

Division for Palestinian Rights

Chronological Review of Events Relating to the Question of Palestine

Monthly media monitoring review

August 2012

Monthly highlights

- Palestine and Thailand officially launch diplomatic relations ([1 August](#))
- PA announces renewal of bid to upgrade status at the UN ([4 August](#))
- Israel denies entry to four foreign ministers and ambassadors to the West Bank to attend high-level meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries ([5 August](#))
- Israel agrees to release 123 Palestinian political prisoners held since before the Oslo Agreement ([10 August](#))
- PA President Abbas calls on Islamic world leaders to support the Palestinian bid for full UN membership ([16 August](#))
- US State Department lists violence by Jewish settlers as "terrorist incidents" ([21 August](#))
- South African Cabinet approves labelling of goods imported from Israeli settlements ([22 August](#))
- Former Israeli soldiers says mistreatment of Palestinian children was "routine" ([26 August](#))
- UN warns of deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip ([30 August](#))

1

Israeli military vehicles conducted a limited incursion east of the al-Maghazi refugee camp after an armour-defence system of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) was triggered near the Israel-Gaza border. The IDF investigated whether an anti-tank missile had been launched, activating the system. (*Haaretz*)

Palestinian officials and an Israeli army representative said that the IDF had detained four Palestinians in raids around Nablus, Jericho, Budros and Hebron. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A 22-year-old, Ayman al-Sharafa, was killed and two other Palestinians were injured after a car exploded in Gaza City's Tal al-Hawa neighbourhood before dawn. The military wing of Hamas reported the incident as an accident. (*Ma'an News Agency, Now Lebanon*)

Diplomatic relations between Palestine and Thailand were officially launched, in accordance with an agreement reached on 11 July between Palestinian Authority (PA) Foreign Minister Riyad Malki and his Thai counterpart, Kantathi Suphamongkhon. (*Wafa*)

The High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, warmly welcomed the agreements signed the previous day by PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and Israeli Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz to improve the regulation of Israeli-Palestinian bilateral trade and taxation arrangements. Given the current financial difficulties, Ms. Ashton had been urging both parties to improve the mechanisms through which Israel collects certain customs and taxation revenues on behalf of the PA. The agreements were an important step forward in promoting Palestinian economic development and further improving economic relations between Israel and the Palestinians. (www.consilium.europa.eu)

PA Finance Minister Nabil Qassis said that the deficit in the PA's 2012 budget had reached more than \$1 billion. He said that a decrease in foreign aid and failure of donor countries to fulfil their financial pledges were behind the severe crisis. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Mayor of the northern Ramallah village of Sinjil, Ayyoub Sweid, said that settlers from the "Givat Ariel" outpost had vandalized Palestinian property in the village and had left a box containing ethylene, benzene and sulfur underneath a car in town. They also wrote "Palestinians should die" and "Stay away from our lands" on a wall in the village. An Israeli army spokesperson said that graffiti had been discovered on the walls of a house in Sinjil and that security forces were reviewing the incident. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A statement issued by the PA Foreign Ministry condemned the Israeli Government's official policies of investing in settlement expansion. The

statement followed an Israeli report saying that official spending under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on settlements in the West Bank had increased by 38 per cent during 2011, to around \$300 million. It said that such policies aimed to prevent the establishment of a geographically contiguous Palestinian State and to destroy the two-State solution. It urged the international community, especially the Quartet, to condemn the policy, hold the Israeli Government responsible for the failure of the peace process, work to immediately end the Israeli occupation and settlements activities and support the rights of the Palestinian people. (Wafa)

In a letter to foreign officials in Jerusalem, Palestinian Chief Negotiator Saeb Erakat said that Israel's decision to renew the closure of the Orient House, a former office of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Jerusalem, was "an act of piracy". He said that such Israeli measures were considered null and void by the international community, calling on them to intervene immediately to compel Israeli to reopen Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem that had been closed since 2001. (Wafa)

A lawyer for the Palestinian Prisoners' Society said that Israeli prison authorities had severely assaulted two Palestinian hunger strikers, Samer Al-Barq and Hassan Safadi. "At 2 a.m., [Mr. Safadi] was in bed when jailers attacked him and forced him to stand, and tore his clothes, his mattress and pillow. When he tried to resist, one of the jailers punched him in the face and fought with him until an officer intervened," the lawyer said in a statement. The prison administration then transferred Mr. Al-Barq to another prison. Although Mr. Al-Barq was using a wheelchair due to his poor health, guards at the jail asked him to stand up and walk and when he was unable to do so, they threw him to the ground, he said. (Ma'an News Agency)

2

Israeli forces with bulldozers closed 500 metres of a rural road on a private land in the al-Makhroun area of Beit Jala. (Ma'an News Agency)

An internal document indicated that PA President Mahmoud Abbas, backed by the Arab League, was ready to seek UN recognition of Palestine as a non-member observer State in the General Assembly but had not decided on when to submit the application. A senior Palestinian official said, on condition of anonymity, that Mr. Abbas favoured waiting until after the US presidential elections, in line with a request by the US. The document stated that Palestinians must prepare for possible harsh restrictions by the US and Israel if they went ahead with this step, including suspension of US aid. (AP)

The power authority in Gaza announced that it was capable of operating its sole generator at full capacity for the first time in six years. (Ma'an News Agency)

According to a report issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, more than 536,000 Israeli settlers live in 144 settlements and outposts in the West Bank. (www.pcbs.gov.ps)

Mayor Sweid of the village of Sinjil said that Israeli trucks had begun moving caravans to land that had recently been razed by Israeli bulldozers specifically to put up the caravans. The razed land was confiscated by Israeli authorities in 2001 for military purposes. (Wafa)

The first shipment of wheat flour donated by Turkey arrived in Gaza. The full in-kind donation of the 12,500 metric tons of wheat flour worth \$6.6 million, contributed by the Disaster and Emergency Management of the Prime Ministry of the Republic of Turkey, will arrive over the next eight weeks and will be distributed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to the most vulnerable refugees living in Gaza. "The Palestine refugees we serve are grateful for this generous donation," said Filippo Grandi, Commissioner-General of UNRWA. (UNRWA press release)

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights issued a [statement](#) strongly condemning the decision of the EU to offer strengthened trade and diplomatic relations to Israel at the EU-Israel Association Council meeting on 24 July. It said that by expanding bilateral relations with Israel, the EU had ignored warnings from its own foreign ministers that Israel's policies and actions in the West Bank seriously undermined the possibility for a two-State solution for Israel and Palestine. It also called on the EU to reconsider its position in relation to Israel in the light of repeated violations of international human rights and humanitarian law; and called on Israel to fulfil its obligations under those norms. (www.pchrgaza.org)

3

The Israeli military detained a 25-year-old Palestinian man from Beit Ummar, north of Hebron. (IMEMC)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation announced that it would allocate \$2 million to UNRWA in 2013. (RIA Novosti)

The IDF signed an order expanding the boundaries of the "Beit El" settlement to make way for a new housing project. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli forces razed an agricultural road and demolished facilities of a restaurant and a house west of Beit Jala in the Bethlehem Governorate. (Wafa)

In a [press release](#), UNRWA expressed its concern that Palestine refugee communities in Damascus and its suburbs were experiencing the effects of the escalating armed conflict in Syria. "This trend is illustrated by recent developments in and around Yarmouk, a densely populated suburb of Damascus where at least 150,000 Palestine refugees reside among approximately one million Syrians of all backgrounds. ... During the early evening of Thursday, 2 August, in an area on Palestine Street in Yarmouk, there were several explosions, apparently caused by artillery shells, which damaged adjoining homes. Initial, unconfirmed reports from informal sources suggest that some 20 people were killed and tens more were wounded. UNRWA is in the process of verifying Palestine refugee casualties. UNRWA deplores the injuries and loss of life. The Agency strongly appeals to all sides to preserve human life and to act with restraint and in accordance with international law," UNRWA said in the statement. (www.unrwa.org)

The EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah issued a statement expressing its deep disappointment about Israel's decision to renew the closure order of Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem, in particular the Orient House and the Chamber of Commerce. The EU urged Israel to reconsider these closures, rescind its decision and allow these institutions, which had been closed for 11 years, to reopen, as required under the road map. (eeas.europa.eu)

The German Government announced that it had made an additional donation of € 2 million to help feed 667,500 food-insecure and vulnerable Palestine refugees living in Gaza. The funds were in support of UNRWA's 2012 Emergency Appeal, which aimed to mitigate the effects on refugees of the deteriorating political, socioeconomic and security situation in Gaza and in the West Bank. (unrwa.org)

4

PA Foreign Minister Malki told reporters in Ramallah that the Palestinians would renew a bid to upgrade their status at the United Nations on 27 September 2012. (Haaretz)

A Jerusalem court released on bail 23 right-wing activists who had been arrested the previous day for throwing stones at Palestinian vehicles on Route 60 near the fledgling "Ramat Migron" settlement. According to the Jerusalem Magistrates Court, 22 of the 23 were minors. The court issued injunctions mandating that the activists stay away from "Ramat Migron" for 60 days unless they could prove that it was their place of residence. (The Jerusalem Post)

Eight Palestinians were injured when Jewish settlers threw rocks at a bus and Palestinian cars travelling on the main Ramallah-Nablus road, near the

settlement of "Shilo". Eight people on the bus, which was carrying worshippers who were returning home after a day of prayer at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, had to be taken to a hospital in Nablus for treatment. (Wafa)

According to Abdul Nasser Ferwaneh, a researcher specializing in prisoners' affairs, and a published report, 113 Palestinian prisoners were in Israeli jails, arrested before the 1993 signing of the Oslo accords, 66 of them imprisoned for over 20 years. (Wafa)

5

According to Palestinian medical sources in Hebron, two Palestinians died after being pursued by Israeli soldiers and crashing their car. (IMEMC)

One Palestinian was killed and another was injured in an Israeli air strike that targeted a motorcycle in Rafah, south of the Gaza Strip. Hospital officials said that they had identified the dead man as a former member of the Popular Resistance Committee's militant group, who had shifted allegiance to "Magles Shoura al-Mujahddin, among Salafi factions that are a fringe presence in Hamas-ruled Gaza". The Israeli army said in a statement that one of the men targeted "was among those responsible for the execution of the terror attack adjacent to the Israel-Egypt border in which an Israeli civilian was killed". (Wafa, Reuters)

