

<p>UNITED NATIONS</p> <p>OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS</p> <p>Occupied Palestinian Territory</p>		<p>الامم المتحدة</p> <p>مكتب لتنسيق الشؤون الإنسانية</p> <p>الأراضي الفلسطينية المحتلة</p>
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P.O. Box 38712 East Jerusalem
Phone: (972) 2 – 5829962 / 5825853, Fax: (972) 2 – 5825841

OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

Update for oPt (31 December 2003– 06 January 2004)

INSIDE: Ongoing military operation in Nablus ▪ Casualties ▪ Incidents involving ambulances ▪ Curfew ▪ House demolition ▪ Land levelling/confiscation ▪ Checkpoints/roadblocks/Separation Wall/restrictions on movement ▪ Labour movement to Israel ▪ Other incidents

1. Ongoing military operation in Nablus:

The situation in Nablus was extremely tense as a result of the ongoing military operation that started 26 December. The humanitarian situation in the old city and in the Qarioun district in particular was serious as people inside were in need of food and medicine. ICRC, OCHA and local NGOs were in some cases able to intervene. The commercial life in Nablus came to a virtual standstill. On 31 December clashes occurred all over Nablus resulting in several injuries caused by live ammunition and tear gas. The Evangelical hospital in the Rafidia district was surrounded as IDF searched the hospital. The operation in the Qarioun district in the old city was escalated, and the Qasr Abdel-Hadi house was subjected to mortar fire causing substantial damage to its construction. Several other buildings in the area suffered substantial damages. On the same day IDF entered Osarin village south of Nablus. A 16-year old youth was injured during clashes between IDF and stone throwers. He was evacuated by the IDF to an Israeli hospital where he died. In addition, IDF announced curfew on Madama village south of Nablus and Beit Furik east of Nablus.

On the following day, 01 January 2004 a bulldozer knocked down the remnant structures of the Shoubi house in the Qarioun district. This house had been hit by air strikes during the operation defensive shield April 2002 killing seven Palestinians inside.

On 03 January Clashes in Nablus city centre led to the killing of three Palestinians within less than an hour as direct live ammunition was used by IDF. A fourth Palestinian was killed during the funeral of these. Eight were injured.

On 04 January IDF completely demolished another house the Qarioun district.

2. Casualties

Palestinians: **12 deaths**
 70 injured

Israelis: **0 deaths**
 2 injured

3. Incidents involving ambulances and medical teams

Denial of access: **2** incidents
Delay (1-2 hrs.): **6** incidents (one case the patient died)
Abuse/Attach on medical crew: **2** incident

4. Curfews

Curfews were reported in the following locations: Nablus (6 days), al Yamun, al Funduq, Jinsafut and Beit Ummar (4 days), Balata RC, Balata refugee camp, Beit Rima and Burqa (3 days), al Khadr (2 days), Madama, Beit Furik, Jalbun, Birqin and Burdus (1 day); partial curfew was imposed in Hebron H2 (1 day).

5. House demolitions/Demolition Orders

DATE	LOCATION	Completely Demolished	Partially Demolished
31/12/2003	Deir al Balah	3	0
03/01/2004	Khan Yunis	2	8

05/01/2003	Khan Yunis	6	0
05/01/2004	Rafah	4	9
TOTAL		15	17

6. Land levelling/confiscation

- The land levelling in Aqaba in Tulkarem district, which was reported about last week, is complete.
- Ongoing land levelling near Gilo checkpoint, An- Nu'man and Al-Khas villages for the construction of the Wall and the bypass road.
- **3 January:** IDF bulldozed land in Wadi Al-Ghawit, close to the settlement of Newe Daniel, south-west of Al-Khader town, and prevented farmers to reach their lands in that area claiming that it belongs to Israel.
- IDF issued 8 military orders to confiscate land between North West Jerusalem and Beituniya for the construction of the Wall. Most of this lands is agricultural.

Gaza:

Date	Area	(dunums)	Acres	Crop
01/01/2004	Deir Al Balah	3	0.7413	Palm and Olive
02/01/2004	Deir Al Balah	4	0.9884	Olive
03/01/2004	Al Buraij Refugee Camp	54	0.7413	Olive and Citrus
03/01/2004	Khan Younis	20	4.942	Olive
04/01/2004	Rafah	15	3.7065	Olive
05/01/2004	Khan Younis	60	14.826	Olive
TOTAL		156	25.9455	

7. Checkpoints/roadblocks/Separation Wall/restrictions on movement

- Tulkarm/Qalqiliya governorates:

- The following agricultural gates have been reported closed during the week; Qalqiliya south, Zeita south, north, Attil, Salman, Isla, Jayyous south and Izbet Jalud. The opening hours of the other agricultural gates remain the same as previously reported.

