

Division for Palestinian Rights

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

Monthly media monitoring review

April 2012

Monthly highlights

- Israel deports Palestinian female prisoner to the Gaza Strip ([1 April](#))
- UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine concludes with proposed measures to address the issue of Palestinian political prisoners ([4 April](#))
- Quartet meeting statement underscores Jordan's support for the peace process ([11 April](#))
- "Welcome to Palestine" fly-in participants are detained upon arrival at the Ben Gurion Airport ([15 April](#))
- Palestinian Prisoners' Day marked in the West Bank and Gaza ([17 April](#))
- Two architects of the Oslo accords say that the two-State solution is defunct and that the option of one single democratic State for both Israelis and Palestinians must be considered ([24 April](#))
- Israeli Government grants legal status to three settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank ([24 April](#))
- President Obama waives provisions of section 7040 (a) of Public Law 112-74 (the Act) to provide funds appropriated to the PA ([25 April](#))
- Number of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in Israeli jails continues to rise ([26 April](#))
- Human Rights group accuses Israeli Supreme Court of bowing to political pressure after freezing demolition order of unauthorized building in the 'Beit El' settlement ([29 April](#))
- Estonia upgrades status of Palestinian diplomatic delegation to the level of a Mission ([30 April](#))

1

Israeli soldiers shot dead a Palestinian gunman who was suspected of trying to plant explosives beneath a fence at the border with Gaza. (Reuters)

Senior Fatah official Muhammad Shtayyeh told *Voice of Palestine* radio that Arab nations, at an Arab League summit in Baghdad the previous week, pledged to compensate the Palestinian Authority (PA) if Israel froze delivery of tax revenues. (Ma'an News Agency)

In Deir Balah, in the central Gaza Strip, three Palestinian children died in a fire caused by a candle used due to a lack of electricity. (Ynetnews)

Israel deported Palestinian hunger striker Hana Shalabi to the Gaza Strip. (AFP)

The PA Ministry for Prisoners' Affairs said that Israeli prison authorities stormed the Nafha jail after Palestinian prisoners refused to give DNA samples, injuring 61 of them. (Ma'an News Agency)

2

A 28-year-old Palestinian man died of wounds suffered during an Israeli raid on Rammun village, near Ramallah, on 27 March. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Shin Bet announced that it uncovered and arrested the cell that was behind a shooting in the Ramallah area earlier in the year. Members included a number of Palestinian Red Crescent workers. (The Jerusalem Post)

A 19-year-old man from Rafah died in a tunnel under the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces arrested 10 Palestinians, including two minors, in the West Bank. (Wafa)

Quartet Representative Tony Blair met separately with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in an effort to keep the sides engaged. (The Jerusalem Post)

Hamas urged PA President Mahmoud Abbas to consult with factions and form a new Government. Hamas leader Ismail Radwan said that "formal contacts haven't stopped but, in reality, there is no real impetus toward reconciliation". (Ma'an News Agency)

The International Committee of the Red Cross transferred emergency fuel supplies to the Gaza Strip, having distributed 150,000 litres of diesel fuel to Gaza's hospitals. (AFP, Al Arabiya)

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat announced that he intended to promote the establishment of a new settlement of 200 homes in East Jerusalem. The planned neighbourhood, which would be known as "Kidmat Zion", would be established on a plot of land purchased by Irving Moskowitz, an American millionaire and would be located between Abu Dis and Jabal Mukabber. (Haaretz, IMEMC)

Israeli forces demolished 10 tents used by Palestinians as dwellings and animal barns in an area near Beit Furik, a town east of Nablus. (Wafa)

An Israeli municipal court cancelled an administrative order to demolish the protest tent of Palestinian activists in the Al-Bustan area of the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Silwan. (Wafa)

Israel's Supreme Court ruled that the Palestinian Husseini family could not claim ownership of the landmark Shepherd Hotel in East Jerusalem, paving the way for a Jewish settlement project. (Reuters)

Israeli forces raided the Jerusalem office of the Al-Quds University Institute for Modern Media, halted a ceremony to launch a website, detained employees and confiscated equipment and files, network director Harun Abu Arrah said. Employees were presented with an order forbidding the event as a banned official initiative of the PA. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The IDF issued an eviction order for settlers who had taken over a Palestinian house in Hebron. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli settlers from "Karmi Tzur" razed Palestinian agricultural land near Beit Ummar, north of Hebron, to build a new road. (*Wafa*)

Imprisoned Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti was in solitary confinement in an Israeli jail after he called upon Palestinians to start a popular uprising. (*Haaretz*)

In Abu Dhabi, the Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) signed an extension of an agreement to support, for a second year, the Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan School in Beit Lahia, Gaza. (www.unrwa.org)

3

At least 15 Israelis attacked a Palestinian worker who was on his way to work in western Jerusalem, causing injuries. (*Wafa*)

Israel returned the body of a 20-year-old Palestinian man shot by Israeli forces on 30 March in Gaza near the border with Israel. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

At a news conference, Prime Minister Netanyahu said that he still hoped to reach a peace deal with the Palestinians because the alternative would be absorbing them into Israel and destroying the Jewish character of the State. (*AP*)

Visiting Amman, PA President Abbas met with the visiting Special Envoy to the Middle East Peace Process of the Russian Federation, Sergey Vershinin, and held talks on the situation in the Middle East and the efforts to resume peace talks. (*IMEMC*)

Hamas and the PA agreed to an Egyptian-brokered deal to end the Gaza fuel crisis, officials said. Under the agreement, an Israeli company will supply industrial diesel fuel for the area's power plant and a temporary mechanism would be put in place whereby Hamas could pay the bill without dealing directly with Israel.

(*Reuters*)

The Ministry of Defense of Israel reiterated its order for Jewish families to evacuate "Beit Hamachpela", a disputed Hebron apartment building by 3 p.m. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli forces demolished four ancient buildings and uprooted 52 electricity poles near Bethlehem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The International Criminal Court (ICC) rejected a bid by the PA to recognize the Court's jurisdiction, blocking moves to have the tribunal investigate the Gaza conflict.

In a statement, the prosecutor said that it was up to "relevant bodies at the United Nations", or the group of States parties to the Rome Statute, to determine if Palestine met the definition of a State under article 12. (*AP*, www.icc-cpi.int)

The United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine, with the theme "The question of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention facilities: legal and political implications", opened at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). (*Division for Palestinian Rights*)

France urged pro-Palestinian activists, who planned to visit Bethlehem on 15 April in solidarity with residents, to refrain from joining the operation given the high risk of being detained or turned back by Israeli authorities. About 1,200 Palestinian supporters throughout Europe had reportedly bought plane tickets for the visit to help open an international school and a museum at the request of a local organization called "Welcome to Palestine". (*Reuters*)

The Centre for Constitutional Rights filed a petition with several international bodies on behalf of the Palestinian descendants of those buried in the Mamilla Cemetery, urging Israel to halt construction of the "Museum of Tolerance" by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre on the site of the cemetery. (*IMEMC*)

The UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine discussed the current situation of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails and detention facilities, its legal and humanitarian aspects. The meeting would resume the following morning to discuss the legal status of the prisoners under international law. (*Division for Palestinian Rights*)

An international seminar on Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails, organized by UFree, an Oslo-based non-governmental organization, which highlighted the issue of Palestinian prisoners, was held in Gaza City. (www.pressv.ir, www.ufree-p.net)

4

Israeli forces detained 15 Palestinians overnight during raids on the central and southern West Bank. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Gaza medical authorities discovered the body of a man who appeared to have been shot dead the previous day east of Gaza City. An Israeli military spokeswoman confirmed that forces on the border had fired on a "suspect crawling towards the security fence". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed a meeting in Amman between Palestinian Chief Negotiator Saeb Erakat and his Israeli counterpart, Yitzhak Molcho. They were to discuss the stalled peace process and a meeting between a top PA delegation and Prime Minister Netanyahu. Later in the day, the Foreign Minister of Jordan, Nasser Judeh, told *Jordan TV* that Jordan had succeeded in "breaking the stalemate" citing "communication currently under way" between the two sides. (*The Jordan Times*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu will send a letter to the PA President Abbas calling upon him to return to the negotiating table promptly and without preconditions.

A senior Israeli official said that the letter would be a response to a similar communiqué that President Abbas planned to relay to Mr. Netanyahu in the coming days.

The Israeli message will stress Israel's willingness to resume the talks that had taken place in Jordan and to discuss all core issues: borders, security arrangements, refugees, water, settlements and Jerusalem. (*Haaretz*)

PA President Abbas held talks with US Special Envoy David Hale in Ramallah. The president and Mr. Hale discussed the latest developments in the peace process and efforts to revive it. (*Wafa*)

On a visit to the occupied Palestinian territory, a five-member European Parliament delegation led by Irish MEP Emer Costello expressed shock at the violent acts perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians. In a statement, they said: "The delegation condemns the Israeli policy of the special planning and zoning controls in the occupied Palestinian territories which has led to the demolition of habitable houses and destruction of valuable infrastructure projects, many of which have been funded through the European Union and its Member States' taxpayers". The delegation called upon the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and member States to demand that Israel adhere to international law and to refrain from any upgrading in relationship with Israel. (*Wafa*)

The Israeli Housing Ministry declared new tenders for the construction of 1,121 new settlement homes, 827 of them in the "Har Homa" settlement in East Jerusalem. In "Givat Ze'ev", just north of Jerusalem, 180 units would be built while the remaining 69 were planned for "Katzrin", in the occupied Golan. The units were approved in August 2011 by Israel's Interior Minister, Eli Yishai. PA Presidential Spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said that the decision "does not encourage the resumption of negotiations". (*AFP*, *Haaretz*, *IMEMC*, *Ma'an News Agency*, *Wafa*)

Israeli soldiers completed the establishment of an outpost on the Mount of Olives, in East Jerusalem, overlooking the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Old City. (*Wafa*, *IMEMC*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and his senior ministers announced that the "Beit Hamachpela" house in Hebron would be evacuated by 26 April. However, Minister of Defense Ehud Barak decided not to wait and ordered the evacuation of settlers from the house by a special police patrol unit. (*Ynetnews*)

Prime Minister Netanyahu told his Government that he would seek to legalize the three settler outposts of "Bruchin", "Sansana" and "Rekhelem" in the West Bank. (*AFP*)

Israeli settlers planted tree saplings on 2,000 square metres of privately-owned Palestinian land in the Ein al-Qassis area of al-Khader, near Bethlehem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Fuel began arriving in Gaza under a new deal between Hamas and the PA. "Tanks of fuel holding 45,000 litres each entered through the Kerem Shalom crossing this morning," Raed Fattouh, the coordinator on the Palestinian side of the crossing, said, adding that about 430,000 litres of industrial fuel for the electricity plant were expected during the day. (*AFP*)

ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo said that the tribunal would allow the Palestinians to sign up if the General Assembly adopted a resolution recognizing

Palestine as a non-member observer State. *(The Washington Post)*

The UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine concluded its deliberations at the United Nations Office at Geneva with proposed measures to address the issue of Palestinian political prisoners that included requesting the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the issue of prisoners of war status and the adoption of a General Assembly resolution on the issue. *(UN News Centre)*

5

Israeli forces arrested 20 Palestinians from Kufr Qaddoum, east of Qalqilya, after raiding their homes and tampering with the contents, according to local sources. *(WAFA)*

Just hours after Israeli security services evacuated settlers from the "Beit Hamachpela" home in Hebron, Palestinians and left-wing activists were barred from moving in. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

A Palestinian detainee attacked and slightly injured a guard at the Nafha jail in southern Israel. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

The Palestinian Prisoners' Club said that 12 Palestinian prisoners were currently on hunger strike in Israeli jails to protest their administrative detention without charge or trial. *(WAFA)*

The Thabet organization for Palestinian refugees' right of return expressed grave concern over the deletion by UNRWA of 169,000 refugees from its 2011 records. *(Middle East Monitor)*

6

Palestinian Christians were denied the opportunity to attend Good Friday rites in the Old City of Jerusalem as a result of Israeli-imposed closures. *(WAFA)*

In a press release, the World Bank announced that its board of directors had endorsed the Interim Strategy for West Bank and Gaza for 2012 to 2014 and authorized \$55 million for the Trust Fund for Gaza and the West Bank. *(www.worldbank.org)*

Leaders of Palestinian prisoners said that prisoners would begin an open-ended hunger strike on 17 April to put pressure on Israel to release them. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

7

Two residents in Rafah were injured as a result of Israeli-fired missile. *(IMEMC)*

Two children were moderately injured when an old ordnance exploded in the southern Gaza Strip. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

A Palestinian child, an Israeli and an international peace activist were injured by Israeli soldiers during a weekly non-violent protest against the Wall and the settlements in Beit Ummar. *(IMEMC)*

PA Minister for Prisoners' Affairs Issa Qaraqe said: "The entire world, as well as the United Nations, is responsible for protecting Palestinian prisoners ... deprived of their basic rights as stated in international law." *(Ma'an News Agency)*

The International Coalition Against War Criminals and a number of international human rights organizations denounced the ICC [Prosecutor's] ruling on the request by Palestine for the investigation of crimes committed by Israel during the Gaza conflict. *(WAFA)*

8

An Israeli female passenger in a private car sustained light injuries after the car was pelted with stones near the Macabim checkpoint. *(Ynetnews)*

Israeli forces detained an American-Palestinian activist in Hebron amidst closures in the city during the Jewish holidays, a local activist said. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Three rockets fired from the Gaza Strip hit southern Israel without causing casualties or damage, police said. *(AFP)*

Israeli forces arrested five Palestinians from Hebron and Qalqilya. *(WAFA)*

A statement from Hamas said that it executed three Palestinians, one of whom was convicted of collaborating with Israel. *(The New York Times)*

In his Easter Sunday message, Pope Benedict XVI urged Israelis and Palestinians to "courageously take up anew the peace process". *(Ma'an News Agency)*

PA President Abbas met with the Prime Minister of Italy, Mario Monti, in Ramallah. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

PA President Abbas, during a meeting in Ramallah with an Israeli delegation headed by former Minister and Knesset member Yossi Beilin, reiterated his intention to seek UN recognition of a Palestinian State if Israel did not accept his conditions for resuming the peace process. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

The non-resident Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the PA, Bulat Sugurbayev, said that in 2012, a Kazakhstan Consulate would be opened in Ramallah. *(WAFA)*

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh said that the stalled reconciliation deal between Hamas and Fatah was not optional and was an obligation. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Settlers raided agricultural land south of Jenin under the protection of Israeli troops. *(WAFA)*

The Israeli military authorities closed the main entrance to the northern Jerusalem town of al-Ram with cement blocks reportedly due to Palestinian youths' stone-throwing at Israeli soldiers. *(WAFA)*

9

The Israeli navy fired live ammunition at a fishing boat in the Gaza Strip, witnesses said. An Israeli military spokeswoman said that a boat had deviated from the designated fishing area and after failing to respond, warning shots were fired. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Israeli forces arrested eight Palestinians from Hebron and Jenin. *(Jordanian News Agency)*

The Allenby Bridge crossing between the West Bank and Jordan will operate under reduced hours on 11 and 12 April due to the Passover holidays. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Israeli forces shot a Palestinian worker in the foot while he was gathering gravel in the buffer zone between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The injured man was hospitalized and was in moderate condition. *(WAFA)*

Consultations over an expected reshuffle in the PA were to be delayed until after PA President Abbas concluded his international tour, a senior Fatah official said. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

On the sixty-fourth anniversary of the Deir Yassin massacre, the Arab League, in a press release, said that the Israeli Government's practices and measures aimed to bring down the PA. *(WAFA)*

Dozens of settlers, accompanied by the Israeli police, entered the Al-Aqsa mosque to perform religious rituals in celebration of Passover. *(Palestine News Network)*

PA Minister of Labour Ahmad Majdalani said that the March salary payment for 180,000 Palestinian public, civil and security employees would be delayed until after the transfer of funds from Algeria. *(WAFA)*

The International Youth Foundation, in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), launched four new projects aimed at developing job preparation and entrepreneurship skills of young Palestinians. *(www.reliefweb.int)*

Israeli authorities approved the transfer of four electrical transformers donated by the United Nations Development Programme to the Gaza Strip. *(Ynetnews)*

Hamas called upon all Palestinian militant groups to form a joint committee to plan ways to capture Israeli soldiers who could then be exchanged for Palestinians held in Israeli jails. *(DPA)*

The Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, said that the decision by the ICC Prosecutor did not mark the end of the Palestinian bid.

He said: "The doors are still open for us if we decide to sign the Rome Statute, or go to the General Assembly asking to become a non-member State. This is left for the Palestinian leadership to determine." *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Some 160 Palestine refugees from Jordan, Lebanon and Syria were issued a 10-day permit for entry into the West Bank. *(Palestine News Network)*

The PA was not involved in the decision to deport Hana Shalabi to the Gaza Strip, PA Prisoners' Affairs Minister Qaraqe said. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Hundreds of visitors from around the globe were invited by the "Welcome to Palestine 2012" campaign to celebrate Easter in Bethlehem. Members of the press were also invited to a press conference the following day for a presentation of the Campaign's programme and goals at the Bethlehem Peace Centre. *(Palestine News Network)*

The Popular Struggle Coordination Committee and the Bil'in Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements will hold the 7th International Conference for Popular Struggle from 10 to 13 April 2012. (*Palestine News Network*)

10

Israel police were preparing to send reinforcements to Ben-Gurion Airport for the weekend to prevent the entry of a large group of pro-Palestinian activists planning to travel to the West Bank as part of a campaign entitled "Welcome to Palestine 2012". There were reports that over 2,500 activists had registered. European and American airlines had received requests from Israel to prevent activists from boarding flights. (*Haaretz*)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad said: "It is important for the Quartet to put a lot more emphasis, in addition to what it traditionally does, on [Israeli] violence in the face of non-violent Palestinian protests, settler violence [and] Israeli army incursions into Area A." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The PA called on "brotherly Arabs to speed up their support in order for the National Authority to meet its commitments". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A US State Department official said that a letter from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was delivered to key members of Congress informing them of her decision to move forward with the \$147 million package of the fiscal year 2011 economic support funds for the Palestinian people, overruling House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairwoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen's hold on the funds. The funds delivered "critical support to the Palestinian people and those leaders seeking to combat extremism within their society and build a more stable future. Without funding, our programmes risk cancellation," the official, who was not authorized to speak about the issue, said in an e-mail. "Such an occurrence would undermine the progress that has been made in recent years in building Palestinian institutions and improving stability, security and economic prospects which benefits Israelis and Palestinians alike." (*National Journal*)

Turkey donated two electric buggies [golf carts] to transport travellers who have difficulty walking through the Erez terminal on Israel's border with the Gaza Strip, officials said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Scholars of the Levant Conference to Support Al-Quds, which opened in Damascus, called upon Arab and Islamic figures to confront the serious Zionist practices to Judaize Jerusalem and destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque, calling upon Arab and Islamic media to expose those practices. (*SANA*)

Israel was looking for opportunities to legalize five buildings in the "Ulpana" outpost, located on the outskirts of the "Beit El" settlement, built on private Palestinian land. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Hundreds of settlers broke into the evacuated settlement of "Homesh", south of Jenin, to commemorate Passover, PA official Ghassan Daghas said. (*Wafa*)

Several dozen Jewish teenagers took advantage of the Passover holiday to erect a new outpost near "Hashmonaim" [settlement] in the West Bank. The teens, who named the outpost "Or Hadash" [new light], clashed with security forces at the scene who confiscated their tools. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Australian Government expressed concern that Israel's latest announcement on settlements could further complicate prospects for resumed direct negotiations.

