



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

24 - 30 November 2010

LATEST DEVELOPMENT

2 December: Israeli forces killed two armed Palestinians near the fence in the Gaza Strip.

West Bank

11 Palestinians injured by Israeli forces

During the week, Israeli forces injured 11 Palestinians, nine of them in confrontations in East Jerusalem. Since the beginning of 2010, Israeli forces have injured 1,085 Palestinians, of whom 51 percent were injured in East Jerusalem clashes. In comparison, a total of 772 Palestinians were injured during the equivalent period in 2009.

Nine Palestinians, including three women, were injured in clashes that erupted between Palestinian residents of Al 'Isawiya village of East Jerusalem and Israeli forces on 30 November. The confrontations took place in the course of demolitions carried out by the Jerusalem municipality in the village (see East Jerusalem demolitions below). Palestinians damaged three settler vehicles in the nearby settlement of French Hill later the same day.

Israeli forces physically assaulted and injured two boys, aged 8 and 13, during search and arrest operations in the Silwan village of East Jerusalem and Tulkarm City (Tulkarm governorate). The Israeli media reported that a group of prominent Israeli professionals sent a letter to the Israeli Prime Minister this week, protesting the Israeli police's treatment of minors arrested on suspicion of stone throwing in Silwan. According to the letter, the police have violated Israeli child protection laws, put in place to protect children in conflict with the law and ensure their physical and mental well being. Overall this week, Israeli forces conducted 87 search and arrest operations in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), compared to a weekly average of 90 of such operations in 2010.

Also this week, 22 Palestinian workers were injured after their vehicle turned over, reportedly while they were being chased by an Israeli military jeep near the Israeli settlement of Bitar Illit (Bethlehem governorate). While the circumstances of the incident remain unclear, the Palestinians were reportedly working inside Israel without permits and were heading back to their homes at the time.

Two international women activists were injured during a weekly demonstration against the construction of the Barrier in Al Ma'sara village (Bethlehem governorate). Other weekly protests continued this week, with no injuries reported. These included demonstrations against the expansion of an Israeli settlement (Hallamish) and the construction of the Barrier (Bil'in and Ni'lin villages) in the Ramallah area, and against restrictions on access to land (Beit Ummar village) in the Hebron area.

Also, during the week, stone-throwing Palestinians injured an Israeli security guard near the settlement of Ofra in the Ramallah area.

East Jerusalem: Evictions of Palestinian families and wave of demolitions

On 24 November, a group of Israeli settlers took over a Palestinian apartment near an Israeli settlement in the At Tur neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. The apartment is uninhabited and is located on the third floor of a building that was sealed off last year by court order following a dispute between the Palestinian residents and settlers who claim to have purchased the apartment from the former owner in 2005. So far in 2010, Israeli settlers have taken over two buildings and an apartment in East Jerusalem, displacing 43 people. In 2008 and 2009, three Palestinian families (55 people) were evicted from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem.

Also in East Jerusalem this week, the Israeli authorities demolished 12 Palestinian-owned structures in the communities of Sheikh Jarrah (1), At Tur (1), Su'fat (1) Al 'Isawiya (2) and Hizma (7) due to the lack of permit. The structures included three residences (one under construction), six plant nurseries, two shops and one storage room. Three families comprising 15 people, including eight children, were forcibly displaced and the livelihoods of at least 15 other families were affected. To date in 2010, 54 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem (including seven structures demolished by their owners following demolition orders). Sixty-two (62) people have been displaced and about 250 other people have been otherwise affected.

14 structures, including a mosque, demolished in Area C of the West Bank

The Israeli authorities demolished fourteen Palestinian-owned structures in Area C of the West Bank due to lack of building permits. The structures included a mosque, three residences, a greenhouse (covering one dunum of land), a road (around two kilometers long), an animal pen and seven shacks for storing fodder in the communities of Al Jiftlik (Jericho governorate), Ar Rifa'iyya (Hebron governorate), Khirbet Yarza (Tubas governorate) and Qarawat Bani Hassan (Salfit governorate). As a result, 38 people were displaced and the livelihoods of at least 60 people were affected. So far in 2010, 291 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in Area C (including ten structures demolished by their owners following demolition orders), 393 people have been displaced, and 1,160 individuals have been otherwise affected.

