



## PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

15 –21 JULY 2009

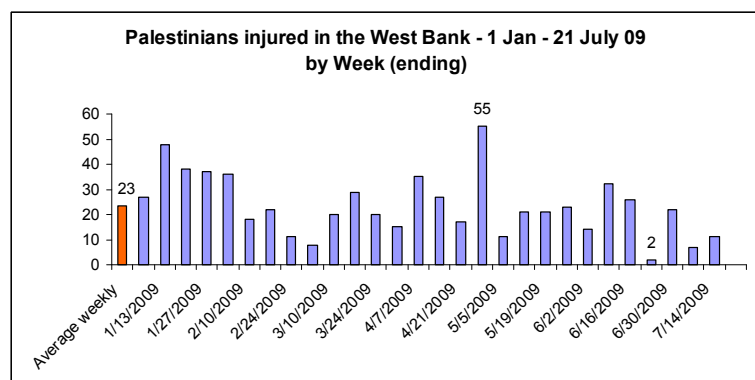
### West Bank

#### No casualties due to Israeli-Palestinian conflict

For the first time since OCHA started its database in January 2005, no casualties were recorded in the West Bank this week due the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As a comparison, up to and including 14 July 2009, an average of 23 Palestinians were injured per week in 2009.

Although no injuries occurred during anti-Barrier demonstrations in Ni'lin

and Bil'in (Ramallah), for the second week in a row, Israeli forces used so-called "skunk bombs" in Bil'in village—a foul-smelling liquid sprayed on the protesters – to disperse the crowds.



In 113 search and arrest operations Israeli security forces arrested 58 Palestinians during the week. While the number of operations is equal to the weekly average of the first six months of 2009, the number of arrests was 13% lower. Israeli security forces also staffed 47 flying checkpoints during the week.

In addition, Palestinian security forces arrested 34 Palestinians allegedly affiliated to Hamas, compared to a weekly average of 25 in the first half of 2009.

#### Demolitions in East Jerusalem and Area C continue

Demolitions continued in East Jerusalem, with one Palestinian homeowner forced by the Jerusalem municipality to demolish his house in Sur Baher neighborhood, due to a lack of a building permit. Nine people, including six children, who were about to move into the residence were affected.

On 21 July, the Jerusalem municipality issued a demolition order against a booth of the Wadi Al Hilwi Information Center in Silwan. The center provides information about the historical background and the current situation of the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan. Also, on 16 July, Israeli security forces distributed eviction orders in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Beit Safafa and against four houses. If implemented, the evictions will displace more than 50 people, the majority of whom are children.

In Area C, on 15 July, the Israeli Civil Administration demolished 19 tents and animal barracks of seven Bedouin families located south of road 449 in the Ramallah governorate. Fifty (50) people, including 32 children, were affected. The structures were uninhabited at the time as they serve only as winter residences for the families. Furthermore, Israeli authorities distributed stop work orders in the villages of Kisan (Bethlehem), Twani (Hebron) and Kafr Qalil (Nablus).

## **Palestinian property attacked by Israeli settlers after outpost evacuations**

Ten settler-related incidents were reported during the week – the same number as in each of the two previous weeks, and more than the average of seven during the first six months of 2009. No casualties were reported but Palestinian property sustained damage.

On 20 July, the Israeli army demolished several structures in three settlement outposts in Ramallah governorate. Outposts are Israeli settlements constructed without the authorization of the Israeli authorities. In response, Israeli settlers implemented their “price tag” strategy, by attacking Palestinian property. In Turmus’aya (Ramallah), settlers cut down olive trees and threw stones at Palestinian vehicles travelling on road 60 near the village. Further north, settlers from Yitzhar set fire to several dunums of land belonging to the villages of Madama and Tell, south of Nablus City.

In addition, in East Jerusalem, a group of armed settlers attempted to take over a house in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood for the fourth time in a month. In Beit Sahur (Bethlehem), settlers continued to hold gatherings on Thursdays and Fridays on the site of the former military base of Ush Al Ghurab. A pediatric hospital is planned for the site. However, the Israeli Civil Administration has refused to issue the required permits.

## **Social and cultural institutions in East Jerusalem closed down**

As reported last week, Israeli authorities closed the Nidal Center for Community Development in the Old City of Jerusalem on 15 July. The grounds on which the Israeli authorities acted have become known this week: they allege the center is affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a faction within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In a separate development on 21 June, Israeli security forces closed a tourism exhibition at the Al Hamra Palace in East Jerusalem for allegedly being sponsored by the Palestinian Authority (PA). Israeli authorities have repeatedly disrupted social and cultural events in East Jerusalem, which they consider linked to the PA.

## **Infringements on freedom of press by Israel and the PA**

In the Old City of Jerusalem, Israeli forces detained two Palestinian journalists working for the Palestinian news agency “Inter Palmedia”, while en route to the compound of the Al Aqsa Mosque in the Old City to report on a children’s summer camp. The journalists were interrogated for several hours. The reasons for the detention remain unclear.

Also during the reporting period, the PA revoked its decision to suspend the operations of the Qatari-based television network Al Jazeera in the West Bank. On 15 July, the PA had sanctioned Al Jazeera for “false reporting” after a senior PLO-official accused Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas of having plotted the assassination of his predecessor, Yasser Arafat. Despite revoking the ban, Al Jazeera reported that the PA still intended to take Al Jazeera to court “for its continuous incitement against the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority”.

