

Division for Palestinian Rights

## *Chronological Review of Events Relating to the Question of Palestine*

Monthly media monitoring review  
July 2011

### *Monthly highlights*

- Quartet issues statement on movement and access of people and goods in the Gaza Strip ( [2 July](#) )
- PA condemns Israel's decision to approve the construction of 900 housing units in the "Gilo" settlement ( [5 July](#) )
- Israeli Defense Minister Barak stops transfer of bodies of 84 Palestinian militants, weighing the matter against a prisoner swap scenario ( [5 July](#) )
- Prime Minister Netanyahu orders blockage of entry to pro-Palestinian activists participating in a "fly-in" protest to Tel-Aviv ( [6 July](#) )
- Peace Now reports Israel's appropriation of Palestinian land under Ottoman Empire legislation allowing the confiscation of land uncultivated for several consecutive years ( [8 July](#) )
- Knesset approves law banning Israelis from boycotting settlements products ( [11 July](#) )
- Belgian Senate adopts draft resolution calling upon the Belgian Government and all EU countries to recognize a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders ( [14 July](#) )
- Norway upgrades Palestinian diplomatic representation ( [18 July](#) )
- Security Council discusses in an open debate the Palestinian bid for statehood, and hears a briefing by UN Special Coordinator Serry ( [26 July](#) )

1

British Foreign Office Minister for the Middle East, Alistair Burt, said that during his visit to the region he "will be encouraging both sides to return to direct negotiations immediately on the basis of parameters as set out by US President Obama in May". ( [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) )

Israeli police limited access to the Al-Aqsa and Dome of the Rock Mosques in Jerusalem for Muslim men under the age of 45 as a precautionary measure, a spokeswoman said. ( *AFP* )

Saleh al-Arori, head of the Prisoners' Affairs Unit of Hamas and member of its Political Bureau, announced that Hamas had refused an offer by German mediators concerning the prisoner swap deal with Israel because "they conspired with Israel and took their side... Therefore, German mediators lost their credibility and became unwanted". ( *PNN* )

The Israeli army fired tear gas at Palestinians demonstrating at the northern gate of Qalqilya, injuring four, witnesses said. Locals said that protesters were demanding the opening of the gate on the wall in accordance with an Israeli Supreme Court ruling. ( *Ma'an News Agency* )

The United States-flagged "Boat to Gaza" left a port in Athens but was stopped by the Greek coast guard. ( *Ma'an News Agency* )

2

"Efforts to maintain security while enabling movement and access for Palestinian people and goods are critical," a Quartet [statement](#) said. "In this context, the Quartet strongly urges all those wishing to deliver goods to the people of Gaza to do so through established channels so that their cargo can be inspected and transferred via established land crossings." It added: "The Quartet regrets the injury and deaths caused by the 2010 flotilla, urges restraint, and calls on all Governments concerned to use their influence to discourage additional flotillas, which risk the safety of their participants and carry the potential for escalation." ( *UN News Centre* )

John Klusmire, the US captain for the vessel *The Audacity of Hope*, was being held at police headquarters near Athens on charges of trying to leave port without permission and endangering the lives of passengers. The vessel was part of the Gaza flotilla. ( *BBC* )

3

Talks between Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal on a new Palestinian Cabinet had been postponed, Fatah official Azzam al-Ahmed said. (AFP)

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) cancelled a vote in Barcelona on a motion to support a declaration of Palestinian statehood. Deputy Knesset Speaker Majallie Whbee (Kadima) said that he had stopped the forum from voting to approve the declaration, because EUROMED lacked the needed quorum. (The Jerusalem Post)

"The Government has decided to pay employees half their salary due to the financial crisis that the Palestinian Authority is experiencing because of the failure of donors, including our Arab brothers, to fulfil their pledges," PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad said. (AFP)

Over 1,000 Israelis entered Nablus overnight to visit Joseph's Tomb, witnesses and the army said. Locals said that Israeli forces imposed heavy restrictions on the site. (Ma'an News Agency)

An Israeli settler driving near Nablus ran over a 40-year old Palestinian woman, and then tried to flee the scene. Separately, an Israeli-plated vehicle ran over a 14-year old boy in Qalqilya and then drove away. (IMEMC)

Around 7,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails went on a one-day hunger strike in protest against the tight measures imposed by Israeli prison authorities, the PA Ministry of Prisoners Affairs said. (Xinhua)

Saeb Erakat, member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), said that tunnelling food, cement and other goods via other means, such as Greek ships, missed the point, which he said was to "immediately lift, not ease" Israel's maritime blockade of Gaza. He lauded those behind the flotilla as people "who have dedicated their time, effort, and passion for a just cause". A spokeswoman for *The Audacity of Hope*, which had been barred by Greek authorities from sailing to Gaza, said that the Greek offer "doesn't really address the issue for us, which is ending the naval blockade". (CNN)

The Greek Foreign Ministry issued a statement proposing to "undertake the task of transporting the humanitarian aid from the Gaza flotilla with Greek vessels or other appropriate means through existing channels." Foreign Minister Stavros Lambrinidis talked by phone with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who thanked the Greek official and "expressed support for the Greek initiative". In his view, it could help to reduce tension in the region and ensure that much-needed aid would be delivered to those who need it in Gaza. (CNN, UN News Centre)

4

Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Orabi received a message from PA President Abbas asking Egypt to continue sponsoring the conciliation agreement between Fatah and Hamas and to help both parties to overcome differences to form a Government, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Menha Bakhoun said in a statement. (KUNA)

PLO Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi said that there was no need for a worldwide panic relating to the plan to seek United Nations recognition of a Palestinian State, since "it is the Palestinians' natural and legal right to determine our destiny on our land as part of the international community from which we seek recognition." (Wafa)

Activists on a French boat protested by symbolically "setting sail" for Gaza, revving up their engines in an Athens port in defiance of a Greek ban. French activists were joined by Americans from *The Audacity of Hope*. The French "Boat to Gaza" campaign had renewed their request for permission to leave the port, but had been told that the ban remained in place. Activists from the impounded *The Audacity of Hope* had begun a hunger strike in front of the US Embassy to protest the arrest of their captain. (AFP)

The Greek coastguard intercepted a Canadian ship which had set sail for Gaza carrying medicine, activists said. The *Tahrir* had left a port on the island of Crete, a witness said. (Reuters)

5

The Israeli Air Force fired into the Gaza Strip killing two gunmen from the Tawheed and Jihad group who had approached the boundary fence, medical officials and militant sources said. In a separate incident, Palestinian gunmen fired through the fence at an Israeli military vehicle, lightly wounding the driver, an Israeli military statement said. (Reuters)

Nimr Hamad, adviser to PA President Abbas, said: "We are continuing with preparations in the legal and international arenas for the September battle. But if the Quartet endorses the two-State solution and demands a freeze of settlement construction, we will change our mind." PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat said that the Palestinians would return to the negotiating table once Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had declared his acceptance of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 lines and had halted [settlement] construction, not only in the West Bank but also in East Jerusalem. (The Jerusalem Post)

The Russian Federation hoped that the Quartet meeting the following week would help to resume the suspended Israeli-Palestinian talks, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said during his meeting with a Fatah delegation led by Nabil Sha'ath. Mr. Sha'ath said, "Our plan to go to the United Nations will get support from Russia." He did not specify what he meant by "support", and the Foreign Ministry would not comment on his statement. (AP, The Voice of Russia)

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé told the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee that France still hoped to host a conference to relaunch the Middle East peace process but had pushed the planned July date to September. He also said he hoped that the Quartet would urge Israel and the Palestinians to return to the negotiating table. "If this appeal is launched, we'll move on the second phase," he said. (AFP)

After talks with Assistant Arab League Secretary-General for Palestine Affairs Mohammed Sobeih in Cairo, Iceland's Foreign Minister, Össur Skarphéðinsson, reiterated his country's strong support of the Palestinian people's rights, especially the right to establish an independent State within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. He also said that his country supported recognition of a Palestinian State. (Petra)

Security Council President Peter Wittig, the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, said that the Security Council planned to discuss in July the possibility of Palestine becoming a United Nations Member State. An open debate on the Middle East had been scheduled for 26 July, according to the provisional calendar of the Security Council for July. "I think [that] will be an occasion to explore the various options that might exist on the Palestinian side," Mr. Wittig said. (Reuters)

A delegation from Iceland led by Foreign Minister Skarphéðinsson entered the Gaza Strip to discuss ways to achieve Palestinian reconciliation. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak issued a last-minute order to stop the transfer of the bodies of 84 Palestinian militants to the PA which had been announced by a Palestinian official the previous day. He said that it was important to weigh the repercussions of such a transfer on a future prisoner-exchange deal. (Ahran Online, Haaretz)

Israeli soldiers arrested Hamas leader Nazeem Abu 'Oun near Jenin, along with two other residents. Three more Palestinians were seized in different West Bank areas. (IMEMC)

The Organization of the Islamic Conference sent medical equipment to the Gaza Strip. (Saudi Press Agency)

The Israeli Government published tenders for the construction of 300 units in "Beitar Ilit", 40 units in "Efrata" on the lands of Al-Khader village, south of Bethlehem, and 46 others in the "Shomron" area in the Nablus district. Fatah leader Nabil Sha'ath said: "This conduct does not leave any chance for the peace process." (Ma'an News Agency)

The PA condemned Israel's decision to approve the construction of 900 housing units in the Jerusalem [settlement] of "Gilo". Spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said that the plans would destroy any chance at building a true foundation for the peace process. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli army bulldozers demolished a water well belonging to a Palestinian farmer in Al-Khader, south of Bethlehem, on land near the settlement of

“Efrata”, according to a PA Ministry of Agriculture spokesman. Meanwhile, settlers from “Yizhar” set fire to Palestinian agricultural lands, the village council head said. (*The Palestine Telegraph, WAFA*) Israeli soldiers entered Khirbit Zakariyya, south of Bethlehem, and surrounded by the “Gush Etzion” settlement block, and demolished a Palestinian home, claiming that it had been built without a permit. (*IMEMC*) The Israeli army carried out a large operation in Iraq Burin, south of Nablus, arresting two Palestinians. (*IMEMC, Ma'an News Agency*) The French ship *Dignité Al-Karama* had managed to leave Greek territorial waters behind and was now headed for Palestinian territory, organizers said. (*ANSA*)

