordan Valley. The land, which is located between Road 90 and the road leading to the settlement, is part of Abu al Ajaj area of Jiftlik and is home to 33 Bedouin families (est. population 130).

Since the late 1990s, Palestinian families in the area have been threatened with displacement, both from the expansionist activities of Masu'a settlers and due to stop work and eviction orders issued by the Israeli Civil Administration on the grounds that they live on "State Land".⁵ According to Palestinian residents, since the early 2000s, settlers from Masu'a have taken control of some 50 dunums in the area by fencing plots of land and cultivating them with crops in order to expand the settlement.

Tensions emerged again in mid-October when Israeli settlers went to Abu al Ajaj area to demolish two animal barracks, which had received stop work orders from the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) earlier in the month. Following intervention by the UN and the ICA, Israeli forces arrived in the area and prevented clashes between settlers and Palestinians. A few days later, however, confrontations took place when settlers returned to the area and began fencing a plot of land by erecting metal fence posts. The settlers' fencing activities continued through the end of October, by which point, settlers had placed fence posts along some 500 meters of land, including 200 meters along which chain link was installed. During this period, clashes again erupted and resulted in multiple Palestinian injuries (see Settler Violence section).

If completed, the fence will obstruct the access of the Bedouin families residing in the area, who own approximately 5,000 sheep and rely on herding for their livelihoods. Currently, the fenced area is the route the herders use to leave and return to their homes. The herders have no alternative route as they are forbidden from using the road leading to the settlement and the other route, near Road 90, that might provide access is agricultural land cultivated by Palestinians.

AT RISK OF DISPLACEMENT

Bir al 'Idd is a small herding community located in Area C, in the south-eastern corner of the Hebron governorate. In 2001, community residents were forced to leave as a result of systematic harassment from Israeli settlers living in the nearby settlement outpost of Mitzpe Yair. An additional factor causing their displacement was access restrictions to most of their grazing lands, located in areas previously declared "closed" by the Israeli military for training.

In October 2009, in the framework of a petition to the Israeli High Court of Justice, submitted by the Israeli NGO Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR) on behalf of the residents, the Israeli authorities informed the residents may return, but must stay within the confines of a limited area. Following this, four families (approximately 50 people) returned, however, shortly thereafter, the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) began issuing stop work orders against all the residential tents and animal shelters erected on the grounds that they lack building permits; 17 such orders have been received thus far. Permit applications, as well as a draft outline plan for the community, submitted later to the ICA by RHR, were rejected.

In addition to the threat of demolition, since their return, residents have also faced harassment and intimidation by Israeli settlers living in two nearby settlement outposts (Mitzpe Yair and the Lucifer Farm). Combined, these two factors place the community again at risk of imminent displacement.

Hebrew slogans saying "price tag"⁴ and "revenge" were sprayed on the inside walls of the mosque. In another grave incident in the village of As Sawiya (Nablus), on 20 October, a group of Israeli settlers set fire to the storage room in the girls' secondary school, destroying sports equipment inside. The settlers also vandalized one of the school's walls with graffiti. According to the Israeli media, the Israeli Police suspect that both attacks were perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the context of efforts to prevent a 'renewal of a freeze' on settlement building.

Reported rise in West Bank demolition orders

In October, a total of 25 structures were demolished in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing 39 Palestinians and affecting at least 76 others. In the first ten months of 2010, a total of 313 Palestinian structures were demolished in these areas.⁶ While this represents an increase compared to the number of structures demolished during the parallel period in 2009 (255), fewer people have been displaced in 2010 demolitions (402 compared to 546). Two of this month's demolitions occurred

in the context of a military operation in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron (H2), while the rest were carried out due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits.⁷

Also this month, OCHA recorded the delivery of "stop work" and demolition orders against 32 structures in Area C, as well as 10 eviction orders against families residing in Area C in the Salfit, Tubas, Ramallah and Nablus governorates.⁸

According to the Displacement Working Group (DWG) Legal Taskforce, a survey of organizations providing legal aid in Area C shows a steep increase in the number of requests to legally challenge stop work and demolition orders, which may indicate a rise in the issuance of such orders by the Israeli Civil Administration; lawyers for five of the primary legal aid providers⁹ are currently providing legal assistance to cases of 501 orders that were issued in the first seven months of 2010, compared to 171 orders issued in the last seven months of 2009. The majority of the orders issued during the 14 month period surveyed were delivered in the Hebron (209), Ramallah (149) and Nablus (75) governorates.

