



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

16-22 MAY 2012

Key issues

- ❖ Video tape showing Israeli forces failing to intervene during a settler attack on a Palestinian village in the Nablus area underlines the longstanding concern over the lack of adequate law enforcement against Israeli settlers.
- ❖ A significant obstacle to movement was removed by the Israeli authorities in the Hebron governorate, facilitating thousands of Palestinians' access to their main service center and additional livelihood options.
- ❖ Power cuts throughout the Gaza Strip remain as high as 12 hours per day, disrupting delivery of basic services and daily life in Gaza.

WEST BANK

Dozens of Palestinians injured in protests and clashes; settler activities raise tensions

Over half of this week's Palestinian injuries (27) were sustained during clashes in the course of a demonstration in Kafr Qaddum village (Qalqiliya). The demonstration is held on a weekly basis, in protest of the prohibition on the use of the main road connecting the village to Nablus and to agricultural land, on the grounds that this measure is needed to protect the nearby Qedumim settlement. Four other Palestinians, including two children (aged 15 and 16), and one Israeli soldier were injured during three weekly protests held in the Ramallah governorate, against the construction of the Barrier on Bil'in and Ni'lin villages' land, and the expansion of Hallamish settlement.

Six other Palestinian children were injured by Israeli forces in various incidents. These included: a 15-year-old child who was injured when hit with a tear gas canister during clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian youths at the entrance to the Al Arrub refugee camp (Hebron); another child (aged 14) injured during a search-and-arrest operation in Az Zawiya village (Salfit);

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0

Killed in 2012: 3

Killed in 2011: 11

Injured this week: 45; 31 in demonstrations

Of whom children: 8

Injured in 2012: 1,384

2012 weekly average of injured: 69

2011 weekly average of injured: 28

Search-and-arrest operations by Israeli forces this week: 57

and four others (aged between 1 and 8) injured when Israeli forces intervened in a clash between Palestinian residents and settlers that entered Nablus City to pray at Joseph's tomb.

Also this week, seven Palestinians were injured by Israeli settlers. The gravest incident took place on 19 May, when a group of armed Israeli settlers from Yitzhar settlement (Nablus) entered the nearby village of 'Asira al Qibliya and clashed with residents. Both sides threw stones at each other and some of the settlers also fired live ammunition at the residents; a total of five Palestinians were injured. Israeli soldiers arrived at the scene shortly after the beginning of the incident. Images of the incident



captured on camera by an Israeli human rights organization, however, suggest that the soldiers failed to intervene and stop the shooting. This latter development raises again the long-standing concern over the lack of adequate law enforcement on violent Israeli settlers, including by forces present during the attacks.

In East Jerusalem, tensions ran high on 20 May in the context Israel's celebration of "Jerusalem Day", in commemoration of the occupation of the city. Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians and Israeli protestors erupted in the Old City, as thousands of Israelis marched there. One Israeli activist was physically assaulted and injured by Israeli forces. Confrontations between settlers and Palestinian residents extended to the Silwan area in East Jerusalem and to Nabi Samuel village in the Jerusalem governorate, resulting in the injury of two Palestinians and some damage to a house and a vehicle.

In two incidents in the vicinity of Shim'a (Hebron) and Bat Ayin (Bethlehem) settlements, settlers also stoned Palestinian farmers and herders, causing no injuries. In two other incidents, settlers cut down around 60 trees, mostly olive trees, belonging to the villages of Beit Ummar (Hebron) and Burin (Nablus), and set fire to one dunum of land in At Tuwamin village (Hebron), damaging a barley crop.

A house in East Jerusalem demolished

This week, the Israeli authorities demolished one Palestinian-owned uninhabited residence (100 square meters) in At Tur neighbourhood of East Jerusalem, due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits. This is the first residence that has been demolished in East Jerusalem for over two months. The number of demolitions this week is around 90 percent less than the weekly average since the beginning of 2012 (around 15).

Also in East Jerusalem, a Palestinian was forced to demolish an extension to his house in the Old City upon receiving a demolition order from the

Settler-related incidents resulting in injuries or property damage:

This week: 6

2012 weekly average: 6

2011 weekly average: 8

Palestinians injuries by settler violence:

This week: 7

Injured in 2012: 57

2011 weekly average: 4

Israeli settlers injured by Palestinians:

This week: 0

Injured in 2012: 15

Injured in 2011: 37

Israeli authorities. Authorized construction in East Jerusalem remains virtually impossible for Palestinian residents, since, of the areas illegally annexed to Israel, only 13 percent, mostly already built up, are zoned for Palestinian construction.

