

Division for Palestinian Rights

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

Monthly media monitoring review

May 2013

Monthly highlights

- Denmark and Finland announce plans to upgrade status of Palestinian Missions in Copenhagen and Helsinki ([4 May](#))
- China's President makes four-point proposal for the settlement of the Palestinian question ([6 May](#))
- Jordanian Parliament votes to expel Israeli Ambassador from Amman and recall Jordanian Ambassador from Israel after Al-Aqsa Mosque incidents ([8 May](#))
- Peace negotiations are expected to resume in June, according to senior Israeli official ([9 May](#))
- El Salvador and Palestine establish diplomatic relations ([9 May](#))
- Palestinians mark sixty-fifth anniversary of their mass displacement ([15 May](#))
- Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erakat briefs Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People at 352nd meeting ([20 May](#))
- US Secretary of State Kerry announces plan to invest \$4 billion to develop the economy of the West Bank ([26 May](#))
- African Union grants Palestine non-member observer status ([27 May](#))

I

According to witnesses, the Israeli navy, along the Gaza shores, fired heavy artillery at Palestinian fishing boats injuring one fisherman. (Wafa)

Israeli tanks entered the al-Aqaba village, north of Tubas, in the West Bank Area C, causing damage to roads and agricultural land, while troops detained a 23-year-old Palestinian, an official said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Palestinian witnesses said that seven Israeli military vehicles had entered 200 metres into a border area near Khan Yunis and had destroyed agricultural land, including trees. (Ma'an News Agency)

Palestinian Civil Defense in the West Bank said that firefighters had to deal with 57 wild fires caused intentionally by Israeli settlers after the killing of a settler the previous day. The fires gutted hundreds of trees and agricultural land. (Wafa)

Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas said that Palestinians may accept a small land swap as part of a final status agreement with Israel but would not recognize it as a Jewish State. (Trend News Agency)

The Israeli Prime Minister's Office issued a statement saying that Israel "welcomed the support given by the Arab League delegation and the US Secretary of State to the diplomatic process." (The Jerusalem Post)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that an agreement with the Palestinians must be reached in a way "that will prevent Israel from becoming a bi-national State, but will provide stability and security." He avoided a direct mention of the latest overture by the League of Arab States [on land swaps] and insisted that the root of the conflict was the Palestinian failure to accept Israel as the Jewish State, and not territory. (Haaretz, Ma'ariv, Ynetnews)

Israeli Labour leader Shelly Yacimovich promised to support and possibly join Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition if its hard line members moved to pull out over the resumption of talks with the Palestinians. (AFP)

Israel partially reopened the Kerem Shalom crossing to allow 190 truckloads of goods into the Gaza Strip, said Raed Fattouh, the coordinator in charge of goods entering Gaza. (Wafa)

Israeli authorities began work on changing the route of the separation wall section at the entrance of Jbara village, south of Tulkarm, bringing it closer to the Green Line, said the head of the Jbara village council. (Wafa)

The Israel Nature and Parks Authority proposed that a chain-link fence backed by security systems be erected near the West Bank town of Batir, south of Jerusalem, instead of the concrete wall the Ministry of Defense wanted. It said that a fence would balance environmental and security concerns in the area, which could soon be a World Heritage Site of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, but environmentalists and Palestinians disagreed. (Haaretz)

Approximately 35 dunums of planted corn fields were destroyed during a conducted by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in the town of Jalboun, east of Jenin. (Ma'an News Agency)

After a wave of demolitions that left 52 Palestinians homeless and 36 homes destroyed the previous week, 16 aid and development agencies, in a statement, urged world leaders to pressure the Israeli Government to immediately stop the destruction of Palestinian property and the building of Israeli settlements in areas close to the Israeli military zones in Area C. (www.ochaopt.org)

An aid convoy organized by the Charitable Association for Supporting the Palestinian People in Italy arrived in the Gaza Strip through the Rafah crossing. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

2

The IDF arrested 8 Palestinians from Bethlehem, Hebron and Salfit. (*Petra*)

Hamas replaced policemen in border areas with fighters from its Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam Brigades in an effort to stop rocket fire at southern Israel. (*Asharq Al-Awsat, The Jerusalem Post*)