Palestinians face extreme difficulty obtaining a permit to build in the West Bank: in Area C, more than 70 percent of the land, currently allocated to Israeli settlements or the Israeli military, is unavailable for Palestinians, while severe restrictions apply to their use of additional 29 percent. Only one percent of the land in Area C is thus available for Palestinian construction and development. According to official

Gaza Strip

Israeli air strikes and access restrictions continue to result in casualties

In October, Israeli forces killed three members of an armed group and injured 23 civilians inside the Gaza Strip. Eleven of the injuries occurred in the course of air strikes, some of which were reportedly carried out in response to rockets fired by Palestinian factions towards southern Israel. In one incident on 7 October, Israeli Air Force hit a military training base located northwest of Gaza City, injuring six civilians and damaging 30 buildings and three cars in the vicinity. Another air strike carried out the same day targeted a vehicle allegedly carrying armed Palestinians. While the missile fired missed the targeted car, five civilians, including two children (aged 10 and 2), traveling in another car nearby, were injured. Palestinian armed groups continued to launch rockets throughout the month towards southern Israel. No Israeli injuries or damage to property by Palestinian rockets were reported.

Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to areas located up to 1,500 metres from the fence dividing Gaza and Israel (17 percent of Gaza's territory) continue. In a number of separate incidents, Israeli forces opened fire towards Palestinian workers collecting scrap metal near the fence, injuring ten of them. In the same context, an elderly man was injured when Israeli forces opened fire at Palestinian farmers picking olives in fields located approximately 400 metres from the fence, east of Khan Younis. In another incident, a mentally disabled man was injured when they reportedly approached the fence. Also on 19 different occasions,

statistics, between 2000 and 2009 the Israeli Civil Administration issued some 5,600 demolition orders in Area C for structures built without a permit.¹⁰ In East Jerusalem, only 13 percent of the land is zoned for Palestinian construction, compared to 35 percent that has been expropriated for the exclusive use of Israeli settlements.¹¹

Israeli bulldozers and tanks launched incursions a few hundred meters into the Gaza Strip and withdrew after conducting land leveling.

Barring access to fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from the shore also continues. In nine separate incidents, Israeli naval forces opened 'warning' fire at Palestinian fishing boats, forcing them ashore. While there were no reported injuries this month, one boat sustained damage.

Since the beginning of 2010, 55 Palestinians have been killed and 220 others injured by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip, while three Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza (including one by 'friendly fire', and six others injured. While the number of fatalities this year decreased compared with 2009 (71), the number of injuries increased significantly (220 vs 163), excluding casualties during the "Cast Lead" offensive (i.e., before 19 January 2009). Despite the divergence in the trends concerning deaths and injuries, in both cases 2010 has seen a worrying increase in the percentage of civilian casualties: 40 vs. 30 percent of the fatalities, and 87 vs 73 of the injuries in the Gaza Strip by Israeli forces, in 2010 and 2009 respectively, were Palestinian civilians.

In another incident this month affecting civilians, following an explosion inside a Hamas security compound in the Rafah area, 26 civilians were injured, including 18 children (of whom, 15 were students in their classes at the time of the incident), an elderly man, and seven other bystanders. The injuries mainly resulted from shattered glass fragments. The explosion also resulted in severe

damage to the compound, four UNRWA schools and one UNRWA health centre in the vicinity. Circumstances surrounding the incident remain unclear.

Tunnels continue to claim lives; three Palestinians killed and three injured

Despite reports about the slow-down in the volume of tunnel activity since the June 2010 easing of the Israeli blockade, tunnel-related incidents continue. In two separate incidents this month, three Palestinians were killed while working inside tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border, two by electrocution and one as a result of a fall. Another 27 Palestinian workers sustained injuries. In 2010, 43 Palestinians have been killed and 109 others have been injured in different tunnel-related incidents, including air strikes, tunnel collapses and other incidents of electrocution and the explosion of gas cylinders.

