



# FRAGMENTED LIVES HUMANITARIAN OVERVIEW 2014

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United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory  
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Coordination Saves Lives

## FOREWORD

The year 2014 was a traumatic one in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). In the Gaza Strip, 1.8 million Palestinians endured the worst escalation of hostilities since 1967: over 1,500 Palestinian civilians were killed, more than 11,000 injured and some 100,000 remain displaced. In the West Bank, increased confrontations between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli forces resulted in the highest casualty levels in recent years, while settlement expansion and the forced displacement of Palestinians in Area C and in East Jerusalem continued. Overall, some 4,000,000 Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remain under an Israeli military occupation that prevents them from exercising many of their basic human rights.

This is the fourth year in which the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has detailed the key humanitarian concerns in the oPt. The purpose of the report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the underlying causes or drivers of the humanitarian situation in the oPt in a given year. In place of the extended narrative of previous years, the main trends and indicators for 2014 are represented in info-graphics, with links provided throughout the report to convey additional information and context. The concerns outlined in the Humanitarian Overview reflect the advocacy priorities identified by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the main humanitarian coordinating body for UN agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the oPt. In 2014, these priorities remain Accountability; Life, Liberty & Security; Forced Displacement; Movement & Access; and Humanitarian Space. The Overview is structured around these priorities, with the issue of accountability addressed throughout. Each section contains a calendar of the main developments in 2014 and a Way Forward, which details the main steps required to rectify policies and practices inconsistent with international law and reduce humanitarian vulnerability.

As with all OCHA reports, the Humanitarian Overview is based on data collated and cross-checked from multiple sources that include OCHA, other UN agencies, international NGOs, Palestinian and Israeli NGOs and, where relevant, government sources.

The overall situation described in this report is a protection-based crisis, with negative humanitarian ramifications. This crisis stems from the prolonged occupation and recurrent hostilities, alongside a system of policies that undermine the ability of Palestinians to live normal, self-sustaining lives and realize the full spectrum of their rights, including the right to self-determination. Were these factors removed, Palestinians would be able to develop their government institutions and economy without the need for humanitarian assistance.

To achieve progress in this regard, a range of actions is required by all relevant parties, particularly the following:

- Israel, the occupying power, must fulfil its primary obligations to protect the Palestinian civilian population, and ensure that people's basic needs and human rights are met. This would include taking action to secure the physical protection of Palestinian civilians, cease their displacement, ensure accountability for violence and abuse, and lift restrictions on the movement of people and goods, as well as on access to land and resources.

- All parties to the conflict, including armed groups, must fulfil their legal obligations to conduct hostilities in accordance with international law to ensure the protection of all civilians during hostilities and to ensure accountability for acts committed in contravention of the laws of armed conflict.

Third states share responsibility for ensuring respect for international humanitarian law in the oPt and for promoting compliance with human rights obligations, and should take all necessary actions stemming from that responsibility.

## LIFE, LIBERTY AND SECURITY

### oPt overview

Palestinian civilians across the oPt continue to be subject to threats to their lives, physical safety and liberty from conflict-related violence, and from policies and practices related to the Israeli occupation, including settler violence. 2014 witnessed the highest civilian death toll since 1967 due to the July-August hostilities in Gaza, and a significant increase in Palestinian fatalities in the West Bank. There was also a marked increase in Israeli casualties, as a result of Gaza hostilities and from tension in East Jerusalem.

Although the context in which civilians are killed or injured and their property destroyed and damaged varies, there is a pervasive crisis of accountability, with no effective remedy for the vast majority of alleged violations of international law, to ensure justice for the victims and to prevent future violations.

### Way Forward

- During hostilities, all parties must distinguish at all times between civilians and combatants and take all necessary precautions to avoid or minimize civilian casualties and damage to civilian objects. In particular:

- Israeli forces should refrain from launching attacks, if these are expected to cause loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, or damage to civilian objects, which would be

excessive in relation to the military advantage anticipated.

- Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip should refrain from the indiscriminate firing of rockets and other projectiles at Israel and, to the extent possible, ensure that civilian areas in Gaza are not used to launch attacks or to shield military forces or installations.
- Outside of active hostilities, Israel should take all necessary measures to protect the Palestinian civilian population, including by:
  - Preventing excessive use of force by its military and security forces during law enforcement operations.
  - Taking appropriate measures to bring to an end attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their property.
- All parties must ensure that there is accountability for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and ensure that victims have access to effective remedies, including compensation:
  - The Government of Israel should fulfil its obligations by continuing current efforts to review investigation mechanisms regarding allegations of violations of international law by its security forces to ensure that these mechanisms are in accordance with international legal standards.
  - The authorities in Gaza should fulfil their obligations to ensure accountability by ensuring investigations are conducted into the launching of indiscriminate attacks from civilian areas in Gaza and at civilian areas in Israel.
- All parties must ensure that due process is respected at all times for persons in detention. Palestinian children in detention should be treated with due consideration to their age, in accordance with international legal standards.

#### Main trends in

#### LIFE, LIBERTY AND SECURITY IN 2014

##### **Gaza Strip**

Between 7 July and 26 August, the Gaza Strip witnessed the deadliest escalation in hostilities since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967. According to preliminary figures by the Protection Cluster, a total of **2,220** Palestinians, including **1,492** civilians, were killed. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, **11,231** Palestinians were injured. Israeli attacks striking residential buildings accounted for a significant number of the civilian casualties, raising concerns about respect for the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in attack under international humanitarian law (IHL). The hostilities also had a severe impact on the Israeli civilian population due to indiscriminate rocket and mortar fire from armed groups in Gaza. The Israeli fatality toll from the hostilities was **71**, predominantly military, **66** soldiers. An independent commission of inquiry has been established by the UN Human Rights Council to investigate violations of both IHL and human rights law in the oPt, particularly in the Gaza Strip, in the context of military operations conducted after 13 June 2014 and to make recommendations, in particular on accountability measures, and on ways and means to protect civilians against any further assaults.

