



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

12 – 18 SEPTEMBER 2012

Key issues

- Significant drop in amount of fuel arriving through tunnels for Gaza Power Plant, forcing the shut-down of one of the three operational turbines.
- Gaza court sentences two men to death.

WEST BANK

Number of Palestinians injured by Israeli forces remains below 2012 weekly average

This week, 40 Palestinians, including 13 children, were injured by Israeli forces, significantly fewer than the number of Palestinians injured on average per week thus far in 2012 (59). This is consistent with the trend since mid-July.

Most of these injuries (24) were sustained in Kafr Qaddum village (Qalqiliya), during the weekly demonstration against the prohibition on the use of the main road connecting the village to Nablus City, and to agricultural land in the vicinity of Qedumim settlement; an Israeli activist was also detained during the demonstration. Injuries in Kafr Qaddum village account for 38 percent of all injuries from Israeli forces in 2012.

Eight Palestinians, including four children, were injured this week by Israeli forces, during two demonstrations in the Jerusalem governorate, one near the Old City (5) and one near Shu'fat checkpoint (3). The demonstrations were in protest of an anti-Islam film produced abroad. Two Palestinian males were also injured during demonstrations in Bil'in village (Ramallah) against the construction of the Barrier and during a demonstration by Palestinian and international activists near Ofer prison (Ramallah), which was held in solidarity with Palestinian detainees

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Injured this week: 40
Injured in 2012: 2,168

2012 weekly average of injured: 59
2011 weekly average of injured: 28

Search and arrest operations by Israeli forces this week: 36

in Israeli jails. A further six injuries (including two children) were reported this week in the Jerusalem, Ramallah and Nablus governorates, in varying contexts.

Settler violence continues against Palestinians and their property

This week, the number of Israeli settler incidents was roughly consistent with the 2012 average. No Israeli settlers were reported injured by Palestinians.

Two of this week's injuries occurred when a group of Israeli settlers from Esh Kodesh settlement outpost attacked Palestinians from Qusra village (Nablus), while they were working on their land. Settlers threw stones at the farmers and attempted to expel them from the land, sparking clashes with the farmers and other residents of the village. Israeli forces intervened after approximately 45 minutes and fired tear gas grenades towards the Palestinian



residents. One farmer (40 years) was injured when an Israeli settler hit him in the head with an iron pipe, and his brother (34 years) was injured by stones thrown by Israeli settlers (see section above for other injuries). This is the second consecutive week that settlers from Esh Kodesh have attacked Palestinian civilians from Qusra village.

In addition, a group of Israeli settlers from Itamar settlement attacked a group of farmers from 'Aqraba village (Nablus) with sticks, injuring three farmers. Another group of Israeli settlers, from Shilo settlement, threw stones at Palestinian-registered vehicles travelling near Za'tara checkpoint (Salfit), injuring two Palestinian men and one pregnant woman and breaking the vehicle's windows. During the reporting period, Israeli settlers from Otni'el settlement entered the Palestinian community of Imreish (Hebron), sprayed racist slogans on the walls of a mosque and attempted to set fire to a vehicle.

Also this week, a nine-year-old Palestinian girl was injured when an Israeli settler vehicle ran over her in Tuqu' (Bethlehem). Thus far in 2012, 13 Palestinians, including eight children, have been injured in hit and run incidents involving Israeli settler vehicles.

Unreported during the previous week, the security coordinator of the Sha'arei Tikva settlement was killed in an incident which, according to the Israeli media, was assessed by the Israeli Police as a "hit and run accident" that occurred in the course of monitoring the entry of Palestinian workers without permits to Israel; the suspected driver of the car is a Palestinian citizen of Israel.

No demolitions or displacement; issuance of demolition orders continues

For the second consecutive week, there were no demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures. During the period, however, Israeli forces issued an eviction order against six dunums of land in

Settler-related incidents resulting in injuries or property damage:

This week: 6

2012 weekly average: 7

2011 weekly average: 8

Palestinians injuries by settler violence:

This week: 8

Injured in 2012: 126

2011 weekly average: 4

Israeli settlers injured by Palestinians:

This week: 0

Injured in 2012: 32

Injured in 2011: 37

Al Khader village (Bethlehem), on the grounds that it is "state" land. The owner of the affected land, which was rehabilitated recently by a local NGO with international assistance and includes a water cistern, was given 45 days to return the land to its pre-rehabilitation state.

