



LATEST DEVELOPMENT SINCE TUESDAY, 30 June 2009

- 8 July marked the five-year anniversary of the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion, which found that Israel's construction of the Wall within the Occupied Palestinian Territory violated its obligations under international law. Excerpts from an upcoming OCHA Report on the Impact of the Barrier can be found on OCHA's website at www.ochaopt.org.

West Bank

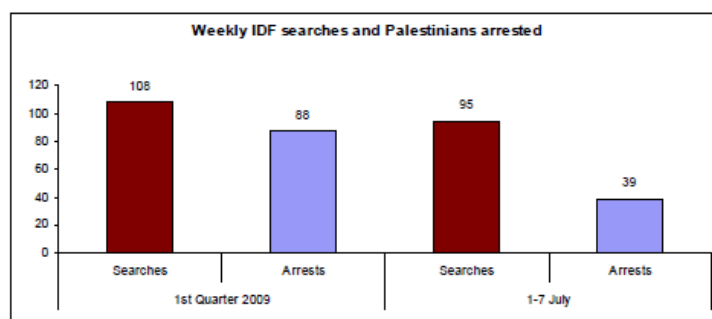
Sharp decrease in Palestinian casualties

Seven Palestinians were injured by Israeli forces in the West Bank during the week — roughly one third of the weekly average of Palestinians injured in the first quarter of 2009. All but one of the injuries occurred at or near checkpoints in Hebron, Jericho and Nablus governorates. The most serious incident took place on 1 July when four Palestinians, including three children, were injured between Tappuah checkpoint and Beita junction on road 60. Israeli soldiers opened fire after they had allegedly thrown stones at Israeli vehicles, an allegation that is being denied by Palestinian sources. All four injured were transferred to hospitals for medical treatment.

For the third consecutive week, more members of Israeli security forces than Palestinians were injured in anti-Barrier demonstrations held in Ni'lin and Bil'in villages (Ramallah): one Palestinian, three Israeli border police, two international peace activists. In the last three weeks twelve members of Israeli forces have been mostly lightly injured during anti-Barrier demonstrations.

The week witnessed a decrease in Israeli search and arrest operations in the West Bank with Israeli search operations and IDF arrests of Palestinians approximately 14% and 56% respectively lower than comparative weekly averages in the first quarter of 2009.

In addition, 42 Palestinians were arrested by Palestinian security forces (PSF) in 22 search operations, mainly in the northern West Bank, for alleged affiliation with Hamas. This number is approximately 30% lower than the 60 Palestinians arrested per week in the previous four weeks. In June 09, 241 Palestinians were arrested by Palestinian security forces.



More people in East Jerusalem and Area C under threat of displacement

This week the Jerusalem Municipality distributed seven demolition orders against residential houses in the Silwan neighbourhood, which were built without a building permit. In the Beit Hanina neighbourhood, a Palestinian demolished a room in his house, affecting six people, after receiving a demolition order by the Jerusalem Municipality.

On the same background, the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) distributed ten stop-construction orders, a step preceding the issuance of demolition orders, in the Area C section of the town of Idhna (Hebron). The threatened structures include two houses, home to 13 people including nine children, and

a factory employing ten people. In the town of Al Khader (Bethlehem), the ICA issued nine demolition orders for five houses where 35 people, including 21 children, live, and four water cisterns.

During the first six months of 2009, Israeli authorities demolished 150 structures in Area C, mostly in Bedouin communities in the Jordan Valley, and 38 in East Jerusalem.

Settler-related incidents

During the reporting period there were ten reported incidents of settler violence in the West Bank, mostly concentrated in the northern districts, none of which resulted in Palestinian injuries. The number of incidents is higher than the weekly average of seven during the first six months of 2009. This week, an Israeli female settler was injured near Haris village (Qalqiliya) due to Palestinian stone-throwing.

In one of the incidents, Israeli settlers from the Bracha settlement set fire to ten dunums of land belonging to Palestinians from 'Iraq Burin village (Nablus) on 6 July. The next day, the settlers levelled 16 dunums of agricultural land belonging to Palestinians from the same village.

Over the last three weeks, Israeli settlers from the Avne Hefez settlement have erected tents in an area west of Kafr Al Labad village (Tulkarm) in an attempt to establish a new outpost on land levelled by Israeli authorities in 2005. A group of Palestinian and Israeli peace activists protesting against the settlers' activity were verbally assaulted and pushed by the settlers. Palestinian farmers and herders working in this area reported that they were frequently harassed by Israeli settlers.