Tulkarm/Qalqiliya:

Check Point	Status
Taybeh	In principle open whole week between 08:00 and 24:00, but only for holders of permits into Israel and international vehicles. The checkpoint is still under reconstruction. The district is announced as a military zone since the first of January.
Kafriat	The checkpoint has been closed since 27 December following the incident in Tel Aviv. Only university students and ambulances have been allowed through. But since Tulkarm has been announced as closed military zone no one can cross the checkpoint. Ambulances faced some delays crossing this checkpoint.
Qalqiliya DCO	The checkpoint has been open during the whole week for both pedestrians and vehicles. Checkpoint was not manned during 4 and 5 January. IDF was manning the checkpoint again since 6 January.
Jaljoulia	Open for 24 hours, but only for holders of permit into Israel and for residents of Ras Tira, Ad Daba, Wadi Ar Rasha, Ramadin and Arab Abu Farda.

Commercial checkpoints

Check Point	Status
Qalqiliya DCO	Operational
Taybeh	The back-to-back system has only been operational for essential supplies such as food and gas after the incident in Tel Aviv on 25 December.

Road Gates: (selected)

Gate	Status
Anabta	The gate is closed for vehicles but open for pedestrians and therefore it functions as a back-to-back system for buses and taxis between 08:00 and 18:00. The gate was reported closed from 1-4 January.
Qaffin	Open 24 hours and manned by soldiers and only accessible for holders of green permits, except for residents of Nazlat Isa, Nazlat Abu Nar, Baqa Ash Sharqiya, and medical staff and teachers.
Baqa Ash Sharqiya	Open between 04:00 and 24:00 and manned by soldiers. Due to past occurrences (as earlier reported) of inappropriate body search at this gate, female commuters continue to opt for a detour through Qaffin gate in the absence of female soldiers at this gate to conduct the body search. Local residents of Nazlat Isa, Nazlat Abu Nar and Baqa Ash Sharqiya are not required green permits together with teachers, suppliers and medical staff.
Ras Atiya / Ras Tira	The gate is open three times a day and only accessible for holders of green permits between 07:00 – 08:00, 12:00 – 13:00 and 16:00 – 17:00. Teachers, school children and medical staff are exempted. The

	gate is manned by soldiers around the clock.
Wadi As Rasha	The gate is open twice a day between 07:00 – 07:30 and 13:00 – 13:30 for holders of green permits.
Azzun Atma	The gate is open between 06:30 – 21:00. Residents from Beit Amin and Saniria are still required a green permit to enter Azzun Atma. Residents of Azzun Atma as well as ambulances, teachers and school children from Beit Amin and Saniria are still exempted. The gate is manned by soldiers around the clock who also guard the adjacent gate into the Israeli settlement of Sha'are Tiqwa.
Jbara	Closed in these days due to the school holidays.
Azzun	Open all week.
Habla	The gate is only open for holders of green permits between 07:00 – 08:00, 12:00 – 13:00 and 16:00 – 17:00 and teachers and ambulances. The gate is manned by soldiers. However, PRCS ambulances from Qalqilya need prior co-ordination with IDF through ICRC before access is granted. Teachers from Qalqilya barely use this gate any more due to irregular opening hours and difficulties at Jaljoula checkpoint. More frequently teachers travel through Azzun to reach the schools in Habla.

- Nablus/Jenin/Tubas governorates:

- The majority of check points in the Governorate of Nablus were closed for Palestinians since 27 December.
- Flying check points were erected at the junction between Qabatiya, Jenin and Birqin.

Nablus: (Checkpoint opening hours: 06:00. Closed for vehicles at 18:00, for pedestrians at 20:00)