In a statement, the Australian Government said that it had consistently called on both sides to show restraint and comply with their obligations under the road map and other previous agreements. That included settlements because it was counter-productive to the peace process. (*Australian Ministry for Foreign Affairs*)

Speaking at the 7th International Conference for Popular Struggle in Bil'in, PA Prime Minister Fayyad said, "Popular resistance is one of the best forms of resistance and reflects the rights of Palestinians." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Mayor of Bethlehem, Victor Batarseh, urged Israel not to humiliate hundreds of tourists invited by some 25 Palestinian organizations to a week-long tour of Palestine under the "Welcome to Palestine" initiative. Israel's Public Security Minister, Yitzhak Aharonovitch, said: "If they arrive in Israel, they will be identified, removed from the plane, their entry into Israel will be prevented and they will be moved to a detention facility until they are flown out of Israel." (*Ma'an News Agency, Ynetnews*)

11

Israeli forces detained seven Palestinians and four internationals in the southern West Bank after a conference on popular resistance, witnesses said. They said that three people were injured in the incident outside Hebron's Ibrahim Mosque following an altercation between participants in the nearby conference and Israeli settlers. Police subsequently arrested 11 of the participants, including 4 foreigners. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A Palestinian was apprehended while he was trying to pass through the Bekaot checkpoint near Nablus with seven improvised explosive devices, three knives and rifle shells. IDF officials believed that the 19-year-old Palestinian planned to attack Israeli civilians or soldiers during the Passover holiday. (*Ynetnews*)

The Israeli military police was investigating allegations that soldiers stole pieces of gold worth tens of thousands of shekels from the home of a Palestinian man during a late-night raid in Kafr Qaddum, a West Bank village last week. (*Haaretz*)

The IDF stopped the flow of vehicles in and out of Al-Ram, a Palestinian city of 60,000 north-east of Jerusalem, because of increased stone and firebomb throwing at army patrols by local youths, the army said. (*Haaretz*)

EU officials in Jerusalem and Ramallah condemned Gaza's Hamas rulers for executing three prisoners and urged Hamas to give up the practice of capital punishment. (*AFP*)

The Quartet principals released a statement after their meeting in Washington, D.C., where they were joined by Quartet Representative Blair and Foreign Minister Judeh of Jordan, who briefed on Jordan's engagement in the peace process. The Quartet underscored its support for the positive efforts by King Abdullah and Foreign Minister Judeh. It called on the international community to ensure the contribution of \$1.1 billion to meet the PA's 2012 financing requirements. The Quartet also expressed its concern over settler violence and incitement in the West Bank and called upon Israel to take effective measures. The Quartet condemned rocket attacks from Gaza and stressed the need for calm and security for both peoples. The Quartet expressed concern about unilateral and provocative actions by either party, including continued settlement activity. It welcomed plans for dialogue between the parties and discussed ways to support these efforts. (*EU*)

Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Federation's Minister for Foreign Affairs, arrived in Washington, D.C. to attend the G-8 and Quartet meetings and called on the Quartet to intensify its efforts. He said, "It is most important to prevent the Arab Spring's overshadowing of the Palestinian problem. Hopefully, the upcoming ministerial meeting of the Quartet will find solutions, which will resume the negotiating process." (*ITAR-TASS*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu will meet with PA Prime Minister Fayyad in Jerusalem on 17 April. Mr. Fayyad will be accompanied by Chief Negotiator Erakat and the Secretary-General of the PLO, Yasser Abed Rabbo, to personally deliver a letter from President Abbas in which he laid out his conditions for returning to direct negotiations, including a halt to Israeli settlement construction and clear parameters for discussions of future borders. Mr. Netanyahu's office had said that he will respond with his own letter to Mr. Abbas, which was likely to call for a resumption of direct negotiations without preconditions. (*AFP*)

The EU contributed €22.5 million to the payment of the March salaries and pensions of around 84,000 Palestinian civil servants and pensioners in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, John Gatt-Rutter, EU representative to the PA, said. (*Wafa*)

The Governor of Nablus prevented Israeli potatoes from being introduced to the Palestinian market in line with a decision issued by the PA Ministry of Agriculture. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to an Al-Aqsa Mosque Foundation statement, Jewish worshipers had entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound accompanied by Israeli forces but had been prevented from completing their religious rites after a heated argument with security guards. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A 40-year old Palestinian woman from Wadi Susiya, south of Hebron, was severely beaten by a group of masked settlers near her house, which was located adjacent to the "Susiya" settlement. (*Wafa*)

Palestinian Legislative Council member Muhammad al-Lahham announced that popular committees and local organizations will hold a conference on Palestine refugees in Jericho on 14 April. He said that organizations and lawmakers from refugee camps across the West Bank will attend and that participants will discuss the conditions in camps and relations with UNRWA. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Bahrain's Royal Charity Organisation, in cooperation with UNRWA, inaugurated a new health centre in the Khan Yunis refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The new medical facility, the largest of its kind, will serve over 130,000 refugees, providing primary health care and medical services for mothers and children. (*Bahrain News Agency*)

A Palestinian man, detained in an Israeli prison and on a hunger strike for the last 41 days, was in serious condition after beginning to refuse liquids, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel said, and demanded that he be transferred to a civilian hospital. (*AFP, France24*)

According to a report by the International Solidarity Foundation for Human Rights, at least 300 Palestinians were arrested by the Israeli authorities in March, including dozens of children and seven women. Ahmad Toubasi, a lawyer and researcher at the Foundation, said that the arrests, particularly those of women and children, were in violation of international laws. One woman was arrested in Hebron when she attacked soldiers at a checkpoint after they took her three-year-old

son away from her and five women were arrested during visits to relatives imprisoned in Israeli jails. (Wafa)

French organizers of the "fly-in" of hundreds of pro-Palestinian activists who were expected to arrive at Israel's Ben Gurion airport during the weekend said that they still planned to travel despite Israeli opposition. "We are obliged to transit through Tel Aviv [Ben Gurion] to get to the West Bank". Israeli security forces said the previous day that they had begun preparations for the "fly-in" and local radio reported that those who will arrive were expected to be arrested by police deployed at the airport. The French Foreign Ministry has advised the 500 to 600 French nationals believed to have signed up for the "fly-in" not to travel "because of the risks of expulsion or detention". The event was expected to draw a total of up to 2,000 people, primarily from Western Europe. (AFP)

Gaza authorities said in a statement that the "Miles of Smiles" campaign will send its twelfth aid and solidarity convoy to the Gaza Strip in May. Coordinators of the campaign said that Arab and Islamic leaders would join the next planned convoy. (Ma'an News Agency)

12

Israeli forces entered at dawn the town of Tayasser, near the northern West Bank city of Tubas, searching homes. In nearby Jenin, troops stormed and searched houses. Local sources said that local youths tried to stop the invading forces who responded by firing tear gas and rubber-coated steel bullets. Nine Palestinians were arrested. (IMEMC, Jordan News Agency)

While PA President Abbas was expected to present Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu with a letter detailing Palestinian conditions for the renewal of peace negotiations, Mr. Netanyahu would respond with a letter of his own. Government officials familiar with the document told *Ynet* that it would not include a demand for Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish State. Israel would refer to its demand to maintain control over the Jordan Valley and that any future Palestinian State should be demilitarized. (Ynetnews)

A senior PLO official revealed in an interview that David Hale, US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, who visited the region, discussed with President Abbas the content of the Palestinian letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu and told him that the US Administration could not guarantee Israel's approval and that the Obama Administration would not put pressure on Prime Minister Netanyahu to accept it. (Islam Times)

PA President Abbas started an official three-day visit to Japan on the first leg of a tour of Asian countries during which he would meet with top officials. (Wafa)

The PA said that it had poured around \$7 billion into the Gaza Strip since Hamas seized control in 2007 but complained that the Islamist group had stymied its efforts to balance its books. The PA said that it had spent \$120 million a month, or more than 40 per cent of its entire budget, on salaries and services in Gaza. "In return, Hamas does not pay for any of the needs of the people in Gaza. On the contrary, it sells the medicine that we send for free and keeps the money," Ahmad Assaf, a Fatah spokesperson in the West Bank, said. Hamas denied the allegation and said that the PA had been merely funnelling foreign donations earmarked for the Palestinian people. (Reuters)

Three Palestinians and two settlers were injured when the settlers assaulted the Palestinian farmers in an attempt to prevent them from completing their work on farm land adjacent to the Itamar settlement. (Ynetnews, Ma'an news)

Palestinian human rights groups reported that 11 Palestinian political prisoners continued their hunger strike with two of the prisoners, Thaer Halahla and Bilal Thiyab, having entered their forty-fifth day. (IMEMC)

13

Israeli forces opened fire at a Palestinian fishing boat off the coast of north-western Gaza Strip. Witnesses said that the gunfire caused the boat to sink but no one was injured. An Israeli military spokeswoman said that the vessel "deviated from the designated fishing area" and that the naval forces fired warning shots at the boat's engine after it failed to respond to calls to turn back. (Ma'an News Agency)

PA President Abbas called for NATO forces to replace Israeli troops on Palestinian land. The President's call was made during a meeting with Arab ambassadors in Tokyo. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces raided the headquarters of the civil defence forces in Azzun, east of Qalqilya, in the West Bank. Israeli soldiers questioned two officers over stone-throwing at Israeli vehicles near the town's main road. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Jordanian Minister of the Interior, Muhammad ar-Raod, would travel to Ramallah the following day for a two-day visit to discuss ways of strengthening the relationship between the two countries. A PA official commented that Mr. Ar-Raod would be the first Arab Minister of the Interior to visit the area. (Ma'an News Agency)

In a response to a High Court petition filed the previous year by Beit Furim residents, the Israeli Government admitted that the IDF, acting without a court order, had barred Palestinian villagers from freely accessing their farmland for the past two years beginning in 2010. (Palestine News Network, Haaretz)

The German airline Lufthansa canceled the tickets of dozens of pro-Palestinian activists scheduled to fly to Tel Aviv on 15 April as part of a mass fly-in dubbed "Welcome to Palestine", according to organizers. According to statement released by the organizers, "Dozens of passengers who bought a plane ticket to travel to Tel Aviv on 15 April were notified on [the previous day] by Lufthansa that their reservation was cancelled at the behest of Israel." (Ynetnews, AFP)

The Israeli peace bloc Gush Shalom called, in a letter to Israeli Minister of Public Security Yitzhak Aharonovitch, for the cancellation of plans to flood the Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv with a massive police force in preparation for the arrival of the 1,000 international activists. (Wafa)

In its weekly report on human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights reported that during the week of 5 to 11 April 2012, Israeli forces used force to disperse peaceful protests organized by Palestinian civilians in the West Bank. Five Palestinian civilians, including a journalist, were wounded and dozens suffered from tear gas inhalation. Israeli forces conducted 52 incursions into Palestinian communities in the West Bank during which they arrested 32 Palestinians, including 6 children. In the Gaza Strip, one civilian and two resistance fighters were wounded. (IMEMC)

14

During an interview with Japanese media, President Abbas dismissed the idea of dismantling the PA. Regarding the letter he would send to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu the following week, President Abbas noted that it would highlight the negative effects of settlement activity. "There is no such term called the end of the peace process; however, history confirms that there is something called the end of the occupation," he stated. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Palestinian prisoner support group Addameer announced that at least eight Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons were currently on open-ended hunger strike calling for an end to the Israeli policy of 'administrative detention'. According to Addameer, four hunger-strikers had been hospitalized and force-fed intravenously.