'Cast Lead' killing investigated

An Israeli media report issued this month indicates that the Israeli Military Advocate General (MAG) has ordered the opening of a criminal investigation into an attack that occurred during the 'Cast Lead' offensive. The incident, which took place on 5 January 2009, resulted in the deaths of 21 Palestinian

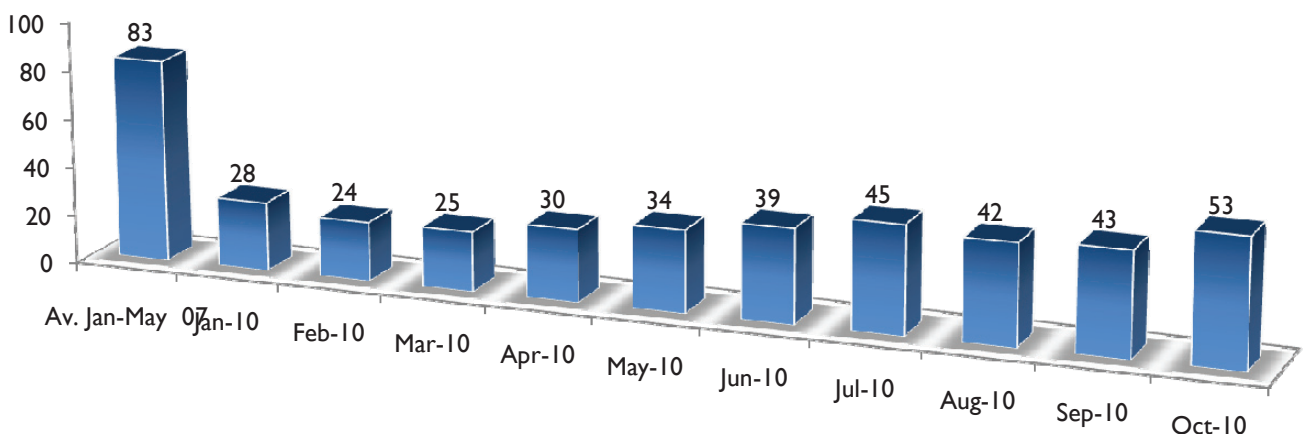
civilians and the injury of 19 others, all belonging to the same extended family (Samouni).¹²

The incident was documented in detail in the report issued by the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (also known as the 'Goldstone report'). The Mission found that the day before the incident, Israeli soldiers gathered approximately 100 civilians residing in a neighborhood in eastern Gaza City in one house, which was later struck with three missiles, apparently shot from an Israeli helicopter. According to the report, "[e]verything indicates that the Israeli forces knew that there were about 100 civilians in the house. Indeed, the families had asked to be allowed to leave the area towards a safer place, but had been ordered to stay in Wa'el al-Samouni's house. The house must have been under constant observation by the Israeli soldiers, who had complete control over the area at the time."¹³

According to an update issued by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in July 2010, the MAG opened a total of 47 criminal investigations into 'Cast Lead' incidents.¹⁴ So far, four Israeli soldiers have been prosecuted in connection with three of the investigations, which examined the killing of one civilian, the use of a child as a human shield, and the theft of a credit card.¹⁵

Last month, a committee of experts, appointed by the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to examine

Percentage of non-food items of total imports



the status of investigations carried out by both sides into the findings of the 'Goldstone report', submitted its report.¹⁶ It concluded that it could not assess definitively whether Israeli investigations meet international standards of independence, impartiality, thoroughness, effectiveness and promptness, in part due to the lack of co-operation by the Israeli authorities. Regarding the investigations conducted by the Gaza authorities, the committee stated that it "cannot conclude that credible and genuine investigations have been carried out." The committee found that the investigation conducted by the PA "can be considered credible and genuine". The HCR subsequently decided to renew the committee's mandate, and requested it to submit a further report by March 2011.

The blockade continues; production and reconstruction remain confined

No significant developments took place during October in the context of the blockade over the Gaza Strip, which intensified on 15 June 2007. The sweeping restrictions on the import of construction materials and on the export of goods from Gaza

continued to impede economic recovery, as well as the ability to address immense housing and infrastructure needs. This is despite the easing of import restrictions ongoing since 20 June 2010.

