



## PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

8 –14 JULY 2009

### KEY DEVELOPMENTS AFTER TUESDAY, 14 July 2009

- On 15 July Israeli authorities demolished 15 tents and animal barracks belonging to five Bedouin families (about 45 people, including 28 children) along the road that links the Ramallah and Jericho governorates.
- Israeli authorities closed down the Nidal Center for Community Development, in the Old City of Jerusalem for unclear reasons on 15 July. The center's director was detained and the center, which is aimed at community mobilization and voluntarism, was ordered to remain closed until 11 August.

## West Bank

### Palestinian casualties remain below average

Nine Palestinians were injured by Israeli security forces during this week, two more than the week before and less than half the weekly average of 22 Palestinian injuries during the first half of 2009. Five of the injuries occurred during home demolitions in East Jerusalem (*See demolition and displacement section*), the remaining four injuries, including three children, occurred during weekly anti-Barrier demonstrations held in Ni'lin and Bil'in villages. In Bil'in for the first time in months the Israeli army used so-called "skunk bombs" – a foul-smelling liquid which is sprayed on the protesters – to disperse the crowd.

Israeli security forces arrested 52 Palestinians in 93 search operations during the week, respectively 22% and 17% less than the weekly averages of the first half of 2009. The bulk of this week's arrests (22) and searches (77) took place in the northern governorates.

In addition, Palestinian security forces arrested 29 Palestinians allegedly affiliated to Hamas, compared to a weekly average of 25 in the first half of 2009.

### Demolitions and displacement continue

In the East Jerusalem neighborhoods of Beit Hanina and Silwan, Israeli authorities demolished a house and part of another house for lack of building permits. In Beit Hanina, seven refugees, including three children were displaced and an elderly woman and a young man were injured. In Silwan, 17 refugees, including twelve children, lost part of their living space when Israeli authorities demolished a bedroom and a living room of a home. A Palestinian woman and two of her sons were injured while trying to resist the demolition. In addition, a Palestinian was forced to demolish one of the two rooms of his house in the Old City. Six people were affected, including four children who used to sleep in the demolished room.

Additionally, a number of demolition and stop work orders were distributed in East Jerusalem and in Area C. The Jerusalem Municipality distributed three demolition orders against residential structures in Al Bustan (Silwan neighborhood) on 9 July. In the Hebron Governorate, the Israeli Civil Administration distributed stop-work orders, a step preceding the issuance of final demolition orders, against a residential tent and an animal shelter in the village of Khalet Al Hajar Al Foqa and against three houses in the town of Surif.

Since the beginning of 2009, Israeli authorities have demolished 40 structures in East Jerusalem and 150 structures in Area C, mostly in Bedouin communities in the Jordan Valley.

In the first half of June, Israeli media had reported that the Israeli Minister of Interior shelved the Jerusalem 2020 plan, a master plan for the city's development. During the reporting period, a ministry spokesperson said that the minister was studying the plan but not intervening, according to Israeli media.

## Settler-related incidents increase

In total, ten settler-related incidents were reported in the West Bank during the week, approximately one third more than the weekly average of seven during the first six months of 2009. The only incident that resulted in injuries took place on 13 June in Hebron when Israeli settlers from the settlement of Tel Rumeida physically assaulted and injured an eleven-year-old Palestinian boy on his way home from school.

Attacks on Palestinian property by Israeli settlers continued during the week in the northern West Bank governorates. In one incident settlers attempted to burn trees belonging to Palestinians from 'Iraq Burin village (Nablus).

On 14 July, close to Yitzhar settlement Israeli bulldozers started leveling land belonging to the village of 'Urif (Nablus). The village council expressed concern that this is the start of an expansion of the settlement. More than 18 dunums have been leveled.

In addition, the central West Bank governorates saw an increase in settler-related incidents: half of this week's incidents occurred in Ramallah district. On 9 July Palestinians opened fire at an Israeli vehicle near Ofra settlement (Ramallah). Following the incident, the Israeli army carried out search operations in several villages in the area and placed flying checkpoints at their entrances: Al Taybeh, Silwad, Ein Yabrud, Rammun and Beitin. In Beitin, the Israeli army imposed a curfew for 2 hours and 50 minutes, reportedly interrogating dozens of civilians in the village's school and arresting two Palestinians.

## Gaza Strip

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### Military activities in Gaza continue to constrain civilian's lives,

During the reporting period, Israeli forces continued to enforce access restrictions on fishing zone and the areas bordering Israel. On three separate occasions, Israeli patrol boats opened fire on Palestinian fishing boats west of Beit Lahia and Gaza City, forcing the boats to return to shore. Also, access restrictions on the 300-meter wide "buffer zone" near the Gaza-Israel border fence remain in force, with Israel opening warning fire in the direction of Palestinian farmers working in the area, forcing them to leave their agricultural lands. This week, no Palestinian or Israeli casualties were reported in any of these incidents.