##### **Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)**

Significant numbers of unexploded ordnance (UXO), including **ERW from armed groups** are dispersed across Gaza, posing a serious threat to the life and physical integrity of the population.

##### **Accountability**

There are serious concerns regarding the lack of accountability arising from the conduct of the July-August hostilities in Gaza. The Israeli Military Advocate General (MAG) has so far announced criminal investigations into **19** "exceptional incidents" relating to the hostilities, of which two have been closed, with approximately **126** allegations being assessed by a fact-finding assessment mechanism.<sup>1</sup> However, in Operation Cast Lead (2008/09), only **three** soldiers were convicted, with the longest sentence involving the theft of a credit card; and in Pillar of Defence (2012) no criminal investigations were opened into allegations of violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) by Israeli forces, although two fact-finding committees were formed to investigate specific incidents. As with previous escalations no information is available indicating that investigations are being conducted by the Palestinian authorities regarding alleged violations by Palestinian armed groups.

##### **West Bank, including East Jerusalem**

The West Bank witnessed the highest number of Palestinian fatalities in incidents involving Israeli forces since 2007 and the highest number of Palestinian injuries since 2005, when OCHA began collecting data. Violence peaked in the second part of the year, following the abduction and killing of three Israeli youths and the reported retaliatory killing of a Palestinian youth in East Jerusalem in July; in protests against the July-August hostilities in the Gaza Strip; and in confrontations during October and November regarding perceived changes to the status quo of the Al Aqsa Mosque compound. Also of concern is the sharp increase in the percentage of child casualties by Israeli forces; **13** were killed, compared to **four** in 2013, the highest number recorded in the West Bank since 2006. Palestinian attacks against Israeli civilians (mostly settlers) and security forces also rose in 2014, with Israeli fatalities increasing from **four** to **12**.

##### **Cause of Injuries**

Of particular concern during 2014 was the sharp increase in the Israeli forces' use of live ammunition which, in addition to almost all the fatalities, accounted for **1,112**, or nearly **18%** of Palestinian injuries, up from **4%** in 2013 and **2%** in 2012. Rubber-coated metal bullets accounted for **43%** of injuries, up from **39%** in 2013. Despite the frequency of clashes in East Jerusalem, there were no recorded Palestinian deaths or injuries from live ammunition or rubber-coated metal bullets in areas located on the 'Jerusalem side' of the Barrier.

Responsibility for law enforcement in these areas lies with the Israeli civil police which, unlike the army and the Border Police, is not allowed to use these types of ammunition for crowd control purposes.

##### **Violence by and against Settlers**

In 2014, incidents of settler violence resulting in Palestinian casualties and the number of injured Palestinians increased, although the number of incidents leading to Palestinian property/land damage decreased. The number of attacks by Palestinians leading to Israeli casualties significantly increased.

##### **Palestinians in Detention**

The monthly average of Palestinians held by the Israeli authorities for alleged security offences increased by **24%** in 2014.<sup>2</sup> Data on Palestinian children in military detention show that a monthly average of **185** children were in Israeli military custody in 2014, compared to **197** in 2013, a **6%** decrease. The monthly average of those held under administrative detention increased significantly to **327**, from **132** in 2013 and **245** in 2012. No children under the age of 14 were held in detention in 2014, a positive trend that started in late 2013.<sup>3</sup>

##### **Accountability**

The rise in the number of Palestinian fatalities and serious injuries in the West Bank highlights longstanding concerns over the use of excessive force by Israeli forces, particularly in crowd control contexts. Criminal investigations by the Israeli authorities into the circumstances of **32** of this year's killings have led to the indictment of only **one** suspect, while the results of the other cases are still pending.<sup>4</sup> The failure by the Israeli authorities to adequately enforce the rule of law in relation to Israeli settler violence against Palestinians is also a longstanding concern, despite special measures implemented by the Israeli authorities to address this. From 2005 to August 2014, only **7.4%** of a sample of **970** Israeli police investigations monitored by the Israeli human rights organization, Yesh Din, into suspected offences committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinians led to an indictment.<sup>5</sup>

##### **Key events in**

#### LIFE, LIBERTY AND SECURITY IN 2014

##### **Gaza Strip**

**24-30 June:** Tension in Gaza remains high for the third consecutive week with Palestinian firing of rockets towards southern Israel and Israeli air-strikes on Gaza every day this week.

**27 & 29 June:** The Israeli Air Force kills three members of armed groups. Since the beginning of 2014, Israeli forces have killed at least five members of armed groups in similar operations.

**7 July:** The Israeli army launches a large military operation in the Gaza Strip, following which the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza both declare an emergency and set up mechanisms to coordinate emergency assistance.

**17 July:** The Israeli military launches a ground incursion into Gaza.

**19-20 July:** The ground offensive expands into densely populated areas, including Ash Shuja'iyyeh neighbourhood, reportedly resulting in the deaths of 60 Palestinians and 13 Israeli soldiers.

**20 July:** In the most serious incident involving multiple fatalities in the same family, an Israeli plane destroys the home of Tawfiq Abu Jame' in Bani Suheila. Rescue crews recover 25 bodies, including 19 children and five women, three of whom were pregnant. A member of an armed group was reportedly visiting the house when the airstrike took place.

**23 July:** There are reports that Khuza'a was exposed to severe artillery fire over night, with at least 20 reported killed, as Israeli forces entered the village.

**27 July:** The Gaza emergency enters its twentieth day, with the Palestinian fatality toll exceeding 1,000.

**1 August:** The 72-hour humanitarian cease-fire which came into effect this morning was short-lived following the reported killing of two soldiers and the capture of another in Rafah.

**5 August:** An Egyptian proposal for a 72-hour cease-fire enters into force today. Israeli forces have reportedly completed their withdrawal and redeployed along the fence separating Gaza and Israel.