Israeli prison authorities confirmed that four hunger-strikers were in the hospital of Ramle prison. (www.imemc.org)

Palestinian Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Qaraqe announced that about 1,600 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails would start an open-ended hunger strike the following day with the aim of forcing Israeli authorities to improve prison conditions. Among other things, the strikers had demanded an end to the practice of the administrative detention policy and solitary confinement punishment, permission for prisoners to pursue secondary and higher education, permission of family visits and improvement in medical conditions. The strike would coincide with the Palestinian Prisoner Day. (Wafa)

15

The Ayman Judah Brigades, a division of Fatah's military wing, said that they had fired a rocket into Israel from the Gaza Strip the previous night. An Israeli army spokeswoman said that no rockets had landed in Israel overnight. (Ma'an News Agency)

According to Palestinian medical sources, one youth from Al-Esawiyya town, in the Jerusalem district, was shot and wounded by Israeli military fire during clashes that took place after the Israeli army invaded the town. (www.imemc.org)

The Israeli army opened an investigation into an incident in the West Bank during which a high-ranking officer struck a demonstrator in the face with his M-16 rifle, a military spokeswoman said. The incident was captured on video and shared on social media websites and broadcast on Israel's *Channel 10* television. An IDF spokesperson said in a statement: "This is a grave incident. GOC Central Command Nitzan Alon ordered a thorough investigation in which the circumstances of the incident will be examined. Lessons will be derived and the appropriate steps will be taken." (*Al Arabiya News*)

Lieutenant-Colonel Shalom Eisner regretted the incident in which he struck a foreign activist with his M-16 rifle. "I should not have flung my weapon like that, but

those are 60 seconds out of a two-hour event," he noted. He had been suspended from his post. Prime Minister Netanyahu had condemned the incident and said that "such conduct is not characteristic of IDF soldiers and commanders and has no place in the IDF and the State of Israel". (*ynetnews.com*)

Dozens of Beitar Jerusalem soccer fans marched in Jerusalem, chanting anti-Arab slogans on their way to a match and beat a woman who objected, according to the alleged victim. Israeli police launched an investigation into the attack. (*Haaretz.com*)

According to security sources, Israeli forces arrested eight Palestinians from across the West Bank. Four of the arrested Palestinians hailed from the Hebron area, while the rest hailed from the West Bank cities of Ramallah and Bethlehem. (*Wafa*)

According to witness accounts, Israeli warplanes fired a missile at an open area of Gaza City. No injuries were reported. In a separate incident, a medical spokesman, Adham Abu Salmiya, said that Israeli soldiers opened fire at two security guards at a factory east of Gaza City. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

President Abbas, on a regional tour of Asia, said that the Israeli Government's stated support of a two-State solution was merely a "slogan for public opinion". "Israel talks about the two-State solution without taking a single step towards that solution ... [they are] comfortable with the status quo and don't seek to reach a solution. Halting settlement construction isn't a precondition but rather a commitment present in all agreements," he said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Governor of Bethlehem, Abdul-Fattah Hamayil, signed an order banning the entry of Israeli agricultural products into Bethlehem effective from 1 May. The Governor ordered security services to enforce the ban and monitor agricultural produce in the southern West Bank city. The decision followed the ban on imported Israeli watermelons, onions, strawberries and potatoes implemented by PA Minister of Agriculture Ahmad Majdalani earlier in the month, a press statement said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to unnamed sources, settlers from the Maoun settlement, near the southern West Bank city of Hebron, opened fire at a number of Palestinians who were crossing a road close to the settlement. No injuries were reported. (*www.inemc.org*)

More than 40 pro-Palestinian activists who reached Tel Aviv's international airport as part of an attempted "fly-in" were detained by Israeli officials. Nine Israeli supporters, some holding "Welcome to Palestine" signs, were also detained as they waited to greet the arrivals. An Interior Ministry spokeswoman said that Israel had, on 11 April, given airlines the names of some 1,200 activists whose entry into Israel would be barred. Israel had also made it clear that the carriers would have to bear the costs of repatriating any deportees. The aim of the so-called "flytilla" was to help open an international school and a museum in Bethlehem. Israel described the fly-in as a misguided protest against "the Middle East's sole democracy", denounced the activists as provocateurs and said that it would deny entry to anyone who threatened public order. (*Reuters*)

Despite only two activists making it past security at Ben-Gurion Airport, the "flytilla" protest was a success, an event organizer said during a press conference in Bethlehem. The event was a media success and showed that Israel was not a democracy, the organizer said. (*Haaretz.com*)

16

During a two-day official visit to Sri Lanka, PA President Abbas met with President Mahinda Rajapaksa in Colombo during which they discussed bilateral relations. They signed two bilateral agreements on the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion. Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki stressed that there was much potential for further cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the fields of trade, investment, economic and tourism. (*ColomboPage*)

US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro said that the US would continue to act against Palestinian attempts to gain recognition through the UN and, if necessary, would use its veto. Mr. Shapiro added that there were no shortcuts to peace in the Middle East and that the Palestinians must return to direct negotiations with Israel without preconditions on the basis of what had been outlined by US President Barack Obama. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli forces razed two ponds used for collecting rain water, demolished three water wells, razed agricultural land and destroyed farming equipment in the al-Majnouna area, south of Hebron, according to local sources. (*Wafa*)

Governor Abdul-Fattah Hamayil of Bethlehem issued a communiqué declaring any contact with the Israeli Liaison Department illegal and ordered all organizations and individuals to end all contacts with the Department and instead deal directly with the PA Liaison Department. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad inaugurated stage one of the first water dam to be built in Ouja village in the Jordan Valley, in the West Bank, at a cost of over \$1 million. He added that he would not wait for Israeli permission to allow him to develop Area C, stressing that "this is our land and it is our natural right to develop this area and to serve our people living here". The Islamic Development Bank contributed \$1 million for the project, with the PA paying over \$30,000. (*Wafa*)

Right-wing members of the Knesset were expected to introduce a number of bills supporting construction in West Bank settlements and unauthorized outposts when the Knesset returned from its spring recess in two weeks. Among anticipated legislation was a bill that would legalize Jewish construction on privately-owned Palestinian land at Migron and other outposts. The Knesset would hold a special session on 18 April, when right-wing Knesset members would seek Prime Minister Netanyahu's support for the bill. (*Haaretz.com*)

According to unnamed sources, settlers from the Beit Hadassah settlement, in the heart of Hebron city, attacked a Palestinian store, causing damage. Israeli policemen arrived at the scene and removed the settlers. (*www.inemc.org*)

Settlers from Nhalil settlement cut down some 150 olive trees in the village of Beitillu, west of Ramallah, according to local sources. The olive trees reportedly belonged to a local farmer. (*Wafa*)

According to a high-ranking Israeli source with knowledge of the blacklist, forty per cent of the non-Israeli citizens whose names appeared on a Shin Bet blacklist ahead of Sunday's so-called "fly-in" protest by pro-Palestinian activists were added to the list, despite the fact that the security service had no concrete information showing that they were connected with the protest in any way. A French diplomat and his wife were among those whose tickets to Israel had been cancelled. (*Haaretz.com*)

PLO Executive Committee Member Ashrawi slammed Israel's treatment of international guests of the "Welcome to Palestine" initiative. "We call upon all countries to protect their nationals from persecution and ... to prevent their national airline companies from becoming instruments of Israeli coercion," Ashrawi said. (*Ma'an News Agency, Wafa*)

Israeli authorities held 47 foreigners pending deportation, out of 79 barred from entering because of their links to the "Welcome to Palestine" fly-in campaign, including 37 French nationals, eight Britons, an Italian and a Canadian, Israeli immigration official Sabine Haddad said. All 79 activists would be barred from entering Israel for five years, Haddad said. Eight detained activists began a hunger strike in solidarity with the Palestinian Prisoners' Day and to renew a demand for their basic right to move freely in the occupied West Bank. (*AFP*)

17

Israeli forces detained a Palestinian man at the Erez crossing into Gaza. He was seeking Israeli permission to bring his three blind children, who were staying at a facility in the West Bank, back to Gaza. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli soldiers shot and injured a Palestinian farmer in the southern Gaza Strip, east of Khan Yunis, as he worked on his land. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A letter written by PA President Abbas was delivered to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu by Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erakat as PA Prime Minister Fayyad pulled out of the meeting. The letter reportedly reiterated Palestinian demands for restarting the peace talks, including an end to settlement building and acceptance of the pre-1967 borders as the foundation of the two-State solution. Mr. Netanyahu's office said that he would respond in writing within two weeks. A joint statement issued after the meeting said that "both sides hope that this exchange of letters will help find a way to advance peace." (*www.washingtonpost.com, The Jerusalem Post, AP*)

During its weekly meeting, the Palestinian Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Fayyad, called upon the United Nations to mobilize and exert pressure on Israel to release all Palestinian detainees. The Cabinet condemned the escalation of settler violence and demanded that the Quartet take active measures to provide protection to the Palestinian people. (*www.palestineembassy.org*)

In a statement, Tayyeb Abdul-Rahim, Secretary-General of the [PA] Presidency, rejected Iran's role in Palestinian affairs, saying that it served Israel's goals by exacerbating the split between Fatah and Hamas. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli forces arrested three Palestinians from Kufr Qaddoum village in the West Bank. The Israeli army had been waging an arrest campaign against activists from the village who participated in weekly protests against Israel's takeover of village land and settlement expansion. (Wafa)

An undercover Israeli army unit seized two Palestinians at the entrance of Beit Ummar, north of Hebron. The two had participated in weekly protests against the expansion of settlements. (Wafa)

The Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights, in its seventeenth annual report, said that although there had been a decline in the number of human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by 33 per cent in 2011, violations still occurred almost on a daily basis. The report, which also covered Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, said that settler violence against Palestinians had increased in 2011. (Wafa)

A group of relatives of Palestinians killed by Israel demanded that the Israeli Government exclude their remains from a State plan to bury unidentified remains, starting on 20 May. Palestinian relatives insisted that Israel follow through on its agreement with the Palestinian Ministry of Civil Affairs in the summer of 2011, in which it agreed to release nearly 200 bodies of slain Palestinians. (Ma'an News Agency)

A Palestinian man was seriously injured in the West Bank town of Hebron after settlers beat him up at his home. (AFP)

Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank marked Palestinian Prisoners' Day with rallies in solidarity with prisoners in Israeli jails. In Gaza City, [former prisoner] Hana Shalabi lit a torch of freedom. A joint press release by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry for Prisoners' Affairs said that a total of 201 Palestinian prisoners had died in Israeli jails since 1967 because of torture, medical negligence, fatal force, premeditated killing and shooting. Seven prisoners died in 2007, including five of medical negligence, making it the highest mortality rate among Palestinians in Israeli prisons in one year since 1967. About 2,000 Palestinians had been arrested since the October prisoners' exchange deal between Hamas and Israel, an average of more than 10 arrests per day. (Ma'an News Agency, Wafa)