### Four injured in police raid

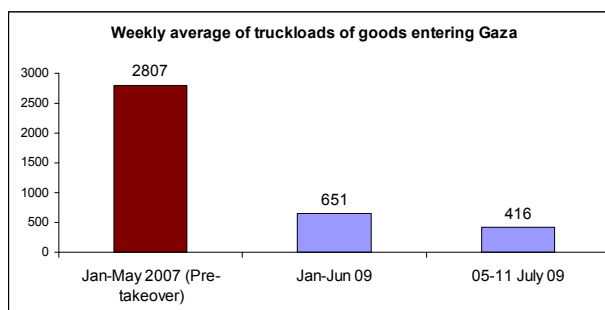
Four people were injured when Hamas police forcibly dispersed a wedding party of a family affiliated to Fatah in Beit Lahia. According to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), the police broke up the party after participants raised the portrait of a Fatah activist who was killed in the internal fighting between Fatah and Hamas.

### Tunnels incidents along Gaza-Egypt border continue to risk lives

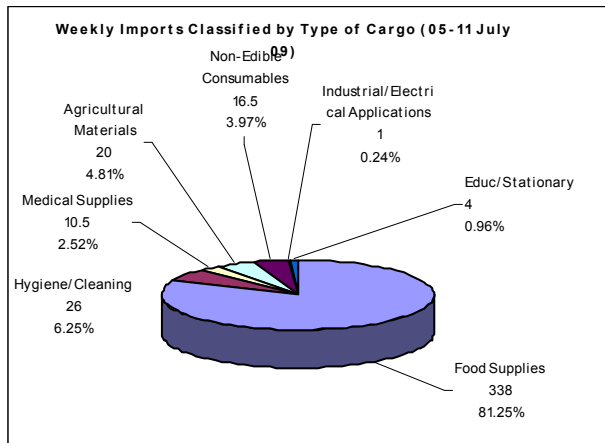
The ongoing Israeli blockade has increased Gaza's reliance on the transfer of basic goods through underground tunnels at the Gaza-Egypt border. Dangerous working conditions prevalent in the tunnels continues to pose risks on those working inside them. This week, four Palestinians were injured when a tunnel collapsed under the Egypt-Gaza border. In the first half of 2009, 27 people died in tunnel incidents and 47 were injured.

### Weekly imports remain below needs - (05 - 11 July 09)

Israel's two-year long blockade of the Gaza Strip continues to affect Gazans' living conditions. This week, a total of 416 truckloads of goods entered Gaza, less than 15% of the weekly average during the first five months of 2007, before the Hamas takeover, and 36% less than the weekly average of goods entered in the first half of 2009.



Many essential goods, including materials for reconstruction, spare parts for water and sanitation projects, and industrial and agricultural materials remain barred from entry or restricted to limited quantities.

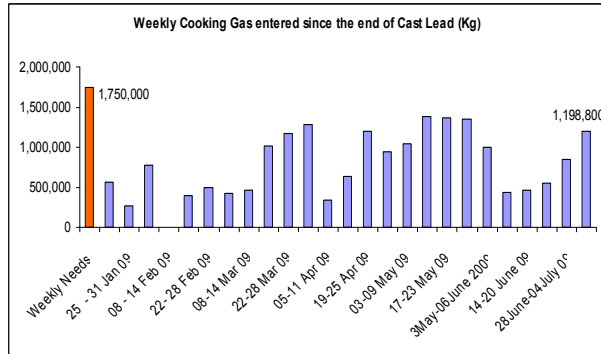
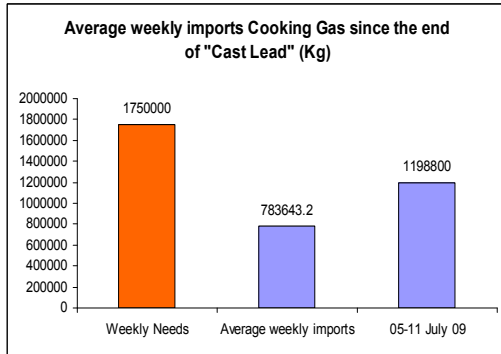


A new report by Paltrade, the Palestine Trade center, highlights the effects of Israel's blockade on Gaza's economy: During these two years, Israel allowed a mere 138 truckloads of exports – compared to an average of 70 per day for the period of March 2005 to May 2007.

### Imports of cooking gas imports increased (08-14 July 2009)

Imports of cooking gas into Gaza increased to 1,199 tons, 35% more than the weekly average since the end of operation "Cast Lead", but still 31% below Gaza's estimated weekly needs.

In addition, approximately two million liters of industrial gas for the power plant entered this week, approximately 70% of the amount needed for the power plant's operation at full capacity. This week's amount is approximately the same as the weekly average since the end of operation "Cast Lead".



The ban on the import of petrol or diesel for public and commercial use remains in effect since 02 Nov 08. Since then, Israel has allowed only limited amounts of petrol and diesel for humanitarian use. Most petrol and diesel available on the open market for public use is transferred through the tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border.

### UNDP begins removing rubble in the Gaza Strip

This week, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) began removing the nearly 420,000 tons of rubble caused by the Israeli "Cast Lead" military operation earlier this year. UNDP estimates that 15,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed, the cost for removing the rubble is estimated at \$12 million. UNDP considers the removal of rubble as an important step in helping Gazans get over the recent destruction. However, Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, UNDP's representative in the occupied Palestinian territory, said, "a real change in the predicament of Gazans depends on Israel relaxing its sanctions on the Gaza Strip."