A meeting was scheduled in New York between Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Moshe Ya'alon and senior Turkish officials. An Israeli Government source said that the US had been exerting heavy pressure on both sides to work out their differences by the time the UN report on the 2010 flotilla was due to come out on 7 July. (*Haaretz*)

Israel was making intense preparations to foil plans by hundreds of activists to flood Israel's Ben Gurion international airport on 8 July, in a show of solidarity with the Palestinians. (*Ma'an News Agency, The Jerusalem Post*)

6

Israeli aircraft opened fire on the central Gaza Strip injuring a Palestinian man and causing damage to property. An Israeli military spokesperson said that forces had targeted “a tunnel used for terror activity” in northern Gaza in response to the firing of projectiles towards Israel. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

After a meeting with visiting Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, Romania's Foreign Minister, Emil Boc, said, “We reaffirmed our country's position that a negotiated solution between the parties, with no unilateral solution, is the only way to ensure real and solid grounds for a lasting peace.” (*Haaretz*)

United States State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland said during a daily press briefing: “Our goal is to get these parties back to the table, and our position on the idea of a UN action in September remains that it's not a good idea, that it's not helpful.” Ms. Nuland spoke as PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat met with senior US officials in Washington, D.C. After his meetings at the State Department, Mr. Erakat stressed that the Palestinians would not waver in submitting their declaration to the UN by the end of July. He said that the decision to push ahead at the UN would be taken at the Arab League Follow-up Committee meeting in Cairo on 16 July. (*AP, Ma'an News Agency, www.state.gov*)

A US House of Representatives resolution reiterating “its strong opposition to any attempt to establish or seek recognition of a Palestinian state outside of an agreement negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians” was on track to sail to passage late in the day. In the resolution, the House of Representatives “affirms that Palestinian efforts to circumvent direct negotiations and pursue recognition of statehood prior to agreement with Israel will harm United States-Palestinian relations and will have serious implications for the United States assistance programs for the Palestinians and the Palestinians Authority”, and “urges the administration to consider suspending assistance to the Palestinian Authority pending a review of the unity agreement.” (*AFP, www.loc.gov*)

During a speech at the European Parliament, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton said, “The UN, the US and Russia responded to my letter requesting a Quartet meeting in Washington next Monday. ... I do not underestimate the challenge, but my objective is clear - to try and adopt a statement next week that will help the Israelis and Palestinians to bridge the gap, and allow for a return to the negotiating table. Many are looking to September - and the prospect of a resolution. We don't yet know what that might say, and what reaction it might bring. But I am clear that my energies should focus on trying to use this time to get the talks moving – and, on that, the EU is united.” (*www.consilium.europa.eu*)

*Haaretz* reported that a new report of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon distributed to Security Council members several days ago was highly critical of Israel for its handling of incidents on the border with Lebanon on *Nakba* Day on 15 May. It concludes that the Israeli soldiers used disproportionate force against Lebanese demonstrators, which resulted in seven deaths. In the conclusions, the Secretary-General noted that IDF soldiers “used direct live fire against unarmed demonstrators” who had tried to breach the border fence. “I call on the Israel Defense Forces to refrain from responding with live fire in such situations, except where clearly required in immediate self-defence. Notwithstanding every country's inherent right of self-defence, there is a need for the Israel Defense Forces always to apply appropriate operational measures, including crowd control measures, which are commensurate to the imminent threat towards their troops and civilians,” the report stated. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman said that if the UN recognized a Palestinian State, Israel could stop transferring tax funds to the PA and deny passage to senior Palestinian officials. (*Ynetnews*)

Egyptian authorities approved the entry of five tons of medical supplies into the Gaza Strip, authorizing a donation from the Arab Doctors Union. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In a report, the PA stated that Israeli settler violence towards Palestinians had increased dramatically in June. “In the first week of June, settlers burnt 350 trees in Deir al-Hatab village near Nablus, 20 grape vines in Hebron and uprooted 40 grape vines in Beit Ummar village,” the report stated. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Settler watchdog organization Peace Now said that plans to build around 900 new homes in the “Gilo” settlement in East Jerusalem were being fast tracked by the city council. (*AFP*)

Israeli soldiers detained six Palestinians from Jenin, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu ordered authorities to block the entry of pro-Palestinian activists planning to travel to Tel Aviv over the weekend in a protest “fly-in”. Mr. Netanyahu ordered the Internal Security Minister and the immigration authority to “act with determination, while trying to avoid unnecessary friction” with anyone taking part in what he termed a provocation, according to a statement from his office. Pro-Palestinian websites had called in recent weeks on activists to fly to Israel on 8 July to protest against its policy towards Palestinians. (*Reuters*)

7

An Israeli soldier was lightly wounded by an explosive device near Gaza. (*Haaretz*)

Three Israeli bulldozers and five tanks penetrated 300 metres into Gaza, east of Khan Yunis, amidst heavy gunfire towards Palestinian homes. No injuries were reported. (*WAFA*)

In a joint statement, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov and Prime Minister Netanyahu noted that both countries shared the conviction that a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must be reached through direct negotiations between the parties. Such negotiations could be based on the Quartet principles with the goal of achieving two States for two peoples. Prime Minister Borissov, however, refused to discuss how

his country would vote at the UN. "Come September, you will see ... there is time," he said. ([www.mfa.bg](http://www.mfa.bg), Haaretz)

The French Government pledged to support the Palestinian Authority with approximately \$100 million in 2012, according to the PA Ministry of Planning. (Wafa)

A Turkish source said that a UN-sponsored report accused Israel of using force prematurely and causing "unacceptable" deaths in its assault of the Turkish ship *Mavi Marmara* bound for Gaza that had killed nine people in May 2010. "Non-violent options should have been used in the first instance," the Turkish source quoted the report as saying. Israel and Turkey failed to reach agreement after they had refused to sign the report. (AFP)

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the report of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010, known as the Palmer report, would be published on 27 July after delays to enable talks between Israel and Turkey. But Israel's Finance Minister, Yuval Steinitz, said that previous drafts of the Palmer report indicated that the panel would rule mostly in favour of Israel. "From what we understand, the report justifies the [Gaza] blockade. It says the blockade is legitimate, that Israel took legitimate steps," he said, adding that the report would include "minor" criticism of the interception. (Reuters)

The Office of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, said that Mr. De Schutter had received a draft of the report of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010 and that he firmly opposed its conclusions. According to Mr. De Schutter, the blockade and the Israeli intervention had clearly violated international law and the human right to food. (AFP)

The Spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said at the noon briefing that the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010 had indicated that it intended to submit the report to Mr. Ban in the coming days. He said that the Secretary-General was concerned about raising tension in the region, emphasizing the importance of using the established land routes to get aid into Gaza. The Spokesperson also said that United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food had clarified that, contrary to an erroneous report by one media outlet, he had not made any public statement on a draft of the report and that he would make his views known in due course. (UN News Centre)

The Greek coastguard intercepted a small French boat with pro-Palestinian activists aboard, including French politicians, a Member of the European Parliament, and a journalist, which had sailed from Corsica. Activists had said that it was in international waters. The *Dignité Al-Kamarawas* detected in the early morning near Crete as it was refuelling at sea and was towed to port for checks, the coast guard said. There were no arrests, activists and the coast guard said. (Reuters)

8

The IDF arrested Besan Mahmoud Abu Baker, 21, at the Atara checkpoint near Ramallah. Ms. Abu Baker is the daughter of Najat Abu Baker, a Fatah member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, from Nablus. Six others were detained at Atara before being released, Palestinian sources said. (Ma'an News Agency)

The President and Executive Director of Americans for Peace Now (APN), Debra DeLee, said in a statement that APN regretted that Hous Resolution 268 and Senate Resolution 184 which had been passed the previous day respectively failed to take a balanced and comprehensive approach towards resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The two resolutions urged the US Administration to take punitive measures against the Palestinians for pursuing national reconciliation and international recognition. "These resolutions will only exacerbate the growing US and Israeli isolation on these issues and further undermine the chances of achieving peace and security for Israel. Israeli-Palestinian peace will not be achieved through congressional grandstanding. Heavy-handed resolutions from Congress cannot stop the Palestinians' quests for national unity, international recognition of their right to a State, and independence," Ms. DeLee added. ([www.peacenow.org](http://www.peacenow.org))

Peace Now stated in a [report](#) that private Palestinian land in the village of Karyut, near Ramallah, had been confiscated to retroactively "legalize" the settlement outpost of "Hayovel", built in 1998. Peace Now said that the Karyut land had been appropriated last month under an 1889 legislation dating back to the Ottoman empire, which ruled the area at the time and allowed the confiscation of land uncultivated for several consecutive years.

"Over the years, Israel used this method in order to take over ... 16 per cent of the West Bank and then allocated it to the settlers," the report stated.