"In the framework of Palestinian Prisoners' Day, about 2,300 security prisoners said that they were refusing their daily meals and about 1,200 prisoners said that they were starting a hunger strike," Israel Prison Service spokeswoman Sivan Weizman said. The protest leaders declared that it would be the most determined hunger strike in decades. A special team will be in contact with the protest leaders, but the Prison Service stressed that there would be no negotiations. The Palestinian Prisoners' Club said that 10 Palestinians on administrative detention were on hunger strike, four of them having been transferred to prison hospitals because of the fragile state of their health. Two of them, Bilal Diab, 27, and Thaer Halahla, 34, had been refusing food for 50 days, with medics expressing concern over their deteriorating health. (AFP, Ynetnews)

Israel released Palestinian administrative detainee Khader Adnan. (The Jerusalem Post)

On the occasion of the Palestinian Prisoners' Day, PA President Abbas said that the PA would ask High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to demand the implementation of the Convention in the Palestinian Territory, especially regarding Palestinian prisoners, who should be treated as war prisoners with the entailing basic human rights, in accordance with international law. (Wafa)

Palestinian Minister for Prisoners' Affairs Qarage and other Palestinian leaders called on the United Nations to form an international fact-finding mission to examine "Israeli crimes against Palestinian prisoners". (Ma'an News Agency)

Amnesty International expressed concern at the reported punitive measures against the hunger-strikers. "We remain very concerned about reports that detainees have been denied access to independent doctors, and that some have been punished because of their decision to go on hunger strike – [including by] being placed in isolation, fined or otherwise ill-treated by Israel Prison Services officers," Deputy Middle East and North Africa Director Ann Harrison said. (www.amnesty.org)

18

Israeli forces stormed the village of Hosan, west of Bethlehem, raided three warehouses and confiscated equipment, claiming that the warehouses were built in Area C, which falls under full Israeli control, according to a local official. (Wafa)

IDF forces apprehended 13 Palestinians in the West Bank overnight for interrogation. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli soldiers, stationed along the borders with the Gaza Strip, shot a Palestinian woman in the head while she was working on her land in Khazza'a, a town east of Khan Younis. (Wafa)

Palestinian Chief Negotiator Erekat said that PA President Abbas insisted that his letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu be delivered on Palestinian Prisoner's Day to affirm the status of the issue as a priority. Mr. Erekat told *Voice of Palestine* radio that the letter touched upon several issues, including settlement activities, peace references and the implementation of the Sharm-el-Sheikh Memorandum, which included the release of all prisoners detained before the signing of the Oslo Accord in 1993, in addition to releasing Palestinian prisoners in accordance with the previous agreement between President Abbas and former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. Mr. Erekat denied allegations that the letter contained a threat to dismantle the PA, stressing the need to restore its role in accordance with signed agreements in order to "bring back life to the peace process". (Wafa)

PA Spokesman Ghassan Khatib said that PA President Abbas was not in a position to take the drastic step of dissolving the PA as the Palestinians were not prepared to cede the limited autonomy they enjoyed in 40 per cent of the West Bank. He added that the PA could go ahead with applications for membership in international organizations and that it would also "fight Israel in the international legal arena", adopt activities to "complement non-violent resistance to the occupation", promote academic and trade-union boycotts, and urge divestment from Israeli firms. He said that "the PA has got to be more courageous" by calling for a boycott of all Israeli goods, rather than just those from settlements. He said that the PA was in serious danger of collapse as "the [current] financial crisis is the most serious in the history of the PA". He added that the international community had "totally let down the PA because no serious attempt has been made to hold Israel to its commitments". (www.irishtimes.com)

The Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Jumaa, along with Jordan's Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, visited the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, after a call by President Abbas for Arabs and Muslims to visit the holy city, in spite of the fact it was under Israeli occupation, stressing that visiting was a show of support for its people and holy places. (Wafa)

Ten Jewish activists belonging to the right-wing Israel Land Fund moved into the house of an Arab family in the Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Hanina after their eviction. According to Israel Land Fund director Aryeh King, a Jewish buyer purchased two buildings 35 years ago, each with two apartments. The properties also belonged to Jewish residents prior to 1948, he said. An eight-year court battle with the current residents recently concluded with the court's decision to award ownership of the house to the Jewish buyer. (The Jerusalem Post)

In a statement, Maxwell Gaylard, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory, condemned the eviction of two Palestinian families from their adjacent homes in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Hanina. (www.unesco.org)

The Committee for the Defense of Silwan uncovered the building of Jewish graves in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Wadi Rababeh. According to the Committee's statement, Israeli bulldozers had razed Palestinian land and built graves, which residents believed to be fake, aiming to Judaize and seize the area. (Wafa)

The PA Ministry for Prisoners' Affairs said in a statement that Israel tightened procedures against prisoners on mass hunger strike, putting them in solitary confinement without electricity. Israeli Prison Service Spokeswoman Weizman said that 1,200 detainees whose privileges had been removed were on continuous hunger strike. They had been moved to a special section of the prison but were not in isolation. Amnesty International had expressed concern about the reported punitive measures against the hunger-strikers. (Ma'an News Agency)

In a unanimous decision, the US Supreme Court ruled that a federal law that allows torture victims to sue their overseas assailants do not permit suits against political groups such as the PLO. (The Washington Post)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad met in Ramallah with Andreas Ias, a Danish activist who was injured on 14 April by an Israeli officer. Prime Minister Fayyad condemned the attack and all of Israel's "continuous violations" against foreign activists, including the recent efforts by Israel to prevent over 1,000 visitors from visiting Palestine. (Ma'an News Agency)

19

Israel Public Radio reported that Palestinians stoned an Israeli vehicle near Al-Arub in the Bethlehem area. No one was injured in the incident but the car was damaged. IDF forces searches the area for the perpetrators. (The Jerusalem Post)

A haredi (ultra-Orthodox) Israeli was stabbed in the chest in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Police Spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said that two Arab

suspects had been arrested. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli forces arrested six Palestinians from across the West Bank (Hebron, Tulkarm, Jericho and the town of Azzun, east of Qalqilya). A Palestinian was reported apprehended in Azzun after four pipe bombs were found in his home, which were neutralized by sappers. (*Wafa, Ynetnews*)

Israeli soldiers shot an 18-year-old shepherd in the chest during military training exercises in the northern West Bank, medics said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli forces raided and searched two homes in the town of Yatta, south of Hebron, using police dogs, for almost five hours. (*Wafa*)

Israeli soldiers raided the town of Yabad, near Jenin, and fired tear gas at Palestinian houses and schools located west of the town, according to local sources.

According to eyewitness accounts, dozens of students and villagers suffered from gas inhalation. (*Wafa*)

A confrontation erupted between Palestinians and Israeli forces at the entrance to Arroub refugee camp, north of Hebron, according to local sources. Witnesses claimed that Israeli soldiers fired tear gas at the residents causing a number of suffocation cases. (*Wafa*)

Muhammad Awad, from the National Committee against the Wall and Settlements in Beit Ummar, said that Israeli soldiers fired tear gas at students who were leaving their schools and who threw stones at army vehicles. (*Wafa*)

The IDF announced that it relieved a combat soldier from the Duvdevan Unit of his duties after it emerged that he had kicked a Palestinian man in the face during a training mission. (*Ynetnews*)

The PA Foreign Ministry accused Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman of trying to mislead international public opinion. Mr. Liberman had told Cypriot President Demetris Christofias that PA President Abbas was not interested in a peace agreement, *Haaretz* reported. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to sources in the Israeli defence establishment, some 20 homes built in the "Mitzpeh Cramim" outpost during the past year could spark a coalition crisis.

The homes, located in the outpost north-east of Ramallah, had all been built on land that Israel had officially recognized as being privately owned by Palestinians.

Construction in the outpost had continued unhindered despite stoppage orders by the Ministry of Defense in 2011. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli authorities ordered residents of Khirbet Umm Sidra, an area south of Hebron, to remove the power line that supplied their homes with electricity, according to a local source. (*Wafa*)

Hamas leader Haniyeh announced that a shipment of Qatari fuel oil would arrive in the Gaza Strip within the two days. In an interview with *Aqsa TV*, Mr. Haniyeh stated that the \$35 million shipment would be enough to run the Gaza power station for two months. (scoop.co.nz)

Security sources said that a group of settlers destroyed two vegetable farms in the Tubas governorate. (*Wafa*)

20

Shin Bet reported that a Hamas operative in the Gaza Strip was helping recruit and organize attacks on Israeli soldiers and civilians in the West Bank. He had been identified as Omar Abu Sneina, a former resident of Hebron, who was released from prison in October 2011. (*Middle East Newsline*)

In an interview with *Asharq Al-Awsat*, Hamas senior figure Mushir al-Masri claimed that Israeli insistence on making "false" accusations against Hamas, particularly with regard to involvement in the recent Eilat rocket attacks, aimed to pressure the international community to continue the blockade of the Gaza Strip. He stressed that the strategy of Hamas was now based on limiting its resistance operations against the Israeli occupiers. (*Asharq Al-Awsat*)

Moussa Abu Marzuq, considered the second-highest-ranking official of Hamas, said that his group would view an agreement between Israel and the PA — even one ratified by a referendum of all Palestinians — as a *hudna*, or ceasefire, rather than as a peace treaty. "We will not recognize Israel as a State," he said. "It will be like the relationship between Lebanon and Israel or Syria and Israel." (*The Jewish Forward*)

The Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Jumaa, defended his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in front of an Islamic council in Cairo, saying that his trip was made in the context of asserting Muslim claims to the city, *Al-Ahram* reported. He denied claims that his trip encouraged normalization with Israel. The council renewed its travel ban.