**8 August:** The expiration of the temporary ceasefire is followed by a resumption of hostilities.

**20 August:** A series of negotiated ceasefires, stretching over nine days in total, ended yesterday. Hostilities continue, resulting in additional Palestinian fatalities, with the toll estimated at 1,999.

**22 August:** 21 Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel have reportedly been killed since 5 August by Palestinian armed groups.

**26 August:** An open-ended ceasefire brokered by the Egyptian government and agreed by the armed groups in Gaza, the Palestinian Authority and Israel enters into force.

##### **West Bank**

**11-17 March:** Clashes take place over several days in and around the Old City of Jerusalem following the Israeli authorities' imposition of age restrictions on the entry of Palestinian worshippers, and the repeated entry of Israeli groups, to the Al Aqsa Mosque compound.

**19-22 March:** On 19 March, Israeli forces shoot dead a 14-year-old boy in south Hebron. On 22 March during a military operation in Jenin Refugee Camp, Israeli forces kill three men.

**15 May:** During demonstrations commemorating the 66th anniversary of the "Nakba", two Palestinian boys, aged 17, are killed by live ammunition at the Beituniya checkpoint. In November, the Israeli authorities indict an Israeli border policeman for killing one of the boys.

**13 June:** Three Israeli youths are abducted near Hebron, reportedly by Hamas members, triggering large-scale Israeli military operations across the West Bank.

**30 June:** The bodies of the three abducted Israeli youths are discovered near Hebron.

**2 July:** Violent clashes erupt throughout East Jerusalem following the abduction and killing of a 16-year-old Palestinian youth from Shu'fat, reportedly in retaliation for the killing of the three Israeli youths.

**4 August:** One Israeli is killed and five others injured by a Palestinian who attacks a bus with a mechanical digger in West Jerusalem.

**25 August:** A 14-year-old Palestinian dies from injuries sustained on 22 August, bringing the number of fatalities in the West Bank since the start of the Gaza offensive on 7 July to 20.

**23 September:** Israeli forces kill two Palestinian suspects in the June abduction and killing of three Israeli youths.

**October:** Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians occur on an almost daily basis and extend to most Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem to protest the entry of Israeli groups into the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, and restrictions imposed on Palestinian access to the compound.

**November:** Clashes with Israeli forces continue across Jerusalem governorate and result in the injury of nearly 800 Palestinians. Clashes decline towards the end of the month following a trilateral meeting between the United States, Israel and Jordan during which they announce a plan to "restore calm" in Jerusalem.

**18 November:** Two Palestinian men kill five Israeli men, including a policeman, and injure 12 others in a synagogue in West Jerusalem. The perpetrators are killed in an exchange of fire.

**10 December:** Ziad Abu Ein, the Palestinian Minister of the Commission on the Wall and Settlement Affairs dies during an olive-tree planting event. Minister Abu Ein suffered from tear gas inhalation and was physically assaulted by an Israeli soldier during an altercation.

## FORCED DISPLACEMENT

### oPt overview

The forced displacement of Palestinians continued in 2014 in the Gaza Strip, and in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Forced displacement is primarily driven by escalations in hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip and by policies and practices related to the ongoing occupation in the West Bank, particularly in Area C and East Jerusalem, where the Israeli authorities continue settlement expansion, contrary to international law, at the expense of the housing, livelihood and development needs of Palestinian communities.

### Way Forward

• During hostilities, all parties should ensure the protection of civilian homes and infrastructure:

- Israel should refrain from attacks which target or disproportionately impact civilian homes and essential civilian infrastructure;

- Palestinian armed groups should refrain from attacks against residential areas in Israel and to the extent feasible, avoid locating military objectives in densely populated areas, and remove civilian persons and objects from the vicinity of military objectives.

• In the West Bank, the Israeli authorities must take necessary measures to end the forced displacement of Palestinians, including:

- Cease the demolition of Palestinian homes and other structures.

- Re-allocate state land, including land designated as firing zones in the West Bank for Palestinian use and development.

- Reform the current planning regime to ensure that Palestinians have access to a fair, effective and participatory planning framework that effectively meets their needs for growth and development.

- Cease requisition of private Palestinian land and resources and stop using the requisition and expropriation of land and the allocation of State land for the establishment and expansion of settlements.

- Ensure that Palestinians have a secure legal status and are able to reside, without arbitrary restrictions, in any part of the oPt.

- Allow families that have been forcibly displaced to return to their homes, and ensure that they are given access to an effective remedy for the destruction of land, homes and other property.

- Revoke the current plan to forcibly transfer Bedouin communities in the central West Bank from their current place of residence.

### Main trends in

## FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN 2014

### Gaza Strip

In 2014, Gaza witnessed the highest rate of internal displacement since 1967, as a result of the July-August hostilities. From previous hostilities, UNRWA had anticipated sheltering a maximum **50,000** internally displaced persons (IDPs) in its installations, but the eventual peak number was almost six times higher. Almost **500,000** people, 28% cent of the population, were internally displaced at the height of hostilities in UNRWA schools, government and informal shelters, and with host families. As of end-December, an estimated **100,000** persons remain displaced throughout Gaza, some renting or still in collective centres or with host families, while others will face the winter in prefabricated units, winterized tents, makeshift shelters, or in their heavily damaged homes, as they wait to rebuild their lives.

### Displacement in Israel

There was also significant displacement in southern Israel during the July-August hostilities, particularly among communities in range of mortar fire from Gaza. According to some sources, as many as 70% of the 40,000 residents of communities near Gaza temporarily left their homes, but subsequently returned.

### Over 100,000 remain displaced

Following the ceasefire announced on 26 August, the majority of IDPs returned home, but shelter needs remain enormous. Up to 18,000 families have no homes to return to and are in need of medium and long term shelter solutions. The Shelter Cluster estimates that over 100,000 housing units need to be built to meet Gaza's housing needs, including the reconstruction of destroyed and severely damaged homes and addressing natural growth needs.