For the first time during his current term, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu approved the previous week the confiscation of the land, which had been classified as private Palestinian land in a 2005 Israeli report. According to *Haaretz*, the Israeli Civil Administration had declared the confiscation of 189 dunams for the Hayovel neighbourhood in the Israeli settlement of Eli. Mr. Netanyahu had repeated guarantees, made also by his predecessors to the United States, that private land would not be confiscated in the territories to expand settlement activity. (AFP, *Haaretz*, [www.peacenow.org](http://www.peacenow.org))

The United States Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva said that its Ambassador to the Human Rights Council, Eileen Donahoe, had called on the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk, to resign after he published a cartoon on his blog which he later withdrew for its anti-Semitic symbolism. Mr. Falk had apologized for running the cartoon showing a dog wearing a blue-and-white Israeli skullcap and a body-warmer marked USA chewing on human bones while urinating on a figure representing justice. In her statement, Ms. Donahoe said that she was repulsed by the cartoon and condemned "in the strongest terms" comments and postings on Mr. Falk's blog. "I am registering a strong protest with the UN on behalf of the United States," she added. (Reuters)

Organizers of the "Welcome to Palestine" campaign, described by some as the "flytilla", said that more than 600 activists, half of whom were French, would be flying into Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel-Aviv to visit Palestinian families having "totally peaceful intentions". Mazin Qumsiyeh, a Palestinian-American professor, told *Public Radio*, that they expected the participants to sign a paper committing to non-violence. Israel appeared to be gearing up for a confrontation, with hundreds of police on standby around the airport. "There is a large police presence in and around the airport to prevent any disturbances," said Police Spokesman Micky Rosenfeld. (AFP)

Pro-Palestinian protesters trying to reach Israel were blocked at airports in Europe and two American activists who arrived in Israel had been deported, said Foreign Ministry official Oded Ben-Hur. No disruptions had been reported at the Ben Gurion International Airport. At Israel's request, several airlines had barred about 200 would-be protesters from boarding flights to Israel from Europe, Police Spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said. Mr. Ben-Hur said that an unspecified number of activists had been allowed through the terminal without incident. Israel had not publicized its criteria for denying entry, but had said that peaceful visitors would not be deported. (AP)

Palestinian Legislative Council member Mustafa Barghouti said that Israeli "hysteria" over international solidarity would not stop foreign peace activists, noting that the Israeli Government had turned the Ben Gurion International Airport into a "military post". He accused Israeli officials of "violating all international navigation laws that regulate flights". International peace activists "will try to reach us, whether on ground or by air, to participate in the actions of the Palestinian popular resistance," Mr. Barghouti said. (Ma'an News Agency)

9

An Israeli Air Force aircraft struck a tunnel in the northern Gaza Strip. An IDF spokesman said a direct hit had been confirmed. Two rockets fired from the Gaza Strip had earlier hit open fields in Ashkelon, causing no injuries or damage. (*Haaretz*, *Ynetnews*)

Israeli soldiers based near the northern Gaza border opened fire at Palestinian homes, wounding a Palestinian woman and causing damage to property.



(IMEMC)

Some 50 international activists who had landed in Israel managed to enter the West Bank as part of the "Welcome to Palestine" campaign, organized by over 40 Palestinian civil society organizations aimed at raising awareness about Palestinians life. They took part in protests in the West Bank.

(IMEMC)

**10**

Egyptian authorities allowed the entry of aid consisting of 32 tons of sewer equipment provided by a Malaysian non-governmental organization, the Global Peace Foundation, to Gaza through the Awja port in central Sinai. (Wafa)

Raed Fattouh, a Palestinian crossings officer, said that 263 loads of goods had been brought into Gaza, in addition to 140,300 kilograms of gas.

(Ma'an News Agency)

An Israeli settler ran over and seriously injured a six-year-old Palestinian child near Bethlehem. (Wafa)

Israel began the deportation of Europeans who had entered the country en masse as part of the "flytilla", with the intention of entering the West Bank.

The first group of 36 people were brought directly from incarceration to Ben Gurion International Airport, where they boarded a flight for Frankfurt. Another group of activists was expected to be deported on a Geneva-bound flight. (Haaretz)

**11**

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said that he was ready to resume peace talks "tomorrow", and blamed the Palestinians for the impasse in negotiations. (DPA)

A meeting of the Quartet was scheduled to take place later in the day in Washington, D.C., to be attended by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Quartet Representative Tony Blair. (AP, [www.consilium.europa.eu](http://www.consilium.europa.eu))

A delegation of European Parliament members announced its full support for the Palestinian bid to seek UN recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, and with East Jerusalem as its capital. The delegation also promised to pressure European Governments to recognize the Palestinian State. The members, after visiting Jerusalem and witnessing Israeli measures against Palestinians there, condemned the isolation of Jerusalem from its Palestinian environment and the continuing confiscation of Palestinian land and construction of settlements. (Wafa)

"Sudan and South Sudan negotiated a peace agreement that led to independence," US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said at a joint news conference with EU High Representative Catherine Ashton ahead of the Quartet meeting. "That is what we're asking the Palestinians and the Israelis to do." "We meet tonight against a backdrop of wanting to try and see progress between the Palestinians and the Israelis in terms of talks,"

Ms. Ashton said. (AP)

A letter sent by 106 members of the European Parliament to EU High Representative Catherine Ashton asked her "to discourage unilateral Palestinian efforts to attain UN recognition". (JTA)

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs launched a new [report](#) entitled "Seven years after the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the barrier: the impact of the barrier in the Jerusalem area". The report focuses on the barrier's impact on West Bank communities and households isolated on the Jerusalem side, and on Palestinian farmers, whose access to their land in so-called "Seam Zone" is severely limited. It calls on the Israeli authorities to abide by the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the wall, and to repeal the gate and permit regime. ([www.ochaopt.org](http://www.ochaopt.org))

Israel uprooted and confiscated 450 olive trees in Wadi Qana, near Salfit, in the northern West Bank. (Wafa)

The Knesset approved a law effectively banning Israelis from calling for boycotts of any part of the country or its settlements on occupied Palestinian land, a parliamentary source said. (AFP)

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics said that the total population of the Palestinian territory in mid-2011 was about 4.17 million – 2.58 million in the West Bank and 1.59 million in the Gaza Strip. (Wafa, [www.pcbs.gov.ps](http://www.pcbs.gov.ps))

Israeli bulldozers demolished Palestinian houses and commercial facilities in Al-Jib, a village west of Jerusalem. (Wafa)

Israeli forces detained a 19-year-old Palestinian during a raid of the Jenin refugee camp. (Ma'an News Agency)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) restored its original logo to its official website. Protests had erupted after the Agency dropped the words "relief" and "works" from its website, describing itself only as the "UN Agency for Palestine refugees". Representatives of the refugees and Hamas leaders accused UNRWA of being part of a "conspiracy" to liquidate the problem of the refugees and deny them the right of return. (The Jerusalem Post)

Several newly arrived foreign activists joined Palestinians in tearing down part of the Israeli separation wall near the Palestinian village of Izbet Attabeh, local activists said. (AP)

**12**

Israeli forces dispersed a non-violent rally against settlement construction and closure of shops in the centre of Hebron, firing stun grenades and tear gas canisters. IDF also closed the area of Ash-Shallalah St. and the old Hebron municipality building, announcing that it was a closed military zone.

The rally was initiated by a local group of Hebron youths called the Coalition Against Settlements. (Ma'an News Agency)

PLO Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi urged the Quartet to adopt clear positions on negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

"The failure of the Quartet to come up with a clear and decisive position on negotiations and the requirements of peace is a direct result of the refusal of its members to bring Israel to compliance with international law, including a cessation of all settlement activities and acceptance of the 1967 border", she said in a statement. "The Quartet's inability to engage makes it more imperative to address the UN and its institutions and agencies directly," Ms. Ashrawi concluded. (Ma'an News Agency)

Russian Federation Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov brushed aside suggestions of a rift among members of the Quartet. "The fact that we did not produce a statement doesn't mean we disagree and abandoned the effort. Our experts continue to discuss it," he said. (AFP)

The President of Greece, Karolos Papoulias, was welcomed by PA President Abbas in Ramallah as part of an official visit. The two Presidents were set to discuss the latest developments in the peace process, the political situation in the region and work to promote cooperation between both sides. (Ma'an News Agency)

An Israeli source told Haaretz that the United States had been unable to find a formula that Palestinians and Israelis could accept and take to the negotiating table. He said that they were working on a formula that would offer the Palestinians the 1967 borders with territorial exchanges while promising recognition of Israel as the national home of the Jewish people. (Haaretz)

"We will go to the United Nations and we hope the United States will not use its veto, but that we will go with its agreement," PA President Abbas told reporters after a meeting with Greek President Karolos Papoulias. "The fact that there is no statement from the Quartet is a negative indication that there is deep division between them," he said. (Ahram Online)

PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat said that the meeting of the Quartet showed that "there is no other option but to support the Palestinian plan to go to the United Nations to seek full membership for the State of Palestine on the 1967 borders". (AFP)

Israeli forces destroyed water wells and water pumps in several Palestinian villages in the Jordan Valley. (Ma'an News Agency)

Testifying before a Congressional panel, officials from the US State Department said that aid to build Palestinian governmental institutions and an economy was essential to the security of both Israel and the Palestinians. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Jacob Walles said that the Administration would closely monitor whether a new Government emerges and would reassess the aid. (AP)

An Austrian pro-Palestinian activist deported from Israel complained of ill treatment at the hands of Israeli forces. The activist was one of about 40 so-called "flytilla" activists expelled from Israel, where they had flown for a protest action over the weekend. "People were injured, people were hit in the face for no reason," she said upon her return to Vienna. According to her testimony, the activists were constantly shouted at and any communication with the outside world was blocked during their detention. The activists were taken to a detention centre in an airless bus in high temperatures and with no water during the three-hour drive, and some with health problems were denied treatment. (AFP)

### 13

A 19-year-old Palestinian student, Ibrahim Sarhan, was shot by Israeli soldiers in the Far'a refugee camp, north of Nablus. He died shortly after arriving at a hospital. Soldiers had prevented local medics from approaching him, leaving him to bleed to death. Soldiers later broke into dozens of homes and searched them before detaining several residents. Two of the detained had not been released. (Ma'an News Agency, IMEMC)

A Palestinian woman was moderately injured in an Israeli airstrike on the Gaza Strip. The strikes had been carried out following the firing of three homemade projectiles into the Sha'ar Hanegev area in the western Negev desert. The Israeli military said that its aircraft had "targeted two weapons manufacturing sites in the northern Gaza Strip". A fourth rocket was fired into Israel from Gaza several hours after the air strikes, striking the Eshkol area but causing no casualties or damage. No groups in Gaza had claimed responsibility for the rocket fire. (Ma'an News Agency, IMEMC)

Israeli forces detained three Palestinian men from Beit Ummar north of Hebron, after ransacking their homes. (Ma'an News Agency)

PLO official Nabil Sha'ath said that the Russian Federation had played a major role in preventing a potentially damaging statement from being released by the Quartet, asking the Palestinians to recognize Israel as a Jewish State and to cancel the September bid for statehood at the United Nations. In return, the 1967 borders were to be recognized as the starting point for negotiations. Mr. Sha'ath commended the Russian Federation and its Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, for their positive relationship with Palestinians. (Ma'an News Agency)