(*The Jerusalem Post*)

Extremist Israeli settlers attacked local and international law professors participating in a conference organized by Hebron University regarding Palestine's membership in the UN. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli authorities bulldozed about 500 olive trees near the town of Salfit in the West Bank. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israel released hunger-striking Palestinian detainee Ahmad Saqr, who had spent 43 months in administrative detention, his brother Ali told *AFP*. (*AFP*)

A spokesman for United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay told reporters in Geneva that the three Palestinians hanged in Gaza on 7 April were executed unlawfully and called on Gaza's ruling Hamas faction to halt a planned execution by firing squad. (*AP*)

21

The Israeli army seized two Palestinian teenagers at an Israeli checkpoint near Nablus saying they were found in possession of weapons. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Israeli army detained five Palestinian shepherds during a non-violent demonstration near Hebron. (*Wafa*)

A delegation of 16 German medics would arrive in the Gaza Strip to perform complex medical operations. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Aides to Israeli Defense Minister Barak released a statement accusing Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz and Vice-Prime Minister Moshe Ya'alon of adopting the rhetoric of the extreme right, after Minister Katz visited the "Ulpana" outpost of the West Bank settlement of "Beit El" and stated that Minister Barak had "taken the Defense Ministry and made it a political tool at the expense of the settlers". Vice-Prime Minister Ya'alon warned that the Government could fall if "Ulpana" residents were forced to leave. (*Haaretz*)

In a statement, the EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah condemned the eviction of the An-Natsha family from their home in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Hanina on 18 April. They also expressed concern over Israeli "plans to build a new settlement in the midst of this traditional Palestinian neighbourhood." (<http://eeas.europa.eu>)

22

Israeli naval forces intercepted a cargo ship suspected of carrying arms in the Mediterranean. Troops boarded the vessel but found no weapons. (*Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post*)

A rocket fired from Gaza landed in southern Israel. No injuries or damage were reported. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu, met with Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal in Doha. Mr. Mashaal reportedly said that he was not hopeful about the peace talks between President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu. However, he expressed the hope for the establishment of the Palestinian unity Government.

Mr. Davutoğlu reiterated his support for Palestine. (www.hurriyetdailynews.com)

The Egyptian Parliament called on Mufti Ali Jumaa to quit after his visit to East Jerusalem which critics said bestowed recognition of Israeli control of the city. (*Reuters*)

Israeli soldiers razed agricultural land in the village of Qalandiya, north-west of Jerusalem. Witnesses said that Israeli authorities had declared their intention to take over 400 dunums to build and expand the Wall to separate the area from Ramallah and Jerusalem and build Talmudic gardens that serve Israeli settlements plans.

(*Wafa*)

The Civil Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem reported that the Israeli Government decided to expand the illegal "Nof Zion" settlement outpost in Jabal Al-Mokabber, in East Jerusalem. The project was part of a plan known as Project 8815 – 100 units were built during the first stage of the project while the second phase will lead to the construction of 217 new units. (*IMEMC*)

Palestinian factions organized a protest at the UNRWA headquarters in Gaza City to coincide with a strike by the agency's employees. At a press conference, Palestinian Peoples Party official Walid al-Awad said that national and Islamist factions had held an emergency meeting "after UNRWA's presidency sent a commission to question a number of the organizations' employees in Gaza City." A leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Abdul-Hamid Hamad, said that UNRWA's questioning of employees amounted to "intelligence work". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

23

Israeli soldiers assaulted a Palestinian family in the village of Qalandiya, north-west of Jerusalem, during attempts to confiscate their property. (*Wafa*)

During an address to the Security Council, the Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mr. Vitaly Churkin, stated that the Russian Federation was working

actively towards inter-Palestinian reconciliation, which was critical for a sustainable settlement in the Middle East. He said that a second inter-Palestinian meeting would be held in Moscow in the second half of May. During those consultations, Russian diplomats planned to “continue efforts to encourage Hamas and Fatah to achieve national reconciliation on the basis of the Doha agreements”. (*Itar-Tas News Agency*)

PA President Abbas met with the Egyptian ambassador to the PA, Yasser Othman, and briefed him on the political situation in the wake of his letter to the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu the previous week. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

PA President Abbas is a worthy and serious partner, and it was certainly possible to reach a peace agreement with him during the past three years, Israeli President Shimon Peres said in an interview. (*Haaretz*)

In a briefing to the Security Council, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe expressed the hope that the recent exchange of letters agreed to by Israeli and Palestinian leaders could provide an opening for further dialogue. Mr. Pascoe also noted that the Quartet recognized at its meeting on 11 April the urgent need for tangible signs of progress on the ground, particularly the need for continued international support for the PA's institution-building efforts. (www.un.org)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad announced that Palestinians had joined an IMF initiative to disseminate statistics to the public becoming a member of the Special Data Dissemination Standard or SDDS. Mr. Fayyad said, "This was the positive outcome of a five-year effort of the Palestinian Authority". (*Ma'an News Agency, Xinhua*)

Israeli soldiers demolished two wells in the town of Halhul, north of Hebron. (*Wafa*)

Settlers from the settlement of “Avni Heifetz” raided a piece of land and cut down dozens of olive trees belonging to a Palestinian resident in an area north of Tulkarm. (*Wafa*)

Palestinian medical sources reported that eight school children were injured when a group of extremist Israeli settlers from the illegal Yitzhar settlement, attacked them in Orif village, south of the northern West Bank city of Nablus. (*IMEMC News*)

A ministerial committee consisting of Ministers Ehud Barak, Moshe Ya'alon, Eli Yishai, Benny Begin, Yuval Steinitz, Yisrael Katz, Dan Meridor and Gideon Sa'ar instructed the State Prosecutor's Office to ask the High Court of Justice to delay the planned evacuation of the “Ulpana” outpost. Prime Minister Netanyahu and Attorney-General Yehuda Weinstein also took part in the meeting. The Prime Minister and Minister Ya'alon both said that the neighbourhood should not be evacuated, while Minister Barak reiterated that the State must raze “Ulpana” and relocate its residents to an alternative site in “Beit El”. (www.ynetnews.com)

Israel threatened to close a Palestinian school in the southern Hebron hills to “protect the security of Israeli settlers”, the school principal said. (*Wafa*)

In a joint press release, UNRWA and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs condemned the previous week's forcible displacement of 67 Palestine refugees in the West Bank, more than half of them children, as a result of the eviction or demolition of their homes and other civilian structures. (www.unrwa.org)

IDF soldiers saved the life of a Palestinian baby who arrived in critical condition at a base near the Haramish Crossing in the West Bank. Dr. Lt. Michael Finkel, doctor for the Home Front Command's Kedem Battalion, immediately treated the baby with antibiotics and fluids. The baby was then transferred by ambulance to a hospital in Ramallah. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

According to prisoners' groups, an Israeli military court refused an appeal by long-term hunger-strikers Thaer Halahla and Bilal Diyab to end their detention without charge. Their lawyer, Jamil Khatib, vowed to take his clients' petitions to Israel's Supreme Court. Negotiations had been more difficult after over a thousand prisoners had joined the hunger strike. Mr. Khatib said that the appeal was denied so as not to encourage the other prisoners. (*Ma'an News Agency, Reuters*)

The OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) granted its annual award for development to families of Palestinian prisoners and released detainees, PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Qaraqe said. OFID will bestow the \$100,000 award at its congress to be held in the United Kingdom in June. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

24

Israeli forces detained fishermen working off the coast of the Gaza Strip and seized their equipment. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli forces detained a member of Fatah and four other Palestinians in Yatma village, south of Nablus, at a checkpoint, one of their relatives said. Israeli news reports said that two people were detained carrying explosives in the northern West Bank, but it was not clear if the incidents were related. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli forces raided several areas in the West Bank and arrested three Palestinians, including two from the Jenin area and one from the Hebron area, according to security sources and a local activist. (*Wafa*)

Prime Minister Netanyahu voiced support for the first time for Palestinians to establish a contiguous State saying that their future country should not look like "Swiss cheese". (*Reuters*)

Two of the architects of the Oslo accords, which were intended to be the basis of a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict almost 20 years ago, had radically changed their position following the long-term impasse between the two sides. Former Israeli Minister Beilin, who worked in secret on the accords, called on the Palestinians to dismantle their governing body saying that it had become a fig leaf and a farce. Former PA Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei, who was one of the key negotiators in the Oslo process, said that the two-State solution was defunct and that the option of one single democratic State for both Israelis and Palestinians must now be considered. (*The UK Guardian*)

State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland said: “[US Special Envoy] David Hale has been in the region all week trying to work on the issues involved ... and bring the parties back to the table.” (www.state.gov)

The Israeli Government announced that it had granted legal status to three settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank, a move that could shore up the governing coalition but which drew sharp Palestinian condemnation. The three outposts – “Bruchin”, “Sansana” and “Rechelim” – were built on land Israel had declared “State-owned”. The Israeli anti-settlement group Peace Now said that the change in the status of the three outposts was the first time since 1990 that the Israeli Government had established a new settlement. In response to that development, PLO official Erekat said that Palestinian leaders were examining ways to secure a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlement activity. (*Ma'an News Agency, Reuters*)

Palestinian Chief Negotiator Erakat said that Palestinian leaders were examining ways to secure a Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlement building, after Israel gave legal sanction to three settler outposts. PLO Executive Committee member and lawmaker Ashrawi said in a statement that “organized efforts to legalize the illegal outposts of “Bruchin”, “Rechelim” and “Sansana” are a deliberate attempt to circumvent international law and to scuttle all chances for peace”. (*Ma'an News Agency, Wafa*)

The Spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued the following statement: “The Secretary-General is deeply troubled by the decision of the Government of Israel to formally approve three outposts in the West Bank: “Sansana”, “Rechelim” and “Bruchin”. The Secretary-General reiterates that all settlement activity is illegal under international law. It runs contrary to Israel's obligations under the road map and repeated Quartet calls for the parties to refrain from provocations. The Secretary-General is disappointed that such a decision comes at a time of renewed efforts to restart dialogue.” (*UN News Centre*)

According to a local activist, Israeli forces demolished an animal barn, razed surrounding land and destroyed a retaining wall in al-Khader, a town south of Bethlehem. Gaza hospitals were running out of medicine and supplies. Dr. Munir al-Barsh, Director-General of the Pharmaceutical Department at Gaza's Ministry of Health, confirmed that a number of supplies had run out completely, including bandages, syringes and plaster for casts, as well as 186 types of medicine. (www.ibtimes.com)

Unnamed sources said that Egypt would close the Rafah border crossing with the Gaza Strip the following day for the commemoration of Israel's official withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula in 1982 following the signing of a peace treaty with Israel three years earlier. The closure will only last for the day. Egypt customarily closes the Rafah crossing on Fridays and national holidays. (*Egypt Independent*)

USAID announced a new contribution of \$22.6 million in food and cash to the World Food Programme's food assistance projects to vulnerable Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The announcement came during a visit of the USAID Assistant Administrator for the Middle East, Mara Rudman, to the agency's warehouses

in Qalandia near Jerusalem. (www.wfp.org)

UNRWA held an inauguration ceremony to officially hand over 223 housing units it constructed with a \$7 million donation from the Dutch Government. The units will provide new shelter to over 1,300 Palestinians living in Gaza's Khan Younis refugee camp. (www.unrwa.org)