The total number of truckloads imported to Gaza during the month (4,457) was some 19 percent higher than in September, but 14 percent lower than in August. Despite fluctuations, the monthly average of truckloads since the recent easing of the blockade (the period of July-October 2010) remains 65 percent below the equivalent figure during the first five months of 2007, before the imposition of the blockade. Along with the increase in the volume of imports, the last four months saw also saw a gradual increase in their variety: in October, 'only' 53 percent of all imported truckloads consisted of non-food (human or animal) items, the highest figure recorded since September 2008,¹⁷ but less than two thirds the pre-blockade figures.

Entry of new items since June 2010, particularly industrial raw materials, allowed a limited resumption of operations by some private sector industries. The Palestine Trade Centre (Paltrade)

PRIOR BLOCKADE GUIDELINES DISCLOSED

This month, the Israeli authorities released some of the guidelines that had been used until recently to govern the blockade of Gaza.²¹

In addition to providing a list of "basic humanitarian products" to be allowed entry into Gaza (mostly food, fodder and hygiene items), the guidelines provided a series of formulas to measure the number of days it will take for residents of Gaza to run out of each particular product (the "length of breath"). On the basis of these calculations a lower and upper "warning line" was set up to give advance warning of what the Israeli authorities would consider as "shortages" and "surpluses". If, and when, the "upper line" for a given "humanitarian product" was reached, its import would be blocked.

The guidelines also specified the criteria against which approval for the import of other goods should be considered. These included the public perception of the goods as "luxuries", their "sensitivity to the needs of the international community", their ramifications on the status of the Hamas government, and their security implications, among others.

The documents were released as a result of a petition under the Freedom of Information Act submitted a year and a half ago by the Israeli NGO Gisha to a District Court. In their initial response to the petition, the authorities denied the existence of these documents; subsequently they acknowledged their existence but refused to release them due to "security considerations".

estimates that during August and September 2010, some 1,365 industrial establishments throughout Gaza were operational - 35 percent of the equivalent figure in June 2007. However, most of these industries operated at a relatively low capacity, as reflected in the total number of employees, 6,000, which constituted only 17 percent of the number employed prior to June 2007.¹⁸ The largest factor preventing a further expansion of private sector production is the ongoing ban on exports, which confines production to the limited (both in size and purchase power) Gazan market. This has been further exacerbated by the sharp increase in the import of competing consumer goods from Israel and elsewhere.¹⁹

In the construction sector, only a marginal increase in activities has been observed in recent months, primarily due to the ban in the import of basic construction materials, which remained unchanged despite the easing. Most of current housing building by private individuals relies on the limited amount of materials brought through the tunnels operating under the border with Egypt, or locally produced. These amounts are insignificant compared to the needs generated by the natural population growth,

as well as by the destruction incurred during the Cast Lead offensive. The most critical shortage reported is in gravel, which is essential for the preparation of concrete.

According to the parameters established in the 20 June announcement, construction materials would be allowed into Gaza for projects carried out by international organizations. However, the multi-layered system of approvals put in place by the Israeli authorities, makes actual implementation of these projects difficult. For example, while in September the Israeli authorities gave verbal approval to 17 UNRWA projects (worth three percent the value of its entire building programme), four of these approvals were later withdrawn and the projects put on hold. As of the end of October, only 85 truckloads out of 359 requested truckloads of restricted materials needed for these projects have entered Gaza. On 10 October 2010, UNDP finally received 'in principle' approval from COGAT for entry of USD 11.7 million worth of materials for seven repair and reconstruction projects²⁰. This constitutes, however, a small portion of the materials required for the projects that were put forward by UNDP to COGAT in July 2010, the value of which is estimated at USD

TWO-YEAR-OLD PALESTINIAN CHILD DIES WHILE WAITING FOR MEDICAL REFERRAL

A two-year-old girl from Gaza died while waiting for an urgent referral to an Israeli hospital on 16 October. She was suffering from leukemia and had previously received treatment at several hospitals in Israel and East Jerusalem. The latest request for urgent treatment was left unanswered for eight days, and when the Israeli authorities finally approved the request, she was too weak to travel. She died two days later. Nismah's case illustrates the limited possibilities of cancer treatment in the Gaza Strip. Each month about 10 percent of referrals are patients suffering from cancer; most of them have to leave Gaza as cancer treatment is almost completely unavailable.