Egyptian security announced the indefinite closure of the Rafah border crossing with Gaza owing to an attack on a police station in the Sinai that killed at least 15 officers. Egypt blamed Islamist militants from Gaza and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. (Ma'an News Agency, Ynetnews)

At a news conference in Ramallah, Hanna Nasser, Chairman of the PA Central Elections Commission, announced that 754 voter registration centres would be open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., until 9 August. (Ma'an News Agency)

A Palestinian analyst group – the Summit of the Free Palestinian Youth (Shabab) – said that following the rise in fuel prices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by Israel, West Bank cities would suffer from massive increases in the price of basic food commodities and fuel, as well as the general economic recession caused by uncertainty about public sector salaries. (Middle East Monitor)

Ibrahim Khreisheh, the Palestinian Representative to the Human Rights Council, told Voice of Palestine radio that the fact-finding committee set up by the Human Rights Council to investigate West Bank settlements would start its work in August and present a preliminary report at the end of September. The committee would submit its final report in March 2013. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Arab League announced that it had received a number of important documents from the Yasser Arafat Foundation which would contribute to the investigation into the late leader's death. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries Committee on Palestine held a press conference in Amman after Israel denied entry to four foreign ministers and ambassadors to the West Bank. The Movement was to convene an unprecedented, high-level meeting in solidarity with the Palestinian leadership, in advance of an annual meeting in Iran at the end of August. Israel's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Yigal Palmor told Reuters that Israel had denied entry to representatives of countries which did not have diplomatic relations with Israel, namely Bangladesh, Cuba, Indonesia and Malaysia. (Ma'an News Agency)

Roberterry, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, urged Israel to reconsider its decision to bar four foreign ministers and ambassadors from attending a conference in Ramallah. "Denying the Palestinian Authority the ability to engage with members of the international community in Area A, is yet another step that contradicts the credibility of the Oslo arrangements, which affirm the Palestinian's right of self-government," Mr.erry said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces expanded the outer borders of the "Navi Daniel" settlement, near the town of al-Khader, south of Bethlehem, according to the al-Khader coordinator of the National Committee against the Wall, Ahmad Salah. Israeli soldiers had moved the military checkpoint at the entrance of the settlement 400 metres forward. (Wafa)

6

Israeli forces arrested four Palestinians from the West Bank, two from Tkou' village, and two from Hebron. (Palestine News Network)

Israeli forces detained seven Palestinians in raids in the northern West Bank, an Israeli army spokesperson said. Troops detained three people from Qalqiliya, three from Kafr Qaddum and one person from Salfit. (Ma'an News Agency)

A 10-year-old Palestinian child was injured by an Israeli settler from the "Kiryat Arba" settlement who ran the child over on a bypass road east of Hebron, according to security sources. The child was reported in a stable condition. (Wafa)

Hamas announced that it had begun implementing a series of security measures in the Gaza Strip in the aftermath of the Sinai attack. All smuggling tunnels under the shared border had been closed and extra security personnel had been deployed along the border. (Ma'an News Agency, Ynetnews)

Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine convened to discuss the recent attack on police officers in Egypt's Sinai, and issued statements condemning the attack. A senior leader of the Palestinian People's Party, Walid al-Awad, said that "Gaza can never be a retreat for those who plan to mess with Egypt's security". (Ma'an News Agency)

Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh led a mass prayer in solidarity with the victims of the terror attack in Kerem Shalom outside the Egyptian Embassy in Gaza. Mr. Haniyeh had called for the establishment of a permanent security coordination committee with the Government of Egypt and vehemently denied any Palestinian involvement in the attack. (Ynetnews)

Hamas Political Bureau Deputy Chief Moussa Abu Marzouq said that Egypt's closure of the Rafah border crossing was a collective punishment for all Palestinians. (Egypt Independent)

According to local sources, the Israeli army arrested two minors in the old city of Hebron. (IMEMC)

Two rockets that were fired from Gaza at the Ashkelon Regional Council Area landed in open fields, Israel Radio reported. The rockets caused no injury or damage. (The Jerusalem Post)

In an interview with an Israeli broadcaster, Matthew Gould, the UK Ambassador to Israel, warned that British public opinion about Israel was turning as a result of the latter's hard-line policies towards the Palestinians. "The centre ground, the majority of the British public, may not be expert but they are not stupid and they see a stream of announcements about new building [activities] in settlements, they read stories about what's going on [in] the West Bank, they read about restrictions in Gaza." Mr. Gould's comments grabbed attention in Israel, not least because he was Jewish and was seen as a friend of the country. (Brisbanetimes.com.au)

Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr, on a three-day visit to Israel within the framework of a Middle East tour, met with President Shimon Peres and stressed Australia's desire to see a negotiated, two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He said that the need for the resumption of negotiations was "urgent". (The Australian)

PLO Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi, during a meeting with Australian Foreign Minister Carr in Ramallah, urged Australia to support Palestine's UN bid. "We, Palestinians, want to partner with Australia and its people in our quest for peace by ending Israel's illegal and immoral occupation, and creating an independent Palestinian State," Ms. Ashrawi said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Gaza was becoming more and more cut off from the rest of the Palestinian territories as hopes of sealing a unity deal between Fatah and Hamas had faded, PA Prime Minister Fayyad warned. "With each day that passes without practical steps towards achieving reconciliation, Gaza is starting to become a distinct entity", he told reporters. "Not a country or sovereign territory, only a distinct entity". And, in parallel, hopes of achieving a Palestinian State were also fading as it was not possible to have an independent State in the West Bank alone, he said. "There is no Palestinian State

without Gaza", he admitted. (*Gulf Times*)

The Israeli Justice Minister, Yaakov Neeman signed regulations that would require plaintiffs to cite their Israeli identification or foreign passport numbers on documents they file. Although the Ministry said that the cases of individuals such as migrant workers, Palestinian residents of the territories and stateless individuals who had no passport would be referred to a registrar or judge. Human rights groups and refugee organizations sharply criticized the Justice Minister, expressing concerns that the new regulations could potentially bar migrants and Palestinians from filing lawsuits in Israeli courts. (*Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post*)

The Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem issued a press statement in which it expressed its deep concern about the situation of the more than 90,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites who had been cut off from the city since Israel's construction of the wall in occupied East Jerusalem. According to an Israeli press report, Israel's Jerusalem municipality had already initiated steps towards the transfer of Palestinian neighbourhoods located east of the wall to the responsibility of the Israeli military. The Coalition urged the international diplomatic and humanitarian community to investigate and act as required in order to prevent the implementation of the measure and protect the Palestinian population who were at risk. (*Palestine News Network*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu had reportedly offered to release 50 prisoners detained before the Oslo Accords and to meet with PA President Abbas to resume political negotiations, if the PA cancelled its proposed UN bid, *Maariv* newspaper reported. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

7

Israeli *Channel 10* reported that Israeli forces had arrested seven "wanted" Palestinians and transferred them to Israeli interrogation centres. (*Palestine News Network*)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad said that Palestinians should hold parliamentary elections in the territory soon, instead of waiting for the elusive reconciliation with Hamas. Comparing the situation to the decades-long division of Germany, he suggested that it would not have made sense to forgo elections in West Germany because of Germany's partition. (*The Washington Post*)

PA President Abbas received Quartet Representative Tony Blair in Ramallah and called for financial support for the PA. Mr. Abbas briefed Mr. Blair on the latest political developments and the dilemma the peace process faced owing to the Israeli Government's intransigence and refusal to abide by international law. Mr. Abbas insisted on the importance of providing financial support to the PA, especially under the current critical financial situation. (*Wafa*)

PA Presidency Spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh slammed statements made by Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman against PA President Abbas and warned of the serious implications of such statements. Mr. Liberman, in a meeting with the Australian Foreign Minister, Bob Carr, said that there would neither be diplomatic progress nor an accord with the Palestinians as long as Mr. Abbas remained in power. Mr. Abu Rudeineh said that Mr. Liberman's statements were similar to the ones made by former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, in which he had openly called for the killing of the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. "Mr. Liberman's statements revealed a mentality interested in killing the peace process and fuelling conflict and wars," said Mr. Abu Rudeineh. (*Wafa*)

Gaza continued to suffer from rolling blackouts of between 6 and 18 hours a day, some planned and some unscheduled, as its only power plant had been unable to meet daily power needs. (*IMEMC*)

Israel reopened the Kerem Shalom crossing with the Gaza Strip to allow the entry of products and fuel. (*Wafa*)

An Israeli court backed an Israeli Government policy of allowing Christians from the Gaza Strip to pray at Israeli and West Bank holy sites, and denying the enclave's Muslims the same right. The Supreme Court rejected an appeal lodged by six Gaza Muslims and the Israeli non-governmental organization Gisha to challenge a ruling of the Beersheba District Court, which had refused to intervene against the policy. They denounced the policy as discrimination in favour of Gaza's 3,000 Christians and against about 1.6 million Muslims in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli authorities had justified access to Muslims holy sites that it imposed periodically through quotas, ages or residence conditions on security grounds. (*AFP*)

Israeli forces were in the process of confiscating agricultural equipment in eight villages in the southern Hebron Hills slated for demolition, with the land to be used as a military training ground. The Palestinian Union of Agriculture Workers Committee said in a statement that all residents of Susia and Rahwa had received eviction orders, and more than 29 villagers from Jinba, Isfey and Tuba had been ordered to leave. Around 1,100 Palestinians, who were dependent on agriculture, would be evicted from 45 k² of land. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Israeli Knesset Finance Committee approved the allocation of NIS 23.4 million (approximately \$6 million) for West Bank settlements, with NIS 8.3 million for the "Migron" settlement outpost, NIS 2.7 million for the infrastructure of the settlements and NIS 12.4 million for the civil administration in the occupied territories to increase the number of inspectors of unauthorized construction in the Palestinian territory. (*Palestine News Network*)

