



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

7-13 MARCH 2012

Key issues

- An escalation in hostilities in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel claims the lives of 24 Palestinians, including four civilians. Almost 80 percent of the Palestinian injuries (62 out of 75) and all Israeli injuries (11) were unarmed civilians. This round of violence ended in a calm agreement.
- The Gaza Power Plant was shut down again due to the lack of fuel, triggering power cuts of up to 18 hours per day. The lack of electricity continues to hinder daily life for 1.6 million people as well as provision of basic services in the Gaza Strip.

WEST BANK

One Palestinian boy killed and another six children injured in clashes

On 9 March, a Palestinian boy stabbed and injured an Israeli soldier. Following this, the Israeli soldier shot and injured the boy and killed a 17-year-old boy who was with him. The incident occurred in the town of Yatta (Hebron), in the course of clashes between Israeli forces and local residents that erupted during a search and arrest operation. Another 14-year-old child was injured in the clashes. Five additional Palestinians, including three children, were injured this week after being physically assaulted or inhaling tear gas in similar clashes in the context of a search and arrest operation in the Old City of Hebron and Burin village (Nablus).

Another two clashes with Israeli forces that occurred during protests against settlement-related activities resulted in the injury of 14 Palestinians. One protest was held against the closure of the main entrance of Beit Dajan village (Nablus), which leads to a road connecting two settlements in the area; and the other was against restrictions on access to agricultural land in the vicinity of Qedumim settlement (Qalqiliya). Another child was physically assaulted and injured by Israeli forces in a clash involving settlers in the Old City of Hebron.

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 1

Killed in 2012: 2

Killed in 2011: 11

Injured this week: 24; 14 in demonstrations

Of whom were children: 6

Injured in 2012: 336

2012 weekly average of injured: 32

2011 weekly average of injured: 28

Search-and-arrest operations this week: 88

Also this week, Israeli settlers stoned and injured two Palestinians who were traveling on Road 60, near Ofra settlement, and physically assaulted and injured another one in Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. In addition, settlers reportedly uprooted 450 olive seedlings, the majority of which belong to the communities of Al Ganoub (Hebron) and Khamat Zikariya (Bethlehem) and cut down around 30 grape vines and over 110 olive trees in the villages of Beit Ummar (Hebron), Qaryut (Nablus) and Beitillu (Ramallah). This brings the total number of trees and other plants vandalized by settlers since the beginning of the year to almost 1,070.



Herding communities in the Jordan Valley remain affected by demolitions and displacement

The Israeli authorities demolished 11 Palestinian-owned structures in the herding community of Fasayil al Wusta (Jordan Valley) due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits. This community experienced two previous waves of demolitions in June and December 2011, with some of the same families displaced more than once. The demolished structures included five residences, two animal barracks, and three latrines. Consequently, three families comprising 29 people, including 21 children, were displaced.

The Israeli authorities also issued stop-work orders against two houses, four water cisterns, an animal shelter, and an electrical grid in the Hebron governorate, and against two animal shelters in the Jordan Valley.

Settler-related incidents resulting in injuries or property damage:

This week: 8

2011 weekly average: 8

Palestinians injuries by settler violence:

This week: 3

Injured in 2012: 23

2011 weekly average: 4

Israeli settlers injured by Palestinians:

This week: 0

Injured in 2012: 5

Total in 2011: 21

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

This week:

Demolished: 11, including 5 residences

Displaced: 29, including 21 children

Demolished in 2012: 127

People displaced in 2012: 249

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

2012 vs. 2011 people displaced (weekly av.): 26 vs. 21

GAZA STRIP

Escalation of violence results in 24 Palestinians killed and over 70 Palestinians and 11 Israelis injured

On 9 March, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) targeted and killed two senior members of the Palestinian Popular Resistance Committees (PRC), triggering a new round of hostilities that lasted until 12 March.

In the course of this escalation, the IAF launched multiple air strikes (firing approximately 40 missiles), targeting military training bases, rocket launch sites, houses, vehicles carrying armed Palestinians, and tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. Overall, 24 Palestinians, including 20 members of armed factions and four civilians were killed as a result of these air strikes. The civilian fatalities included a 12-year-old child, two elderly men and one woman. The child was killed while he was en route to school in the Jabaliya area on

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip:

Killed this week: 24

Killed in 2012: 29

Injured this week: 75

Of whom were children: 17

Injured in 2012: 100

2011 weekly average of injured: 9

11 March; and the following day, a man and his daughter were killed when an air strike hit the vicinity of their house in Beit Lahiya.

At least 70 other Palestinians, the majority of whom were civilians (62, including 21 children, aged between 18 months and 17 years, and 11 women), were injured. Approximately half of the civilian injuries (31), including 12 children, occurred in one incident in the early morning of 12 March, when

the IAF targeted and hit a three-storey residential building, causing damage to the building and other nearby houses, in the Jabaliya area. The Israeli army claims that the building was used for military activities. According to the Ministry of Housing in Gaza, at least five housing units were damaged beyond repair, 30 housing units sustained major damage and approximately 500 other housing units sustained minor damage. The majority of the houses were in Gaza City and in North Gaza. Eight schools and one premises belonging to the Palestine Red Crescent Society also sustained damage.