Check Point	Status
Huwwara Southern main entrance	Generally open for holders of Nablus ID-cards, students, teachers and medical doctors. Closed for all Palestinians except medical personnel and ambulances since 27 December
Beit Iba Western entrance, mainly for trade	Same as Huwwara
Sarra South western entrance, before the closure regime main road to Qalqilya	Closed except for villagers from Sarra or Qusin, who occasionally are let through. Closed for all Palestinians except medical personnel and ambulances since 27 December
Qusin Internal closure between Sarra and Nablus	Open several hours a day when the IDF is not manning the check point. Closed for all Palestinians except medical personnel and ambulances since 27 December. The check point was permanently manned 27 December.
Al Tur Southern checkpoint connecting the Samaritan district of Jarzim with Nablus city	Only open for Samaritans. The gate is occasionally closed for vehicles.
Beit Furik Eastern gate and checkpoint. After the closure regime main gateway between Nablus and the Jordan valley	Occasionally open for villagers from Beit Furik, Beit Dajjan, Azmout, Deir al Hatab and Salem. Teachers with IDs from Ministry of Education (about 70) are usually let through but with delays. Closed for all Palestinians except medical personnel and ambulances since 27 December.
Shave Shomeron (Sabastia) North west, main road to Jenin	Closed for Palestinians unless they have special permits.
Maale Efrayim South east connecting Jericho and Nablus	Closed for Palestinians unless they have special permits.
Hamra East, before closure regime main road to Jordan, Tobas, Jenin	Closed for Palestinians unless having special permits, or coming from these villages: Frush Beit Dajjan, Al Jiftlik, Bardala, Kardala, Ein Shibli, Al Nassaria and Al Agrabania (from which villagers occasionally are let through).
Zaatara (Tappouah) South, main road to Ramallah	Closed for all Palestinians except medical personnel and ambulances since 27 December.
"17" ('Asira) North entrance for the villages of 'Asira ash-Shamaliyah and the neighboring villages.	Totally closed for vehicles by several earth mounds. Closed for all Palestinians except medical personnel and ambulances since 27 December. The check point was permanently manned 27 December.

Awarta checkpoint: (the main commercial checkpoint in Nablus since July 2003)

Date	Status	Remarks
31/12/03 - 06/01/04	Open for food stuffs only.	Basic food stuffs only.
Open during day light hours only		

Jenin: (Check point opening hours: 06:00. Closed for vehicles at 18:00, for pedestrians at 20:00)

Check Point	Status
Janat "Wadi Balaama" Southern entrance to Jenin City	Occasionally manned. Open for all Palestinians.
Haifa Street Western entrance to Jenin City	Occasionally manned. Open for all Palestinians.
Al Amn Al Watani Northern entrance of Jenin	Closed for all Palestinians unless they have special permits.
Salem North western entrance/ "Green Line"	Closed for Palestinians. "Military closed area".
Um ar Rihan Western gate on the separation barrier	Closed for Palestinians living in the area behind the barrier and the "green line". After 17 October residents of these areas are were ordered to obtain special permits to enter/exit.
Qaddim (Al Suweitat) South eastern entrance	Closed during most hours of the day.

Open during day light hours only.

Al Jalama Northern entrance/ main commercial	Back to back was allowed for all goods.
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Tubas: (Open during day light hours only)

Gate	Remarks
Tayasir Gate Gate to the Tubas eastern agricultural lands in the Jordan Valley	Closed for Palestinians unless holding special permits. The check point continued being difficult to cross. Totally closed on 6 January.

- Ramallah/al-Bireh/Beituniya governorates:

- **2 & 3 January:** Budrus village was under closure. Two checkpoints were installed at the entrances of the village restricting people movement in and out.
- **6 January:** The entrance of Aboud village north Ramallah was closed by a flying checkpoint for few hours in the morning time.
- Ongoing construction of the Wall in Burdus village in Ramallah governorate.

Checkpoint/Gate/roadblocks	Status
Qalandiya checkpoint	Open. Access usually only permitted for West Bank/Gaza Palestinians with special permits, Jerusalem ID holders, and foreign passport holders. Vehicles with West Bank registration cannot cross without a special permit. Ambulances and trucks with foodstuffs are permitted to cross. Usually open daily from 06.00-21.00.
Beit El/DCO checkpoint	Open only for diplomatic/foreign/ UN/yellow plated cars, ambulances, some trucks and West Bank cars with special permits. No access for pedestrians. Usually open daily from 06.00-22.00.
Atara Bridge checkpoint/gate	Open for all vehicle & pedestrian. The gate has been replaced by flying checkpoints from time to time.
An Nabi Salih gate	Opened most of the time. Soldiers manned in the Observation Tower closes the gate from time to time on a no-regular-base.
A-Tira roadblock	Closed. No access.
Ofra roadblock	Closed. No access.
Makkabim checkpoint	Open for Israelis, Jerusalem ID holders, foreign passport holders and only those West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians with permits to enter Israel.
Ni'lin checkpoint	Open for Jerusalem ID holders, internationals and Palestinians with special permits into Israel. Residents of Budrus, Qibya, Deir Qaddis and Kharbatha Bani Harith villages are no longer permitted to use the Ni'lin access road.
Rantis checkpoint	Open for Jerusalem ID holders, International and Palestinians with special permits into Israel.