Scandinavian activist groups launched an aid ship destined for Gaza, hoping to challenge the Israeli blockade and draw international attention to the conflict in a move reminiscent of the 2010 "Freedom Flotilla", organizers said. "We have the same goal as the previous flotillas – to put an end to the blockade of Gaza by challenging the Israeli navy," said Torstein Dahle, leader of the Norwegian section of the activist group "Ship to Gaza". The *SV Estelle*, a 53-metre vessel backed mainly by Swedish and Norwegian groups, sailed from Oslo and organizers hoped that several other ships would join it during its journey before it reaches the waters off Gaza in October. (*Reuters*)

"Welcome to Palestine" campaign organizers announced that the next scheduled fly-in would be different from previous ones as fewer activists were expected and that they would arrive at Amman airport and attempt to cross over to the Palestinian territory by land. (*Ynetnews*)

8

The IDF entered several coal plants and confiscated wood and equipment in Daher al-Maleh, a village near Jenin, according to Mohammad al-Khateeb, one of the plants' owners. Mr. al-Khateeb said that the Israeli forces had confiscated almost \$25,000 worth of wood from his own coal plant. (*Wafa*)

According to witnesses, PA police traded gunfire with unknown assailants at PA Prime Minister Fayyad's compound in Ramallah while he was out in Hebron. They said that the exchange of fire lasted one minute with no injuries but that the sound of ambulances was heard shortly thereafter. A security official said that a police officer guarding the building had accidentally discharged his weapon and denied that there had been an exchange of fire. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to local and security sources, Israeli forces arrested four Palestinians from Hebron and Jenin. Mohammad Awad, from the Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements, said that undercover Israeli Special Forces, protected by Israeli soldiers, stormed an area in Beit Ummar, a town south of Hebron. Confrontations erupted between soldiers and the residents following the arrests. The forces fired live ammunition in the air to disperse the local residents. (*Wafa*)

An unusual operation by the IDF in the southern Hebron Hills region intensified suspicions among Palestinian residents that Israel was moving forward with its plan to demolish villages in the area and expel them. IDF helicopters ferried masked, armed soldiers to the isolated Palestinian village of Jinba, where they raided homes, photographing and mapping the site, said the residents. (*Haaretz*)

PLO Executive Committee member Saleh Raafat told *Voice of Palestine* radio that the United States and some Arab countries were pressing Palestinians to delay their UN bid until after the US elections. He also said that the Palestinian people "have no option but to resort to popular resistance and turn to international agencies, particularly the Security Council and the General Assembly, to apply for non-State membership. We should reject this demand and insist on heading to the UN in September." (*Ynetnews*)

Egyptian authorities were expected to reopen the Rafah land crossing to Palestinian travellers in the coming days, said Mahir Abu Sabha, director of

crossings in the Ministry of Interior in Gaza. He asserted that talks with the Egyptian side over reopening the crossing were ongoing. Mr. Abu Sabha reiterated that the Gaza Strip had nothing to do with the "terrorist" attack on Egyptian soldiers on 5 August, which had left 16 dead. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Gaza's health ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra said, "The decision to close the Rafah crossing to patients and humanitarian cases will add to their suffering and harm their health, and could lead to a serious health disaster." Egypt had closed the border following the attack on Egyptian troops on 5 August. Mr. Qudra noted that many patients were awaiting permission to travel into Egypt for medical treatment. "For Palestinians, it is the only way out to the world and it gives hope to hundreds of patients with serious health problems," Mr. Qudra said, noting that many kinds of medicine were not available in Gaza. (*AFP*)

Israeli authorities reopened the Karem Abu Salim commercial crossway in south-east Rafah city in the farthest south of Gaza Strip, allowing the export of one truckload of tomatoes, the entry of 260 truckloads of goods and the pumping of limited quantities of cooking gas into the Strip. (*Bahrain News Agency*)

A group of EU heads of mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah visited the southern Hebron Hills communities facing threat of demolition and displacement. During the visit, the group met at Mufaqara village with PA Prime Minister Fayyad, who briefed them about PA efforts and work to support the people of the area. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli forces began the expansion of a settlement outpost between the two Israeli settlements of Daniel and Eliezer, which had been built illegally on al-Khader, a town south of Bethlehem, according to al-Khader coordinator of the Popular Committee against Settlements Salah. (*WAFa*)

A PA committee looking into the late PA President Arafat's death had asked the Swiss Radiophysics Institute that had found traces of a deadly polonium isotope on Mr. Arafat's clothing to examine his remains. A spokesman for the Institute said that they had agreed to help investigate the 2004 death of Mr. Arafat only if they received guarantees that their findings would not be used for political purposes. (*Reuters*)

9

Two Israeli military patrols entered the Wad Risha area in Ethna village, west of Hebron, while two other patrols entered the village of Beit Ummar, north of Hebron. (*Palestine News Network*)

A security official said that Egypt had formed a military commission to investigate ways to destroy smuggling tunnels under its border with Gaza. A team of Egyptian engineers, border guards and intelligence officers arrived at the area with equipment to demolish the tunnels. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Hamas official Mahmoud al-Zahar had been requested to act as intermediary between Egyptian Intelligence and Hamas leader Haniyeh for the extradition of three members of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' paramilitary wing, who, according to the *Al-Quds* newspaper, had been providing indirect support to radical groups in the Sinai and were connected to weapons smuggling as well. According to a security official in Ramallah, the three militants, Iman Nufal, Riyadh al-Arar and Mohammed Sabu Shimleh, were connected to Hamas' forces in the southern part of the Gaza Strip and had refused to turn themselves over to the Egyptians. The paper also said that the Mossad had transferred to Egyptian Intelligence a list of nine names involved in the attack on Rafah on 5 August. Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, Hamas Political Bureau Deputy Chairman, said that the nine attackers were connected to a group called "The Armies of Monotheism and Jihad in Palestine". (*Haaretz*)

PA Minister of Finance Qassis said that the salaries of public employees for July would be deposited in banks on 13 August. He said that 90 per cent of the employees would be paid in full, while those earning more than \$1,000 would get only 70 per cent of their salaries, with the remaining portion to be paid at a later date. (*WAFa*)

Palestinian communities in the West Bank expressed alarm at the news that Israel would resume construction of the "separation wall" after a delay of five years. Giath Nasser, the lawyer dealing with Battir's legal case against the barrier route, said that the village's ancient irrigation system, where water flowed from an old Roman pool downhill from terrace to terrace and then distributed to farmlands through channels, would collapse if the wall were to be built across the terraces as planned. (*IRIN*)

Israel's High Court of Justice upheld a State order to demolish eight "unauthorized" villages in the southern Hebron Hills located in the IDF's firing zone, in response to a petition filed by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, in 2000. The Court told the Association that it had the right to refile a petition on behalf of the 1,500 villagers. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

A 28-year-old Palestinian woman was wounded in the head when a group of settlers from the settlement of "Kiryat Arba" in southern Hebron attacked her with stones. (*Palestine News Network*)

Al-Khader coordinator of the Committee against the Apartheid Wall Salah said that during a big ceremony, "Efrat" settlers announced the opening of a new park that had been built on land seized from Palestinians from the town. (*WAFa*)

Israeli lawmaker Aryeh Eldad submitted to the Knesset a draft bill that called for allowing Jews freedom to worship in the Al-Aqsa Mosque on specific days, while Muslims would be free to worship at other days, a situation similar to the practice at the Ibrahimi Mosque (Cave of the Patriarchs) in Hebron, according to Israeli sources. (*WAFa*)

Bilal Diab, a 27-year-old Palestinian who was on a hunger strike for 77 days, was released from an Israeli jail. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Jerusalem Municipality issued demolition orders against two UN caravans that had been placed without permission on plots of privately owned land in East Jerusalem's Beit Hanina neighbourhood to replace two illegally built Arab homes that the Municipality had demolished. According to an Israeli official, representatives of the Foreign Ministry had complained about the caravans to the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, who then passed the matter on to New York. Israeli officials blamed the move on the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

10

Egyptian authorities temporarily opened the Rafah crossing into the Gaza Strip for two days. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli authorities ordered the demolition of six structures in Tubas in the northern West Bank. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Senior Palestinian political sources reported that the Israeli Government had agreed to release 123 Palestinian political prisoners held since before the Oslo Agreement. The sources said that the Russian Federation had played an essential role by repeatedly urging Israel to release the detainees. (*IMEMC*)

11

Hamas official Ashraf al-Qidrah said that a young Palestinian man had been shot in his right hand by Israeli soldiers while tending his land east of Khan Yunis. The man sustained moderate wounds. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to Palestinian sources, Israeli navy boats opened heavy machine gun fire at Palestinian fishermen off the northern coast of Gaza City, forcing the fishermen to leave the area. No injuries had been reported. (*WAFa*)

The PA called on Egypt to destroy all underground tunnels along their shared border, saying that the tunnels do not contribute to the economy in the Gaza Strip and were used only by a small number of people for personal gain. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

PA President Abbas met with the US Special Envoy to the Middle East Peace Process, David Hale, in Amman, where they discussed developments in the peace process. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Adel Eilan, from the village council of al-Maleh and al-Madareb in the Jordan valley, said that Israeli forces had confiscated livestock from shepherds and farmers and had imposed a fine of NIS 15,000 for their return to force the shepherds and farmers to leave the area. *(Ma'an News Agency)*
According to the Popular Committee coordinator in Yatta, Rateb al-Jabour, 13 sheep belonging to a Palestinian farmer from Yatta, south of Hebron, died after Israeli settlers from the "Susia" settlement sprayed toxic poison on wild grass in grazing fields surrounding the settlement. *(Wafa)*

12

The IDF detained a Palestinian man in an army raid on his home in al-Tuwani village, in the southern Hebron Hills, prompting clashes between residents and soldiers, a local official said. An Israeli military spokesperson said that she was not aware of the incident. She said that three people had been detained overnight in Rakhme, near Bethlehem, three from Beit Awwa, west of Hebron, and others in Silwad and Hizma, near Ramallah.