The Israeli authorities also issued stop work and demolition orders against 14 structures, including a mosque, eight residences and five animal shelters. The structures are located in the villages of Al Ma'sara (Bethlehem governorate), Kharbatha (Ramallah governorate) and Qatanna (Jerusalem governorate).

Also in Area C, Israeli forces damaged irrigation canals in the Wadi Qana area (Salfit governorate) under the pretext of environmental protection. The rehabilitation of the canals was financed by the Palestinian Ministry of Finance and built in coordination with the Israeli DCL. Three families, comprising 20 members, are directly affected.

Incidents in the context of Israeli settler violence

During the reporting period, OCHA documented three settler-related incidents that resulted in Palestinian injuries and damage to Palestinian property. Since the beginning of the year, OCHA has recorded a weekly average of six incidents resulting in injuries or damage to property, including the uprooting and burning of thousands of trees. A number of incidents of harassment and intimidation affecting Palestinians were also reported.

Israeli settlers physically assaulted and injured a Palestinian shepherd while he was herding his sheep in a field in the vicinity of the Migdalim settlement (Nablus governorate). In 2010, one child was killed and 104 Palestinians have been injured during settler-related incidents. In another incident, Israeli settlers from the settlement of Qedumim levelled around ten dunums of land belonging to the nearby village of Kafr Qaddum (Qalqiliya governorate). Also this week, Israeli settlers from Sdemot Mehola settlement, accompanied by two Israeli soldiers, clashed with the residents of the Bedouin community of Al Farisiyya (Tubas governorate), after the settlers attempted to confiscate 500 sheep belonging to the community. No injuries were reported, but the leader of the community was arrested; he remains under arrest.

In two separate incidents, Palestinians hurled stones at Israeli-plated vehicles driving in the Ramallah area, causing damage to two vehicles.

Access Update

Israeli forces prevented Palestinian farmers from the village of Qaryut from entering their land in the vicinity of the Eli settlement (Nablus governorate). This incident occurred despite an Israeli court order allowing the farmers to enter their fields freely. This is the fourth time that the farmers have been prevented from entering their land since the beginning of November 2010. In a separate incident, Israeli forces denied farmers access to their land near the Barrier in the Beit Ula village (Hebron governorate) under the pretext that this is "State Land".

Israeli forces continue opening a road gate at the main entrance to Salfit City, allowing only registered mini-buses through. This gate has been in place for over seven years, blocking access for more than 40,000 residents of villages located to the north to basic services in Salfit City.

Gaza Strip

Israeli restrictions on access to land and sea continue; 12 Palestinians injured

This week, Israeli forces injured 12 Palestinian civilians, the majority of whom were injured near the fence separating Israel and the Gaza Strip. This year, 58 Palestinians (including 22 civilians) have been killed and 245 Palestinians (including 220 civilians) have been injured in Palestinian-Israeli violence in the Gaza Strip. Over 60 percent of deaths and injuries have occurred near the fence this year.

Incidents in the context of Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to areas located up to 1,500 metres from the fence (an area comprising 17 percent of the Gaza Strip's territory) continue. In five separate incidents, Israeli forces injured ten Palestinian workers, including two boys (aged 15 and 16), while they were collecting gravel and scrap metal from the former Israeli settlements blocks near the fence. In another nine incidents near the fence, Israeli forces opened fire at farmers while working on their land; no injuries were reported. Also, on three occasions, Israeli forces launched incursions with bulldozers and tanks a few hundred meters into the Gaza Strip and withdrew after levelling land.

On 27 November, Israeli naval forces opened fire at two fishermen in the Beit Lahiya area, injuring them. While the Israeli authorities continue to restrict Palestinian fishing activities beyond three nautical miles from shore, this incident occurred while the fishermen were on land, fishing from shore. In 2010, Israeli forces have killed three fishermen and injured seven others in incidents related to restrictions on access to fishing areas.