### West Bank, including East Jerusalem

In the West Bank, forced displacement is triggered by multiple factors, including the demolition of homes and property lacking Israeli-issued building permits, due to the discriminatory planning regime in Area C and East Jerusalem; evictions; the lack of secure residency status; access restrictions; settler violence; or any combination of these factors. Overall, the number of people displaced in 2014 due to demolitions is the highest recorded in a single year since OCHA began tracking this indicator in 2008.

### Area C

Although there was a decline in the number of structures demolished in Area C in 2014, there was a **20%** increase in people displaced, due to an increase in residential structures demolished. Area C covers over **60%** of the West Bank, where Israel retains exclusive control over planning and zoning and less than 1% has been planned for Palestinian development. According to information provided by the Israeli Civil Administration, during 2014 the Israeli authorities issued a total of **911** demolition orders against Palestinian structures in Area C on the grounds of the lack of building permits (an order may target more than one structure). Only **4% (36)** were actually executed, while the rest of the demolitions were based on orders issued in previous years.

### East Jerusalem

In East Jerusalem, Palestinian residents are at risk of displacement as a result of home demolitions, inability to build, forced eviction and takeover of their property by settler organizations, and the lack of secure residency status.

**Over 7,500** Palestinian Bedouins and refugees in **4** communities in the central West Bank are at risk of forcible transfer due to a "relocation" plan by the Israeli authorities. The individuals targeted are predominantly herders who oppose the transfer plan. In August 2014, the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) deposited outline plans for the creation of a new town near Jericho to transfer some of these communities. In 2014, the ICA demolished, dismantled and seized approximately **70** residential and livelihood-related structures in at least **ten** of these communities.

**"Firing zones"** for military training cover **18%** of the West Bank. Residence within, or access to these areas is prohibited by military order. Some **6,200** Palestinians reside in **38** communities in designated "firing zones" and risk displacement. In 2014, OCHA recorded **31** military trainings in these areas leading to the eviction of **1,277** people, including **439** children, primarily in the northern Jordan Valley, for periods of up to **48** hours (not included in the displacement figures above).

### Punitive Demolitions

In mid-2014, Israel resumed the practice of punitive demolitions, after an almost complete halt for the previous **nine** years. This practice targets the family homes of perpetrators, or alleged perpetrators, of serious attacks against Israeli civilians and security forces, which have been on the rise in recent months. **Four** houses were destroyed and one was sealed in 2014, displacing at least **27** people. Punitive home demolitions impact the entire family and constitute a form of collective penalty in breach of Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

### Key events in

## FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN 2014

### Gaza Strip

**13 July:** The seventh day of the Gaza emergency witnesses the first wave of mass displacement, with tens of thousands of Palestinians from northern Gaza fleeing their homes, following warnings from the Israeli military.

**18 July:** With the start of the ground invasion, the Israeli military announces that the "No Go" zone along Gaza's perimeter fence has expanded from 300 meters to three kilometres from the fence.

**19 July:** The number of displaced Palestinians hosted by UNRWA exceeds 50,000, equaling the peak number in Agency facilities during "Operation Cast Lead" in 2008/2009.

**21 July:** UNRWA is hosting over 100,000 in 69 schools operating as emergency shelters.

**24 July:** UNRWA is hosting about 149,000 IDPs in 84 schools.

**30 July:** UNRWA is hosting almost 220,000 persons in 86 shelters.

**2 August:** With the collapse of the ceasefire, thousands of residents from the eastern part of Rafah governorate flee westwards. The total number of IDPs is estimated at approximately 475,000, one quarter of the Gaza population.

**6 August:** As the ceasefire is holding, IDPs leave shelters and host families.

**10 August:** Since the resumption of hostilities, the number of IDPs climbs to at least 425,000 displaced in emergency shelters or with host families.



**11 August:** With the new ceasefire, the number of IDPs in emergency shelters has declined to 209,172.

**15 August:** The number of IDPs has risen again, with 218,367 now seeking refuge in 87 UNRWA schools, as families discover that their homes are uninhabitable or lack even the basic water, electricity, and food available in emergency shelters.

**20 August:** With the resumption of hostilities, the number of IDPs has risen to more than 400,000.

**23 August:** A record number of 292,959 IDPs are now hosted in 85 UNRWA schools.

**25 August:** The number of IDPs has risen to 475,000. The Israeli military intensifies the sending of messages through leaflets, phone calls and mobile phone texts warning civilians to stay away from "terrorists and terror infrastructure."

**27 August:** With the declaration of the open-ended ceasefire there has been a dramatic decline in the number of IDPs, with the numbers in UNRWA shelters decreasing from 289,000 to 53,000.

**24-27 November:** Heavy rains cause localized flooding across the Gaza Strip, temporarily displacing a number of people, including some 350 who sought shelter in UNRWA collective shelters.

#### West Bank

**31 January:** Following the demolition of over 100 Palestinian structures in Area C and East Jerusalem this month, the Humanitarian Coordinator expresses concern about these demolitions and the obstruction of assistance to those displaced and called for a halt to demolitions. On 28 March, he reiterates his call for an immediate halt to demolitions.

**April:** Following a significant decline in the previous two months, the number of demolitions and displacements in Area C spikes again in April, with the majority of the 87 demolitions taking place in Area C.

**10 April:** Israeli forces confiscate five tents in Al Ja'wana Bedouin community in the Jordan Valley, displacing three families. The structures were erected in response to a demolition the previous week.

**20-26 May:** 36 structures are demolished in Al Jiftik town in the Jordan Valley. This is the fifth time that residents have experienced demolitions in 2014, leading to the destruction of 50 structures in total and the displacement of 95 persons.

**26-28 May:** All 62 residents of Humsa Al Buqai'a Bedouin community in the northern Jordan Valley are forced to evacuate their homes twice this week for Israeli military training exercises. Since 2012, residents of this community have been temporarily displaced on 14 separate occasions.

**2 July:** The Israeli authorities resume the practice of punitive demolitions which was largely discontinued since 2005. A house in Idhna (Hebron) belonging to the family of a Palestinian suspected of killing an Israeli policeman in April is partially destroyed with explosives.