(Ma'an News Agency)

Following a Cabinet meeting where Israel's Strategic Affairs Ministry Director-General Yossi Kuperwasser presented a most recent "incitement index", Mr. Kuperwasser insinuated that the US was currently opposed to the re-establishment of the committee to monitor incitement. He told reporters that both Israel and the Palestinians had expressed willingness to set up the committee. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

PA President Abbas arrived in Jeddah to participate in the Extraordinary Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to be held on 14 and 15 August in Mecca. Mr. Abbas was accompanied by PLO Executive Committee member Erakat, Minister of Waqf and Religious Affairs Mahmoud Habash, Director of the General Intelligence Major-General Majed Faraj and the Diplomatic Adviser to the President, Majdi al-Khalidi. Mohammad Shtayyeh, Minister in charge of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, said that Mr. Abbas, in his statement to the Summit, would propose a comprehensive plan to develop the city of Jerusalem requesting the Arab and Islamic countries to support the funding of the plan. *(Palestine News Network)*

Israeli police arrested an Israeli teen suspected of torching a mosque in the West Bank. *(Ynetnews)*

At a press conference in Gaza, senior Hamas official Salah Al-Bardawil said that Hamas was prepared to shut down smuggling tunnels if Egypt opened the Rafah crossing permanently. "The tunnels are a popular and compulsory way to lift the Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip," he said.

(Ma'an News Agency)

Under a military court plea bargain, an IDF sniper, who was charged with manslaughter in 2010 for the fatal shooting of two Gaza women, Riyeh Abu Hajaj, 64, and her daughter Majda Abu Hajaj, 37, during Operation Cast Lead in 2008, would spend 45 days in jail as a result of the reduction of his charge from manslaughter to illegal use of a weapon. *(AFP)*

Jerusalem police banned a group of the Bnei Akiva youth movement members from calling out "The Temple Mount is in our hands!" or hold up signs with the slogan during a demonstration they intended to hold in Jerusalem. Police said that the statements constituted incitement for the Arab public and could lead to violence. The slogan was famously called out by Lieutenant-General Mordechai "Motta" Gur when the Old City was conquered during the Six-Day War. *(Ynetnews)*

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Najah al-Karnawi, 49, a Palestinian resident of the West Bank, was served an indictment by the Beersheba District Court for allegedly providing services to Islamic Jihad by transferring funds to them from the Bedouin city of Rahat, where she lived illegally for an extended period. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

In an interview on *Israel Radio*, former Mossad Chief Danny Yatom warned against presenting an apocalyptic picture of how Iran would respond if Israel took military action against its nuclear programme, saying that the main concern was the thousands of rockets that were stored by Hezbollah and Hamas in Lebanon and Gaza. Those rockets, he said, could "cover all of Israel and that is the main problem". *(The Jerusalem Post)*

PLO Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi and PA Governor of Jerusalem Adnan Husseini hosted an Iftar meal in East Jerusalem, the first official Palestinian gathering inside the Holy City in the 18 years since Israel had imposed a ban on such events. Ms. Ashrawi briefed diplomats from countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East on the Palestinian bid to join the UN in the coming months. She asked the diplomats not only to vote for a future UN resolution on observer State status, possibly this fall, but also to provide the PA with a financial "safety net" in case of cuts in aid caused by the bid. *(Ma'an News Agency, The New York Times)*

Tawfiq Khaladi, Director of Algeria TV, presented the Palestinian Ambassador in Algiers with a collection of archival records from the channel's coverage of the Palestinian struggle for independence since the 1970s. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

The General Director of the Jerusalem Electricity Company, Hisham al-Omari, called on the PA to intervene in an impending electricity crisis in the West Bank after the Israeli Electric Corporation had threatened to cut off electricity to the West Bank owing to unpaid bills by the PA and the refugee camps amounting to over \$100 million. The Jerusalem District Electricity Company distributed power purchased from Israel and supplied Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem, as well as the West Bank cities of Jericho, Bethlehem and Ramallah. *(Ma'an News Agency, Now Lebanon)*

The Director of Forensics in the PA Ministry of Justice told a press conference that DNA tests in Jordan had identified the remains of two Palestinians returned by Israel in May as the bodies of Ramzi Jamal Shaine and Anis Rafuq Khalil from Ramallah. PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Qaraqe called on the PA to investigate the circumstances behind the deaths of Palestinians returned by Israel. He also called for an investigation into the case of missing Palestinian fighter Abdul Naser al-Bouz from Nablus. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

A local activist said that Israeli bulldozers had razed some five dunums of land, uprooted and seized olive trees and demolished a well used for collecting rainwater that local farmers used to irrigate their land in al-Khader, south of Bethlehem. *(Wafa)*

Chief Palestinian liaison officer Jihad Jayyousi said that Israeli authorities would allow Palestinians from the West Bank to enter Jerusalem on 14 August to celebrate Lailat al Qadr, the holiest night in Ramadan. *(Wafa)*

According to the Arab League Assistant Under-Secretary for Palestinian and Arab Occupied Land Affairs, Mohammad Sobeh, the Extraordinary Summit of the OIC, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia, had the issues of Palestine and Jerusalem on its agenda, with the status of Jerusalem as one of its top items. *(KUNA)*

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People held its [344th meeting](#). Stressing the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Chairman of the Committee voiced particular concern over the plan that the Government of Israel had recently announced to evict Palestinian residents from eight villages in the southern Mount Hebron area to make way for army training zones, and by Israel's publishing of tenders for 171 new units in East Jerusalem. *(www.un.org)*

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Israeli forces arrested four Palestinians, one in Burqin and three in Qalqilya, an Israeli army spokeswoman said. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

A 20-year-old Palestinian, Abd-Elaziz Elfakhouri, was apprehended by IDF soldiers during a routine check in Hebron after refusing to identify himself. An Israeli security source reportedly said that during questioning, it turned out that the man was wanted for investigation. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

South Africa's Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ebrahim Ebrahim, said, "What we are saying as Government is we

discourage South Africans from visiting Israel. ... We do not prevent them. ... We say we discourage them. ... We believe Israel is an occupying power and is doing all sorts of things in the [Occupied Palestinian Territory] which has been condemned by the entire international community.” (www.iol.co.za)

A spokesman for a group of Palestinians who were deported to the Gaza Strip by Israel in 2002 said that they had appealed to PA Prime Minister Fayyad to help secure permits for their families to visit them during Ramadan. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A number of Palestinians in Lebanon, Libya, Kenya and Turkey had reportedly complained that Egypt had denied them transit visas to return to Gaza. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Egypt opened its border with Gaza for a three-day period ahead of a major Muslim holiday during the weekend, but imposed tight restrictions on who can travel and it did not say whether it would resume normal border operations after the Rafah passenger terminal was closed following a recent security incident in Sinai. (*The Washington Post*)

A group of extremist settlers used pumps to empty a Palestinian well and flooded farmland near Hebron. (*IMEMC*)

A senior Israeli politician said that Prime Minister Netanyahu had decided to bury the Levy Report, which recommended legalizing most unauthorized settlement outposts in the West Bank and making it easier for existing settlements to expand. (*Haaretz*)

The Israeli municipality of Modi'in-Maccabim-Reut appeared for the first time on the European Union's newly published [list of settlements](#) whose exports would not be considered as made in Israel and thus would not be eligible for tax breaks when imported to EU member countries. The information was confirmed by the spokesperson of the EU delegation in Israel, who said that the EU did not recognize the region, defined as “no man's land”, as a part of Israel. (*Haaretz*)

The Israeli Supreme Court extended by one year an 18-month imprisonment sentence of Zvi Struk, 30, a settler from the Esh Kodesh outpost, who had kidnapped and assaulted Amran Farah, a 15-year-old Palestinian. (*Haaretz*)

15

Israeli soldiers raided several towns in Hebron and arrested a 20-year-old Palestinian man. (*IMEMC*)

At a daily briefing, White House Spokesperson Victoria Nuland said that the US continued to oppose any Palestinian statehood-related efforts through the UN before a full settlement with Israel. On the issue of possible cut in aid in case of a UN bid, Ms. Nuland said that Congress had been strong on those issues and that “There are a number of legislative things on the books, of which the Palestinians are well aware”. (www.state.gov)

Palestinian sources said that Egyptian President Morsy had decided to resume unity efforts between Fatah and Hamas by inviting representatives of both parties to meetings in Cairo after the Eid al-Fitr holiday, which would begin next week. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics [said](#) that the unemployment rate in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip during the second quarter of 2012 was 20.9 per cent – 17.1 per cent in the West Bank and 28.4 per cent in the Gaza Strip. (*Wafa*, www.pcbs.gov.ps)

Israel Army Radio reported that the Israeli Government would increase the quota of Palestinian construction workers permitted to enter Israel from 19,000 to 30,000 in the coming weeks. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

PA Minister of Planning and Administrative Development Ali Al-Jarawi said that Al-Najah University, Bethlehem University, Al-Istiqlal Academy, Bir Zeit, Hebron, the Open University and Palestinian Polytechnic would all receive funding to alleviate the financial crisis affecting universities. The total amount of funding to be divided among the seven universities would be NIS 4.7 million (\$1.1 million). (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli authorities released two lawmakers, Hatem Qafisheh and Mohammad Maher Bader, who were affiliated with Hamas in the Palestinian Legislative Council. Mr. Qafisheh and Mr. Bader had reportedly spent 22 months and 17 months, respectively, in administrative detention. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The “Miles of Smiles 15” aid convoy arrived in the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing. Some 70 activists from countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and the United Kingdom brought medical aid for Palestinian children. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

16

Israeli tanks and bulldozers crossed into the Gaza Strip, east of Rafah, according to witnesses. There were reports of gunfire but no injuries. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

At the fourth Extraordinary Session of Islamic Summit Conference, in Mecca, PA President Abbas called on Islamic world leaders to support the Palestinian bid to seek full membership at the UN, as well as in finding a solution for the refugee issue and establishing an independent Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as its capital. President Abbas added that Palestinian reconciliation could be complete without elections. (*Wafa*)

On the sidelines of the Islamic Summit Conference, PA President Abbas met with Turkish President Abdullah Gül and discussed bilateral relations, recent developments in the region and the stalled peace process. (*Wafa*)

PLO Chief Negotiator Erekat said that 57 countries attending the OIC summit in Mecca indicated that they would support a Palestinian bid for UN membership, in September 2012. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Hamas Spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri insisted that they supported elections, but that reconciliation had to be achieved first. Mr. Abu Zuhri criticized recent remarks by PA President Abbas who had said that there would be no reconciliation without elections. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Yasser Wadiya, head of an independent coalition of Palestinian figures, called on Fatah and Hamas to stop the media crossfire that did not serve the Palestinian cause and instead implement agreements towards national reconciliation. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