Palestinian Association for Human Rights (Shahed), in its annual report, described the Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon as "a breeding ground for disease, home collapses and a well of social problems". Shahed called on the Lebanese Government to allow Palestinians to own property and collect social security and to work in the some 30 "liberal" professions they were currently barred from, including law, engineering and medicine. (*The Daily Star*)

According to senior Government officials and network security experts, the PA instructed Internet service providers to block access to news websites whose reporting was critical of President Abbas. As many as eight news outlets had been rendered unavailable to many Internet users in the West Bank after technicians at the Palestinian Telecommunications Company interfered with access to the sites. Experts said that it was the biggest shift toward routine Internet censorship in the PA's history. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The tenth Palestinians in Europe Conference would take place on Saturday, 28 April, in Denmark. The event is organized by the General Secretariat of the Palestinians in Europe Conference, the Palestinian Return Centre and the Palestinian Forum in Denmark. The conference is entitled "Our Spring blossoms our Return". (*IMEMC*)

Activists said that an Israeli military court ordered the release on bail of prominent Palestinian protest leader Bassem Al-Tamini, who had been held since March 2011 on charges of inciting youths to throw rocks and organizing protests. The EU and Amnesty International had condemned his detention as based on confessions extracted from children. (*AP*)

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In an interview with *Maariv*, Israeli President Peres warned about Israel's direction, saying that without peace with the Palestinians, its economic prowess and future would be imperilled. Mr. Peres said, 'Israel has been blessed with a lot of talent that manufactures many excellent products. And in order to export, you need good products, but you also need good relations. So why make peace? Because if Israel's image gets worse, it will begin to suffer boycotts. There is already an artistic boycott against us – they won't let Habimah Theater enter London – and signs of an undeclared financial boycott are beginning to emerge.' (*The New York Times*)

In a memorandum, President Obama directed Secretary of State Clinton to transmit to Congress his determination to waive the provisions of section 7040 (a) of Public Law 112-74 (the Act), in order to provide funds appropriated to the Palestinian Authority. (www.whitehouse.gov)

John Gatt-Rutter, EU Representative in Ramallah, said that the EU, Switzerland and Austria, through the EU mechanism for assistance to the Palestinians (PEGASE), will contribute €10 million to fund a programme providing 64,743 Palestinian families in the West Bank and Gaza with cash and in kind assistance. He said, "This is our first contribution for 2012 to the social allowance scheme of the Ministry of Social Affairs which the EU has been supporting not only through direct financial support but also in its efforts to materialize a comprehensive social protection scheme to effectively support all Palestinians in need." (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israel temporarily closed all its crossings to the Occupied Palestinian Territory "for security reasons" until 27 April, coinciding with Israeli Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism Remembrance Day and Independence Day. (*ANSAMed*)

Commenting on an Islamic scholar's argument, PA President Abbas said that visits to Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem by high-level Arab personalities should not be seen as acceptance of Israel's prolonged occupation of the eastern half of the city. He renewed his call on Arabs and Muslims all over the world to visit Jerusalem. (*Reuters*)

The French Foreign Ministry said that the Jerusalem tramway extension project, which links several Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem to West Jerusalem, posed a political problem. (www.ambafrance-us.org)

France objected to the destruction by the Israeli army of two cisterns in the Hebron area which it funded. France called on the Israeli authorities to stop destroying property and humanitarian infrastructure in Area C. Protests had been lodged with Israel's Ambassador to France, as well as with the Israeli authorities in the region. (www.diplomatie.gouv.fr)

In a letter to the Security Council, Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN, denounced Israel's legalization of three West Bank settler outposts – "Sansana", "Rechelim" and "Bruchin" – as an illegal attempt to entrench "its massive network of illegal settlements". He called on the Security Council "to act immediately to address these continuing illegal, grave actions by Israel." (*Haaretz*)

In a statement, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton condemned Israel's legalization of three West Bank settler outposts, saying that she was "extremely concerned", and called upon Israel to reverse its decision. (www.consilium.europa.eu)

Israel's Supreme Court rejected an appeal by a Palestinian prisoner, Hassan Safdi, 31, who had been refusing food for more than seven weeks to protest being held without charge under the administrative detention procedure. Mr. Safdi's lawyer, Osama Maqbul, said that he had lodged an appeal against the order with an Israeli military court and a second appeal to the Supreme Court, but both had been rejected with the court urging Mr. Safdi to end his protest. (*AFP*)

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People adopted a statement expressing its utmost concern about the recent decision of the Israeli Government to legalize three settlement outposts. It also denounced Israel's relentless demolitions of Palestinian homes and dwellings in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and called upon the Security Council to meet its legal obligations and to compel Israel to halt and dismantle settlements in order to safeguard the two-State solution. (*UN press release*)

Israeli police arrested three people for disturbing the peace outside the Tel Aviv offices of the left-wing organization "Zochrot", where a protest was planned commemorating pre-1948 Palestinian villages, just two blocks away from the main Independence Day celebrations at Rabin Square. According to the police, group members had planned to lay out fliers on the sidewalk and side streets outside their offices showing the names of Palestinian villages that existed within the Green Line before the founding of the State of Israel. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

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Signing a peace agreement with the Palestinians would give Israel more time to focus on building a better future for its children, President Peres told foreign diplomats who had gathered at his official residence in Jerusalem to mark Israel's sixty-fourth Independence Day. (*Ynetnews*)

Fatah leaders in Gaza met with representatives of PLO factions to discuss ways to cooperate on national projects. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

PA Communications Minister Abu Daqqa announced that he would step down and revealed that the Attorney-General's office had ordered several websites shut down over the past six months. (*AP, BBC*)

Israeli soldiers detained two Palestinian teenagers, a 16-year-old and a 14-year-old, near Amatin village in the northern West Bank. An Israeli military spokesman said that two Palestinians were detained for throwing rocks at an Israeli settler. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Nathmi Salman, Mayor of Deir Istiya, said that the IDF delivered orders to Abdul Mansour, Qasem Mansour and Muqbel Awad from Wadi Qana, in the northern West Bank, to uproot 1,070 of their olive trees. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation said that Israel's move to legalize the three West Bank outposts of "Bruchin", "Rechelim" and "Sansana", along with other unilateral moves, undermined chances for the resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. (*The Voice of Russia*)

For the second time in a week, a dozen settlers attacked the outskirts of the village of Urif, south of Nablus, according to witnesses. The army, which was present in the area, fired tear gas at the Palestinians who attempted to defend their village, causing suffocation among some. (*Wafa*)

Settlers blocked the road which links the West Bank town of Hawara, south of Nablus, to Tulkarm and Qalqilya and which passes by the settlement of "Yizhar" as they celebrated the sixty-fourth anniversary of the creation of Israel. Israeli troops who were in the area did not stop the settlers. (*Wafa*)

Ahmad al-Bitawi, a researcher for the International Solidarity Foundation for Human Rights said that Palestinian women detained in Israel would join the mass hunger

strike by refusing food for two days each week. He said that Lina Al-Jarbouni had been moved to solitary confinement in Ramla prison for refusing to stop her nine-day hunger strike. The prisoners were demanding an improvement to their living conditions and an end to solitary confinement. (*Ma'an News Agency*) Four Palestinians were injured when clashes erupted at a demonstration in support of Palestinian detainees on hunger strike outside Israel's Ofer detention centre near Ramallah. Israeli forces detained Abdullah Abu Rahmeh, a leader in the non-violent resistance movement from Bil'in. (*Ma'an News Agency*) Israeli prison authorities escalated its punishment of striking prisoners in an effort to force them to end their strike, a statement by Addameer said. Methods of punishment currently being employed against hunger striking prisoners included attacks on prisoners' sections; confiscation of personal belongings; transfers from one prison to another; and solitary confinement, fines and the denial of family and lawyer visits, the statement said. (*Wafa*) The number of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in Israeli jails rose to 2,000, with more preparing to join the protest the following week. Seven prisoners had been transferred to a prison medical centre, including Tha'er Halahleh, 34, and Bilal Diab, 27, who had been on hunger strike for 58 days. Their appeals against imprisonment without charge – known as administrative detention – were dismissed by a military court earlier in the week. (*The Guardian*)

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Israeli abuses against Palestinian fishermen in Gazan waters had escalated in recent weeks. The Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights had noted that Israeli forces had recently begun opening fire directly on boats' engines with no justifiable cause. (*ReliefWeb*)

Israeli soldiers forcibly evicted a Palestinian resident of the Jordan Valley. Adel Zamel and his family were left homeless after they were displaced from their home. (*Wafa*)

Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erakat condemned Israel's publication of a guidebook that considered the occupied West Bank as part of Israel. "The Israeli Ministry of Defense is telling its citizens to carry weapons when hiking in the occupied West Bank near Palestinian villages," Mr. Erakat said. "This is an outrageous case of incitement to violence against Palestinians that reflects Israel's official policy and mindset. It should be of grave concern to the international community." (*PNN*) For the first time since 1967, settlers raised Israeli flags on top of the fourth holiest site in Islam, the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. The head of the Waqf and Endowment Department in Hebron, Zeid al-Ja'bary, stated that "this is an attack against the religious and historic stature of this site to millions of Muslims around the world". Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and his coalition partners had declared the Ibrahimi Mosque, also referred to as the "Cave of Patriarchs", to be part of the Jewish Heritage sites, a move designed to preclude the Palestinian attempt to have UNESCO officially include the Old City of Hebron on its list of historic and archaeological cities. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli Education Minister Gideon Sa'ar called Israel's legalization of three West Bank settlement outposts a "holiday gift" from Prime Minister Netanyahu for the nation's Independence Day. The remark came a day after the Spokesman for the Prime Minister, Mark Regev, had been quoted in *The New York Times* as saying that the recognition of the outposts of "Bruchin", "Sansana" and "Rechelim" did not constitute a legalization of unauthorized settlements but rather a resolution of "procedural and technical" issues such as improper permits and mistakenly building on the wrong hill. (*JTA*)

The Israeli Government asked the Supreme Court to delay the eviction of the "Upana" [outpost] of the "Beit El" settlement, built on land belonging to Palestinians, ordered for 1 May, and requested a three-month delay. (*Reuters, Ma'an News Agency, The Jerusalem Post, Ynetnews*)

A teenager was seriously injured when he was hit in the head by a tear gas canister during a weekly anti-settlement protest in the Qalqilya-area village of Kufri Qaddoum. Israeli soldiers fired tear gas at the protesters who, in addition to the Palestinians, included international and Israeli activists. (*Wafa*)

Ten right-wing Israeli activists, mainly from the "Migron" settlement, broke into the West Bank Division Command base in "Beit El". The activists, all between 13 and 18-years-old, held posters denouncing the IDF and condemning the Government's policy concerning illegal outposts. (*Israel Hayom*)

