



UNITED NATIONS

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
occupied Palestinian territory

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

4 - 10 May 2011

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 10 MAY

- 11 May: Approximately 22 truckloads of aggregates crossed into Gaza for the first time through the alternative facility at the Kerem Shalom Crossing designed to replace the conveyor belt at Karni Crossing.

West Bank

35 Palestinians injured by Israeli forces

This week, Israeli forces injured 35 Palestinians in demonstrations and clashes with Israeli forces. Thus far in 2011, five Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces in the West Bank, and 462 have been injured, compared to six fatalities and 624 injuries in the same period in 2010. A total of 18 members of Israeli forces have been injured in 2011.

On 6 and 7 May, clashes erupted between Palestinian residents of the Silwan area of East Jerusalem and Israeli forces, resulting in the injury of ten Palestinians, including three paramedics and three children (aged 14, 15 and 17). In 2011, 177 Palestinians have been injured in Silwan. This is 38 per cent of the total number of Palestinians injured throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israeli settlers and their armed security guards in the area, as well as an Israeli plan to demolish dozens of houses to make way for a touristic complex are the reasons for growing tensions in Silwan.

Fifteen other Palestinians were injured in weekly protests against settler violence, including in 'Iraq Burin village in the Nablus governorate (9 injuries); against access to land near Karnei Zur settlement in the Hebron governorate (4 injuries); and against the construction of the Barrier and the expansion of Hallamish settlement in the Ramallah governorate (2 injuries). A Palestinian house was set on fire and partially damaged by a tear gas canister fired by Israeli forces in the latter protest.

A further ten Palestinians were injured in clashes with Israeli forces at a checkpoint, in the course of the demolition of a number of structures in the Hebron governorate (reported below) and during military raids on villages. Overall this week, Israeli forces conducted around 98 search and arrest operations throughout the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, slightly above the weekly average for such operations since the beginning of 2011.

Settler violence continues

During the reporting period, OCHA documented six settler-related incidents that resulted in three Palestinian injuries and damage to property. A number of additional incidents involving prevention of access and intimidation by settlers were also reported during the week. One Israeli settler was also injured this week when Palestinians threw stones at his vehicle in the Silwan area of East Jerusalem.

Israeli settlers physically assaulted and injured a Palestinian shepherd while grazing his sheep near Qusra village (Nablus governorate), and killed one of the sheep. In a separate incident, settlers threw stones at

children in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of East Jerusalem, injuring one of them (aged 15). Another boy (aged 8) was transferred to a hospital after Israeli settlers physically assaulted him near his house in the Israeli-controlled area of the Old City of Hebron (H2).

This week also, Israeli settlers from Betar Illit settlement reportedly uprooted around 200 olive trees and grape vines and destroyed a fence and two terraces belonging to Husan village (Bethlehem governorate). In two other incidents in the Ramallah governorate, settlers uprooted a number of olive trees and lemon seedlings and damaged two water pipes belonging to the villages of Silwad and Dura al Qara'.

Demolitions resumed

After a three-week lull, the Israeli authorities demolished 13 Palestinian-owned structures in the Bedouin community of Susiya (Hebron governorate) in Area C of the West Bank due to the lack of building permit, displacing 11 families comprising 73 people, of whom 46 were children. The structures included residential zinc rooms and tents. Another residential tent and an animal shack were demolished by their owner in Umm Salamuna village (Bethlehem governorate) after receiving a demolition order. Since the beginning of 2011, 207 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem and Area C, displacing 433 people – a sharp increase compared to the equivalent period in 2010 (70 demolitions and 142 people displaced).

The Israeli authorities also issued stop-work orders against residential structures belonging to 50 Bedouin families residing near Al Eizariya village (Jerusalem governorate), as well as a stop-work order against a power line supplying electricity to seven houses in the Jalud village (Nablus governorate). Israeli forces also uprooted dozens of olive saplings belonging to a Palestinian in An Nabi Samuel, a village located in the closed area between the Barrier and the Green Line (Jerusalem governorate), after issuing an order to that effect a month ago.

Gaza Strip

A calm week in Gaza

This week was the calmest one since the beginning of the year: no armed clashes, Israeli air strikes or rocket firing by Palestinian armed factions, as well as no deaths or injuries, were reported in the Gaza Strip or southern Israel. Since the beginning of 2011, 47 Palestinians (18 civilians) and two Israelis (one civilian) have been killed in the context of Israeli-Palestinian violence in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, and 176 Palestinians (148 civilians), and nine Israelis (five civilians) have been injured. The total number of casualties (deaths and injuries on both sides) is more than double the figure during the equivalent period in 2010.

On two separate occasions, Palestinians, together with international activists, organized a wheat harvest activity in the Khuza'a area and a demonstration in the Beit Hanoun area protesting the continued Israeli restrictions on access to land near the fence separating Israel and the Gaza Strip (de-facto up to 1,500 meters from the fence). As they approached the fence, Israeli forces fired 'warning' shots, forcing them to withdraw.