King Abdullah of Jordan spoke out against Israeli attempts to Judaize the history and antiquities of the Old City of Jerusalem, declaring Israeli actions “illegitimate” and “encouraging religious conflict”. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

PA Justice Minister Ali Muhanna said that a DNA test of the remains of Nasser Al-Buz, whose body had been returned to his family by Israel as a humanitarian gesture in May, found that it was not Al-Buz's body. Mr. Muhanna said that the PA would send an official letter to Israel demanding the return of Al-Buz's remains. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

General Director of the Jerusalem Electricity Company Al-Omari said that a deal had been reached with the Israel Electric Corporation to postpone power cuts in the West Bank until after Eid al-Fitr and to schedule a monthly payment plan to remove the debt. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A new Oxfam report stated that the [fresh water](#) supply in the Gaza Strip failed to keep up with the growing population. Gaza residents paid up to one third of their household income on [drinking water](#) and, with much of the water supply network damaged during [Operation Cast Lead](#) in 2008, the growing shortage of fresh water sources posed an increasing health risk. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Six Palestinians from one family were wounded after their taxi caught fire while passing by the al-Arub refugee camp near the West Bank settlement of “Bat Ayin”, in what Palestinian witnesses claimed to have been the result of a settler hurling a firebomb at the vehicle. (*Haaretz*)

After a panel of Israeli ministers had agreed unanimously to transfer a Hebron building that Jewish settlers had been living in illegally into the

possession of the city's Jewish community, first evicting the settlers, Israel's Attorney-General Yehuda Weinstein noted problems with the legality of the position and recommended that the Jewish squatters be evicted but the property should not be given to anyone at that stage. The State was expected to request a one-month extension of the deadline for submitting its response to the court on a Peace Now petition demanding the removal of the squatters. (*Haaretz*)

Members of the United Church of Canada, the country's largest Protestant denomination, voted in support of a motion to boycott goods produced in Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Qaraqe said in a press release that Palestinian prisoners had launched a new national programme with legal and political dimensions, asking to be recognized as "war prisoners" in accordance with international law. The prisoners would seek to present the new programme during the September sessions of the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, and to have it adopted by the PA. (*Palestine News Network*)

Maxwell Gaylard, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, expressed serious concern over the more than 1,000 Palestinians living in the southern Hebron Hills region who had been forced to leave their houses after Israeli authorities designated the area as a fire zone for military training. "These are already some of the most vulnerable families in the West Bank – forcibly displacing them from their homes and lands would have a serious immediate and long-term impact on their physical, socio-economic and emotional welfare," Mr. Gaylard said. (*UN News Centre*)

17

Thousands of worshippers performed morning prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, with a quarter million expected in the Holy City throughout the day. Meanwhile, Israeli police were deployed by the thousands throughout East Jerusalem and the Old City, according to police spokesman Mickey Rosenfeld. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A Qassam rocket fired from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel landed in the Sdot Negev Regional Council area. No injuries or damage were reported in the attack. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The military wing of Hamas said that one of its members was killed in the Gaza Strip after an explosive device had accidentally detonated. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Dozens of Jewish youths attacked three young Palestinians in Jerusalem's Zion Square in what one witness described as a "lynch". (*Haaretz*)

Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon announced a plan to hold a summit on the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries at UN Headquarters in New York in September. The summit's main purpose would be to push forward the matter of property rights of Jewish refugees who had been forced to flee Arab countries after the establishment of the State of Israel, and to turn the Jewish refugee issue into a bargaining chip, which would make it clear that if the Palestinians voiced demands for refugee compensation, demands would also be made from the Israeli side. (*Ynetnews*)

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine added a voice of caution to proposals by the Fatah leadership to unite PLO members on a joint electoral list in upcoming local elections. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

18

According to an Israeli army spokesperson, a rocket was fired from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel. The missile landed in the Eshkol region without causing injuries or damage. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Hamas security forces arrested a terrorist who was responsible in part for the attack that killed an Israeli civilian working on Israel's southern border fence in June. According to reports, the arrest was part of a campaign to detain members of the extremist Salafi movements operating in Gaza. (*Ynetnews*)

According to a statement from the Israeli Prime Minister's Office, Prime Minister Netanyahu had called PA President Abbas to wish him well on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr. During the conversation, the Israeli leader also addressed the 16 August attack on a Palestinian man, believed to have been perpetrated by extreme rightists, and promised that all efforts would be made to bring the attackers to justice. (*The Global News Service for the Jewish people*)

At the end of Eid al-Fitr prayers in a mosque in the West Bank city of Ramallah, PA President Abbas told reporters that he "hope[d] that next year will be the year of Palestinian independence". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Hamas leader Haniyeh telephoned PA President Abbas to congratulate him on the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. During the conversation, Mr. Haniyeh reaffirmed his commitment to national unity. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Egyptian authorities announced the release of 18 Palestinian prisoners as a gesture for the Eid al-Fitr holiday. The released detainees had been arrested at security checkpoints in the Sinai after seeking to enter Egypt illegally. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

19

Israeli police detained an Israeli man who was suspected of throwing stones at Palestinian cars south of Bethlehem. (*Ma'an News Agency, Ynetnews*)

According to Palestinian sources, Israeli soldiers smashed the windshield of a car owned by a Palestinian and used a metal barrier to smash its doors; the car was parked at the entrance of the Old City of Hebron. The soldiers justified the attack by claiming that "the car was parked near a settler's outpost" along Ash-Shuhada Street. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli opposition leader Shaul Mofaz called PA President Abbas on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr, pressing for a resumption of peace talks, Israeli media reported. The two had agreed to schedule a meeting soon, according to the report. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli authorities released Khaled Tafesh, member of Hamas and the Palestinian Legislative Council, after he had spent seven months in administrative detention. Mr. Tafesh was arrested by Israeli forces from his Bethlehem home on 19 January 2012. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

20

Israeli police arrested Jewish youths on suspicion of assaulting a Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem. (*Reuters*)

Four members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine had been indicted by an Israeli military court after their arrest three months earlier on suspicion of plotting an attack. The four men were allegedly planning to attack Israeli soldiers manning checkpoints and to abduct soldiers and settlers. (*Haaretz, Ma'an News Agency*)

The Israeli State Attorney-General's Office ordered the eviction of an illegal West Bank outpost in response to an appeal by its residents hoping to prevent its destruction. The eviction was set to be carried out on 28 August. (*Haaretz, Xinhuanet*)

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Israel International Model United Nations at the College of Management Academic Studies in Rishon LeZion UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Processerry said that a strong Palestinian economy was not enough for stability. Mr.erry said that while the last few years had seen "considerable economic growth in the Palestinian territories, and relative stability, including unprecedented

security cooperation", this was not enough to assure a sustainable future. "This is because the Palestinian Authority is quickly... losing its legitimacy in the eye of the public, if it is not able to bring also the political goal forwards – the creation of a Palestinian State living side by side with Israel in peace and security". (*The Jerusalem Post*)

21

Israeli forces arrested nine Palestinians across the West Bank – three in Nablus, five in Beit Awwa, Hebron, and one in Hebron city, an Israeli army spokesperson said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

According to Palestinian sources, the Israeli army bombarded the Khuzaha town, south of the Gaza Strip. Israeli soldiers stationed on the border between Israel and Gaza opened heavy artillery fire, destroying farms and houses. (*Kuwait News Agency*)

Israeli Defense Minister Barak telephoned PA President Abbas to send his well-wishes on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr and the end of Ramadan(*The Jerusalem Post*)

PA President Abbas issued a statement marking the 43rd anniversary of an attempt by the an Australian, Denis Michael Rohan, to set fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, saying that Jerusalem's Arab and Islamic identity was a Palestinian red line. The statement read that all Israeli excavation work in Jerusalem and tunnels underneath the Mosque "will not undermine the fact that the City will forever be Arabic, Islamic and Christian". The statement concluded "that there will be no peace or stability before our beloved City and eternal capital is liberated from occupation and settlement."

(*The Jerusalem Post*)

Violence by Jewish settlers had been cited for the first time in a US State Department list of "terrorist incidents", as Israeli political leaders condemned a string of recent attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinians in the West Bank and Jerusalem. (*The Guardian*)

According to Palestinian witness accounts, a number of armed extremist Israeli settlers attacked a Palestinian home in Far'ata village, west of the northern West Bank city of Nablus, and tried to torch it. (*IMEMC, The Jerusalem Post, Ynet*)

Upon discovering 15 new structures built without the required permits near the Palestinian village of B'nai Na'eem in the West Bank, the non-governmental organization Regavim filed a petition requesting that the High Court of Justice order the West Bank Civil Administration and the IDF to demolish the structures and halt further construction. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

In a report issued by Abdul-Nasser Farawn, a Palestinian researcher and former political prisoner, it was claimed that Israel held captive 4,550 Palestinians in 17 prisons, detention and interrogation centres across Israel. Among the prisoners were 220 children. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Foreign Ministry of France released a statement alerting its nationals and non-governmental organizations that would take part in the forthcoming "Welcome to Palestine" event in support of the Palestinian people of the "risks of ejection by the Israeli authorities as they pass the Allenby crossing point between Jordan and the Palestinian territories". Hundreds of French and Europeans had been trying for months to attend the events in the Occupied Palestinian Territory but had been largely blocked at ports of entry into Israel and detained and expelled, prompting them to bypass Israel by going through Jordan by way of the Allenby crossing point into the Palestinian territory. (*KUNA*)

22

Hamas spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra said that the IDF had fired artillery shells into central Gaza and explosions had been heard near the Wadi Gaza area, with no injuries reported. An Israeli army spokesperson said that there had been no military activity in the area. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli boats opened heavy machinegun fire at Palestinian fishing boats in the Sheikh Ejleen area, west of Gaza City in the southern Gaza Strip.

