



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

15-21 FEBRUARY 2012

Key issues

- Israeli air strikes in the Gaza Strip injured 15 civilians, including three children, as well as causing damage to some civilian structures.
- Power outages throughout the Gaza Strip remain high due to insufficient fuel supplies to run the Gaza Power Plant, disrupting the delivery of public services as well as daily life in Gaza.

WEST BANK

Clashes during protests result in around 40 injuries

This week, violent clashes erupted between Israeli forces and Palestinian residents of Kafr Qaddum (Qalqiliya) during a weekly demonstration protesting access restrictions to agricultural land in the vicinity of the nearby settlement (Qedumim). As a result, 34 Palestinians were injured, constituting 85 per cent of this week's injuries. Two other Palestinians were injured in another weekly protest against the expansion of Hallamish settlement in the Ramallah area.

Three Palestinians were also injured in two demonstrations, which evolved into clashes with Israeli forces, in front of the Israeli prison of Ofer (Ramallah). The protests were held in solidarity with the Palestinian prisoner, Khader 'Adnan, who is being held in administrative detention and whose health is in a critical state after being on a hunger strike for 66 days. The hunger strike has been held to protest Israel's use of administrative detention, where prisoners are detained without charge or trial, on the basis of orders that can be renewed indefinitely, as well as against his conditions of detention. On 21 February, the prisoner suspended his strike after reaching an agreement with the Israeli authorities not to renew his administration detention and to release him on 17 April. Currently, there are over 300 Palestinians being held under administrative detention, up 45 percent from February 2011.

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces:

Killed this week: 0
Killed in 2012: 0
Killed in 2011: 10

Injured this week: 40; 39 in demonstrations
Of whom were children: 0

Injured in 2012: 160
2011 weekly average of injured: 28
Search-and-arrest operations this week: around 100

The level of reported settler violence remains low, with five settler attacks against Palestinians and their property recorded this week, compared to a weekly average of eight attacks since the beginning of the year. Israeli settlers physically assaulted and injured an elderly Palestinian while he was grazing his livestock near Beitillu village (Ramallah). Settlers also uprooted ten olive trees and damaged

Settler-related incidents:

Settler-related incidents resulting in injuries or property damage:

This week: 5
2011 weekly average: 8

Palestinians injuries from settler violence:

This week: 1
Injured in 2012: 15
2011 weekly average: 4

Israeli settlers injured by Palestinians:

This week: 0
Injured in 2012: 3
Total in 2011: 21



a car belonging to residents of Mikhmas village (Ramallah); and vandalized eight dunums of agricultural land planted with olive and almond trees in Ash Shuweika village (Hebron). A Palestinian-plated vehicle and two Israeli-plated vehicles were damaged by settlers and Palestinians, respectively, in stone-throwing incidents in the Qalqiliya and Jerusalem governorates.

On two separate occasions, clashes took place between Palestinians and Israeli right-wing activists, accompanied by Israeli forces, while the activists attempted to enter Al Aqsa mosque compound. While no injuries were reported, around 20 Palestinians were detained during the confrontations.

Road accident in Area C claims the lives of six children and one teacher

In a grave accident this week, on 16 February, a truck hit a school bus while driving on a main road in Area C, south of Ramallah City. The collision set the school bus on fire, resulting in the death of six Palestinian children and one teacher and the injury of some 40 children and two drivers. Palestinian Red Crescent Society and Israeli Magen David Adom ambulances arrived after some 25 minutes, by which time the fire had been put out by bystanders and many children had been rescued and transported to Ramallah hospital using public transportation. Ambulances later transported some of the casualties to Ramallah and Hadassah hospitals. The accident occurred near Jaba' checkpoint, in an area that requires Palestinian ambulances and fire trucks to coordinate their entry with the Israeli authorities.

Herding communities in South Hebron continue to face demolitions and displacement

This week, the Israeli authorities demolished eight Palestinian-owned residential and livelihood structures in the herding community of Saddet

Tha'lah in the vicinity of Karmel settlement in south Hebron, on the grounds that they lacked Israeli-issued building permits. The structures included one residence, two water cisterns, four animal structures and a kitchen, displacing 19 people, including 15 children and affecting the livelihoods of 36 others. In the same region, the Israeli human rights organization, Rabbis for Human Rights, launched an appeal requesting funds for preparing a master plan to prevent the execution of outstanding demolition orders affecting over half the structures in the community of Susiya.

The Israeli authorities also issued demolition orders against 12 livelihood structures in of Barta'a Ash Sharqiya village, located in an area between the Barrier and the Green Line in the Jenin governorate, affecting the livelihoods of ten families.