**12 -18 August:** The Israeli military carries out punitive demolitions of two houses and seals a third belonging to three Palestinians in Hebron, suspected of abducting and killing three Israeli youths in June.

**25 August:** The Israeli Civil Administration publishes outline plans for the creation of a new town in An Nw'eima (Jericho), to accommodate the transfer of the Bedouin and herder communities from their current places of residence.

**October:** According to media reports, the Mayor of Jerusalem has ordered municipality officials to strengthen 'enforcement' measures against Palestinians in East Jerusalem, including expediting house demolitions for buildings built without permits. The objective is to pressure the Palestinian population to act against young demonstrators.

**11-17 November:** The Israeli authorities deliver two punitive demolition and sealing orders, including targeting the home of the Palestinian who attacked a bus in West Jerusalem, killing an Israeli.

**19 November:** In East Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities demolish the home of the Palestinian who attacked a light train station in East Jerusalem in October, killing two Israelis.

#### MOVEMENT AND ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

##### oPt overview

Israel restricts Palestinian movement within the oPt through a combination of physical obstacles, including the Barrier and checkpoints, bureaucratic constraints, such as permit requirements, and the designation of areas as restricted or closed. This multi-layered system impacts the flow of persons and goods between the Gaza Strip and the outside world, including the West Bank; into farming and fishing areas within Gaza; and within the West Bank, in particular into East Jerusalem, in areas isolated by the Barrier, 'firing zones', the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron city (H2), and land around or within Israeli settlements. Combined, these restrictions impede access to services and resources, disrupt family and social life, undermine livelihoods and compound the fragmentation of the oPt.

##### Way Forward

Palestinian civilians should be able to move freely and in safety to, from and within the oPt, subject only to restrictions to address Israel's legitimate security concerns in compliance with international law. The following actions would affect an immediate improvement in the humanitarian situation in the oPt:

In the Gaza Strip:

- Israel must fully lift the blockade, subject only to restrictions provided for in international law. When required, access restrictions must address a specific threat in a proportionate manner and be temporary in nature. Access to the sea must be expanded to 20 nautical miles from the Gaza shore, as agreed under the Oslo Accords, and farmers should be granted safe access to their land and properties near the fence with Israel, subject to specific security arrangements.
- The Egyptian authorities should resume operations at Rafah Crossing at the same level as they were in January 2013 and facilitate the entry of relief consignments to the Gaza Strip without delay.

In the West Bank, the Israeli authorities must:

- Remove physical obstacles and administrative restrictions on free movement that are not necessary for legitimate security purposes. These include access restrictions into East Jerusalem, areas isolated by the Barrier, the 'firing zones', the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron city, and land around or within Israeli settlements
- Comply with the ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Barrier in the West Bank and the subsequent General Assembly Resolution.

The number of Palestinians permitted by Israel to cross through Erez increased by **24%** in 2014 compared to 2013, due to relaxations introduced following the July-August hostilities. Despite these easings, the amount of Palestinians permitted to cross Erez in 2014 was only about **16%** of the number before the

Main trends in

#### MOVEMENT AND ACCESS RESTRICTIONS IN 2014

##### Gaza Strip

Fenced in on its land borders with Israel and Egypt, and with no control over its airspace or territorial waters, access from Gaza to the outside world is restricted to three land crossings, controlled by Israel (Erez and Kerem Shalom) and Egypt (Rafah). Israeli restrictions on external trade, including with the West Bank, and on access to agricultural land and fishing waters, discourage investment and perpetuate high levels of unemployment, food insecurity and aid dependency. The vast majority of the smuggling tunnels under the border with Egypt remained inoperative in 2014.

##### Access Restricted Areas: Sea

Citing security concerns, Israeli naval forces prevent fishermen from accessing beyond six nautical miles from Gaza's shore -- less than one third of the **20** nautical miles allocated under the Oslo Accords -- severely undermining fishermen's livelihoods. Restrictions are enforced through the use of live ammunition and arrest/confiscation of equipment by Israeli naval forces. In 2014, **59** fishermen were arrested at sea and **27** boats were confiscated by Israeli naval forces

##### Rafah

Due to long-standing restrictions on Erez, the Rafah border crossing became the primary access point for Palestinians in Gaza to the outside world. Restrictions introduced by Egypt in July 2013 have drastically reduced access, with the number of exits declining by **29%** between 2012 and 2013 and by **36%** in 2014, when Rafah was closed for **207** days, or **57%** of the year. By year's end, there were around **17,000** registered people, including medical patients, waiting to exit Gaza.

##### Erez

The number of Palestinians permitted by Israel to cross through Erez increased by **24%** in 2014 compared to 2013, due to relaxations introduced following the July-August hostilities. Despite these easings, the amount of Palestinians permitted to cross Erez in 2014 was only about **16%** of the number before the second intifada in 2000.

##### Access Restricted Areas: Land

Palestinian access to areas in the vicinity of the perimeter fence has increased since the August 2014 ceasefire. Field observations suggest that areas within **100** meters from the fence are largely inaccessible, compared to **300** metres previously. Access to areas several hundred metres beyond this distance is risky. There were five fatalities and **131** injuries in the ARA by land in 2014 (excluding the July-August hostilities), compared to nine fatalities/68 injuries in 2013, and **35** fatalities/206 injuries in 2012.

##### Kerem Shalom

Since June 2007, citing security concerns, Israel has imposed restrictions on the passage of goods into Gaza, in particular construction materials. Kerem Shalom Crossing witnessed a **19%** decrease in imports in 2014 compared to 2013, although construction materials needed to repair the enormous conflict-related damage are now entering under the framework of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism since October. (See Humanitarian Space).

Israel has also prohibited exports from Gaza to Israel and severely restricted transfers to the West Bank. In 2014, **136** truckloads of agricultural produce exited Gaza for international markets compared to **5,774** truckloads to Israel, the West Bank, and the external world in 2007. For the first time since 2007, in 2014 Israel permitted the transfer of commercial goods from Gaza to the West Bank, **92** truckloads.