(*Petra*)

Palestinian medical sources in Jerusalem reported that an elderly Palestinian woman was wounded after Israeli soldiers had attacked her and her family in the Atarot area, north of Jerusalem. (*IMEMC*)

The Office of the Spokesperson for the US Department of State issued a statement condemning in the strongest possible terms "the senseless act of hate and violence committed against a Palestinian youth in Jerusalem on 17 August. We wish victim Jamal Julani a speedy recovery. Discriminatory acts of violence undermine and discredit efforts toward peace and security between Israelis and Palestinians. We welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu's unequivocal condemnation of racism and violence and his call for a full police investigation. The perpetrators of this hateful crime must be held to account". (*US Department of State*)

In a letter, Israel's Foreign Minister Liberman called on the Quartet foreign ministers to press for new PA elections to replace PA President Abbas, whom he described as an obstacle to peace. (*Haaretz*)

PA Presidential Spokesman Abu Rudeineh condemned a letter sent by Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman to the Quartet describing PA President Abbas as an "obstacle to peace", saying that it was an incitement to kill and considered as meddling in internal Palestinian affairs. He called on Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to denounce Mr. Lieberman's statements. (*Wafa*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu rebuked his far-right Foreign Minister Liberman for suggesting that Palestinians should vote out their President to help revive peace efforts. Prime Minister Netanyahu's opening of a public rift with his coalition ally appeared to be an attempt to minimize any diplomatic fallout. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli Defense Minister Barak sharply criticized Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman's letter to the Middle East Quartet calling for PA elections to replace PA President Abbas. Mr. Barak attempted to dispel the impression that Israel sought to intervene in Palestinian politics: "Abbas is no Zionist... but to suggest that we should try to oust him – that's a strange idea." (*Haaretz*)

PLO Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi said that the Israeli Government was waging a campaign of "distortion, hatred and incitement", which created "a culture of impunity, racism and exclusivity." Ms. Ashrawi condemned written remarks by Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton [and the rest of the Quartet] accusing President Abbas of "acting to undermine attempts to renew the peace process". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The army-issued permits for the young Palestinian men from the Jayada family to come into Jerusalem to check on their hospitalized family members following the past week's firebomb attack on a Palestinian taxi had expired. The IDF liaison office in the West Bank, known as the Civil Administration, informed the men that their requests for extension had been denied. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

PA border official Raed Fattouh said that the Rafah crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip and the Kerem Shalom commercial crossing with Israel would be partially reopened. He said that the Egyptian authorities had informed the Palestinians that the Rafah crossing would operate only for passengers coming into Gaza. The Kerem Shalom crossing would operate to allow the entry of humanitarian aid, gas for domestic use and some commercial merchandise. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

South Africa's Cabinet approved the attachment of Occupied Palestinian Territory labels on imported goods from Jewish settlements. Government Spokesperson Jimmy Manyi said in a press briefing that "this is in line with South Africa's stance that recognizes the 1948 borders delineated by the United Nations and does not recognize occupied territories beyond these borders as being part of the State of Israel." (*Al Jazeera, The Nation*)

The Israeli Foreign Ministry issued a statement stating that a South African decision to mandate special labels on products coming from the Occupied Palestinian Territory was exclusion and discrimination that "brings to mind ideas of a racist nature which the Government of South Africa, more than any other, should have wholly rejected". (*The Jerusalem Post*)

In a [statement](#) issued by her spokesperson, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton expressed serious concern about the implications of the recent Israeli decision to publish a tender for 130 additional housing units in the settlement of "Har Homa", across the Green Line in East Jerusalem. (www.consilium.europa.eu)

The coordinator of the Committee against the Apartheid Wall, Ahmad Salah, said that about 70 settlers had arrived under army protection at the historic Solomon Pools located in al-Khader and performed religious rituals. (Wafa)

Ghassan Daghas, the PA official monitoring settlement activity in the northern West Bank, said that settlers from the settlement of "Itamar" had entered the Nablus village of Awarta and poured petrol over cars belonging to Nidal Qawariq and Eyah Qawariq. They also sprayed racist slogans on several walls in the village but failed to ignite the petrol before fleeing, he said. (Ma'an News Agency)

According to eyewitness accounts, Israeli forces handed two Palestinians demolition notices of their houses in Beit Ummar, a town north of Hebron. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli authorities handed out eviction orders to farmers near Jericho in the central West Bank, the PA's official news site reported. (Ma'an News Agency)

During his official visit to Brazil from 13 to 19 August, UNRWA Commissioner-General Filippo Grandi invited Brazil to become the first Latin American country to join the 25-member UNRWA Advisory Commission. (IPS News Agency)

In his [briefing](#) to the Security Council, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman said that while there had been quiet, direct exchanges in an effort to agree to the terms that would create an environment conducive to talks, "we are concerned that we have not yet seen the progress required for sustained negotiations that could lead to successful outcomes". (www.un.org)

A new study by a team of American, Israeli and Palestinian researchers identified rising trends of violence among children in the Middle East, as a result of the protracted Israeli-Palestinian dispute. (Haaretz)

Israeli special units stormed a section of Rimon prison in southern Israel and attacked Palestinian prisoners. According to PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Qaraqe, eight prisoners were injured. (Ma'an News Agency, Wafa)

23

A Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem complained of police misconduct to the Justice Ministry after a police officer had shocked him five times with an electric stun gun, on 21 August, in front of his five children. (Haaretz)

Speaking to *Israeli Public Radio*, Foreign Minister Liberman accused the Palestinians of using two forms of "terror" to attack Israel, with Hamas managing the armed version and PA President Abbas taking the diplomatic track. He said that there was a division of labour between Hamas leader Haniyeh and President Abbas, accusing the latter of leading "a campaign of incitement against Israel in the international arena". (AFP)

PLO Chief Negotiator Erakat told Lebanese satellite channel *Mayadeen* that he had written to the US and Israel asking for clarification of a letter by Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman in which he had slammed PA President Abbas and called for a new Palestinian leadership. Mr. Erakat said that he intended to send more letters to international bodies as a warning that Mr. Abbas was in danger as Mr. Liberman's letter entailed incitement to kill him. He reaffirmed that Mr. Abbas would still seek Palestine's membership in the UN and an independent Palestinian State "despite all this agitation", adding that the Palestinian leadership was ready to return to negotiations once Israel had frozen settlement activity. (Ma'an News Agency)

Senior Hamas member Al-Zahar criticized Egypt's decision to open the Rafah crossing for only three days a week. He claimed that the Sinai terror attack investigation, which had led to the closure of the crossing, had proven that Gaza had nothing to do with the attack but that the Mossad was the responsible party. (The Jerusalem Post)

A Fatah lawmaker called on the Palestinian leadership to refuse to meet with Israeli officials until their ministers halted threats to President Abbas. (Ma'an News Agency)

Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin, while visiting lynching victim Jamal Julani at the Hadassah University Medical Center in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem warned that racist violence was a strategic threat. "It is hard to see you lying in the hospital because of an unimaginable, outrageous act," Mr. Rivlin told Mr. Julani. "I came here in the name of the State of Israel in order to apologize and express anger over what happened." (The Jerusalem Post)

It was announced that Israeli and Palestinian officials were set to meet during the week to discuss the Palestinian electric company's debts and set a payment schedule to postpone blackouts in the occupied West Bank. However, a Palestinian official said that the Israeli Electric Corporation was demanding partial payment from the Jerusalem Electricity Company, which supplied power to West Bank cities, before agreeing to a meeting to discuss the NIS 415 million debt. The Corporation had threatened to cut off power to West Bank cities unless the bill was paid by 1 September, said Hisham al-Omari, the Director of the Company. (Wafa, Ma'an News Agency)

According to eyewitness accounts, a group of Israeli settlers planted trees on a Palestinian privately owned land plot in al-Khader village, south of Bethlehem, which they had taken over in May 2012. (IMEMC, Jordan News Agency, Wafa)

Several dozen settlers rallied against the impending eviction of the West Bank settlement of "Migron" in Jerusalem across from the Justice Ministry building. (Ynetnews)

According to local residents, Israeli forces handed eviction notices to several Palestinian farmers in Kufr Jammal, a village south of Tulkarm. (Wafa)

In a statement, the Palestinian Prisoners' Club said that Israeli police had severely beaten and then arrested a 20-year-old Palestinian from Issawiya, an East Jerusalem neighbourhood. (Wafa)

24

A Palestinian man was wounded when the IDF raided his home in the Wadi Husain district in the southern Hebron area, near the Israeli settlement of "Kiryat Arba". Hosni Matrabeh, 48, lost consciousness when an Israeli soldier threw a sound bomb which exploded near his head, a relative said.

The troops said that they were searching for someone who had shot at a building in the area, which was controlled by the Israeli army. (Ma'an News Agency)

In response to Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman's request pushing for change in the Palestinian leadership, the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry said in a statement: "Moscow underscored that breaking the current deadlock in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process was possible only through negotiation on the universally accepted international law basis. This is what should be made the cornerstone." (TASS)

Palestinian sources said that Egypt's attempts to cleanse Sinai of terrorists had brought about the destruction of a quarter of the tunnels connecting the Egyptian and Palestinian Rafah. It was predicted, however, that the tunnels would be restored after the current operation had been completed. (Ynetnews)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad met with the Governor of the Bank of Israel, Stanley Fischer, in Jerusalem, Israeli media reported. Mr. Fischer's office confirmed the meeting but gave no further details. (Ma'an News Agency)

Qatar will open an office in Gaza to oversee the first phase of its \$224 million reconstruction project, an official in Gaza said. Initially, efforts would focus on infrastructure and buildings for the Ministries of Health and Agriculture, he said, stressing that the PA was not involved. (Ma'an News Agency)

Representing the PA, Deputy Minister for National Economy Abdul Hafiz Nofal thanked the South African envoy in Ramallah after the African Cabinet approved a regulation "requiring the labelling of goods or products emanating from IOT [Israeli-occupied territory] to prevent consumers from being led to believe that such goods come from Israel". Mr. Nofal said that the move was important because it would make it easier to tax the products and to indicate to consumers which products to boycott should they choose to exclude settlement goods. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Alistair Burt, UK Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, said: "The recent announcement by the Israeli authorities to tender for the construction of 130 new housing units in the illegal settlement of 'Har Homa' is extremely worrying... I call for this decision to be rescinded." (www.fco.gov.uk)