Israeli-settlement expansion

Settlers from two outposts, which according to the Israeli media are planned to be evacuated by the Israeli authorities, expanded during the reporting period. In the governorate of Qalqiliya, Israelis from the Havat Gil'ad outpost built two structures on land belonging to Palestinian farmers from Far'ata village. In Hebron Governorate, settlers from the outpost of Avigail, levelled approximately 20 dunums of the land belonging to the village of Um Fagarah, and added three new caravans. The pattern of expansion of outposts in reaction to announced evacuations has been seen repeatedly. Settlement outposts are illegal under both International Humanitarian Law and Israeli Law.

West Bank access

Ten dunums of land were burnt in an area behind the Barrier belonging to Palestinians from Zeita village. The circumstances of the fire remain unclear. The fire brigade was delayed for one hour at the agricultural gate 564, in spite of coordination between the Israeli DCL and Palestinian DCO.

Gaza Strip

17-year-old girl killed in clashes

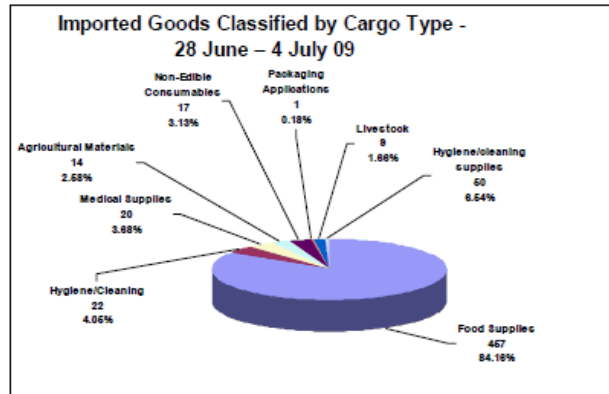
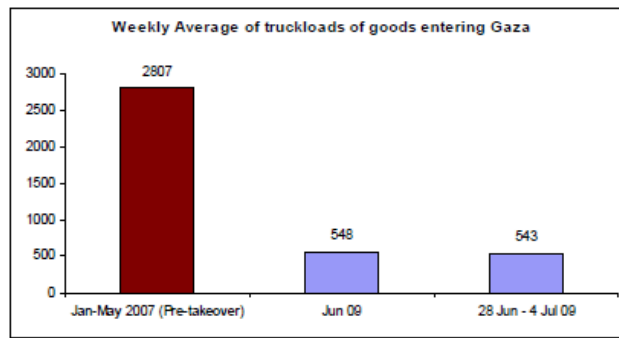
This week, clashes between IDF troops stationed at the border fence and armed Palestinian militants from Al Bureij Camp claimed the life of a 17-year-old Palestinian girl, and caused injury to four of her family members when a tank shell fired by the IDF hit her house. Also, two other Palestinian civilians, including a three-year-old child, were injured when a mortar shell fired by Palestinian militants hit their house east of Deir Al Balah. More than 15 mortar shells, including six which landed within Gaza, were fired by armed Palestinians targeting IDF troops at the border with Gaza. No Israeli injuries were reported. Israeli military forces continue to enforce access restrictions on fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from Gaza's coast, and the agricultural areas bordering Israel. This week, no injuries were reported from these access restrictions.

Other Casualties

Three Palestinians were killed and two others injured in various incidents, including family feuds, accidental shooting during military training exercises, and in a tunnel collapse.

Weekly average of imported truckloads remains below needs - (28 June – 04 July 09)

Restrictions imposed by Israel on imports and exports to and from the Gaza Strip continue to affect Gaza's living conditions. This week, a total of 543 truckloads of goods entered Gaza, less than 20% of the weekly average during the first five months of 2007, before the Hamas takeover, but roughly the same as the weekly average of June 09. The entry of many essential goods, including materials for reconstruction, spare parts for water and sanitation projects, and industrial and agricultural materials remain barred from entry or restricted to limited quantities.



Cooking gas imports increased but remain limited (28 June – 04 July 2009)

Imports of cooking gas increased this week with a total of 852 tonnes, 43% higher than the weekly average in the previous three weeks. However, according to the Gaza Gas Stations Owners Association (GSOA), this amount represents less than half of the estimated weekly needs; although cooking gas remains in short supply, it is still available on the open market.

Longer power cuts in summer heat

Continuing a trend that began in the beginning of February 2009, the amount of industrial fuel allowed by Israel into Gaza this week was approximately 70% of weekly fuel needs for the power plant's operation. According to the Gaza Electricity Distribution company, 90% of Gaza's population experiences daily power cuts of 6-8 hours. This is an increase from 4-5 hours per day, due to higher consumption related to the use of air-conditioners in the summer heat. 10% of Gaza's population, mainly residing in Jabalia, Beit Lahiya, east of Khan Younis and areas in the Gaza City have been completely without electricity since the beginning of the Israeli Operation Cast Lead in late December 2008. The spare parts needed to reconnect these people to the electricity grid are currently restricted from entry into Gaza.