##### West Bank, including East Jerusalem

In recent years, the Israeli authorities have eased some long-standing restrictions, improving access to key urban hubs. However, Palestinian movement throughout the West Bank, including into East Jerusalem, remains restricted by a complex system of physical and administrative measures - the Barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks, and a permit system - undermining livelihoods and access to basic services, as well as hindering the ability of humanitarian organizations to deliver assistance.

##### East Jerusalem

Permit requirements and the Barrier continue to restrict the access of non-Jerusalem Palestinians to East Jerusalem. Some easing of restrictions take place during Ramadan, although numbers declined significantly this year, with Gaza residents still prohibited.

Throughout 2014, the Israeli authorities restricted the access of Palestinians, including Jerusalem ID holders to Al Aqsa Mosque, in conjunction with a rise in the number of incidents of settlers and other Israeli groups, entering the compound.

#### Hebron

Following the abduction of three Israeli youths who were subsequently killed, the Israeli authorities imposed movement restrictions, focusing on the Hebron area, including invalidating permits to access East Jerusalem, Israel and some settlement areas, and Jordan. There are over **120** physical obstacles, including **18** permanently staffed checkpoints, in the over **20%** of Hebron City, known as H2, where Israel continues to exercise full control.

Over **90** Palestinian communities in the West Bank which have land within, or in the vicinity of, **56** Israeli settlements and settlement outposts can only access their land, if at all, only through 'prior coordination' with the Israeli authorities, generally only for a limited number of days during the annual olive harvest.

#### Settlements

Over **90** Palestinian communities in the West Bank which have land within, or in the vicinity of, **56** Israeli settlements and settlement outposts can only access their land, if at all, only through 'prior coordination' with the Israeli authorities, generally only for a limited number of days during the annual olive harvest.

#### Area C

Some **532** Palestinian residential areas are located in Area C, with movement restrictions undermining livelihoods and access to basic services, as well as the ability of humanitarian organizations to deliver assistance. In a 2013 survey, some **50%** of respondents cited restrictions on access and movement as their main protection concern.

#### Barrier

The Barrier, in conjunction with its gate and permit regime, is the main obstacle to Palestinian movement within the West Bank. Most Palestinian farmers need special permits to access their farming land between the Barrier and the Green Line, which has been declared a 'closed area.' For those granted permits, entry to the 'closed area' is channelled through some **85** gates designated for agricultural access. Data collected by OCHA show that olive trees in the area between the Barrier and the Green Line have an approximately **60%** reduction in yield compared to their equivalents on the 'Palestinian' side of the Barrier.

#### Key events in

### MOVEMENT AND ACCESS RESTRICTIONS IN 2014

#### Gaza Strip

**January:** Continuing the restrictions imposed by Egypt since July 2013, the Rafah border crossing with Egypt opens for only six out of 31 days in January.

**9 -10 February:** For the first time since October 2013, Israel exceptionally allows the entry of 1,000 tonnes of cement through Kerem Shalom Crossing, designated for the private sector for repairing damage sustained during the winter storm in December 2013.

**13 -19 March:** Following an escalation in hostilities, the Israeli authorities close Erez crossing, limiting access to humanitarian cases. Despite the closure, the Israeli authorities facilitate the exit of a limited number of urgent medical cases seeking treatment in West Bank and Israeli hospitals.

**April:** Kerem Shalom is only open for 15 out of a potential 26 working days (including Fridays). There are four days of closure for Jewish holidays and another three days of partial closure in response to Palestinian rocket fire from Gaza. The volume of goods that enter Gaza during April was the lowest recorded since October 2011, leading to shortages of some essential items.

**April:** According to the World Health Organization, during April only seven patients travel from Gaza to Egypt through Rafah Crossing for medical treatment, compared to more than 4,400 patients in April 2013.

**May:** The fishing catch during the sardine season is significantly higher than in previous years, primarily due to an easing of Israeli restrictions on access to the sea as part of the November 2012 ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. However, this year's catch is still 27% below 2006, prior to the reduction of access to six nautical miles (NM) from the shore.

**22 May:** The Israeli authorities issue exit permits for around 600 Christian residents of Gaza, all aged over 35, to travel to Bethlehem on the occasion of the Pope's visit to the city.

**13 June:** The Israeli authorities close Erez and Kerem Shalom in response to Palestinian rocket fire.

**6 July:** The Israeli Minister of Defence approves the reduction of the fishing area from six to three NM, citing security reasons.

**18 July:** Prior to a ground invasion, the Israeli military announces that the "No Go" zone along Gaza's perimeter fence has been expanded from 300 meters to three kilometres from the fence, 44% of the territory.

**7 August:** Israel partially lifts access restrictions to the sea to 3 NM from the Gaza shore. The limit returns to 6 NM following the ceasefire on 26 August.

**5 - 7 October:** For the first time in five years, Israel permits 1,200 Gaza residents to travel to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, for the feast of Eid al Adha. A weekly quota of up to 200 individuals over the age of 60 is also permitted to travel to East Jerusalem for Friday prayers.

**24 October:** Following an attack in the Sinai Peninsula in which over 30 Egyptian military personnel are killed, Rafah is closed for the rest of the year, with a few exceptional openings.

#### West Bank

**19 April:** After being stopped at a checkpoint during an Easter procession in the Old City of Jerusalem, the United Nations Special Coordinator, Robert Serry, calls on all parties 'to respect the right of religious freedom, granting access to holy sites for worshippers of all faiths and refraining from provocations not least during the religious holidays.'

**13 June:** Following the abduction of three Israeli youths, the Israeli authorities impose movement restrictions, focusing on the Hebron area, preventing residents from accessing East Jerusalem, Israel and some settlement areas; and preventing men aged between 20 and 50 years from travelling to Jordan via the Allenby Bridge.