The IDF was preparing to evict the 30 "Migron" families living on land privately owned by Palestinians. The settlers were reported to have met during the night to decide whether to cooperate and leave the settlement on 27 August or defy the orders and stay. (*Haaretz*)

The Swiss Lausanne University Hospital radiology lab said that it had received the go-ahead from Suha Arafat, the widow of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, to test his remains for poisoning by polonium. "We are waiting for a formal, written letter from the lawyer before travelling to Ramallah to carry out the probe", the lab's spokesman, Darcy Christen, said. (*AFP*)

Olivia Zemor, a spokesperson for some 100 US, British, French and Spanish activists, who had arrived in Jordan to try to cross into the West Bank and deliver supplies to Palestinian students, said, "We are a group of peaceful people and we are quite sure we will pass this time. We are supporting Palestinian rights and if Israel says no to us, it cannot call itself a democratic country." The group had attempted to go to Israel in July 2011 and April 2012, but had been denied entry at Ben Gurion airport by Tel Aviv authorities. (*AFP*)

25

Israeli forces detained four Palestinians across the West Bank, an Israeli army spokesperson said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Egypt decided to reopen the border crossing with Gaza, *MENA* reported, adding that the Rafah crossing would return to operation six days a week. (*AFP*)

Jordan's trade unions called on Arab and Muslims communities to take action against measures by Israel that "seeks to expel the Palestinians from Jerusalem". The country's 14 trade unions said that Israel was going ahead with excavations near the Al-Aqsa Mosque to cause it to collapse. (*Xinhua*)

26

Palestinian militants launched three rockets towards Israeli territory, which hit a factory near Sderot. No casualties were reported; however, damage was caused. (*Xinhua*)

Israeli military sources and media reported that the Israeli army arrested eight Palestinians in Nablus and in the Hebron district. (*IMEMC*)

Israel should present PA President Abbas with an ultimatum, Foreign Minister Liberman told *Haaretz*: "If he does not resume negotiations and abandon his UN campaign, Israel would cease to see him as a legitimate negotiating partner." (*Haaretz*)

PA President Abbas said that the Palestinian request for non-Member status in the UN aimed to protect the peace process and preserve the two-State solution. Responding to Foreign Minister Liberman's letter to the Quartet calling for his replacement, he said that Israel's Government was destroying any chance for peace. (*Haaretz*, *Wafa*)

The Arab League condemned, in a statement, Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman's latest statements against President Abbas. (*Wafa*)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad called on Hamas leader Haniyeh not to attend the summit of non-aligned countries, to be held in Tehran. He said that inviting Mr. Haniyeh "is a strong strike to the Palestinian unity". Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erakat told *Xinhua* earlier that President Abbas would not attend if Mr. Haniyeh did. Movement of Non-Aligned Countries Spokesman Mohammad Reza Forqani said: "So far, Iran has not sent an official invitation to ... Ismail Haniyeh." A Hamas official said that Mr. Haniyeh would not be attending owing to concerns over Palestinian unity. (*NAM News Network*, *PNN*, *Wafa*)

A truckload of eggs produced in the West Bank was exported to Jordan for the first time. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Former Israeli soldiers said that mistreatment of Palestinian children was "routine" and occurred even at times of relative calm. A collection of over 30 testimonies published by the Breaking the Silence group of ex-servicemen, said that physical violence, often arbitrary, had been used against very young children. (*AFP*)

Israeli police arrested three 12- and 13-year-olds from the settlement of "Bat Ayin" on suspicion of hurling a firebomb on 16 August at a taxi, wounding six members of a Palestinian family. (*Haaretz*)

27

A rocket exploded in an open field outside of Sderot. No injuries or damages were reported. Students from the area were evacuated into shelters. (*Xinhua*)

An IDF spokesperson confirmed that two weapons production and storage sites in the northern Gaza Strip had been struck by its air force in response to earlier high-trajectory fire that had targeted Israeli communities. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

A group of eight Israeli settlers attacked and wounded Ismail Adara, a 67-year-old Palestinian shepherd, as he grazed his flock near the village of Bir al Eid in the southern Hebron Hills. He was rushed to a hospital in Hebron with wounds in the neck and fingers and with possible head fractures. (*Haaretz*, *Ma'an News Agency*)

Several Israeli military jeeps entered areas east of Nablus and the Balata refugee camp and soldiers seized two residents aged 18 and 47. (*Wafa*) "The population of the Gaza Strip will increase from 1.6 million people today to 2.1 million people in 2020," a joint report by OCHA, UNRWA, the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the United Nations Children's Fund said. Infrastructure across a number of sectors – electricity, water and sanitation, and municipal and social services – is "not keeping pace with the needs of the growing population", it said. (*AFP*)

The Government of the Netherlands had made a \$15.9 million donation during the year to UNRWA's core programming as well as a donation of \$5.7 million in response to UNRWA's 2012 Emergency Appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. (unrwa.org)

Prime Minister Netanyahu said that the settlements of "Efrata" and "Gush Etzion" would always be part of the State of Israel. "Efrata and Gush Etzion are integral parts of greater Jerusalem", Mr. Netanyahu said. "We are building 'Efrata' and 'Gush Etzion' with enthusiasm, faith and responsibility." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The PA urged EU States to follow South Africa's example and separately label all products manufactured in Israeli settlements. (*The Irish Times*)

A number of extremist settlers burned three Palestinian cars in the Wad Khamis area near Hebron. (*IMEMC*)

Settlers razed land belonging to Palestinians from the town of Bruqin in the Salfit Governorate. Bruqin's mayor, Akrama Samara, said that settlers from the settlement of "4" razed land west of the town in preparation for the construction of new settlement-neighbourhoods. (*Wafa*)

The head of the Palestinian Water Authority, Shaddad Attali, condemned Israel's destruction of Palestinian agricultural wells in the Kufir Dan area near Jenin. (*Wafa*)

The Israeli army handed several residents of the area south of Hebron orders to leave their homes in preparation for demolition. (*IMEMC*)

The Israeli authorities issued new eviction orders in the Wadi Qana area, leading to the uprooting of 176 olive trees owned by Palestinians from the

town of Deir Istiya . (Wafa)

Israel prevented some 100 pro-Palestinian activists from entering the West Bank from Jordan at the Allenby Bridge. The activists from Belgium, France and other European countries carried an official invitation from the Governor of Bethlehem and gifts, including writing implements, for children. (Haaretz)

The Gaza Strip will not be "a livable place" by 2020 unless action is taken to improve basic services in the territory, according to a [UN report](#). Basic infrastructure in water, health, education and sanitation "is struggling to keep pace with a growing population", according to the report. It estimates that Gaza's population will rise from 1.6 million to 2.1 million by 2020, the need for double the number of schools and 800 more hospital beds, and states that the territory is already suffering from a housing shortage. The report also states that the coastal aquifer, the territory's only natural source of fresh water, may become unusable by 2016. UN officials pointed to the difficulty of improving the situation given "the closure of the Gaza Strip, violent conflict and the pressing need for Palestinian reconciliation". "An urban area cannot survive without being connected", said UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the Occupied Palestinian Territory Gaylard. Gaza had no air or sea ports, and the economy was heavily dependent on outside funding and smuggling through tunnels under the border with Egypt. Even though Gaza had experienced some economic growth in recent years, the report states that it "does not seem to be sustainable" and finds that Gazans were worse off now than in the 1990s. (BBC, www.unsco.org)

28

Palestinians threw six Molotov cocktails at IDF forces near the town of Abu Dis. No injuries or damage were caused. IDF soldiers arrested one man in connection with the attack for further investigation. (The Jerusalem Post)

Three Palestinians were detained and suffered light injuries when Israeli police fired at their car's tires, causing it to turn over, after failing to stop at a security checkpoint and nearly running over a security officer near Nablus. The car allegedly contained large quantities of alcohol, and the riders, according to police, had long histories of criminal activity. (The Jerusalem Post)

The IDF arrested two fishermen off the coast of northern Gaza near Beit Lahiya. A statement by the agricultural authorities in Gaza said that Israel imposed a three-mile restriction every season. An Israeli military spokeswoman said that navy forces had detained the fishermen because they had deviated from the designated fishing area. They also took their boat to Ashdod port. Both fishermen were later released back to Gaza, she added. (Ma'an News Agency)

Under IDF protection, hundreds of Jewish pilgrims visited Joseph's Tomb in Nablus as clashes erupted in the nearby Balata refugee camp. The IDF closed down the eastern section of Nablus for several hours, the duration of the rituals of the Jewish pilgrims, and used large amounts of tear gas during the clashes. (The Jerusalem Post)

Referring to Egyptian President Morsy's indication the previous day that he would preserve Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel, Foreign Minister Liberman said, "I was happy to hear Egyptian President Mohamed Morsy speak of Egypt's commitment to peace with Israel, to the Camp David peace accords and to the battle against terror". Mr. Liberman, who was speaking at a legal conference, urged Mr. Morsy to warm relations with Israel by visiting Jerusalem. (AFP)

PA Foreign Minister Al-Malki said that PA President Abbas would rally support for the UN bid at the summit of non-aligned countries, in Tehran.

The Palestinian delegation was also expected to discuss the issues of prisoners in Israeli jails and Israel's ongoing confiscation of Palestinian land.

"Politically and diplomatically, we depend on the Non-Aligned Movement and its support as its countries constitute the largest international gathering in the world," Mr. Malki said. The Palestinian delegation would seek political and not financial support at the summit, as most participating States were developing countries facing their own economic difficulties, he said, adding that it would also call for boycotting relations with Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman over his recent call for President Abbas' replacement. (Ma'an News Agency)

At the ministerial meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Tehran, the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Marty Natalegawa, said that the Palestinian issue remained on the top of the Movement's agenda, urging delegates to take concrete steps to ensure that Palestine's bid for enhanced status in the UN succeeds this year. (www.thejakartapost.com)

The land authority in Gaza began levelling ground to establish a free trade zone between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. "The land authority has submitted 200 acres to the Economy Ministry [...], all located west of the Rafah crossing", Land Authority Director Amal Shamali said. "An area of 40 acres will be within the commercial crossing in the area near the Rafah crossing, while 160 acres will be allocated to the free market", he added.