Beituniya commercial checkpoint	Open for goods and ICRC vehicles only – back-to-back system in operation.
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Jerusalem/Jericho governorates:

Check Point	Status
Hizma CP North eastern entrance on Road 1.	Open all week for Israelis, Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards, West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians with permits and internationals. Palestinians without special permits denied access. UN staff requested on several occasions to show personal national passports in addition to their UN ID Card.
Az Za'ayyem CP	Open all week for Israelis, Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards, West Bank and

Eastern entrance of junction Road 437/Psigat Ze'ev settlement.	Gaza Strip Palestinians with permits and Internationals. Palestinians without special permits denied access.
Ar Ram CP Northern entrance on Road 60 North.	Open all week for Israelis, Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards, West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians with permits and Internationals.
Bir Nabala/Atarot CP Northern entrance on Road 404 / 45 Road Atarot Junction.	Open all week for Israelis, Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards, West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians with permits and Internationals. Palestinians without special permits denied access.
Ramot Allon CP North western entrance on Road 436/Beit Ikksa village.	Open all week for Israelis, Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards, West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians with permits and Internationals. Palestinians without special permits denied access.
Shufat Refugee Camp/ Anata Checkpoint	Open all week for Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards, West Bank Palestinians with permits and Internationals. Palestinian without special permits denied access.

Jericho

Check Point	Status
DCO Main checkpoint off Road 1	Open all week between 0600 hrs until 2200 hrs. Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards allowed entrance on foot. Entrance with car only for ambulances and internationals and Palestinians with permits.
'Ein ad Duyuk al Foqa Northern entrance	Open all week between 0600 hrs until 2200 hrs. Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards allowed entrance on foot. Entrance with car only for ambulances and internationals and Palestinians with permits.
Gate opposite Allenby CP off Road 90.	Gate manned by IDF. Closed at all times. Soldiers open the gate for the Shuttle busses taking Palestinians to Allenby Border Crossing to Jordan.

Commercial Checkpoints:

Back to Back CP/DCO CP	DCO CP functions also as a Back to Back checkpoint for goods in and out of the city.
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Bethlehem/Hebron governorates:

- Many flying checkpoints were observed on main junctions and bypass roads checking people and vehicles.
- 31 December:** Late at night IDF closed the Al- Fawar - Dura junction, in the district of Hebron, with earth mounds and reopened it on the 1st of January in the evening.
- 5 January:** OCHA Hebron visited An-Nu'man village and observed contractors working on both the construction of the Wall as well as the bypass road coming from Teqqa settlement despite a Supreme Court order issued on 17 December requesting the IDF to come up with an alternative route due to the hardship caused to the villagers in An Nu'man and Al Khas. Consequently to further deterioration of the situation in the village of An Nu'man, residents are now prevented by the private Israeli security staff on site to travel out of the village by car, as the only road connecting them to the West Bank will be cut off by both the Wall and bypass road.
- In Bethlehem, 1,200 special permits have been issued this week for Christians Palestinian in conjunction with the holidays to visit their relatives and holy shrines inside the green line, a total of 2,277 special permits have been issued so far.
- 31 December:** The total number of valid permits for buses of the Hebron National Bus Company is 24, of which 17 for public transport between Hebron and Bethlehem and 7 for movement between Hebron and Jericho.

Selected checkpoints in Behtlehem/Hebron

Check Point	Status
Gilo North entrance to Bethlehem	Open 24 hours to international humanitarian organizations Palestinians with permits during the whole week.
Walaja Entrance to village, western access to Bethlehem	Open from 08:00 to 20:00 hours to international humanitarian organizations and Palestinians.
Bethlehem DCO Entrance to Beit Jala	Open 7:00 to 19:00 hours to internationals and Palestinians.
Container ("Wadi nar") East of Abu Dis, main transit between North and South West Bank	Open 24 hours to all Palestinians but no Palestinian-plated private vehicles allowed through unless with appropriate permission. Open to public transport buses that have obtained permission. Long delays were reported.
Noqedim South-east of Bethlehem on route 356 (Zatara area)	Open 24 hours to all Palestinians as well as international humanitarian organizations. Long delays experienced by travelers passing through the CP from North to South.
Ras Al Joura ("Abu Habla") Main entrance to Hebron	Closed for all vehicles after the opening of Halhoul bridge on 12 December.