Also this week, Israeli forces cut down around 325 olive trees belonging to Turmus'aya village (Ramallah), claiming that the trees are planted on "state land" and that they had previously handed out a military order for the Palestinians to evacuate the land in 40 days. The affected Palestinians claim to have registration documents proving their land ownership and that they did not receive the evacuation order.

Palestinian-owned structures demolished in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

This week:

Demolished: 8, including 1 residence

Displaced: 19, including 15 children

Demolished in 2012: 111

People displaced in 2012: 212

2012 vs. 2011 demolitions (weekly av.): 15 vs. 12

2012 vs. 2011 people displaced (weekly av.): 28 vs. 21

GAZA STRIP

Air strikes injure 15 civilians and damage at least 15 houses, a hospital and a school

For the third consecutive week, the Israeli Air Force launched a series of air strikes that struck residential and livelihood structures, as well as military training bases inside Gaza City. As a result, 15 civilians, including three children (aged 2, 6 and 14) and three women, were injured. Also, at least 15 residential structures, six public premises, including a hospital, a school, a training center, an NGO office, a police station, and a civil defense station, sustained damages. The air strikes were reportedly carried out in response to rockets fired by Palestinian armed factions towards southern Israel, none of which resulted in injuries or damage to property.

Israeli restrictions continued on Palestinian access to areas up to 1,500 meters from the fence and to fishing areas beyond three nautical miles (nm) from the shore. This week, Israeli forces opened fire in the air to disperse a weekly demonstration against access restrictions in an area approximately 180 meters from the fence. No injuries were reported. Also, three Palestinians were detained by Israeli forces while they were inside the restricted area in the Rafah area. In three incidents this week, the Israeli navy opened warning fire towards Palestinian fishing boats near the sea buoys placed by Israeli forces to demark the areas accessible to Palestinian fishermen (3 nm), forcing them ashore.

Also on 16 February, a 13-year-old child died from suffocation after falling inside a tunnel located 30 meters from his house while playing in the area (Middle Area of the Gaza Strip). This is the third child fatality that has occurred in similar circumstances within the past two years in the Gaza Strip.

Despite an increase in fuel supply, high power outages continue, disrupting daily life in Gaza

Local sources indicated that increasing amounts of fuel entered through the tunnels under the Gaza-

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip:

Killed this week: 0
Killed in 2012: 5

Injured this week: 15
Of whom were children: 3
Injured in 2012: 23
2011 weekly average of injured: 9

Egypt border during the reporting period, in response to the fuel crisis that took place during the past three weeks. Between 15-21 February, approximately 1.25 million liters of diesel and 2 million of liters of petrol (benzene) reportedly entered Gaza and were distributed to local fuel companies/petrol stations. Palestinian and Egyptian officials are holding meetings in Cairo to resolve the fuel and electricity crises in Gaza.

Towards the end of the reporting period (on 20 and 21 February), the Gaza Power Plant (GPP) received approximately 450,000 liters of diesel, which enabled it to operate one turbine, thus producing 30 megawatts (MW) (compared to 80-85 MW produced before the beginning of the current crisis). As a result, long electricity blackouts of between eight to 16 hours per day remain in place, slightly below the exceptional high power outage of 18 hours per day last week. Currently, the Gaza Strip is receiving 167 MW of electricity (120 MW from Israel and 17 MW from Egypt and 30 MW from the GPP), thus, creating a 50 percent electricity deficit. In February, the GPP has so far received around one-quarter (2.3 million liters) of the average amount of fuel that was received in 2011 on a monthly basis. Since the beginning of 2011, the GPP has been depending on cheaper Egyptian fuel, transferred via the Rafah/Egypt tunnels, rather than buying more expensive fuel from Israel.

Electricity shortages disrupt the delivery of public services, including hospitals and water and waste water treatment plants. Most such facilities reported shortages of back-up fuel supply, due to the long hours of reliance on electricity generators. The Ministry of Health in Gaza reported on 19 February

that its current back up fuel capacity is less than a week's supply, raising concerns over the lives of critical patients, including children in incubators if the situation continues.

The Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) reported an around 60 percent reduction in water supply for drinking and another 50 per cent drop in water supply for domestic use due to the lack of fuel. Facilities run by the CMWU have on average fuel available for less than a week (less than 80,000 liters). This is compounded by the overuse of electricity generators due to long hours of electricity cuts, increasing the chance of breakdowns and malfunctions of generators. Also, water and sewage facilities, including 190 water wells, 40 main sewage pump stations, 15 districts sewage pumping stations, four wastewater treatment plants, eight water desalination units and ten water lifting stations remain particularly vulnerable as a result of electricity shortages.

Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

Imports:

Weekly average of truckloads (TL) entered this week: 1,002

TL carrying food: 41%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2012: 1,058

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

Exports:

Truckloads that left this week: 5

Weekly average since late November 2011: 16

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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