(Ma'an News Agency)

The PA Foreign Ministry called on the international community and the Quartet to condemn Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's statements declaring the annexation of the Gush Etzion block to greater Jerusalem and hold him responsible for the halt in the peace process and negotiations. (Wafa)

After a 30-month legal battle, the Haifa District Court rejected all claims of negligence by the bulldozer driver and by the Israeli army in the death of US activist Rachel Corrie. The civil lawsuit was brought against the State of Israel and the IDF by her family exactly seven years after her death. Ms. Corrie was killed by an Israeli bulldozer in 2003, as she was with a group of activists acting as human shields to prevent a house from being demolished in Rafah. Judge Oded Gershon, reading out his verdict, said that the military police investigation, which found that Ms. Corrie had been killed by accident as a result of her "own irresponsible behaviour", had been properly conducted. Senior US officials had criticized the original investigation of the case, saying that it had been neither thorough nor credible. The Corrie family lawyer, Hussein Abu Hussein, said that the family would appeal the verdict, which was based upon "distorted facts". (AFP, Reuters)

The US Ambassador to Israel, Dan Shapiro, told the Corrie family that Israel's investigation into the death of American activist Rachel Corrie was not satisfactory and was not as thorough, credible or transparent as it should have been. (Haaretz)

A French court opened a murder inquiry into the 2004 death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, prosecutors said, following claims by his widow that he might have been poisoned. Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erekat welcomed the inquiry. He said that the Arab League would also call for an international investigation into Mr. Arafat's death, at the United Nations. (Reuters)

The Governor of Jericho and the Jordan Valley, Majid al-Fityani, said that the IDF handed demolition notices to two Palestinian homeowners in the Sbaiha area in Jericho. He also said that the IDF had previously notified residents of their plan to raze some 3,000 dunums of land planted with palm trees. (Wafa)

Local sources reported that Israeli soldiers, accompanied by a military bulldozer, had destroyed five wells and three tents in the Zannouta area, south of Hebron, where the soldiers had violently assaulted some Palestinians protesting the demolitions. The IDF also removed two tents in a Khirbit Susya village, south of Hebron, where the residents also received orders to remove solar panels, a source of electricity for the village. (MEMC)

The hearing on a petition to delay the eviction of the residents of the "Migron" settlement by the Israeli Supreme Court concluded without a decision, enabling its residents to remain for several more days. In March, the Court reaffirmed its ruling that "Migron" had been built illegally on private Palestinian property. (Xinhua)

During a meeting with Egyptian Consul Hammam Abu Zaid in Ramallah, PA Minister of Prisoners' Affairs Qaraqe requested that Egypt include Palestinian detainees in its prisoner exchange deal with Israel. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Palestinians held a demonstration in Ramallah to express solidarity with thousands of prisoners held in Israeli jails. The demonstration was organized by a new Palestinian movement named "Palestinians for Dignity". (www.presse.tv)

The International Solidarity Movement expressed deep concern at the ruling by an Israeli district court that Rachel Corrie's death had been an accident. (www.palsolidarity.org)

29

Israeli military warplanes set off a series of sonic bombs over the Gaza Strip, spreading terror and panic among local residents. (*Wafa*)

A Gazan woman was in critical condition after being shot by Israeli troops near the border in central Gaza, in an area east of the town of Deir al-Balah. (*AFP*)

A group of Israelis attacked a Palestinian woman in the village of Lebnan Al Sharq. (*Gulfnews.com*)

A Palestinian cameraman from the Gaza Strip reportedly managed to capture on tape Israeli navy boats encircling Palestinian fishing boats, flooding them with water and blocking their way as they tried to sail back to shore. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli forces stormed several neighbourhoods in Beit Ummar, searched houses and arrested several Palestinians. (*Palestine News Network*)

Israeli forces set up a military checkpoint at the southern entrance of Al-Khader village, south of Bethlehem. (*Palestine News Network*)

PA President Abbas arrived in Tehran to attend the summit of non-aligned countries. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation received instructions from President Morsy to provide Gaza with fuel for its sole power station, according to *Al-Watan* newspaper. The company will provide 30,000 tons of fuel as well as petroleum donated by Qatar. The fuel will arrive through the Al-Ouja crossing in Egypt's northern Sinai and will then be transported to Gaza via the Kerem Shalom crossing within the next few days.

(*Ma'an News Agency*)

In a letter to the President of the Security Council, Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations criticized as biased a UN report on Gaza that had concluded that the region would not be "liveable" by 2020 unless urgent action was taken to improve fundamental infrastructure. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Dov Weissglas, Chief of Staff to then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at the time of Yasser Arafat's death in 2004, and a key participant in deliberations surrounding Mr. Arafat's worsening health, denied that Israel had poisoned Mr. Arafat. (*AP*)

PLO Executive Committee member and head of the PLO Department of Culture and Information Hanan Ashrawi strongly denounced the Israeli district court ruling that absolved Israel's military and the State of the 2003 killing of American activist Rachel Corrie while she protested the demolition of a Palestinian home in the Gaza Strip: "Despite the testimonies of eyewitnesses, the audiovisual evidence and the overwhelming proof that Rachel was deliberately murdered, the Israeli court insists on victimizing her again in her tragic death. This proves that once again the occupation has distorted the legal and judicial systems in Israel and that the lack of accountability for its violence and violations has generated a culture of hate and impunity", she said. (www.palestineembassy.org)

Fakhri Abu Diab, a member of the Committee for Defending Lands of Silwan, stated that the Jerusalem Municipality had handed notices for the demolition of five homes in the Al-Bustan neighbourhood in the city. (*IMEMC*)

Israel's High Court ruled that the "Migron" settlement [outpost] in the West Bank must be evacuated by 4 September. The court rejected an appeal by the settlers to delay the evacuation. (*Reuters, The Jerusalem Post*)

A group of settlers set fire to a car and sprayed racist graffiti in a Ramallah neighbourhood. Settlers also sprayed racist graffiti on vehicles and the walls of homes in al-Zira village, located by al-Jalazun refugee camp, opposite of "Beit El". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli soldiers demolished a Palestinian home in Bethlehem. (*IMEMC*)

Israel destroyed five cisterns and several tents, sheep enclosures and storage sites in four Palestinian communities in the southern Hebron Hills. (*Haaretz*)

Amnesty International [condemned](#) the Israeli court's verdict on the 2003 death of Rachel Corrie, saying that it shielded Israeli military personnel from accountability and ignored deep flaws in the Israeli military's internal investigation of her death. (www.amnesty.org)

Hundreds of Palestinians welcomed the "Key of Return" back to the Aida Refugee Camp in Bethlehem. The one-ton steel key, measuring almost 10 metres, was brought to Bethlehem from Berlin, where it had been exhibited at the seventh Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, from 27 April to 1 July. (*Palestine News Network*)

30

Israeli forces raided the Awarta village east of Nablus and ransacked homes. Thirteen Palestinians were detained overnight. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Dozens of residents of Al-Bireh, near Ramallah, were treated for the effects of tear gas inhalation after Israeli soldiers had invaded the town and fired gas bombs. (*IMEMC, Palestine News Network*)

Egypt's President Morsy arrived in Tehran, noting in a speech to the summit of non-aligned countries that Palestinian independence "has been a priority of the [[Muslim Brotherhood](#)] movement since its birth and it will be so until we achieve a comprehensive solution that will support the right of the Palestinian people to decide their own future and to establish their free State on their own soil". (*Ynetnews*)

PA Presidential Spokesman Abu Rudeineh said: "The President will have Palestinian, Arab and international consultations to set a date for the UN bid, to present the request for non-member State status for Palestine... After the Tehran Summit, the President will go to Cairo to attend the Arab League Follow-up Committee meeting on 5 and 6 September, which will set a date for the Palestinian bid." (*AFP*)

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told PA President Abbas in Tehran: "We love Palestine, and we are committed to achieving Palestinian national reconciliation as it will contribute to the Palestinian resistance." He said that Iran was ready to host negotiations between Palestinian groups. (*NAM News Network, Ma'an News Agency*)

The Austrian Government donated €750,000 to UNRWA's health programming in the West Bank and Gaza. (unrwa.org)

Richard Falk, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, condemned an Israeli court ruling that cleared the army of any blame for the 2003 death of US peace activist Rachel Corrie as "a defeat for justice and accountability" and "a

victory for impunity for the Israeli military". (AFP)

Israeli authorities gave Palestinian farmers living in Jericho in Area C orders to uproot palm trees they had grown and leave agricultural lands within 45 days. (Al Jazeera)

Israeli forces destroyed seven Bedouin residential tents and sheds in grazing fields east of Bethlehem. (Wafa)

The Israeli authorities handed a number of Palestinians from the village of Nahhalin, west of Bethlehem, eviction orders to take over 12 dunums of land. (Wafa)

Israel released Hussam Khader, a Fatah lawmaker, after his detention of 15 months without charge. (Ma'an News Agency)

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A rocket fired from the Gaza Strip struck a house in Sderot in southern Israel. No one was hurt. (AP)

Israel's Home Front Defense Minister Avi Dichter said that Israel would have to alter its deterrence strategy with regard to Gaza. (Haaretz)

Five Palestinians were wounded after a group of settlers threw stones at their bus near Ramallah. (Ma'an News Agency)

A 22-year-old Palestinian, who had been shot by Israeli soldiers with a live bullet during a weekly demonstration against settlements in the village of Nabi Saleh, was in stable condition after surgery to his stomach, a hospital spokesman said. The soldiers also fired rubber bullets, hitting in the head a 21-year-old man who had to be hospitalized. A number of demonstrators were treated for light wounds at the site. (AFP)

The 16th summit of non-aligned countries that concluded in Tehran issued three statements concerning the Palestinian cause. The first statement affirmed the Palestinian people's lawful rights, the independence of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital and the right of refugees to return. The summit adopted the Ramallah statement which was supposed to have been issued at the planned meeting of the non-aligned countries in Ramallah but was cancelled after Israel had prevented some participating countries from entering the West Bank. The third statement expressed solidarity with Palestinian prisoners and called for their immediate release. (Wafa)

British Deputy Consul-General in Jerusalem Ben Saoul said that Britain would not suspend financial aid to the PA even if it submitted a new application to the UN seeking recognition as an observer State. (Ma'an News Agency)