Since January 2009 a total of 33 patients have died while waiting to access hospitals outside Gaza.

Israeli authorities approved 76.2 percent of patients' applications to leave Gaza through Erez for hospitals in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Israel and Jordan in October. This is the lowest rate since May 2010, substantially lower than in September, when it was 85 percent. On the other hand, the proportion of cases delayed was the third highest this year. 26.6 percent of all applications (211 patients) were delayed, which is almost double compared to September's 12.8 percent.

For detailed data on referral of patients from Gaza subscribe to WHO's monthly report at rad-report@who-health.org

128 million, UNDP is currently finalizing contracts and will start discussing detailed entry schedules with COGAT by end November 2010. By contrast, entry of construction materials for the upgrading of two large wastewater treatment plants, funded by the World Bank and Germany, continued.

Similarly to private construction, the largest constraint in the implementation of the few projects that passed all the required approvals is shortage of gravel. This is primarily due to the restricted capacity of the conveyor belt at the Karni crossing. While this is the single facility used for the transfer of gravel, animal feed and grains, it has operated only two days a week. A prior commitment by the Israeli authorities to extend its operation for an additional day each week remains unimplemented. This has resulted in a significant slow down in the pace of progress, despite the availability of other materials transferred through the Kerem Shalom Crossings.

Humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip

No improvement has been observed in the restricted access of humanitarian staff to and from Gaza, particularly with regard to national staff. During October, UN agencies submitted 45 requests for national staff members to enter/exit the Gaza Strip through the Erez Crossing, of which only 45 percent so far approved—far below the average rate of similar applications during the first six months of 2010, prior to the announcement of the easing of the blockade was 76 percent. Since the beginning of 2010, the number of requests submitted by UN agencies have steadily declined – compared to January 2010, the number of requests in October has dropped by 55 percent. Alongside a decline in number of requests submitted to CLA Gaza, there seems to be a decline in approval rate as well. Compared to January, the approval rate in October has dropped by roughly 50 percent.

Issues across the oPt

Child Protection	September 2010	October 2010
Palestinian children killed	3	0
Israeli children killed	0	0
Palestinian children injured	26	29
Israeli children injured	0	0
Palestinian children displaced from home demolitions	0	25
Palestinian children in Israeli prisons	269	NA

Allegations of abuse of Palestinian detainees

In October, two Israeli human rights organizations, B'Tselem and Hamoked, issued a joint report highlighting allegations of mistreatment of Palestinian detainees held in an Israeli interrogation center.²² The findings, based on the testimonies of 121 Palestinians, who were arrested on suspicion of activity against Israel's military occupation of the oPt, show that they were subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, and in some cases, also to torture.

Forms of mistreatment reported by detainees, most of whom were arrested from their homes in the middle of the night in a violent manner, include physical violence and threats during arrest and interrogation, prolonged cuffing (making it impossible to move their bodies), and having their family members threatened and, in cases, arrested, in an attempt to pressure them into a confession. Detainees were held in small windowless cells (some in isolation) with “appalling” hygienic conditions and many were not allowed to change their clothes. The ongoing use of artificial light made it impossible to distinguish night from day and the light and forced air (frequently too hot or too cold) caused vision problems and headaches. Some detainees reported that they were intentionally deprived of sleep, while others report that conditions in their cell made sleep impossible. These practices are consistent with mistreatment documented for years by other Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations.²³

According to the report, the pattern of mistreatment to which detainees are subjected appears to be calculated, designed, in part, to break the detainee by inducing physical discomfort, anxiety, shock and disorientation as a means of coercing detainees into confessing. However, the authors also note that the ill-treatment often extends beyond the period of interrogation and differs substantially than treatment of criminal prisoners in Israel. Therefore, they argue, it must be understood in the context of the conflict between Israel and Palestinian groups acting in opposition to Israel's control of the oPt. Highlighted is the fact that since 2001, 645 complaints by those interrogated have been made to the Ministry of Justice concerning Israel Security Agency interrogators treatment of Palestinian detainees, but not one has led to a criminal investigation.