Senior Hamas official Moussa Abu Marzuq, speaking to the Palestinian daily *Al Falesteen*, reiterated Hamas' position that it would not support Salam Fayyad as Prime Minister in an interim Government. (IMEMC)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu defended the Boycott Law, which was [passed in the Knesset](#) on 11 July, which penalizes people or organizations who call for a boycott of Israel or the settlements. Mr. Netanyahu said that the law did not taint Israeli democracy. "What stains [Israel's] image are those savage and irresponsible attacks on a democracy's attempt to draw a line between what is acceptable and what is not", he said. (Haaretz)

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki said that the Palestinian leadership planned to seek recognition of statehood but would be willing to postpone the bid if peace talks restarted with a clear timetable. (Ma'an News Agency)

PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat, speaking at a news conference in Ramallah, said: "In the aftermath of the Quartet meeting, we urged the United States administration to revisit, reassess, re-evaluate its position vis-à-vis our attempt to gain Palestine admittance to the UN." "Without Security Council approval, we cannot get admittance by the General Assembly", he said, adding the Palestinians could however seek to have their status upgraded to a non-member State by the General Assembly. (AFP)

In a statement issued by the Office of Information and Culture, PLO Spokesman Fayiz Abu-Aytah said that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's decision to import an increased number of Romanian and Bulgarian workers was considered as a political blackmail aimed at soliciting the support of Romania and Bulgaria in Israel's efforts at opposing the Palestinian bid for statehood within the 1967 borders. (Wafa)

The Israeli army authorized the expropriation of large areas of Palestinians land in the Bethlehem district in order to expand the "Efrata" settlement, built on the lands of Al-Khadre District, south of Bethlehem. The mayor of Al-Khadre said that one of the farmers had found a military order, placed by the soldiers on his land, informing him that Israel would annex large areas of farmlands to "provide security" for the nearby settlement. (IMEMC)

Eleven Palestinian teenagers were arrested in the Palestinian district of Silwan in East Jerusalem for throwing stones at the nearby settlement of "Beit Yonatan". A police spokesperson said that the youths would be charged in the coming days. (Wafa, IMEMC)

In a [press release](#), the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights condemned the Israeli navy's attacks on eight Palestinian fishing boats and on the *Olivia*, an international boat that monitors the situation on the Gaza seashore. A fisherman said that an Israeli gunboat opened fire indiscriminately at their boats, heavily damaging them. The crew of the *Olivia* said that they went to the area and Israeli naval troops stopped and attacked them using water hoses. ([www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org))

Israel approved the start of work on the Museum of Tolerance that would be built on the site of an old Muslim cemetery in Jerusalem. The project, organized by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, had been the subject of a lengthy legal battle, with Palestinians and some Israeli supporters arguing that the museum would desecrate the burial site. (AFP, IMEMC)

The Zionist Organization of America and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) have joined peace groups such as Americans for Peace Now and J Street in criticizing Israel's Boycott Law. Despite describing boycotts of Israeli settlement products as "abhorrent", ADL National Director Abraham Foxman stated that the new law was a "disservice to Israeli society". J Street attacked the law as a "clear and unabashed violation of the fundamental democratic precept of freedom of speech". Israeli leftist organizations [launched a series of protests](#) against the law. The Gush Shalom movement filed a petition to the Supreme Court claiming that the law was unconstitutional and anti-democratic. (IMEMC)

### 14

Ibrahim Sarhan, a Palestinian student who died the previous day in the Al-Farah camp near Nablus, had been shot before being arrested by Israeli soldiers, witnesses in the refugee camp said. He was reportedly bleeding profusely as soldiers surrounded his house and refused to allow ambulances in. Israeli army officials said that an explosive device had been hurled at troops who were there to arrest Mr. Sarhan and others. Shots were fired by the troops when Mr. Sarhan attempted to evade arrest but was immediately treated by army medics after being shot. (Ma'an News Agency)

In a statement, the Israeli military said that its aircraft had targeted three tunnels, two used for smuggling in southern Gaza and one "used for terrorist activity" in the north of the Gaza Strip. The attacks were in response to rockets fired from the Gaza Strip at southern Israel the previous day. Five Palestinians were moderately wounded and two others were reported missing. Shortly after the airstrikes, another "projectile" was fired from

Gaza into southern Israel, causing no damage or injuries, the Israeli military said. (AFP)

A day after Prime Minister Netanyahu had backed the newly approved Boycott Law, the Palestinian Authority said that it would boycott any Israeli company that would heed it. The PA Minister of National Economy, Hassan Abu Libdeh, said that "Palestinians plan to boycott Israeli companies that will obey the Boycott Law." He accused the Israeli Government of using the law, "to force a certain reality, to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian State. It's part of the mechanism of the occupation." (Ma'an News Agency)

In a recent interview with the Japanese *Kyodo News*, Riyad Mansour, the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, said that Palestinians were optimistic that if they opted to press ahead with statehood plans by presenting a resolution before the next UN General Assembly session, they would garner a two-thirds majority. "We have about 120 countries [backing the statehood plan so far] and we expect very soon to cross the 130 [mark], which will be the two-thirds majority in the General Assembly," Mr. Mansour said. (Kyodo)

The Belgian Senate adopted a draft resolution calling upon the Belgian Government and all the EU countries to recognize a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders. The draft resolution was adopted by 43 Senate members, with 11 abstaining, and none opposed. (Wafa)

According to a draft statement, the Arab League Monitoring Committee had decided at its meeting in Doha to support the Palestinians' full member status at the United Nations. "It was decided to go to the United Nations to request the recognition of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital and to move ahead and request a full membership," a communiqué stated. (www.buenosairesherald.com)

Thousands of Israelis and Palestinians were expected to take part in a "March for Independence", calling for the recognition of a Palestinian State the following day. The organizers said that the recognition of an independent State of Palestine should come before negotiations. The event would represent a rare cooperation between the left-wing Solidarity Movement and the popular committees of East Jerusalem. According to the organizers, this was the first Jewish-Arab event of its kind to be held in Jerusalem since 1991. (Haaretz)

The Palestinian Authority in Ramallah is set to approve plans to hold municipal elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in October 2011. PLO Executive Committee member Ghassan Shaka told *Ma'an News Agency* that consultations about the elections had been held during a recent PLO Committee meeting and 22 October was understood to be the preferred date for the elections. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Interior Ministry Spokeswoman Sabine Hadad said that Israel had deported all but two women pro-Palestinian activists who had flown into the country the previous week. "One of them will be expelled on Thursday during the day, while the other one, who has launched a legal proceeding challenging her expulsion, will remain in detention," she said. But activists said that dozens remained in jail, with several challenging deportation orders. (AFP)

## 15

Israeli jets bombed six targets in the Gaza Strip, wounding at least five Palestinians. The airstrikes were in retaliation for five rockets and mortar shells fired from Gaza at southern Israel the previous day, the army said. (DPA)

The Israeli military will be investigating the killing, on 13 July, of 21-year-old Ibrahim Sarhan, after Israeli forces had raided his residence at Al-Farah refugee camp, for alleged wrongdoings. (IMEMC)

A group of Israeli settlers torched Palestinian olive orchards in the Jabal Suleiman area, near Burin village, south of the West Bank city of Nablus. (IMEMC)

Israeli army commander Netsan Arlen had reportedly warned, during an army meeting on the situation in the West Bank, about the risk of armed conflict between settlers and the army when evacuating the settlement of Metzhez Yetzahar before the end of the year. (Ma'an News)

IDF officials issued a statement condemning Hamas for not taking action to stop rocket fire from the Gaza Strip into Israel, shortly after Chief of Staff Benny Gantz had called an emergency meeting to discuss the increased violence in southern Israel. (Haaretz)

A coalition of Israeli peace groups plan to file a petition with Israel's High Court challenging the legality of the Boycott Law, passed earlier this week, making boycotts of Israeli products illegal. (IMEMC)

Former US Permanent Representative to the UN John Bolton had said, during a visit to Israel, that although the General Assembly was certain to support the Palestinian effort, this endorsement would be meaningless without approval in the Security Council, where it almost certainly would face a US veto. (Haaretz)

UNESCO released a statement confirming the occupied status of East Jerusalem, after the organization had been criticized for listing Jerusalem as Israel's capital on its website, despite the international consensus that the eastern part of the city is under military occupation. (Ma'an News)

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights released its [Weekly Report on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory](#), for the week of 7 to 13 July 2011. (PCHR Gaza)

Approximately 2,000 Palestinians and Israelis took part in the "March for Independence", which called for the recognition of a Palestinian State. Several Members of the Knesset participated in the march, including Zehava Galon of Meretz and Dov Hanin of Hadash. Other prominent public figures took part as well, such as the former Speaker of the Knesset, Avraham Burg, and former Attorney-General Michael Ben Yair. The demonstrators waved Palestinian flags and carried signs reading "everyone has the right to an independent State", "marching to independence" and "only free people can negotiate for peace". (Haaretz, Ma'an News Agency)

## 17

Medics said that seven Palestinians from one family were injured in an Israeli airstrike on Beit Hanoun, in the north of the Gaza Strip. Among the victims were four children. Israel's army denied carrying out the attack. (Ma'an News Agency, IMEMC)

Israeli forces raided the northern West Bank village of Qaryut, south of Nablus, firing gunshots into the air as well as stun grenades and tear gas canisters. According to a local resident, Israeli forces ransacked several homes, beating its residents and detained a minor after beating him. (Ma'an News Agency)

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is planning to visit the Gaza Strip on 25 July, according to reports by *Maariv*. (Ma'an News Agency)

A parliamentary delegation headed by Hamas lawmaker Ismail Al-Ashqar arrived in Istanbul to attend a workshop on strengthening Palestinian reconciliation. Officials from Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, civil society organizations and Palestinians abroad will also participate in the workshop. (Ma'an News Agency)

PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat said that the PA was planning a massive diplomatic campaign to gain recognition of statehood from both the UN as well as individual countries. Mr. Erakat called on the US to reconsider its decision to veto a Palestinian bid for statehood. "Israel has ruined the peace [process] and the US must reconsider its stance on the matter", he said. (Ma'an News Agency)

At a Cabinet meeting, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said that he would oppose a proposed new bill calling for a parliamentary investigation of Israeli human rights groups, which was supported by Yisrael Beiteinu, the party led by Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman. (AP)