Palestinian armed factions launched a number of rockets and mortar shells targeting southern Israel, including military bases located along the border, but no Israeli injuries or damage to property were reported.

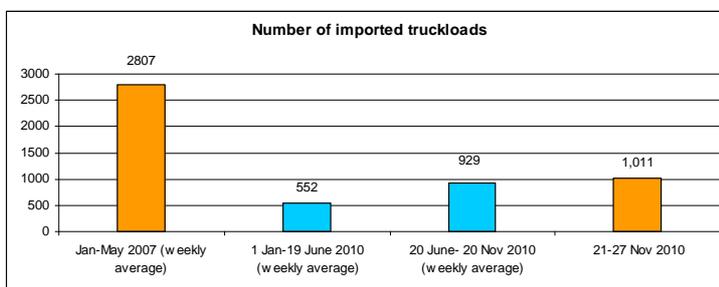
Limited shipments of exports leave Gaza

Despite the ongoing Israeli restrictions on Gaza exports, this week the Israeli authorities allowed four truckloads carrying strawberries (5.7 tonnes) and cut flowers (43,000 stems) to exit the Gaza Strip. These truckloads (exited on 28 and 30 November) are the first to leave Gaza since 18 April 2010. While Gaza is capable of exporting 2,300 tonnes of strawberries and 55 million flowers each season, during the 2009-2010 season, only around 50 tonnes of strawberries and only one-third of the 40 million cut flowers intended for export were allowed out, due to the ongoing restrictions on exports and the lack of necessary agricultural inputs. Since the blockade on Gaza commenced in June 2007, only 675 truckloads of exports have left Gaza, all of which were strawberries and cut flowers. A monthly average of 1,086 exported truckloads left Gaza in the first five months of 2007 before the blockade.

Wheat reserves continue to decline

This week, the number of truckloads that entered Gaza (1,011 truckloads) slightly increased, compared to the weekly average entering since the Israeli announcement to ease the blockade on 20 June 2010 (929 truckloads). However, this week's figure represents only 36 percent of the weekly average of imports recorded before the imposition of the blockade in June 2007. Food items made up 55 percent of imports, compared to less than 20 percent of total imports prior to the blockade.

Low quantities of wheat continue to enter Gaza through the conveyor belt at Karni Crossing. This crossing operates only two days a week: one day is allocated for the transfer of wheat and animal feed; and the other for gravel for approved international projects. Prior to the easing, wheat and animal feed entered on both days. While overall volumes of imports have increased since the Israeli announcement to ease the blockade, there has been a sharp decline in the volume of wheat grain allowed into Gaza, with imports decreasing by around one-quarter in the period from June to October compared to the previous five months (48,609 vs. 64,273 tonnes). The main constraint is the limited operation of the conveyor belt at the Karni crossing.



According to Gaza's six mills, there are over 500 truckloads (19,540 tonnes) of wheat delayed and waiting to enter Gaza. As of 29 November, there were some 3,020 tonnes of grain available at the six mills in the Gaza Strip and 170 tonnes of wheat flour at the local market, quantities that cover the population's needs for less than six days.

Daily power outages in Gaza remain close to 12 hours; access to running water remains a daily challenge

Imports of industrial fuel to operate the Gaza Power Plant (GPP) slightly declined this week compared to last week (1.16 vs. 1.24 million litres). The total provision of electricity throughout the Gaza Strip stands at about 40 percent below the estimated daily demand of 280 MW. Approximately 30 MW of power is produced by the GPP and 120 MW and 17 MW are purchased from Israel and

Egypt respectively, providing Gaza with less than 170 MW. This shortfall triggers a daily average of power cuts of up to 12 hours throughout the Gaza Strip.

The ongoing power cuts affect daily life throughout the Gaza Strip, as well as the provision of essential services, including water supply, sewage treatment and removal, and the functioning of health services. Access to running water also remains a daily challenge for the population due to power cuts. Twenty percent of Gazans living in areas including Gaza City, Rafah and Jabaliya, have access to running water only once every five days (6 to 8 hours); 50 percent have access once every four days (6 hours); and 30 percent receive running water once every two days (6 to 8 hours).