Also this week, Israeli forces verbally ordered Palestinian workers in Ar Rahwa (Hebron) to stop digging a cistern in the area, on the grounds that it is located in a closed military zone. Israeli forces also issued a requisition order against 0.2 dunums of land located near the Ibrahimi Mosque in the Israeli-controlled section of Hebron city (H2) for security reasons.

During the previous reporting period, the Israeli army handed over stop work orders for 16 structures in Khirbet Yarza village, located in a closed military zone in the Tubas governorate. The affected structures include one residential structure, nine animal shelters and six toilets, owned by 11 families (61 members).

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

This week:

Demolished: 0

Demolished in 2012: 465

Of which residences: 136

People displaced in 2012: 676

2012 vs. 2011 demolitions (weekly av.): 13 vs. 12

2012 vs. 2011 people displaced (weekly av.): 18 vs. 21

If implemented, the orders will displace eight civilians; the residential structure has been demolished four times previously. All of the other structures were donated by local and international NGOs and the Palestinian Authority following demolitions in the village in May 2012. Since 1967, the Israeli military has declared approximately 18% of the West Bank as a closed military zone for training, or “firing zone. The designation of land for military purposes has had a serious humanitarian impact on Palestinian civilians and dramatically reduced the land available to them for residential and livelihood uses.

Renewal of requisition orders

Unreported during the previous period, Israeli forces delivered a renewed military order extending the requisition of 647 dunums of land belonging to the villages of ‘Awarta and Burin (Nablus) until 31 December 2014 for security reasons. The land is located near ‘Awarta road gate (currently closed) and a nearby Israeli military training area. The lands are owned by at least 80 farmers from the two villages.

In a response to the High Court of Justice (HCJ) submitted during the reporting period, the Israeli state reported that they have the authority to allocate parcels of privately-owned Palestinian land, which was requisitioned prior to 1979 for military purposes, for settlement construction. This is despite a landmark HCJ ruling from 1979, which established that settlement construction does not qualify as a “military need” and it is therefore not allowed to requisition private property for that purpose. According to Israeli media reports, there are over 40 settlements that are located fully or partially on privately-owned Palestinian land that was requisitioned for military purposes. Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are contrary to international humanitarian law, which prohibits the occupying power from transferring its civilian population into occupied territory.

Israeli court issues ruling on Al Rajabi house

On 13 September, the Jerusalem Magistrate’s Court issued a ruling supporting the property claims of Israeli settlers to Al Rajabi House settlement in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron (H2), and ordered the State to return the property to them within 30 days. According to Israeli media reports, the move is dependent upon authorization by the Israeli Ministry of Defense of the sale and movement of settlers into the building. In November 2008, the Israeli High Court of Justice ruled that settlers must leave the Al Rajabi House, declaring that the State of Israel would be named temporary custodian of the property until a separate ruling on the ownership was issued. On 4 December 2008, Israeli security forces evacuated the settlers by force. In the aftermath of the eviction, Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian civilians and their property in Hebron city and other parts of the West Bank.

Closure imposed on the West Bank due to Jewish holiday

The Israeli authorities imposed a full closure on the West Bank, from 16-18 September, due to the Jewish New Year holiday. During the closure, West Bank ID holders who hold Israeli-issued access permits are prohibited from entering East Jerusalem or Israel, except those working for international organizations or humanitarian cases. Also on the occasion of the holiday, on 17 September, Israeli forces closed all northern entrances to the Silwan area of East Jerusalem, in order to facilitate access of Israeli settlers to the area. Silwan is an area of regular tension, due to Israeli settlement activity in the heart of the neighbourhood, the presence of Israeli settlers and their armed security guards, as well as an Israeli plan to demolish dozens of houses to make way for a touristic complex. As a result of this closure, Palestinians were forced to use other longer routes to reach their homes. In Hebron, the Ibrahimi Mosque was closed to Muslim worshippers on 17 – 19 September due to the holiday.

GAZA STRIP

Relative calm in Gaza

This week, the situation in Gaza and southern Israel was relatively calm; some incidents of Palestinian rocket firing and Israeli land-leveling incursions were reported, none of which resulted in casualties.

Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to areas along the fence separating Israel and the Gaza Strip as well as to fishing zones beyond three nautical miles from the Gaza Strip shore continued. On one occasion, Israeli tanks and bulldozers entered between 150 - 300 meters from the fence, under cover of heavy fire and conducted land levelling operations. On two occasions, Israeli troops positioned along the fence opened fire towards Palestinian farmers, forcing them to leave their fields. No injuries or damage were reported. On three occasions, Israeli forces arrested five Palestinians, including three children, allegedly for attempting to infiltrate into Israel; the children reportedly remain in Israeli custody. On at least five occasions, the Israeli navy opened warning fire towards Palestinian fishing boats, forcing them ashore. No injuries or damage were reported.

During the week, armed Palestinian groups fired a number of projectiles toward southern Israel and Israeli military positions near the fence, one of which exploded prematurely at the launching site. No injuries or damage were reported.

Gaza courts issue two death sentences

On 12 September, a military court in Gaza sentenced a 45-year-old man from Beit Lahiya to death by hanging, and his 40-year-old wife to 10 years in prison, on the charge of collaboration with Israel. The court found the couple guilty of providing information to Israel that led to the assassination of two members of Palestinian armed groups in Gaza. This week, a Gaza court

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip:

Killed this week: 0

Killed in 2012: 47

Injured this week: 0

Injured in 2012: 244

2012 weekly average of injured: 8

2011 weekly average of injured: 9

Israeli casualties by Palestinian fire from Gaza

Injured this week: 0

he was found guilty of killing two people, one of whom was a youth he buried alive. According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR), a total of five death sentences have been issued in 2012, bringing the number of death sentences issued since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in 1994 to 130 (104 in the Gaza Strip and 26 in the West Bank). Since 2007, 14 death sentences have been carried out by the Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip, including six people convicted of collaboration with foreign bodies.

Also during the period, the Permanent Military Court in Gaza convicted four people for their roles in the April 2011 kidnapping and killing of Italian activist Vittorio Arrigoni, with sentences ranging from one year imprisonment to life imprisonment with hard labour. Arrigoni's family, along with PCHR, had requested that the Court abstain from issuing the death penalty in the case.

Rafah Crossing remains open in both directions

This week, the Rafah Crossing between Gaza and Egypt was open on six days in both directions: 5,726 persons, including students, patients,

foreign passport holders, and people with residency permits in foreign countries, reportedly exited the Gaza Strip to Egypt, 4,586 persons entered the Gaza Strip. Reportedly, 381 persons were denied access to Egypt for unknown reasons. Thousands of Palestinians are registered and waiting to leave Gaza, but are unable to do so due to restrictions imposed by the Egyptian authorities.

Power cuts continue to disrupt daily life inside Gaza

This week, the Gaza Power Plant (GPP) was forced to shut down one of the three operational turbines (out of four in total), reducing the production capacity to 60 megawatts (MW), due to fuel shortages. Currently, the total electricity deficit rate reaches up to 45 percent, forcing the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company (GEDCO) to continue applying a strict distribution schedule of eight hours of electricity supply and eight hours of cuts.

The GPP needs over 3.5 million liters of fuel a week in order to operate at full capacity. Only 20 per cent of this amount was reportedly received from Egypt through the tunnels over the reporting period. This represents a significant drop in fuel supply compared to last week (when over 75

percent was received). The transfer of the Qatari fuel through the official crossings via Israel has remained blocked by the Egyptian authorities since 6 August, reportedly for security reasons.

According to local sources including tunnel owners, this week, the tunnels between Gaza and Egypt continued to partially operate, due to security restrictions imposed on both sides of the border. However, despite the reported limitation in tunnel activity in general, the flow of fuel from Egypt continues, at varying levels. Approximately 400,000 liters of fuel are entering Gaza each day, while the Gaza Strip needs a total of 800,000 to one million liters. Less than one-quarter of the amount entered daily this week was designated for the GPP.

Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing)

Imports: 9-15 September 2012

Number of truckloads (TL) entered this week: 1,481

TL carrying food: 44%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2012: 1,081

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

Exports:

Truckloads this week: 00

Weekly average since the beginning of 2012: 5

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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

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