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) leader Kayid Al-Ghoul said that PFLP representatives had met with Egyptian officials in Cairo to discuss the failure of the parties to the reconciliation agreement to agree on who will lead the unity Government. The Egyptian leadership will invite Palestinian factions to a meeting in Cairo in the coming few days to try and move the implementation of the agreement forward. (Ma'an News)



Archbishop Desmond Tutu endorsed the TIAA-CREF campaign, calling on the pension fund association to "heed the call for divestment, to refuse to profit from oppression of a people, and thus to stand on the side of what is right: a safe, secure and peaceful future for Palestinians and Israelis". Archbishop Tutu pointed out that despite pleas from shareholders, including medical professionals, students and academics from universities across the United States, TIAA-CREF had refused to allow a vote on a resolution at its biannual meeting of shareholders taking place on 19 July in Charlotte North Carolina, that would have compelled it to consider divestment from companies such as Caterpillar or Elbit that profited substantially from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. ([www.charlotteobserver.com](http://www.charlotteobserver.com))

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman referred to a number of leftist non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as "terror organizations". "We're not talking here about leftist organizations and not about human rights groups; we're talking about terror organizations", Mr. Lieberman said, mentioning by name groups that lobbied for Palestinian legal rights and encouraged soldiers to blow the whistle on comrades who, they believed, committed abuses. [The Association for Civil Rights in Israel](http://www.associationforcivilrights.org) lashed back with a harshly worded statement. "It's a shame that Lieberman is not familiar with the official documents, among them Foreign Ministry reports boasting of the important actions of human rights organizations in Israel", it said. (AFP)

18

Two Palestinians were injured, one of them critically, as Israeli warplanes targeted the southern Gaza Strip for the fifth day in a row. A *Ma'an News Agency* reporter said that fighter jets had fired missiles at the town of Khuza'a, east of Khan Younis. The Israeli army described the target as a "terrorist squad planning to target IDF soldiers". (*Ma'an News Agency, Ynet News, IMEMC*)

In its [conclusions](http://www.consilium.europa.eu) in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Council of the European Union called on "the parties to show the highest sense of responsibility and to resume direct and substantive talks". The Council also stressed "the central role of the Quartet" in the efforts to relaunch the peace process. ([www.consilium.europa.eu](http://www.consilium.europa.eu))

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton said: "We are still working in the Quartet to see if we can pull together a statement. [...] It's not easy because the purpose of this statement is to get the talks going again, so it needs to be very inclusive". (AFP)

Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre and PA President Abbas signed an agreement on upgrading the Palestinian representation in Norway. The Palestinian Representative in Oslo will have the rank of Ambassador and the office will now be called "the Palestinian Mission," instead of "the Palestinian General Delegation." ([www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no))

Norway said that it was "perfectly legitimate" for Palestinians to take their case for statehood to the UN for voting in September. "We will consider very carefully the proposed text that's to be put forward by the Palestinians in the coming weeks", said the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, during his joint press conference with PA President Abbas. (*Haaretz*)

PA President Abbas said: "Until now we are waiting for the final answer of the US. We heard that they will take a veto but until now we did not know whether it is official or not... Our goal is to go to the Security Council. If we fail, we will go to the General Assembly." (AFP)

The Foreign Ministry of the Syrian Arab Republic said in a statement: "Syria recognizes a Palestinian State within the 4 June 1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital and on the basis of the preservation of Palestinian legitimate rights". Syria "will treat the Damascus office of the PLO as an embassy upon the publication of this statement", the Ministry added. (AFP)

A group of Israeli settlers attacked three Palestinian shepherds near Jerusalem, brutally beating and stabbing them, according to Palestinian police. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Ariel Rosenberg, Spokesman for the Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing, said that Israel had been seeking builders to erect 294 apartments in the settlement of Betar Illit and 42 apartments in Karnei Shomron settlement. She estimated that construction would begin within a year and would be completed in about three years. (AP)

Israeli police stormed a summer camp for children in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of East Jerusalem and interrogated campers, according to a Fatah official. The camp was run by the Sheikh Jarrah Women's Forum and hosted about 50 children, aged 12 to 17. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli court had fined a family in the Bustan area of the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Silwan more than \$10,000 for building a house without a permit. The court had given the owner, a mother of eight, until October to obtain a building permit from the Israeli municipality. Otherwise, the house would be demolished. (Wafa, IMEMC)

Three settlers from the "Havat Maon" settlement, south of Hebron, attacked two members of Operation Dove and one member of the Christian Peacemaker Teams with clubs and stones. The settlers had reportedly aimed at Palestinian shepherds, but when they could not catch them, they turned toward the activists that had entered the valley to intervene and document the attack. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In a [press release](http://www.regjeringen.no), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway said that the Palestinian people faced the threat of a serious economic crisis as pledged funding for the PA was not being paid. Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre said, "All donors should make an extra effort to support the Palestinians this summer and autumn". Mr. Støre also emphasized that Israel had a particular responsibility for removing obstacles to growth in the Palestinian economy. "I urge Israel to work systematically to improve the conditions for Palestinian value creation and to lift the current blockade of Gaza", he said. ([www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no))

The Knesset suspended an Arab lawmaker for sailing with the flotilla that challenged the blockage on Gaza in May 2010. Hanin Zoabi was punished after three lawmakers filed complaints against her for travelling aboard the *Mavi Marmara*. The ethics committee said in a statement that she had "participated in an action destined to threaten State security". (Reuters)

A French yacht carrying pro-Palestinian activists, which set sail from a Greek island during the weekend, was expected to reach the Gaza Strip the following day. On board were 16 people, including three crew members and three journalists, among them Amira Hass, a *Haaretz* columnist. (AFP)

In a [report](http://www.b'tselem.org) entitled "No minor matter", the Israeli human rights group [B'Tselem](http://www.b'tselem.org) said that Israel was violating the rights of young Palestinians accused of stone-throwing, failing to protect them as minors and mistreating them during arrest. B'Tselem found that military law encouraged minors to plead guilty to avoid lengthy pretrial detention, and that children were routinely sentenced to prison terms as a punishment rather than as a final resort. Of 835 Palestinian minors, aged 17 and younger, arrested and prosecuted for stone-throwing between 2005 and 2010, only one had



been acquitted, B'Tselem said, noting that "Israel has the obligation to ensure the rights of Palestinian minors under its responsibility. ([www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org))

19

A rocket fired from the Gaza Strip fell in southern Israel without causing casualties or damage, an Israeli spokeswoman said. The fired rocket was the 23rd that had hit Israeli territory since the beginning of the month, the Israeli army said. Hours later, the Israeli Air Force carried out a raid in the north of the Gaza Strip in retaliation for the rocket attacks that had caused no injuries but massive structural damage, a military spokeswoman said.

(AFP, Ma'an News Agency)

PA President Abbas met King Juan Carlos in Madrid, where Mr. Abbas was on an official three-day visit. He briefed the King on the latest developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the impasse in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, reiterating the Palestinian bid to seek UN recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders. (Wafa)

The Spanish Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that Foreign Minister Trinidad Jiménez had met with PA President Abbas during his visit to Madrid. The statement said that Ms. Jiménez also had told President Abbas that the bid for United Nations recognition of a Palestinian State was "legitimate" and that Madrid would determine its position "based on the proposals that arise, in a constructive spirit". Mr. Abbas would also meet with Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero before heading to Barcelona where he would meet with Youssef Amrani, the new Head of the Union for the Mediterranean. (AFP)

PLO Executive Committee and Palestinian Legislative Council member Hanan Ashrawi criticized the draft statement the United States had tried to "impose" on other Quartet members during their last meeting in Washington, D.C. She said: "Bilateral negotiations have failed precisely because they have lacked an even-handed broker prepared to introduce comprehensive terms of reference ..." adding, "The proposed statement by the US mentions the 1967 borders and then immediately negates them in order to accommodate illegal Israeli settlements and other 'facts on the ground' created by Israel in violation of international law." ([www.palembassy.com](http://www.palembassy.com))

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon said that international support for a planned Palestinian declaration of independence in September had been waning, in large part because of intense Israeli lobbying against the initiative. He said that he had personally met with representatives of 45 Latin American and European countries, and believed that many were not going to vote with the Palestinians. "What seemed to be a landslide for the Palestinians has stopped", he said. (AP)

In a letter, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu asked Colombia's President [Juan Manuel Santos](#), to back Israel in its rejection of a UN that would recognize Palestinian statehood. The letter was carried to Colombia by visiting Israeli Infrastructures Minister Uzi Landau. ([www.eltiempo.com](http://www.eltiempo.com))

Israeli bulldozers razed 35 dunums of Palestinian land and confiscated irrigation networks in Baq'a area, east of Hebron, according to local residents. (Wafa)

The spokeswoman for EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton issued a statement saying, "We are deeply disappointed about the approval by Israeli authorities of a tender for the construction of hundreds of new homes in two Jewish settlements in the West Bank". (Haaretz)

Major-General Avi Mizrahi told UK television *Channel 2* that a yeshiva, or religious seminary, in the settlement of "Yitzhar", in the West Bank, should be closed, calling it a source of terror against Palestinians. "What's happening in the field is terrorism," he said, according to the *Independent* newspaper, adding that it "needs to be dealt with". (Ma'an News Agency)

The Israeli navy intercepted and boarded the French-flagged *Dignité Al-Karama* boat as it approached the Gaza Strip. The navy said that it had exhausted all diplomatic channels but the vessel had ignored the calls. The navy took control of the ship, taking it to the port of Ashdod. The passengers would face questioning upon arrival at the Israeli port and will be referred to immigration authorities. (Ma'an News Agency, AFP, IMEMC)

Turkish and Israeli officials were expected to hold another round of negotiations before the release, on 27 July, of the UN report on Israel's 2010 killing of nine activists on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla. (Hürriyet Daily News)

A Palestinian prisoner at Ramla prison hospital in Israel had become seriously ill after having been on a hunger strike for 38 days to protest the inhumane treatment and neglect of the medical needs of the Palestinian prisoners. (Ma'an News Agency)

20

The IDF entered the village of Talluza, near Nablus, raiding several homes and arresting a father and his son. Rabah Salahat, a resident of the village, said that soldiers had stolen gold belonging to his wife after raiding his home and ordering his family outside. (Ma'an News Agency)

A video posted on YouTube showed an IDF officer cocking his weapon and aiming it at the head of a Palestinian civilian during military operations in a West Bank village. IDF officials admitted the incident appeared to be grave, adding that a Military Police investigation had been launched. (Ynetnews)

An international monitoring boat was confronted by the Israeli navy in Gazan waters and targeted with high-pressure water canons. Volunteers from Civil Peace Service Gaza – an international NGO monitoring human rights abuses in Gaza – together with Palestinian fisherman and international press, had been on board the boat at the time. (Ma'an News Agency)

Speaking to Arabic-language television station *Al-Arabiya*, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said: "I'm prepared to negotiate with President Abbas directly for peace between our two peoples right now. We can do it here in my home in Jerusalem, we can do it in Ramallah, we can do it anywhere."