A statement by Hamas said that Political Bureau Chief Khaled Mashaal and PA President Abbas spoke by telephone about rallying grassroots Palestinian efforts and all other levels to support Palestinian prisoners in their hunger strike against Israeli prison policies and their demands to end the practices of administrative detention and solitary confinement and to reverse recent policy with respect to rolling back prisoner privileges and increasing penalties. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The World Bank approved a \$3 million grant which would fund ongoing efforts by the PA to register land in the Dura area, in the southern West Bank. The project is co-financed by the Government of Finland. (*Wafa*)

In its second annual fundraiser, St. John Ambulance helped raise awareness and funds for access to healthcare in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. With the support of the local community in Ottawa, the Order of St. John and the Palestinian Ambassador to Canada, the event raised more than \$10,000 for an East Jerusalem-based eye hospital. (*Wafa*)

Thousands of Christian and Jewish supporters of Israel bombarded CBS executives with complaints about a "60 Minutes" segment that blamed Israel for the exodus of Christians from the West Bank and Jerusalem. In the segment that aired on 22 April, correspondent Bob Simon, Palestinian Christian leaders and others blame Israel and the settlements for Christians leaving Bethlehem and Jerusalem. (*JTA*)

The Third Annual 5k Run/Walk will commence outside the Edward Said Conservatory of Music in Birzeit in order to raise money and awareness for the Ramallah Children's Hospital. (*PNN*)

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The IDF arrested a Palestinian in possession of two explosive devices near the Hawara roadblock south of Nablus. The bombs were later detonated. The suspect was taken in for interrogation by security authorities. (*Ynetnews.com*)

Israeli forces arrested two men as they attempted to cross a security fence carrying sharp objects from the southern Gaza Strip, Israel's army sources said. On the same day, Israeli soldiers also opened fire at civilians in the northern Gaza Strip as they passed by the border fence. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli police arrested four young Palestinians from the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of a-Tur on suspicion of attacking a Jewish family in a public park in the Valley of Ben Hinnom during Independence Day. (*Ynetnews.com*)

The Palestinians will not stop efforts to get full UN membership, even with the release by the United States of withheld Palestinian aid, PA Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Malki said. He said that the strategic decision to go to the UN for full membership "is going on and has nothing to do with" the release of the funds. (*Xinhua*)

Tunisia's Interim President, Moncef Marzouki, met with PA President Abbas in Carthage. According to the communiqué issued by the Tunisian Presidency, the two Presidents discussed Palestinian reconciliation and the Doha agreement. President Abbas also announced that a parcel of land in Ramallah would be allocated for the new Tunisian Embassy. (www.tunisia-live.net)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad told a group of protesters in Ramallah that he would protect the use of an Arabic PA-approved curriculum in East Jerusalem schools. The Palestinian NGO network organized the demonstration against an Israeli directive that Jerusalem schools that were granted funds by Israeli authorities should use only textbooks prepared by the Jerusalem Educational Administration, a joint body of the municipality and the Israeli Ministry of Education. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Co-operative Group became the first major European supermarket group to end trade with companies that exported produce from illegal Israeli settlements. The UK's fifth biggest food retailer and its largest mutual business, the Co-op had taken the step as an extension of its existing policy, which had been not to source produce from illegal settlements that had been built on Palestinian territories in the West Bank. (www.guardian.co.uk)

Egyptian border authorities prevented an Egyptian convoy of the Egyptian Engineers Union from entering the Gaza Strip to deliver construction materials to the besieged coastal region. (*IMEMC*)

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The Israeli navy captured a Palestinian fishing boat with five fishermen men on board in Gaza, leading them to the port city of Ashdod. A local source said that the naval force seized their boat. (*Wafa*)

Two Arab students were attacked by a group of Jewish youth in the Kiryat Yuval neighbourhood in Jerusalem, injuring them lightly. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

A Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) delegation, led by Deputy Speaker Ahmed Mohammed Bahar, arrived in Manama for an official visit as part of a pan-Arab tour to rally support for the Palestinian cause. Bahrain's House of Representatives Speaker Khalifa bin Ahmed Al-Dhahrani met with the delegation, where he called upon all Palestinians to pursue national reconciliation and joint action in order to accomplish their aspirations. During the meeting, Mr. Bahar pointed out the plight of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and called for an international effort for their release, including PLC Speaker Aziz Al-Dweik and other parliamentarians. (*Bahrain News Agency*)

A public opinion poll on a sample of 840 Palestinians, including respondents from East Jerusalem and Gaza, was published by Near East Consulting. The results showed that while 59 per cent of Palestinians supported a peace agreement with Israel, 44 per cent called on Hamas to commit to its position opposing Israel. A total

of 57 per cent said that they did not trust any Palestinian political factions; 33 per cent trusted Fatah, 7 per cent trusted Hamas and 3 per cent trusted other factions. Almost 43 per cent said that neither Fatah nor Hamas worked for the greater interest of the Palestinian people. Fifty-two per cent of the respondents said that both Fatah and Hamas were responsible for the delay in the implementation of the Doha agreement. The poll also showed that 79 per cent of Palestinians expressed trust in President Abbas, whereas 21 per cent said that they trusted Hamas leader Haniyeh. (Wafa)

The Israeli Supreme Court froze for 60 days the demolition order, originally scheduled for 1 May, of five unauthorized buildings on the edge of the "Beit El" settlement in the West Bank. After the end of the period, the Court would meet again to hear the Government's argument. A statement by the Yesh Din human rights group said that the ruling showed that the Court had bowed to political pressure. (Reuters)

Presidential Spokesman Abu Rudeineh condemned an Israeli decision to build temporary housing units in the "Kokhav Ya'acov" settlement near Ramallah, saying that it refuted earlier statements by Prime Minister Netanyahu on his desire to achieve peace. He urged the international community to make Israel halt all unilateral actions that hinder the peace process. Earlier in the day, the Israeli Cabinet unanimously approved the establishment of temporary units to house settlers who were to be removed from the settlement of "Migron", near Ramallah, to allow for the evacuation of the post as ruled by the Israeli Supreme Court. (Wafa)

Israeli settlers razed Palestinian-owned agricultural land near Qasra village, south-east of Nablus, said Ghassan Daghlis, the PA official in charge of monitoring settlements in West Bank. (Wafa)

Palestinian medical sources said that a Palestinian man was seriously injured after being attacked by a pack of boars that belonged to Israeli settlers near Kufur Thuluth Palestinian village, near Qalqilya. (IMEMC)

PA President Abbas said that his Government would refer the issue of prisoners to the UN, internationalizing the campaign. The number of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike had grown to around 1,400 participants. Two prisoners, Bilal Diab and Thaer Halahlah, were on their sixty-fourth day of the strike, their lawyers reported. Eight other detainees had been hospitalized. (Reuters)

Hamas leader Haniyeh called for a new intifada to support Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israel Prison Service Commissioner Aharon Franko met with Palestinian prisoners and promised a prompt response to their demands, the Palestinian Ministry for Prisoners' Affairs said. Mr. Franko told jailed Fatah leader Barghouti and four other prisoners that a committee that looked into their demands had finished its work and would present its recommendations in 10 days' time. (DPA)

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Four Palestinians were wounded during a raid by Israeli soldiers of the Qalandiya refugee camp north of East Jerusalem, Palestinian medical sources reported. (IMEMC)

B'Tselem in a report said that the Israeli army units that killed a Palestinian in the West Bank village of Kufir Ramun on 27 March had been on a training mission and not on an urgent military necessity as claimed by the army. The soldiers, dressed in civilian clothing, had entered the Shawakhah family house in the village, where three Palestinian brothers had mistaken them for thieves in their yard and had come out with knives and clubs to confront them. The soldiers opened fire killing one and seriously injuring the other two. (www.btselem.org)

PA President Abbas said that "the Palestinian Government is determined to again approach the UN General Assembly to obtain recognition of a Palestinian State". (AFP)

Speaking before the Tunisian Parliament, PA President Abbas said: "I choose you [Benjamin] Netanyahu as my partner for peace. With whom else can I make peace?" but added that Mr. Netanyahu must "choose between settlements and peace". (Haaretz)

Estonia upgraded the status of the Palestinian diplomatic delegation to the level of a Mission, a press release issued by the PA Foreign Ministry said. (Wafa)

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) collected \$65 million in support for the Gaza health sector, an OIC representative said. (Ma'an News Agency)

During a meeting with Juan-Pedro Schaerer, the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross Mission for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, PA Prime Minister Fayyad called on the organization to respond to the striking Palestinian prisoners' demands. He stressed the importance of pressuring Israel to stop its violations against prisoners and respond to their rights which were guaranteed by international laws and agreements. (Wafa)

The Belgian Senate adopted a resolution reiterating its support for the Middle East peace process. It highlighted Israel's obligations concerning the treatment of prisoners and asked the Israeli authorities to respect international law, in particular with regard to administrative detention, which should be an exceptional measure.

They called on Israel to respect international agreements on the rights of the child by facilitating visitation rights. (Wafa)

The PA Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs issued a statement saying that imprisoned Fatah leader Barghouti met with the Hadarim Prison's Chief, Aharon Franco, who told him that the authorities would be responding soon to the prisoners' demands as a designated committee had already completed its review of the situation. Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails had warned that if the Israeli authorities did not take practical measures to meet their conditions, the scope of the hunger strike, already in its second week, would be expanded. (Ma'an News Agency)

Hamas Political Bureau Chief Mashaal said that Israel had broken its promises under the last swap deal to improve detainees' conditions. Speaking after meeting Egypt's Foreign Minister Mohammad Kamel Amr in Cairo, Mr. Mashaal said that the October 2011 deal included pledges to end solitary confinement and other restrictions. The previous day, Mr. Mashaal met with Arab League Secretary-General Nabil al-Arabi and agreed to petition the UN on the issue of Palestinian and Arab prisoners in Israel. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israel's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Yigal Palmor criticized a decision by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to place his country on a list of nations considered to be moving to further restrict advocacy and rights groups. The Office of the High Commissioner had issued a statement the previous week criticizing an Israeli law requiring groups to report more rigorously on funding they received from foreign Governments. Mr. Palmor said, "The Human Rights Commission is saying that reporting and disclosing funding is tantamount to total repression." (AP)

More than 7,000 UNRWA staff in Jordan staged a one-day strike to demand better pay and conditions. The staff, including teachers and medical staff, "demand a \$140 salary raise and they do not want their annual bonus cut," said UNRWA Spokesperson Anwar Abu Sakinah. (The Daily Star)