According to the Palestinian NGO Addameer, there are approximately 6,000 Palestinians from the oPt currently being held in Israeli prisons and detention centres, including 37 women and 264 children. Some 200 of the prisoners are held in administrative detention (without charge or trial).

At least 21 Palestinians are held in connection with protests against settlement expansion and the Barrier. One of them was sentenced this month by an Israeli military court to one year in prison, along with a six months suspended sentence and a 5,000 NIS fine, after being convicted of incitement and organizing demonstrations against the Barrier. The conviction and sentencing drew sharp criticism from the international community.

10th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325

October marked ten years since the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls on States to protect women in situations of war and conflict and to promote women's participation in political life.²⁴

Palestinian women and girls continue to suffer a sustained lack of protection from direct violence stemming from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and inter-Palestinian factional strife. Additionally Palestinian women and girls bear a disproportionate burden of vulnerability to food insecurity,²⁵ lack of access to education and health services, and gender based violence.

In the past couple of years, the majority of female deaths and injuries have occurred in the Gaza Strip, due primarily to the high casualty toll of Israel's "Cast Lead" military offensive.²⁶ Women in the Gaza Strip are also affected by Palestinian inter-factional violence and the general security chaos that characterizes daily life. They are often the indirect target of conflict, killed as a result of weapons misuse, as bystanders during Israeli attacks or as a result of the inter-factional conflict.²⁷ In the West Bank, growing numbers of women are injured in the context of Israeli-Palestinian violence.²⁸ In fact, over 70 percent of all injuries among women in the oPt in 2010 have occurred in the West Bank in that context (91 out of 125 total injuries).²⁹

Of growing concern in recent years are increased restrictions on personal freedoms in the Gaza Strip, with women and girls often being forced to behave according to conservative, societal norms. For example, in July 2009, a dress code of headscarves and robes ("jilbab") was imposed on female lawyers appearing in court.³⁰ Women's organizations have been closed and, on occasions, harassed.³¹ Such measures exacerbate the already difficult conditions for women struggling to meet their basic needs under Israeli occupation and demonstrate clearly the need for additional efforts to realize the goals embodied in UNSC Resolution 1325.³²

End Notes

1. Two Israelis were injured in July 2010 due to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.
2. In addition, there were eleven Palestinians injured during the course of weekly demonstrations that occurred in Ni'lin, Bil'in (Ramallah), Beit Fajar (Bethlehem), and Beit Ummar and Hebron City -H2 (Hebron)
3. Although the IDF has declared some of these areas in question to be the closed military areas to Israeli civilians during the olive harvest, the areas are not necessarily closed during other parts of the year to Israeli settlers, when the much of the damage to Palestinian agricultural lands have occurred.
4. The "price tag" strategy entails the exertion of systematic, widespread and indiscriminate violence against Palestinian civilians and Israeli security forces, following attempts by the Israeli authorities to evacuate settlement outposts. The overall objective of this strategy is to deter the Israeli authorities from removing such outposts. For further details refer to OCHA Fact sheet: Israeli settler violence and the evacuation of outposts, November 2009.
5. According to Bimkom, Israel considers almost 30 percent of the West Bank to be "state land," much of which is located in the Jordan Valley. This includes some 13 percent of land that was registered as "government" land when the occupation began in 1967. See Bimkom, "The Prohibited Zone, Israeli Planning Policy in the Palestinian Villages in Area C," June 2008, pg. 29. Much of this land is located in the Jordan Valley.
6. The majority (85 percent) occurred in Area C This figure includes seven structures demolished by their owners in East Jerusalem after receiving demolition orders from the Israeli authorities.
7. In addition, Israeli forces leveled this month two charcoal workshops belonging to Palestinians in the village of Barta'a Asharqiya (Jenin governorate), located on the western side of the Barrier, on grounds that they operated without a permit. The workshops employed 20 people. The leveling of the workshops, which are below ground, was not included in the total number of structures demolished.
8. Two of the orders were issued on the grounds that the affected land is "state land," while the third concerned land that has been previously been declared "closed" by the Israeli military for training.
9. Surveyed organizations are Norwegian Refugee Council, Rabbis for Human Rights, Jerusalem Legal Aid Center, Society of St. Yves and the Wall and Settlement Ministry of the Palestinian Authority.
10. Figure obtained by the Israeli NGO Bimkom – Planners for Planning Rights, through a Freedom of Information Act petition.
11. For additional information, see OCHA reports, "Restricting Space: The Planning Regime Applied by Israel in Area C of the West Bank, 2009, and "The Planning Crisis in East Jerusalem: Understanding the Phenomenon of "Illegal" Construction," 2009.
12. Amos Harel and Anshel Pfeffer, "IDF probes top officers on Gaza war strike that killed 21 family members", Ha'aretz, 24 October 2010.
13. UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, p. 207. The Mission also found that Israeli forces prevented ICRC and PRCS medical teams from evacuating the wounded for over two days.
14. Israeli MoFA, Gaza Operation Investigations: Second Update, July 2010.
15. B'Tselem, http://www.btselem.org/english/gaza_strip/military_police_investigations_into_castlead_violations.asp
16. A/HRC/15/50
17. September 2008 saw a relatively large inflow of building materials in the context of the so-called 'calm agreement', between Israel and Hamas, which collapsed in November 2008.
18. Palestine Trade Center, Gaza Crossings Bi-Monthly Monitoring Report, August-September 2010.
19. For an illustration see, BBC News, "Gaza businesses boxed in by Israeli export ban", 2 November 2010.