In Area C of the West Bank, Israeli forces requisitioned irrigation pipes in Al Baq'a village (Hebron) and two vehicles used in a quarry in Rafat village (Ramallah). In the former village they also damaged 12 dunums of agricultural land planted with vegetables. In addition, the Israeli authorities issued 12 stop work orders against residential structures and animal shacks in Khirbet ar Rahawa (Hebron). Six of the affected structures were funded by the UN Humanitarian Response Fund.

Significant roadblock removed in Hebron

This week, the Israeli authorities removed a road block at the intersection between Beit 'Einun village and Road 60, the main north-south traffic

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

This week:

Demolished: 2

Displaced: 0

Demolished in 2012: 287

People displaced in 2012: 477

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

2012 vs. 2011 people displaced (weekly av.): 25 vs. 21

artery. This intersection was already opened in August 2010 but reclosed shortly after, following an incident where Palestinians shot at an Israeli vehicle in this area, killing four Israeli settlers. This removal significantly reduces the travel time between four villages to the east of Hebron City - Beit 'Einun, Al Uddiesa, Ad Duwarra and Ash Shuyukh (population approx. 18,000) – and their main service center. The removal is also

likely to have a positive impact on the peoples' livelihoods, as it facilitates access to and from more than 80 stone cutting factories and quarries in Ash Shuyukh and Sa'ir villages. Yet, the most direct entrance to Hebron City from these villages, on the other side of the intersection, remains blocked, requiring girls attending a school in the area to cross the dangerous intersection on foot, among others effects.

GAZA STRIP

Nine farmers injured near the fence

In two incidents this week, nine farmers, including a woman, were injured while present at a distance of 600 meters from the fence separating Israel and the Gaza Strip, when Israeli forces fired a number of tank shells and opened fire towards Palestinian agricultural areas in the vicinity. While the specific circumstances remain unclear, the incident came in the context of the Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to areas in the vicinity of the fence. In two other incidents, the Israeli navy opened warning fire towards Palestinian fishing boats, to enforce restrictions on access to fishing zones located beyond three nautical miles from the shore.

This week there were no reports of Palestinian projectiles fired towards southern Israel. Similarly, as in the last four weeks, there were no reports of Israeli air strikes.

Two people killed and three others injured in tunnel-related incidents

In two incidents this week, two Palestinian workers were killed - one who died when a tunnel under the Gaza-Egypt border collapsed, and another who fell inside a tunnel. Three more workers, including a 15-year-old-boy, were injured in three other tunnel-related incidents. In 2012, six workers have been killed and another 13 injured as a result of tunnel-related incidents. Overall in 2011, 36 Palestinians were

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip:

Killed this week: 0

Killed in 2012: 29

Injured this week: 9

Injured in 2012: 164

2012 weekly average of injured: 9

2011 weekly average of injured: 9

killed and 54 others injured in tunnel-related incidents, including air strikes, tunnel collapse and electrocution. Tunnels remain the main source for the transfer of certain goods, including construction materials whose entrance through the official crossings with Israel is restricted, as well as fuel that is significantly cheaper in Egypt compared to Israel.

Shortages of power and fuel continue

The majority of the population throughout the Gaza Strip are experiencing long power cuts of up to 12 hours per day on average, as the Gaza Power Plant (GPP) continues to produce only 25 megawatts (MW), or around one-third of its capacity (80 MW), due to the lack of fuel. According to Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, on May 17 a Palestinian sustained burns while lighting candles inside his house, to cope with the power outages. This follows an incident that occurred two months earlier, when three children were killed in an electricity-related incident.

Fuel supplied through the tunnels under Egypt-Gaza border is estimated this week at less than 25 percent of the daily amount (800,000 – one million liters of diesel and benzene) that entered regularly prior to the onset of fuel crisis. Gaza private companies continue to import fuel, including petrol and diesel, from Israel, to compensate for the ongoing fuel shortage, although the price of fuel purchased from Israel is more than double the price of that transferred from Egypt. According to the Gas Stations Owners Association (GSOA), almost all 180 fuel stations throughout the Gaza Strip have remained closed or partially open for a few hours due to the lack of fuel, with reports of long queues at the stations.

Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing)

Imports:

Weekly average of truckloads (TL) entered this week: 1,143

TL carrying food: 36%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2012: 982

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

Exports:

Truckloads this week: 0

Weekly average since the beginning of 2012: 8

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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Please note that the figures in this report are subject to changes upon the receipt of additional information.