Mr. Netanyahu blamed the stalemate in peace talks on the Palestinian leadership. "Everything is on the table," he said, adding, "But we need to get to the table." (AFP)

In a statement released from his cell in Israel's Hadarim prison, Palestinian leader Marwan Barghouti called for large-scale peaceful protests in support of a Palestinian bid for United Nations membership in September, adding, "Winning the battle of next September, which is an important step in our struggle, requires the biggest peaceful popular protests here and in the diaspora, and in Arab and Muslim countries and international capitals". (AFP)

PLO member Nabil Amr said that the PA's plan to seek UN recognition of a Palestinian State might harm relations with the United States and the European Union. He said that he planned to advise PA President Abbas to delay the statehood bid for a year when they meet at the upcoming PLO Central Council session. According to the *al-Quds al-Arabi* newspaper, Mr. Amr warned that if the Palestinians moved ahead with the statehood initiative, they could lose many friends. (The Jerusalem Post)

Palestinian officials said that their foreign envoys would meet with PA President Abbas in Istanbul during the coming weekend to discuss his efforts to win UN recognition of a Palestinian State. The Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan would address the meeting and hold talks with Mr. Abbas. (AFP)

France's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bernard Valero called on Israel to respect children's rights in line with the international conventions that it had signed, particularly concerning the treatment of Palestinian children arrested and held in Israeli custody. The statement came as a reaction to a

report issued by B'Tselem's accusing Israel of mistreating Palestinian children. (KUNA)

Noman Abu Sneineh, a Palestinian resident of the Ein al-Loza neighbourhood in Silwan in East Jerusalem, was handed a demolition order for his home where he lived with 16 family members. The municipality court in Jerusalem also fined him the amount of NIS 89,000 (\$26,000) for building without a permit. (Wafa)

A number of Palestinians protesting the diminishing services of UNRWA blocked the Agency's headquarters in Gaza for two hours. Mueen Madares, in charge of the Popular Committee of Refugees, said that the strike was only a warning, but that there would be, the following day, an "escalating strike" so that the Agency would submit to the demands of the refugees that "were approved by the UN and international bodies when UNRWA was founded." (Ma'an News Agency)

Maxwell Gaylard, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, said that he hoped that Hamas officials, donors and the concerned aid agencies in Gaza would come to an agreement on the issue of book auditing. Various international NGOs working in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had questioned a demand by officials in the Gaza Strip to submit their books for auditing saying that the motives were unclear. Other aid workers suspected the demand could be for income tax collection and noted that the move would break the "no contact" policy held by some NGOs funded by Governments, including the United States and the United Kingdom, that listed Hamas as a "terrorist" organization. So far, negotiations were deadlocked. (IRIN)

"We are not ready to apologize as apologizing is taking responsibility", Israel Strategic Affairs Minister Moshe Ya'alon told reporters in Jerusalem, about the takeover of the Gaza-bound *Mavi Marmara* ship in May 2010, in which nine pro-Palestinian Turkish activists were killed. However, Israel would be prepared to make a statement regretting the loss of life when its commanders stormed the ship. Mr. Ya'alon said that an upcoming United Nations report was expected to defend the blockade and the naval operation but accuse commandos of using excessive force. He said that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was scheduled to release the report on 27 July. At United Nations Headquarters, however, Spokesman Martin Nesirky said: "The report is in the works but we can't say when it will be handed to the Secretary-General." (AP, AFP, Haaretz)

The Spokeswoman for Israel's immigration service, Sabine Hadad, confirmed that the 15 passengers of the *Dignité Al-Karama* boat, including 11 French citizens and others from Canada, Greece and Sweden, would be sent home today. The activists, whose boat was intercepted by the Israeli naval forces on 19 July as they attempted to sail to Gaza, were taken into custody where they voluntarily agreed to sign a document saying that they are ready to leave within 72 hours. (AFP)

Jordan's Director-General of Department of Palestinian Affairs, Mahmoud Aqrabawi, discussed with UNRWA Deputy Commissioner-General Margot Ellis the Agency's financial crisis. The meeting also touched on means to address the crisis and ease its repercussions on services provided for Palestinian refugees. (Petra)

The Russell Tribunal on Palestine would convene in Cape Town during the year, to examine whether the treatment of Palestinians in Israel and the occupied territories met the criteria of the United Nations Convention against the Crime of Apartheid, Tribunal international coordinator Pierre Galand said. South African witnesses would include Professors John Dugard and Steven Friedman, the advocate Max du Plessis and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. Israel had been invited to make a presentation. However, South African Zionist Federation Spokesman Ben Swartz said that the Tribunal on Palestine was a "pointless political smear campaign by a self-appointed group of anti-Israel activists". ([www.businessday.co.za](http://www.businessday.co.za))

21

A 22-year-old Hamas militant was killed in a work accident inside an underground tunnel operated by militants, in northern Gaza Strip, the armed wing of the movement said. (Xinhuanet)

PA President Abbas arrived in Istanbul for a gathering with his foreign envoys ahead of a Palestinian bid for UN recognition, *Anatolia* news agency reported. (Ma'an News Agency)

PA President Abbas said that the Palestinians were seeking membership in the UN so they could return to negotiations with Israel as equal partners. (The Jerusalem Post, Wafa)

Knesset member Ahmad Tibi had filed a petition with the High Court of Justice against Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin demanding an explanation of the Knesset's dismissal of a debate on a bill he had initiated which proposed disallowing funds from groups denying the *Nakba*, claiming that the decision radically exceeded the Knesset presidium's authority. (Ynetnews)

During his visit in Spain, PA President Abbas said that his efforts to seek UN membership for the Palestinians would not affect negotiations with Israel. "Whatever happens and whatever the reaction and the result of our action in the UN, we know conclusively that we will return to the negotiating table to reach the best solutions with the Israelis," Mr. Abbas said in a speech at the headquarters of the Union for the Mediterranean in Barcelona. (Ynetnews, Haaretz, AFP)

Palestinians still hope they can persuade the United States to support their recognition as an independent State at the United Nations in September, an envoy said. "We are trying to convince them that what we are doing is reasonable and realistic," Riyadh Mansour, the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, said at a news conference in Ramallah. (SFGate)

PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad signed an agreement with the Islamic Development Bank for the repair and improvement of 30 schools in Arab neighbourhoods of Jerusalem and nearby villages. The project will cost \$4.5 million and the Bank will attempt to find lenders to finance it. (IsraelNationalNews)

Israeli bulldozers uprooted dozens of olive trees belonging to three Palestinian families south-west of Beit Iksa, a village in Jerusalem, adjacent to Ramot settlement, according to witnesses. (Wafa)

The Israeli authorities handed three Palestinians demolition orders for one house, built 25 years ago, and two shacks, built more than 10 years ago, in Zawyah village in Salfit, in the northern West Bank, according to the mayor of Zawyah, Khadr Shqair. (Wafa)

Maxwell Gaylard, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory visited the Bedouin village of Khan Al Ahmar, together with David Hutton, UNRWA Acting Director for the West Bank, at a time when the community was facing mass demolitions. This visit took place in the context of a significant increase in demolitions in Area C, where more demolitions have taken place this year than in all of 2009 or 2010, according to a new [report](http://www.ochaopt.org) of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (UN News Centre, [www.ochaopt.org](http://www.ochaopt.org))

A statement from the French Foreign Ministry condemned a decision by Hamas to refuse the reopening of the youth NGO, Sharek Forum, and said that it was "regrettable that the population of Gaza is deprived of the means to realize its aspiration and is denied freedom of expression and of meetings [...] France joins the UN in calling on Hamas to reconsider its decision of 12 July to dissolve the Sharek Forum for Youth, whose offices had been closed since December 2010". (KUNA)

22

In Istanbul, PA Foreign Minister Riad Malki opened a gathering of foreign envoys of the PA. At the meeting, PA President Abbas urged his foreign ambassadors to "mobilize for the September UN bid," informing them that the PA had managed to get 118 countries to recognize the right of the Palestinians to establish an independent State. He also applauded Arab countries for their support "despite what is going on in the Arab world,

which gives the countries the right to be busy with their own troubles.” (Ma'an News Agency)

The senior Israeli Ministers' "Forum of Eight" will convene the following week to decide whether to accept a reconciliation agreement with Turkey, entailing Israel's apology for killing nine Turkish nationals, *Haaretz* reported. (*Haaretz*)

Palestinian firefighters have been battling blazes across the West Bank as Israeli settlers set fire to land in multiple locations. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Two people were injured and three others arrested in a weekly rally in the village of Nabi Saleh, the site of weekly protests against the confiscation of village lands for Israeli settlements. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli settler claimed that he had come under fire while passing near Azzun in the northern West Bank. Palestinian sources said that a wedding was taking place and fireworks had been set off. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The IDF Civil Administration is taking steps to increase State ownership of West Bank lands, an internal military document obtained by *Haaretz* reveals. The policy enables increased [settlement] construction not only around settlement blocks such as “Ariel”, “Ma'aleh Adumim” and “Gush Etzion”, but also in strategic areas such as the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea. (*Haaretz*)

Jailed Palestinian leader Marwan Barghouti had been moved to solitary confinement after guards found a mobile phone in his cell, a spokesman for the Israeli prisons authority said. (*AFP*)