## Gaza Strip

### Military activities in Gaza continue: 15-year-old Palestinian killed

For the second time in three weeks, Israeli military activities in Gaza claimed the life of a Palestinian child. Israeli troops shot and killed a 15-year-old mentally impaired Palestinian boy as he approached the border fence with Israel. In an unrelated incident, two armed Palestinians were injured in an armed clash with Israeli forces in the eastern part of Gaza City.

In addition to access restrictions on land in the “buffer zone”, Israel naval forces continued to enforce the access restrictions on sea areas beyond three nautical miles from Gaza’s shores, opening warning fire on four separate occasions towards Palestinian fishing boats west of Beit Lahia, Gaza City, and Rafah, forcing the boats to return to shore. Palestinian fishing access to areas beyond three nautical miles has been prohibited since January 2009.

### Other casualties

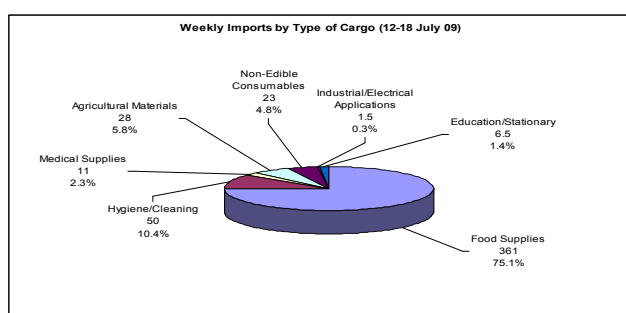
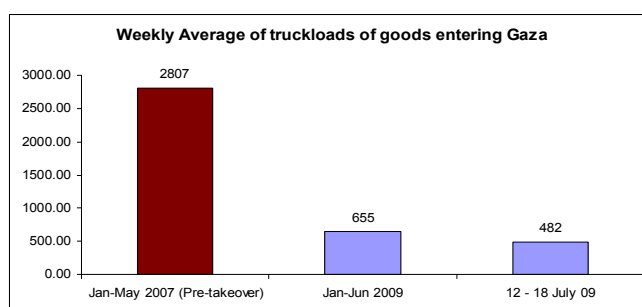
On 21 July, an explosive device detonated at a wedding in Khan Younis, injuring 42 people. The wedding party was for a former Fatah-affiliated PA security officer in Khan Younis. In addition, a 36-year-old man was found dead in an abandoned tunnel near the Gaza-Egypt border in Rafah; according to Al Dammeer Association for Human Rights in Gaza, the man had been missing for twenty days.

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

The transfer of basic goods through underground tunnels along the Gaza-Egypt border continues to pose risks to the lives of those working inside them. During the reporting period, two Palestinians, including a 17-year-old boy and a 32-year-old man, were killed and six others were injured when a tunnel collapsed under the border. Human rights organizations in Gaza have raised grave concerns on the use of child labourers in tunnels.

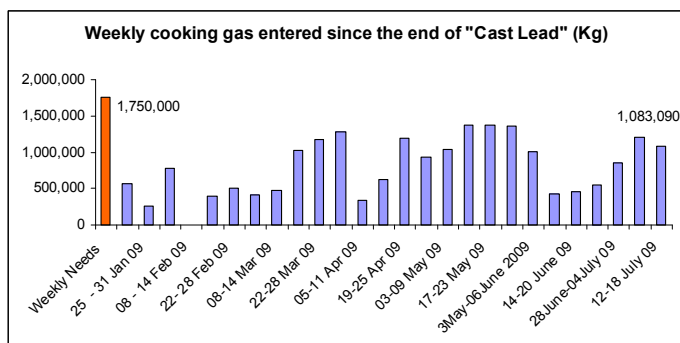
### Weekly average of imported truckloads remains below needs - (12-18 July 2009)

This week, a total of 482 truckloads of goods entered Gaza, less than 18% of the weekly average reported during the first five months of 2007, before the Hamas takeover, and approximately 26% below the weekly average of truckloads entered in the first six months of 2009 (655). Also during the week, for the first time since June 07, seven truckloads of five new items including air conditioners, motor oil, glass, paints and aluminum were allowed in to Gaza. However, the entry of many essential items needed for reconstruction, water and sanitation projects, agriculture, and industry, remain barred or restricted to limited quantities.



## Imported cooking gas at 39% below needs (12-18 July 2009)

The amount of cooking gas which entered into Gaza decreased slightly this week to 1,084 tons from 1,199 tons previously. This is approximately 27% more than the weekly average since the end of operation “Cast Lead”, but still only 61% of Gaza’s estimated weekly needs. There are no reports of cooking gas entering via tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border.



## Scheduled daily power cut durations reduced

During the week, scheduled rolling blackouts decreased from 6-8 hours per day to 4-6 hours for four days per week when the Gaza Power Plants’ increased electricity production to 70 MWs this week, up from 60-65MWs produced in previous weeks. Routine Power Plant maintenance necessitated a decrease in production for a week, resulting in increased fuel stores, which in turn allowed it to operate at increased levels. To continue operations at current levels, the Power Plant would need 2.9 million liters of industrial gas per week. However, from October 2007 through the current reporting period, Israel has systemically restricted the Power Plant’s fuel imports to approximately 2.2 million liters per week—70% of weekly needs.