During the escalation, Palestinian armed factions fired a total of 240 of projectiles, including Grad rockets, towards Israeli towns and cities, as well as military bases, in southern Israel. As a result, 11 Israeli civilians were injured and a number of houses sustained damage.

Reports from Gaza indicate that members of Palestinian armed groups carried out military activities within, or in the close vicinity of densely populated areas in the Gaza Strip. These reports indicate that the IAF has consequently targeted the sites from where these rockets were launched. In the same context, three people, including a woman and two militants, were injured in two incidents when a rocket landed short near a house in the Khan Younis area and another exploded pre-maturely in Beit Hanoun, respectively. On 12 March, a 14-year-old child was killed and five others were injured in Jabaliya, when an unexploded mortar shell exploded while they were playing with it. Hostilities disrupted schooling days for students in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel.

On 13 March morning, an Egyptian-brokered calm agreement between Israel and the armed factions in Gaza was reached. Despite a few Palestinian rocket attacks and Israeli air strikes reported since, the agreement is holding. In one of the incidents since the calm, on 13 March, two Palestinians were injured next to the perimeter fence during a funeral by Israeli gunfire in the context of restrictions on access.

Shortage of fuel continues to disrupt activities of daily life and provision of services

Fuel amounts supplied through tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border were further reduced as a result of a reduction in tunnel activities upon the outbreak of violence. This week, approximately 1.4 million liters of diesel and 2.1 million liters of petrol (benzene) reportedly entered Gaza, constituting 34 percent and 52 percent, respectively, of the weekly average of diesel and petrol that entered in previous months.

Fuel shortages have led to a complete shutdown of the Gaza Power Plant (GPP), which runs on diesel, since 10 March, triggering long power cuts of up to 18 hours per day throughout the Gaza Strip, up from 16 hours per day. Fuel and electricity shortages (since February 2012) continued to disrupt the delivery of public services, including hospitals and water and wastewater treatment plants.

According to the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU), fuel reserves that run water and wastewater treatment plants were exhausted and 25 percent of the 190 water wells throughout the Gaza Strip are out of fuel stocks. Around two-thirds of WASH facilities have enough fuel to operate the standby generators for a few days only. As a result, 40 percent of the Gaza Strip population, mainly in Gaza City, Rafah and Jabaliya receive running water supply once every four days only, 30 percent between 6 to 8 hours every three days, 25 percent between 6 to 8 hours every two days, and five percent between 6 to 8 hours once a day.

The health services in Gaza are jeopardized by the fuel shortages and electricity outages. Given the fragility of the health system in Gaza, there are concerns over the ability of hospitals to function properly should the level of violence escalate again, as reported by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza. Hospitals rely heavily on backup generators that are extremely dependent on the availability of fuel and spare parts and are very vulnerable

to breakdowns. As of 14 March, the available fuel in Gaza Hospitals is only enough to operate the standby electric generators for two weeks, as all hospitals together, need almost 1,000 liters of fuel to operate their generators for one hour.

Additionally, the Ministry of Health in Gaza reported earlier in the week that 368 essential medical items were out of stock (168 drugs items and over 200 medical disposables). This situation was partially addressed by a shipment of seven truckloads (240 pallets) of medical supplies sent by the MoH in Ramallah to Gaza on 12 March.

Cooking gas shortages

For the second consecutive week, reduced amounts of cooking gas have entered via the Israeli-controlled Kerem Shalom Crossing this week, estimated at less than 21 percent of the 1,200 tonnes of cooking gas required on a weekly basis. This is the lowest amount of gas that has entered Gaza in a single week since October 2011. As a result, less than half of the 28 cooking gas stations throughout the Gaza Strip have reportedly closed due to reduced amounts of gas entering via Kerem Shalom. The reasons behind these reduced amounts remain unclear. An estimated 2-5 tonnes of cooking gas are piped daily and more than 3,000 gas canisters are filled in Egypt daily and entering, which partially cover the needs. Shortage of cooking gas, compounded with shortage of power and fuel, is leaving Gaza's

population with very limited amount of energy needed to supply their daily life.

Limited exports left Gaza despite the outbreak of violence

This week (between 4 and 10 March), three truckloads of cut flowers (150,000 stems), one truckload of cherry tomatoes (7 tonnes), and six truckloads of date bars (type of biscuits for WFP food distribution in schools in the West Bank) left Gaza. The latter has been exceptionally allowed for the first time since 2007. On 12 March, activities at the Kerem Shalom Crossing, which is the only operational official crossing for Gaza imports and exports, were temporarily suspended following the landing of a projectile near the crossing. The crossing was opened the next day.

Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

Imports:

Weekly average of truckloads (TL) entered this week: 650

TL carrying food: 37%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2012: 1,021

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

Exports:

Truckloads that left this week: 10

Weekly average since late November 2011: 16

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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