More than 5,000 children attending the UNRWA Summer Games in the Gaza Strip have created the largest-ever handprint painting, breaking the previous Guinness world record. ([www.unrwa.org](http://www.unrwa.org))

A poll by J Street showed that 57 per cent of US Jews back a Middle East peace plan based on 1967 borders with mutually agreed land swaps, while 43 per cent oppose such a move. According to the poll, 83 per cent support a US-brokered solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and 70 per cent want the US Administration to offer a plan that proposes set borders and security arrangements. Nearly 47 per cent of those polled want the US to vote against recognizing a Palestinian State at the UN, while 34 per cent support recognition, with 18 per cent undecided. (*Haaretz*)

23

On the second day of the gathering of Palestinian envoys that was attended by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Istanbul, PA President Abbas said that Israel, by refusing to end occupation or stop building settlements on Palestinian land, had forced Palestinians to seek recognition at the UN, noting that “what is unilateral is Israeli settlements”. He said that to get significant results, “we have to speak with one voice,” adding that the strategy would have the backing of a large consensus from both Palestinian factions. Mr. Erdoğan also addressed the gathering, accusing Israel of “intransigence”, and saying that it had turned its back on any possible solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and had refused to lift its blockade of Gaza. A senior Palestinian official said on condition of anonymity that preparations for the UN bid would be completed on 4 August, during a meeting of an Arab Follow-up Committee in Doha, attended by Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. An official letter would be sent to the UN during the first week of August, he added. (*AFP, Haaretz, Ma'an News Agency*)

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan told reporters at a joint press conference with Jordanian Prime Minister Marouf Bakhit that Turkey had a “Plan B” if no apology came from Israel before the 27 July deadline, which would include measures to further freeze relations. The statement came amid an ongoing debate in the Israeli Cabinet over whether or not to formally apologize to Turkey over the 2010 flotilla incident. Mr. Erdoğan also told a forum of Palestinian ambassadors: “Unless Israel officially apologizes for its unlawful action which is against international laws and humanitarian values, pays compensation for the families of those who lost their lives and lifts its embargo on Gaza, normalization of relations between the two countries is unthinkable.” (*Hürriyet Daily News, Reuters*)

24

Israel's Defense Minister Ehud Barak said that Israel must exert all efforts to avoid a confrontation with the PA over its plan to seek recognition at the UN in September. He told *Army Radio* that his Government's main concern was to mobilize European support to stop the PA's bid. Mr. Barak said he believed that dialogue with the Palestinians was possible to prevent them from seeking UN recognition. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's Bureau confirmed that the National Security Council was discussing many alternatives ahead of September in response to the PA plan to gain UN recognition for an independent State, and would be presenting them to the political echelon for a decision. Israeli officials said that although discussions held by National Security Council Adviser Ya'akov Amidror included the option of voiding the Oslo Accords, it was not considered a leading alternative. Another source said, “It is one of the options that will be presented to the political echelon”. (*Haaretz*)

A delegation of 17 parliamentarians from seven European States entered Gaza through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt to express solidarity with Gazans. The delegation was met by the Palestinian Legislative Council First Deputy Speaker, Ahmad Bahar, along with a number of PLC members. In a press conference, Mr. Bahar expressed hope that the lawmakers would go back home and speak of the sufferings of the people of Gaza due to the Israeli-imposed siege. The delegation's chief, British Labour Party MP Tony Lloyd, said that the visit intended to illustrate their respect of the rights of Palestinian people and aimed to increase European awareness on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. (*KUNA*)

The Palmer report on the *Mavi Marmara* incident that was expected to be submitted to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 27 July had been delayed for a month to give Israel and Turkey time to formulate an agreement in order to renew diplomatic ties, Israeli diplomatic sources said. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Responding to strong public reactions to its recent tagline “The United Nations Agency for Palestine Refugees”, UNRWA said in [a statement](#) that the tagline had been introduced as one of several initiatives aiming to provide a platform for engaging new potential donors. “Having carefully weighed available options and consulted with stakeholders, it has been decided that 'The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East' will be the only words to appear in UNRWA's logo. This decision will be reflected on the website as soon as technicians can redesign it accordingly.” (*UNRWA*)

25

In the Dead Sea, the IDF stopped a small motor boat with two Palestinians from the Jordan Valley carrying 10 Kalashnikov machine guns and 10 magazines. (*Ynetnews*)

A senior officer in the Israeli Air Force said that the success of the Iron Dome anti-missile defence system in intercepting rockets fired from Gaza had spared the IDF from launching an offensive operation in Gaza last April during the cross-border escalation with Hamas. (*Haaretz*)

Senior Israeli defence officials said that the revolutions in the Arab world and the diminished Egyptian security forces' control in the Sinai had allowed the Palestinians to exponentially increase their weapons smuggling into the Gaza Strip. Lately, Hamas had acquired improved high-trajectory rockets, explosive devices, anti-tank missiles and possibly anti-aircraft missiles, the sources said. The situation had been exacerbated by the anarchy in the Sinai, former Shin Bet Chief Avi Dichter said, adding that it had become an area where no Egyptian security official dared to confront the Bedouins. He said that the construction of the steel fence on the Rafah border had been stopped, and parts of it were already being dismantled by the Bedouins. He said that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Hamas wanted to concentrate large stores of weapons in Gaza and, when the opportunity arose, would deliver them to the West Bank. (*Haaretz*)



Commenting on reports that Israel was considering calling off the Oslo Accords if Palestine sought UN membership in September, PA Foreign Minister Riad Malki said: "This is just an attempt to weaken the spirit of the Palestinian people and leaders and urge them to drop September's UN bid." PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat said, "Israel's practices on the ground have practically canceled the Oslo agreement years ago". Both Mr. Malki and Mr. Erakat said that Israel's threats would not affect the Palestinian plan to approach the UN in September for recognition as a State. At the same time, Hamas Spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said, "If Israel annuls the Oslo Accords, it would be the happiest news for the Palestinian people". (*Xinhua, Ma'an News Agency*)

The Chinese Ambassador to Lebanon, Wu Zexian, reiterated China's recognition of the Palestinian State. Mr. Zexian said that China was among the first countries to recognize the Palestinian State and had immediately assigned an ambassador to the State when the Palestinian self-rule authority moved to the West Bank. (*Wafa*)

A group of former Israeli army officials and diplomats visited Washington, D.C., and said that a peace agreement with the Palestinians was urgent in spite of, and because of, regional turmoil, and that contrary to what Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu had claimed, the 1967 borders were, in fact, defensible. The group visited the White House and met with the National Security Council Director for Middle East and North Africa, Stever Simon. They were also to meet with acting Middle East envoy David Hale and officials at the Pentagon. (*Haaretz*)

PA President Abbas requested, in a phone call with Arab League Secretary-General Nabil el-Araby, a meeting of the Arab League representatives to discuss the acute financial crisis of the PA. The meeting would be attended by PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and headed by League's Deputy Secretary-General, Ahmed Ben Helli. (*Wafa*)

The Deputy Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ahmed Ben Helli, stressed that the PA's acute financial crisis required a serious Arab intervention to lessen the sufferings of the Palestinians. He said that the Arab League Council would discuss the PA's financial crisis at a meeting the following day in the presence of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, at the level of permanent representatives. (*Wafa*)

Israeli sources reported that the Israeli Government intended to construct 97 units in Jabal Abu Ghneim in the "Har Homa" settlement in East Jerusalem, with a total cost of NIS 130 million. In addition, 24 units would be built in "Pisgat Ze'ev" settlement, with a total cost of NIS 50 million. (*MEMC*)

The PA Minister of Economy, Hassan Abu Libdeh, said that during 2010, the number of settlement goods on the Palestinian market had fallen substantially. The law banning the sale of such goods put a big dent in the settlement economy, which was estimated at some 200 million shekels per year when it was last legal to buy and sell them in 2010, he said. However, the minister added, "What we have failed at doing is to create jobs for Palestinians as an alternative from working in settlements by the end of 2010". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

26

Speaking at the Security Council, Rosemary DiCarlo, the US Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, said that the US would not support "unilateral action" by the Palestinians at the UN "in September or any other time", adding that "symbolic actions to isolate Israel at the United Nations in September will not create an independent Palestinian State". ([www.aljazeera.net](http://www.aljazeera.net))

According to a statement by the PLO Executive Committee, the PLO "has decided to continue efforts to go to the UN, including the Security Council and the General Assembly, to get recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders and to get full membership of the UN". The Executive Committee also decided to ask a local committee composed of the various political factions "to meet as soon as possible" to discuss all issues obstructing implementation of the reconciliation agreement reached between Fatah and Hamas in May. (*Wafa*)

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine organized a demonstration in front of the UNRWA office in Gaza City. The demonstrators called on the international community to back the Palestinian bid for recognition of a Palestinian State by the United Nations to help them gain respect for their rights to freedom and independence. (*Xinhua*)

France repeated its willingness to organize a conference of donor countries this autumn. "The financial situation of the Palestinians is giving us cause for concern," said a spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry. PA Prime Minister Fayyad said in Ramallah: "The Palestinian Authority may not be able to pay employees their salaries for the next two months." (*Agence Europe*)

Turkey had strongly condemned Israel for continuing to construct settlements in the West Bank. A statement by the Turkish Foreign Ministry said: "Israel's illegal actions on the lands it has invaded are unacceptable." Referring to the Israeli decision the previous week to announce tenders for new housing units, the statement said: "This decision will deepen the suspicions of Israel's sincerity in pushing the peace process forward. We stress that we do not recognize the illegal steps Israel is taking, challenging international law". (*Hürriyet Daily News*)

The Knesset extended the ban on family reunification for an additional year. The ban prohibits granting Israeli citizenship, or even residency, to Palestinians, Lebanese, Iraqis or Syrians married to Israeli citizens. The law does not apply to family reunification for Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs married to citizens of other countries. The Kadima opposition block reportedly voted in favour of the ban's extension. (*MEMC*)

Raed Al-Maghari, a 33-year-old Palestinian patient from Gaza, died after the Israeli authorities refused to grant him permission to pass through the Beit Hanoun crossing in order to be treated at a hospital in the West Bank. (*Wafa*)