**30 June:** Having previously eased access restrictions, the Israeli authorities re-impose, and in some cases, tighten controls around Hebron city following the discovery of the bodies of the three Israeli youths. On 7 July, Israel lifts most of these restrictions.

**4 July:** According to the Israeli authorities, on the first Friday of Ramadan, only 11,000 Palestinian worshippers holding West Bank IDs enter East Jerusalem, a 90% decline compared to the first Friday of Ramadan 2013. The decline is attributed to access restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities; only Palestinian men over 50 and women over 40 who hold West Bank IDs, excluding residents of Hebron, are allowed to enter Jerusalem without permits. In 2013, men above 40, women and girls of all ages, and boys below 12 were allowed access.

**9 July:** Today marks the tenth anniversary of the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*.

**24-25 July:** On *Laylat al Qader*, only a few thousand Palestinian holding West Bank IDs are able to reach Al Aqsa Mosque compared to around 400,000 on the same night in 2013.

**August - September:** On several occasions, Israeli authorities restrict the access of Palestinians, including Jerusalem ID holders to Al Aqsa Mosque, in conjunction with a rise in the number of settlers and other Israeli groups entering the compound.

**October - mid-November:** The Israeli authorities increasingly restrict access of all Palestinians to Al Aqsa Mosque, usually coinciding with the entry of settlers to the compound. On 31 October the compound is closed for an entire day for the first time since 1967.

**13 November:** The Israeli authorities ease restrictions on access, mainly for Palestinian residents of east Jerusalem to al Aqsa Mosque compound following a trilateral meeting between the United States, Israel and Jordan, during which they announce a plan to "restore calm" in Jerusalem. Israel subsequently eases access restrictions, including permitting Muslims from Gaza to visit the compound on 5 December.

### HUMANITARIAN SPACE

#### oPt overview

In 2014, humanitarian organizations continued to face a range of obstacles from the Israeli authorities regarding the access of personnel and of materials needed for humanitarian projects, hampering their ability to provide assistance and protection to Palestinians throughout the oPt. The system for importing building materials into Gaza has now transitioned into the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM), brokered by the UN in September, without prejudice to a full lifting of the blockade, in order to address the enormous reconstruction needs following the July-August hostilities.

Humanitarian operations in Gaza were also impeded by restrictions imposed by, and the prohibition on contact with, the Hamas authorities, in addition to the prolonged closure of the Rafah crossing with Egypt. UN premises serving as collective shelters for IDPs were also struck during the July-August hostilities in Gaza, resulting in **45** fatalities.

In the West Bank, the implementation of humanitarian projects was impeded by restrictions on access to East Jerusalem and limitations on projects that

#### Way Forward

- All parties must respect the inviolability of UN premises and vehicles. During the conducting of hostilities, all parties must respect the special protection afforded to medical facilities and personnel.
- All relevant authorities should afford safe, rapid and unimpeded access of all staff of UN agencies, NGOs and other organizations providing protection and humanitarian assistance to populations in need.
  - The Government of Israel should fulfil its responsibilities to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations by undertaking the following actions:
    - Expediting the permit processing system relating to the movement of national staff of humanitarian agencies (including UN and international and national NGOs).
    - Rescinding the permit requirement for the installation or rehabilitation of structures to address the basic needs of people living in Area C and East Jerusalem
    - Ceasing confiscation, seizure, demolition or destruction of assets, including relief items, of agencies implementing humanitarian projects.
    - Ensuring that all military and civilian staff at checkpoints and border terminals respect the provisions of the UN Convention on Privileges and Immunities, ensuring the passage of all UN staff without delay.
- The authorities in the Gaza Strip should fulfil their responsibilities to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations by:
  - Taking appropriate measures to ensure free movement of humanitarian personnel, irrespective of their nationality, to and from the Gaza Strip through all relevant crossings.
  - Aligning their policies and practices with those already signed into Palestinian law or policy with regard to the registration and treatment of international organizations.

### HUMANITARIAN SPACE

## Gaza Strip

The almost continuous fighting during the seven weeks of hostilities in July and August 2014 presented an enormous challenge to the ability of humanitarian actors to respond. This was compounded by significant gaps in the response capacity of national institutions due to the long-standing access restrictions and funding constraints, which resulted in shortages of equipment and inadequate training. Despite these difficulties, during the hostilities, the Israeli authorities kept the Kerem Shalom crossing open for goods almost without interruption, alongside continuous engagement and coordination with a range of humanitarian actors. Israel also agreed to a succession of temporary ceasefires and both Israel and Egypt also allowed for the evacuation of hundreds of wounded people for treatment outside Gaza. Despite some easing, the severe restrictions on the movement of national staff of humanitarian agencies to and from Gaza remained in place.

## Humanitarian Personnel

In 2014, the Israeli authorities approved the highest numbers of permits for national UN staff travelling in and out of Gaza since 2010, although in the period following the summer hostilities (September through December), the average processing time for applications increased from **10 to 15** days.

## The Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM)

Since mid-2010, Israel has exceptionally allowed international organizations to import restricted building materials (impeded the ability of agencies to respond to urgent needs. Since 2010, UN projects worth **\$534.2** million have been approved and **\$54.4** million rejected. By the end of 2014, this system transitioned to the Temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM). Under the GRM, the Israeli authorities will consider comprehensive programmes of work rather than individual projects, allowing for quicker and more efficient implementation.

## Violation of UN Facilities and Attacks on Humanitarian Staff

On seven separate occasions, UNRWA schools used as Designated Emergency Shelters were either hit directly or struck nearby by shells or other munitions injuring, and in three cases, killing civilians sheltering there. In total, **45** civilians were killed and more than **200** injured. UN premises are inviolable under international law. The IDF Military Advocate General (MAG) has stated that it is launching a criminal investigation into two of these incidents: the Beit Hanoun school on 24 July and Jabalia school on 30 July. On **three** occasions, UNRWA confirmed that weapons' components had been placed in vacant UNRWA schools. Immediately after the discovery, UNRWA informed all key parties and condemned these violations of international law. Throughout the summer hostilities, UNRWA also lost eleven colleagues.