Gaza crossings/checkpoints

- **6 January:** IDF has erected a 200- meter barbed wire across the 2 sides of Kissufim road. IDF forced a Palestinian family to evacuate the house since it's lined on the new security zone.

Check point	Status
Erez	Open
Karni	Open
Sufa	Open, for workers and for inflowing construction materials. On 4 January 262 workers crossed to Israel.
Netzarim Junction	Closed since 08 October.
Abu Houli junction	- Open daily from 03:00 – 20:00. Closed for several hours on: - 31 Dec. 2003 (11:00 – 12:30) massive search was campaign conducted inside the Palestinians vehicles. - 03 Jan. 2004 (13:50 – 18:00)
Abu al Ajin road	Closed
Beach road	Open
Rafah crossing	Open

The enclosed areas:

- **Al Seafa:** Movement remains restricted by the IDF with the entry-exit gate opening twice daily for Al Seafa ID holders from 07.00 to 09.00 and 14.30 to 17.00. Motor vehicles are not allowed to enter since November 2000, with the exception of international agencies that have undertaken prior coordination with the IDF.
- **Al Mawasi:** Al Mawasi. IDF imposed restrictions remain, with no passage possible for male Al Mawasi ID holders aged 15-23 without prior coordination. Youths aged below 15 must be accompanied by a guardian. Motor vehicles are not allowed to enter, with the exception of international agencies that have undertaken prior coordination with the IDF.

8. Labour movement to Israel

West Bank:

- Additional 250 trade permits were issued in Qalqiliya.

Few permits for workers, traders and buses were issued since the old permits were suspended in Hebron and Bethlehem. In Hebron, there are currently 53 valid workers' permit and 10 valid traders' permits. In Bethlehem district all permits have been suspended after the Tel Aviv attack on 25 December. 50 new permits were issued for Palestinian private vehicles to drive on bypass roads in by Hebron DCL office.

Gaza

- Permits for 13,963 Palestinian agricultural and construction workers were issued and 1,810 for merchants. Since 4 January, permits are again issued for married Palestinians over 28.

Date	Israel	Erez Industrial Estate
31/12/2003	10,956	3,561
01/01/2004	11,012	3,269
02/01/2004	7,155	711
03/01/2004	267	1,456
04/01/2004	12,612	3,814
05/01/2004	12,919	3,951
06/01/2004	12,133	3,726

9. Other incidents

Tulkarem/Qalqiliya governorates

- Since 5 January, IDF started to benchmark and take measurements in the northern parts of Habla for building a tunnel that links Habla with Qalqiliya.
- Continuous search and arrest campaigns took place during the week in Tulkarm.

Nablus/Jenin/Tubas governorates

- **31 December:** A man was exiled from Nablus to Gaza.
- **05 January:** IDF entered Tubas city with several armoured vehicles conducting house searches in the city. At the same time 3 IDF vehicles entered Tammun village and erected a flying check point between Tubas and Tammun.
- Arrest campaigns continued in Jenin Governorate during the week.

Ramallah/Al-Bireh/Beituniya governorates:

- Several demonstrations against the Wall took place in Burdus village during the week. IDF beat and shot at demonstrators and peace activists causing several injuries.

Hebron/Bethlehem governorates:

- Israeli news reported that the Supreme Court postponed by 15 days the dismantling of four illegal outposts in the West Bank to give time to settlers to appeal. Two of these settlements, Bat Ayin north of Surif village and Havat Magen David east of Susya settlement, are in Hebron area.
- **2 January:** Three settlers from the Magen David outpost in the Hebron district (which the Government of Israel agreed to dismantle) have expelled a Palestinian Bedouin from his cave in Qwawis village and have moved in it.
- **4 January:** The building of new houses started on the eastern part of Kharsina settlement; 144 new housing units are expected to be built in the area.
- **5 January:** 8 persons from one family were injured at Al-Walajeh village as they tried to protect one of the family sons from being beaten by IDF soldiers.
- Search and arrest campaigns took place during the week.

Gaza

- During the last week: 46 mortars, 5 homes made rockets and 7 anti tanks missile have been fired towards the Israeli settlements and northern towns of, Negev, Sederot, Neve Dekalim, Dugit, Netzarim, and Gadid. No injuries were reported.

(Source: OCHA field units, UNRWA, UNSCO, PRCS, MoH, UHHC, Governors' office, Israeli MoFA & IDF web sites, Al Mizan, PCHR)

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