Israeli bulldozers razed vast areas of Palestinian agriculture land in al-Waljah, a village south-west of Bethlehem, to complete construction of sections of the wall in the area, according to a member of the Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements. According to a *Wafa* correspondent, Israeli soldiers closed the area and prevented the journalists from covering the razing. (*Wafa*)

According to a UN spokesman, the release of the UN report on Israel's deadly 2010 raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla had been delayed until August. (*AFP*)

Speaking after it had emerged that the United Nations report on the *Mavi Marmara* incident had been delayed, a senior source in Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Government said that Turkey was ready to toughen its line towards Israel. "The ball is in the Israeli court. If it decides to apologize, then everything's fine. If not, then we will have to resort to Plan B," said the Turkish diplomat. (*AFP*)

The authorities in the Gaza Strip announced that two residents accused of collaborating with Israel had been executed. [The Palestinian Center for Human Rights](#) strongly condemned the death sentences, claiming they were illegal because the ratification of death sentences was an exclusive power of PA President Abbas. (*Ma'an News Agency, www.pchrgaza.org*)

In the monthly [briefing](#) to the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Roberterry described as "dramatic" the failure of the parties to meet their agreed timeline for a permanent status agreement by September this year, and called for a "credible political path forward". The Council, under the same agenda item, heard a two-session open debate, where the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Abdou Diallo, also made a statement. ([www.unsco.org](http://www.unsco.org))

A public opinion poll had found that 65.4 per cent of Palestinians support going to the UN in September to obtain recognition for a Palestinian State; 50.3 per cent would choose Salam Fayyad to head the next interim Government over independent candidates (27.1 per cent) and Hamas candidate



Jamal Khodary (11.6 per cent); 72.2 per cent believe that not implementing the reconciliation deal is detrimental to the Palestinian national interest. The poll was conducted by the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion, in Beit Sahour near Bethlehem, and questioned a random sample of 1,001 Palestinian adults from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

27

Israeli forces raided Jenin and arrested two employees of the Freedom Theatre, theatre staff members said. Israeli forces also erected a checkpoint at the crossroads of Araba village, south of Jenin. (*Qatar News Agency, Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli soldiers fired gas canisters in the village of Qatana, north-west of Jerusalem, causing fires that damaged fields in the village, the village spokesman said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Al-Aqsa Foundation in Jerusalem published a video showing undercover Israeli forces attacking Palestinian children as they played in the Palestinian neighbourhood of Ras Al-Amoud in East Jerusalem, and forcing one of them into their vehicle. The child was later beaten by the soldiers. (*IMEMC*)

The Israeli army arrested seven demonstrators, including five Palestinians and two foreign peace activists in a non-violent protest against bulldozing farms in preparation for the construction of the separation wall in the village of al-Walaja near Bethlehem, witnesses said. Israeli Central Command said that the protestors had rioted and refused to be removed. (*Xinhua, Ynetnews*)

During a PLO Central Council meeting held in Ramallah, PA President Abbas said: "We are going to the Security Council through a request to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to seek full membership in the UN and recognition of Palestine on the 1967 borders." He told the Council that 122 nations had already recognized a Palestinian State on the 1967 lines. "The Palestinian bid ... is not an alternative to negotiations," he said, negotiations remain the Palestinians' "first, second and third choice." He urged Palestinians to step up peaceful protests against Israel and to back a diplomatic offensive at the United Nations. (*AFP, DPA, Ma'an News Agency, Reuters*)

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned Congress that she would fight to block a Republican bill which would bar aid to Egypt, Lebanon, the PA, and Yemen if groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, and Hamas were part of the Government. (*AFP*)

The Israeli High Court ruled that a sewage treatment facility near the settlement of "Ofra" had been built illegally and could not be used. The petition against it was filed by the Yesh Din group on behalf of residents of the Palestinian village of Ein Yabrud. (*Ynetnews*)

Settlers from "Havat Maon" harassed three Palestinian shepherds and attacked two international observers. One of the observers was hit on the head with an iron bar and was sent to a hospital where he received eight stitches. (*IMEMC*)

According to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Palestinian NGOs specializing in mental health, the number of children with post-traumatic stress disorder and other anxiety disorders, including depression, had increased in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In 2010, 54 per cent of mental health patients at MSF clinics in the Gaza Strip were under 12, a report said. (*IRIN*)

The European Commission earmarked €4 million to reduce the effects of water scarcity for around 50,000 people and livestock in the West Bank.

The Commission said that special attention would be paid to those most affected by the combination of drought and restrictions imposed by Israel, in the south of Hebron, the north of the Jordan valley and other parts of Area C. (*Agence Europe*)

Speaking to *AFP* on condition of anonymity, a senior Palestinian electoral official said: "The [Central Elections Commission] was informed today by the Government that it had decided to hold municipal elections only in the West Bank on October 22." "Until now, Hamas has prevented the elections [commission] from doing its work in Gaza," he said. (*AFP*)

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, at its meeting, heard a report on the UN International Meeting in Support of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, held in Brussels. The Committee was briefed on the Department of Public Information-organized International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, held in Budapest, and on the latest developments on the ground and in the political process.

(*UN News Centre*)

28

A rocket landed in Ashkelon, Israel's *Channel 10* television reported. No injuries or damage were reported. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Israeli Defense Ministry had invested more than NIS 75 million (roughly \$22 million) in purchasing weapons to disperse mass protests in preparation for possible riots following the Palestinian plan to seek UN membership. New weapons include gas grenades, taser guns and substances with a pungent odour. (*Ynetnews*)

After a two-day meeting chaired by PA President Abbas in Ramallah, the PLO Central Council said in the final statement: "The Council fully supports the Palestinian leadership and authorizes it to continue the political and diplomatic moves to go to the UN General Assembly and to the Security Council in September." (*Xinhua*)

A public relations video narrated by Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Daniel Ayalon questioning the status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and recently uploaded on the Internet, had drawn protests from Palestinians and Jordanians. PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat accused Mr. Ayalon of distorting international law and perpetuating the conflict. (*Ynetnews*)

The director of public medical supplies in the Gaza Strip warned of an impending "humanitarian catastrophe" in Gaza hospitals due to fuel shortages for electricity generators. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A report by the Al-Mezan Centre for Human Rights indicated that Israeli forces had been using torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment against Palestinians from Gaza. ([www.mezan.org](http://www.mezan.org))

The 15,000 children attending the UNRWA Summer Games broke the Guinness world record, held by China, for the largest number of people flying kites. (*UNRWA*)

UNRWA condemned an arson attack on its Summer Games facility in Gaza. ([www.unrwa.org](http://www.unrwa.org))

The security of the European Parliament will no longer be provided by the company responsible for Israeli prisons, following an international campaign by NGOs and pressure from members of the European Parliament, which had led G4S, a Danish-British security company, to pledge not to renew its contracts in the West Bank. (*Agence Europe*)

29

*Haaretz* reported that Israeli President Shimon Peres had been holding intensive talks with Palestinians in an effort to resume negotiations and head off a Palestinian bid at the UN in September. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli forces detained Abu Tos, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council affiliated with Hamas, during a raid in the village of Tammun near Tubas. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli Defense Minister Barak said that his Government was striving to find a formula that would allow for the resumption of peace talks with Palestinian leaders. Mr. Barak revealed the efforts after meeting with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who again pressed for Israel to return to talks and expressed new concern over Israeli settlement building in the occupied territories, a United Nations spokesman said. "We are still trying to find a formula that will enable an understanding between the members of the Quartet in a way that will enable a resumption of negotiations," Mr. Barak told reporters. "I cannot honestly predict that it will happen but we are still trying to do our best to enable it," he added, stressing his belief

that direct talks are the only way for a permanent solution. ( *AFP* )

Israeli Defense Minister Barak said in Washington, D.C.: "We are willing to consider an apology [to Turkey] over problems that arose during the operation on the *Marmara*, if there were any." He said that a reconciliation deal with Turkey "would prevent lawsuits against officers and troops all over the world and cause less censure of Israel." "The best lawyers in Israel ... recommend we reach an understanding with Turkey. ... We are not apologizing for using force and not apologizing for the legality of the blockade," he added. ( *Reuters* )

**31**

Two rockets fired from the Gaza Strip landed in southern Israel without causing any damage or injuries, the Israeli military said. The rockets fell on the southern regional councils of Pithat Shalom and Shaar HaNegev, areas both bordering the Palestinian territory. ( *AFP* )

During a meeting held in the Presidential Palace of Male, the Palestinian Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives, Anwar al-Agha, briefed the President of the Republic of Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, on the latest developments regarding the Palestinian cause, in the light of the peace process blockage and the stalled negotiations due to Israeli intransigence. President Nasheed stressed the support of his country and people of the Palestinian bid to go to the UN next September. ( *Wafa* )

Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad said that salaries would be paid in full for the month of August but added that "the payment of full salaries will significantly reduce the ability of the Palestinian Authority to meet other needs during the next month." The commitment came shortly after Bassam Zakarna, head of the government workers' union in the West Bank, warned that he would lead an open-ended strike if salaries were not paid, after salaries were paid only in half in July. Mr. Fayyad urged patience, saying that he would continue to make tireless efforts to secure foreign aid needed to overcome the crisis and enable the PA to meet all of its commitments. ( *Ma'an News Agency* )

Egypt turned back 450 travellers seeking to cross from Gaza at the Rafah border point following an attack on a Sinai police station, Hamas officials said. Gaza's interior ministry said that the 450 would-be travellers, some of them patients seeking medical treatment, had been turned back at the border the previous day. In a statement, the ministry gave no details as to why the travellers had been turned back, but the incident came after Egyptian forces had arrested 12 men, including 3 Palestinians, in connection with an attack on a north Sinai police station. Gaza residents hailed Egypt's decision to reopen the Rafah border crossing in May but since the reopening, Egypt had closely restricted the number of travellers able to cross each day. ( *AFP* )

Israeli settlers from the settlement of "Shvut Rahef", built on Palestinian land in Jaloud, a village south of Nablus, set fire to 150 dunums of the village's land, said Ghassan Douglas, the Palestinian official responsible for the settlement file in the northern West Bank. Mr. Douglas said, "The fires are still burning in the Palestinian fields. This is not the first time that settlers attacked these lands." ( *Wafa* )

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