## West Bank, including East Jerusalem

The implementation of humanitarian projects were impeded by restrictions on access to East Jerusalem and limitations on projects that involve building, expanding or rehabilitating infrastructure in Area C, where the seizure of donor-funded assistance increased in 2014. Under International Humanitarian Law, Israel, as the Occupying Power, bears the primary responsibility for ensuring the protection of the Palestinian civilian population and that their basic needs are met.

## Delays at Checkpoints

Incidents at West Bank checkpoints continue to obstruct and delay the movement of personnel and goods in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, although such incidents have been systematically declining in recent years.

## Destruction of Donor-funded Assistance

The implementation of humanitarian projects involving the construction or rehabilitation of housing or essential infrastructure in Area C and East Jerusalem continued to be severely hampered by the permit regime applied by the Israeli authorities in these areas. In 2014, there was an increase of **31%** in the Israeli military's demolition of donor-funded assistance in Area C, **118** such structures were destroyed, up from **90** in 2013 and **79** in 2012. During the same period, the Israeli military seized **25** items of donor-funded assistance, mainly latrines and other WASH-related structures, a significant decline compared to the **67** donor-funded items seized in 2013.

## Key events in

## HUMANITARIAN SPACE IN 2014

### Gaza Strip

**January-March:** Eleven access incidents affecting 20 NGO staff attempting to enter or exit the Gaza Strip are reported at the Arba-Arba crossing, which is administered by the de facto authorities. In these incidents, staff are delayed, extensively questioned or have their work equipment confiscated. During the same period, eight access incidents affecting 11 NGO staff are reported at the Erez crossing.

**May:** The Israeli Ministry of Defence authorizes the resumption of several UN construction projects, including health centres, schools, housing and water infrastructure. These were suspended in October 2013 following the discovery of an underground tunnel from the Gaza Strip into Israel.

**16 July:** UNRWA announces the discovery of approximately 20 rockets hidden in one of its vacant schools in the course of a regular inspection of its premises. UNRWA strongly condemns those responsible as a "flagrant violation of the inviolability of its premises under international law." Two more such incidents are reported by UNRWA during the course of the July-August hostilities.

**24 July:** An UNRWA school in Beit Hanoun which serves as a shelter for IDPs, is struck by several missiles. Eleven IDPs, including seven children, are killed.

**30 July:** A school in Jabalia, in which 3,300 people are taking shelter, is struck by artillery, killing at least 15 people, including four children.

**3 August:** A strike on an UNRWA school in Rafah, which kills at least nine people, is the seventh incident in which an UNRWA shelter has been hit.

**26 August:** The Erez crossing re-opens today, having closed on 24 and 25 August, due to mortar fire from Gaza on both days. The Kerem Shalom crossing closes in the late morning following a security incident. The Rafah crossing is functioning, despite being hit by an Israeli airstrike yesterday, which killed a security guard and caused extensive damage to the terminal.

**14 October:** The first shipment of basic construction materials for the private sector, coordinated by the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM), is allowed to enter Gaza via Kerem Shalom.

**10 November:** The UN Secretary-General establishes a Board of Inquiry to investigate specific incidents in which death or injuries occurred and damage was done to UN premises during the July-August hostilities. The Board will also investigate incidents in which weapons were found on UN premises.

### West Bank

**February:** The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) announces the suspension of the distribution of tents in the relief kits it provides in the Jordan Valley to families affected by the demolition of their homes. This decision is a response to the Israeli authorities' recurrent obstruction of ICRC distributions, including the confiscation or destruction of emergency items on the grounds that they lack building permits.

**April:** 26 donor-funded structures are demolished, including 11 residential structures, displacing over 100 people. In addition, 35 donor-funded structures receive stop-work or demolition orders, placing another 170 people at risk of displacement.

**9 April:** The Israeli authorities dismantle and seize three donor-funded residential shelters in Jabal al Baba Bedouin community in the El area (Jerusalem). As a result, 19 people, including ten children, are displaced. The same day, the Israeli authorities issue final demolition orders against 18 residential structures (all provided by donors) in the community, which received stop-work orders on 23 February, affecting dozens of people.

**6 June:** A donor-funded consignment consisting of ten latrines and eight water tanks, along with three trucks transporting the goods, are seized by the Israeli authorities while on their way to the Bedouin community of Al Ganoub in Hebron. The trucks are reportedly returned to the implementing organization several weeks later, but the aid items are not released.

**30 June:** 15 donor-funded water tanks serving 26 families in the Khallet An Nahla area (Bethlehem) are seized by the Israeli authorities, and another 11 tanks are damaged during the incident.

**November:** Six donor-funded structures are demolished, including a recently renovated agricultural road and a water connection under construction in a Jordan Valley community, Tell al Khashabah, located within a military "firing zone". The Israeli authorities also deliver demolition and stop-work orders against 12 donor-funded residential structures in the Bedouin community of Wadi Beit Hanina in the Jerusalem governorate, and request an implementing agency to remove five others in Khashem al Karem community (Hebron).

**9 December:** Israeli authorities confiscate a bulldozer, on the grounds of it being used in an Israeli declared nature reserve in the village of Kafr ad Dik (Salfit), where construction is prohibited. The bulldozer is being used in a joint project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture to open an agricultural road.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup><http://www.meg.idf.il/163-7183-en/Ptzarasp?pos=1>

<sup>2</sup>Includes three killed in West Jerusalem

<sup>3</sup>Includes six killed in West Jerusalem and one in Tel Aviv.

<sup>4</sup>Source: Israeli Prison Service through BTselem organization.

<sup>5</sup>Data supplied by UNICEF.

<sup>6</sup>Information provided to OCHA by the BTselem

<sup>7</sup>See Yesh Din, *Law enforcement on Israeli civilians in the West Bank, October 2014*.

<sup>8</sup>Five structures were demolished in Area A and five in Area B by the Israeli authorities in 2014.