20. These projects include: building of 200 housing units in the southern area; repairs to the Gaza Power Plant and related networks; upgrading of a desalination plan; repair of a bridge; building 100 agricultural packing rooms;
21. All the original Hebrew documents, as well as English excerpts, are accessible at: <http://www.gisha.org>.
22. "Kept in the Dark: Treatment of Palestinian Detainees in the Petach-Tikva Interrogation Facility of the Israel Security Agency," October 2010.
23. For example, Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, "Shackling as a Form of Torture and Abuse," June 2009; Defence for Children International / Palestine Section, "Palestinian Child Prisoners: The systematic and institutionalized ill-treatment and torture of Palestinian children by Israeli authorities," June 2009; and Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, "Quarterly Update on Palestinian Prisoners," 20 October 2010.
24. UN Resolution 1325 was adopted by the Security Council on 31 October 2000. It is available for download at http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf
25. For example, female-headed households are among the most vulnerable to food insecurity.
26. Since the beginning of 2009, 191 Palestinian women have been killed and some 1,500 injured as a result of Israeli-Palestinian conflict-related violence in the oPt. These figures include women killed and injured in Gaza during Israel's "Cast Lead" offensive, which began on 28 December 2008. Non-"Cast Lead" casualty figures are for the period 1 January 2009 – 9 November 2010. Five additional women have been killed and three injured in the context of Palestinian inter-factional fighting and family feuds. OCHA also recorded four women killed in crimes committed in the name of "honour" and four killed due to reckless handling of weapons during this period.
27. For example, in October, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights in the Gaza Strip reported the wounding of nine women as a result of an explosion at a Hamas training site on 21 October 2010 See press release at <http://www.pchrgaza.org>,
28. In 2010, between 1 January and 9 November 2010, 91 women were injured in this context, compared to 67 in all of 2009.
29. Almost 85 percent of those taking place during demonstrations against Barrier construction and settlement expansion or in settler-related incidents in the West Bank.
30. See PCHR press release of 26 July 2009, "Decision to Impose Traditional Robes and Veils on Female Lawyers in Gaza Is Illegal."
31. Presentation submitted by women's organizations, including UNIFEM, at the 1325 Open Event Organized on 10 July /2010.
32. For an overview on Palestinian Women and Security see: DCAF report published on May 2010 available at <http://www.dcaf.ch/>.

CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES

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Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), Al Haq, Badil, Save the Children (UK), Defence for Children International – Palestine Section (DCI-PS), Oxfam GB, Palestine Hydrology Group (PHG), Campaign for the Right to Enter, Action Against Hunger (ACF),

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