



# PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

14-20 SEPTEMBER 2011

## Key issues

- Israeli settler violence against Palestinians continues to escalate, affecting the lives and livelihoods of Palestinians. This week, settlers shot and injured a Palestinian and vandalized hundreds of olive trees in different areas of the West Bank. The escalation comes in the context of a request by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for UN membership, which will be submitted later this week.

## WEST BANK

### Settler violence leaves four injured and almost 1,000 olive trees damaged

Settlers have escalated attacks against Palestinians and their property, resulting in injury to four Palestinians and damage to around 990 olive trees.

In one incident, settlers from Esh Kodesh settlement outpost clashed with Palestinian residents of the nearby Qusra village (Nablus governorate), during which a Palestinian was shot and injured with live ammunition and a settler was also stabbed and injured. Also in Nablus, settlers from Itamar settlement physically assaulted and injured three Palestinians who were driving near the settlement. In addition, a man was injured this week when he was hit by a settler vehicle in the Hebron governorate.

During the reporting period, OCHA documented eight settler attacks that led to extensive damage of Palestinian-owned property. Settlers cut down, uprooted or set fire to around 990 trees, mainly olive trees, most of which were located on Palestinian land in the vicinity of settlements in the Qalqiliya, Salfit and Ramallah governorates. Since the beginning of the year, over 6,600 trees belonging to Palestinians have been vandalized by settlers. Israeli settlers also set fire to four Palestinian vehicles in the Nablus and

#### Settler-related incidents:

Incidents resulting in Palestinian injuries or property damage:

in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 310 vs. 198

Injured this week: 4

Palestinians injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 136 vs. 72

Settlers injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 27 vs. 36

Hebron governorates, damaging them. A number of stone-throwing incidents by settlers were also reported, resulting in no injuries.

### Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians continue to result in injuries

Half of this week's injuries occurred when Israeli forces, which were attempting to stop confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli settlers, also clashed with Palestinians. In two separate incidents, nine Palestinians, including a 14-year-old boy, were injured when Israeli forces fired tear gas canisters to stop clashes between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the villages of 'Asira al Qibliya and Qusra in the Nablus governorate.

Also this week, four Palestinians were injured in weekly demonstrations, which evolved into clashes

between Palestinians and Israeli forces, against the expansion of the Hallamish settlement in the Ramallah governorate and access restrictions to agricultural land near Karmei Tzur settlement in the Hebron governorate. Also in five separate incidents, five Palestinians, including a woman, were physically assaulted and injured when they clashed with Israeli forces while they were conducting search-and-arrest operations in a number of areas in the Hebron governorate. Overall this week, Israeli forces conducted almost 80 search-and-arrest operations in West Bank cities and villages, around the weekly average of operations since the beginning of the year. An Israeli soldier was also injured by a stone during a demonstration organized by Palestinians at the Qalandiya checkpoint (Jerusalem) to support the PLO's bid for UN membership.

## Demolitions and issuance of demolition orders continue

Demolition of structures and issuance of demolition orders by the Israeli authorities in Area C of the West Bank have continued. This week, five structures, including a residence, two sections of roads (2.5 meters long) and two animal shelters, were demolished in Al 'Aqaba village (Tubas governorate), due to lack of Israeli-issued building permits. As a result, 23 people, including 11

### Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0

Killed in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 8 vs. 9

Injured this week: 18; 4 in demonstrations

Of whom were children: 4

Injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 1,097 vs. 815

children, were displaced (some of whom had been previously displaced and were living in animal shelters), and around 300 others were otherwise affected.

Also, the Israeli authorities issued demolition and eviction orders against five structures belonging to a Bedouin community living in 'Anata village (Jerusalem governorate). These included four residences and a kindergarten, in which 45 children are enrolled. Other orders affected five residential structures in Al Buweib village (Hebron governorate) and two residences and two animal shacks in Al Farsiya community (Tubas governorate). Many communities, which are located in Area C of the West Bank, remain at risk of forced displacement.

### Palestinian-owned structures demolished

Demolished this week: 5

Of which residences: 1; 23 people displaced

Structures demolished in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 408 vs. 290.

People displaced in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 804 vs. 374.

## GAZA STRIP

### A relative calm continues

A relative calm has continued in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel since 28 August. This week, however, two Palestinians, including a 14-year-old boy and an alleged member of an armed group, died (on 19 and 16 September, respectively) of wounds they sustained during the escalation in hostilities in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, following the 18 August attacks along the Egypt-Israel border,

and in the Israeli "Cast Lead" offensive in 2009, respectively. Also, the Palestinian armed factions fired a number of rockets towards southern Israel, resulting in no injuries or damage to property.

Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from the shore and to areas up to 1,500 meters from the fence separating Israel and the Gaza Strip continue to disrupt the lives and to hinder the livelihoods of

thousands of Palestinians. In one incident, the Israeli Navy briefly detained two Palestinian fishermen and confiscated their boat. In another three separate incidents, Israeli forces opened warning fire towards Palestinian fishing boats, forcing them ashore.

## Tunnels continue to claim lives; three killed and four injured

Three Palestinians were killed and four others injured in two separate incidents on 18 and 19 September while they were working inside tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. These included a worker who died as a result of electrocution and another two killed and four injured when a gas cylinder exploded inside a tunnel. While tunnel activity has declined since the Israeli decision to ease the blockade on 20 June 2010 and many tunnels have been reportedly closed by Egyptian forces, this activity remains a main source for construction materials that are still restricted through the official crossings with Israel, as well as fuel that is significantly cheaper to purchase from Egypt than from Israel. Since the beginning of 2011, 25 Palestinians have been killed and 44 others injured in tunnel-related incidents, including air strikes, tunnel collapses and electrocution.

## Increased movement through Rafah Crossing

During the reporting period, a total of 4,528 people left Gaza through the Rafah Crossing controlled by Egypt, and 2,286 entered Gaza. This is an increase compared to the number of people who crossed into Egypt in recent weeks, however, it remains below the number of people who crossed per week in the first five months of 2006, before the partial closure of the crossing, when an average of 650 people crossed daily each way. Also this week, a total of 111 people were denied entry to Egypt for unspecified reasons. Despite the overall increase in

### Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0

Of whom children: 0

Killed in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 85 vs. 48

Injured this week: 0

Of whom children: 0

Injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 417 vs. 193

the volume of people leaving Gaza through Rafah, due to the backlog generated prior to the reopening of the crossing, there are thousands of travelers registered with the Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza waiting to exit in the coming months.

## Electricity blackouts continued

Electricity blackouts throughout the Gaza Strip continue, with power cuts reaching six to eight hours per day. Basic services including health provision, water supply and waste water management continue to be directly affected by the lack of electricity. The Coastal Municipal Water Utility indicates that due to the ongoing shortfall of electricity supplies, over half of the water wells in the Gaza strip are currently either not functioning or partially operating. The current demand for electricity reaches up to 300 MW, of which only around 70 per cent is covered.

### Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

#### Imports:

Truckloads (TL) that entered this week: 1,189

TL carrying food: 47%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2011: 938

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

#### Exports:

Truckloads that left this week: 0 (zero)

Weekly average since the beginning of 2011: 6

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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