Gaza crossings with Israel

A total of 1,139 truckloads of goods entered Gaza this week (1-7 May), around 30 per cent above the weekly average of truckloads that entered since the beginning of the year (882). However, this week's

figure represents only 41 per cent of the weekly average of 2,807 truckloads that entered Gaza during the first five months of 2007, prior to the imposition of the blockade. Most goods that enter Gaza remain consumer products, with food constituting 54 per cent. Prior to the blockade, food items made up less than 20 per cent of all imports.

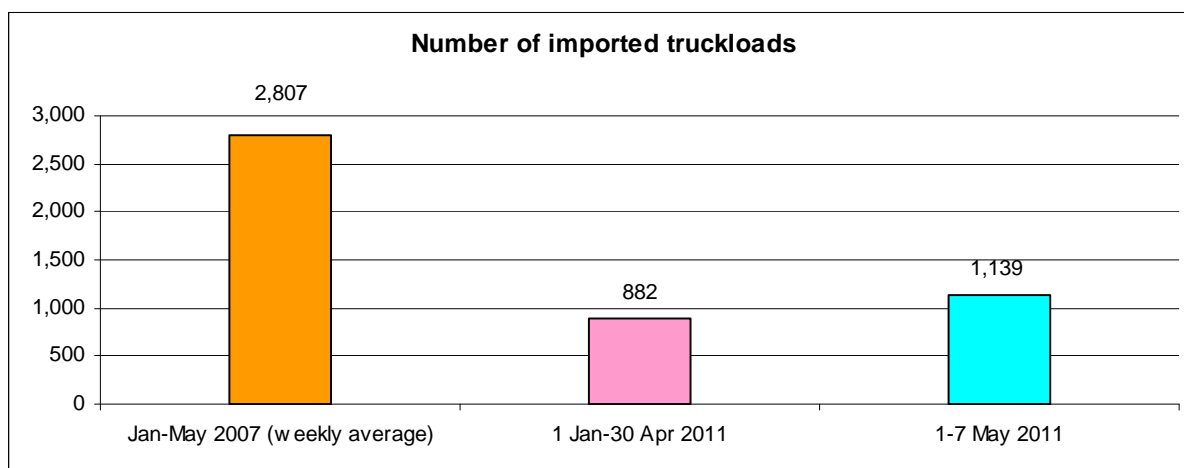
No aggregates for international projects approved by Israel entered Gaza for the third consecutive week. This is due to the recent closure of Sufa Crossing and because the alternative facility at Kerem Shalom Crossing, designed to replace the conveyor belt at Karni crossing that was closed in March 2011, is not yet ready. UNRWA indicated that in the coming weeks it would require an estimated 69,000 metric tonnes of aggregate for its approved construction projects. While Israel approved the entry of the remaining flotilla materials allocated for UNRWA construction projects, according to UNRWA, the last shipment of cement has been rendered unusable as a result of prolonged storage during the lengthy approvals process.

Exports from Gaza remained very limited, with only shipments of agricultural crops allowed out of Gaza designated for areas outside Israel and the oPt. Two truckloads of cut flowers (128,000 stems) were allowed to exit Gaza this week. Since the beginning of the current export season that started in late November 2010, a total of 289 truckloads, 98 percent of which consisted of strawberries and cut flowers, have been allowed out of Gaza. A monthly average of over 960 truckloads of textiles, furniture and agricultural produce left Gaza in the first six months of 2007, before the imposition of the blockade.

Shortages of cooking gas continue. This week, 495 tonnes of cooking gas entered Gaza, representing 41 per cent of the weekly required amount of 1,200 tonnes. The Gas Stations Owner Association in Gaza indicates that less than ten out of the 28 cooking gas stations are partially operating due to lack of cooking gas, while a rationing system remains in place.

Rafah Crossing

The Rafah Crossing controlled by the Egyptian authorities remains partially operational. During the reporting period, approximately 2,189 Palestinians were allowed into Gaza and over 1,341 others crossed out of Gaza through the Rafah Crossing. A further 267 people were denied entry into Egypt. Due to the current access restrictions and the limited operations of the crossing, the Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza continue to implement a registration mechanism to facilitate the travel of only those registered as urgent and humanitarian cases, including patients, students and foreign passport holders, to Egypt. Nearly 3,000 people are so far registered and scheduled to travel.



A man executed by Gaza authorities

On 4 May, the Gaza authorities executed a Palestinian man convicted of collaboration with Israel. The high military court approved the execution of the man on 19 April 2011, who was sentenced to death on 29 October 2009. This is the first execution to be carried out in Gaza since the beginning of 2011, bringing the total number of executions since Hamas took over the Gaza Strip in 2007 to six. Of those executed, three people were convicted of collaborating with Israel in 2009 and three others of murder in 1996, 2005 and 2009 respectively.