Following a six-day visit to East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the European Parliament Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council called on the European High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, and member States to insist that Israel end its illegal policies that prevent resumption of negotiations. The delegation listed Israeli violations relating to freedom of movement, freedom to live without harassment, freedom to develop homes and land, freedom to live peacefully, and freedom to use the same streets as Israelis. The delegation expressed concern that such actions were part of a strategic plan by the Israelis to force Palestinians off their land and remove their residency rights, particularly in the Jerusalem area. (*Wafa*)

Growing discontent among Arab countries over the current Government of Canada's pro-Israeli stand had prompted joint talks of retaliation, including a campaign to move the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization from Canada. (*The Globe and Mail*)

Israeli Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni, together with Prime Minister Netanyahu's special envoy, Isaac Molho, met with Secretary of State John Kerry to discuss the Arab League proposal. (*Haaretz*)

Hamas Political Bureau Chief Khaled Masha'al rejected the endorsement by the League of Arab States of land swaps between Israel and Palestine. (*Aljazeera*)

Prime Minister Netanyahu said that he would hold a national referendum on any peace agreement with the Palestinians. (*AP*)

Google had recognized the Palestinian State after it had previously referred to it as "The Palestinian Territories". (*Palestine News Network*)

The Israeli High Court of Justice ordered the IDF to justify its decision to route the barrier through the West Bank's Nahal Refaim valley and issued an injunction against further work. It gave the IDF until 2 July to respond. (*The Jerusalem Post, France24.com*)

Hebron Governor Kamal Hmeid held a meeting with European Union Representative John Gatt-Rutter and informed him of ongoing and escalating attacks carried out by Israeli soldiers and settlers in Hebron. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli settlers continued, for the third day in a row, their rampage in the West Bank, throwing rocks at Palestinian cars driving in the vicinity of settlements. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Settlers had begun construction on a new outpost near the Zatar checkpoint in the Nablus area, erecting 10 mobile homes surrounded by fencing and connecting them to water and electricity supplies. (*Ma'an News Agency, Wafa*)

A Molotov cocktail was thrown at a settler's car near the town of Salfit in the northern West Bank. (*Kol Israel Reshet Bet, Ma'an News Agency*)

A military judge ruled that three Palestinians had been arrested illegally near the "Givat Gal" outpost near Hebron, and that an IDF officer had beaten one of them without justification. (*Haaretz*)

Relatives of prisoners criticized the recent decision by the Ministry for Prisoners' Affairs to stop paying fines levied by Israeli courts, saying it meant families would be forced to pay the fines. Qadura Fares, head of the Palestinian Prisoners' Society, said that it would be better for detainees to "serve more years in jail than pay money to the occupation." (*occupiedpalestine.worldpress.com*)

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met with Israeli Minister of Justice and Chief Negotiator Livni. He welcomed renewed US and Arab League engagement in the peace process, encouraged Israel to take positive steps, and said that the E-1 settlement should be rescinded. He also expressed concern over the situation of prisoners. Ms. Livni said that the support by the League of Arab States for talks between Israel and the Palestinians was "good news" as it was the fact that "the Arab Peace Initiative is ... negotiable." However, the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, said that Israel had only been "paying lip service" to peace talks. (www.un.org, *Ma'an News Agency*)

3

An Israeli border guard officer sustained light injuries when stones were thrown at him during clashes in the northern West Bank village of Qadum. Clashes also erupted across the West Bank, in the villages of Bil'in and Ni'lin, and near the [settlement] of "Ofra". (*Ynetnews*)

Palestinian medical sources reported that a Palestinian was shot and injured after the Israeli army opened fire on houses and land in the northern part of the Gaza Strip. (*IMEMC*)

Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that China would be happy to facilitate a meeting between Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas when the two leaders visit Beijing in the coming week, if they were willing to meet. (*The Miami Herald*)

While in Austria for talks, Russian Federation First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Vladimir Titov reaffirmed his country's pledge, as a member of the Quartet, to contribute to efforts towards the resumption of negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians. (*Kuwait News Agency*)

Speaking in Jerusalem after meeting with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Swiss Federal Councillor Didier Burkhalter said that there was a "window of opportunity" to get back to the negotiating table. The Minister met with Prime Minister Netanyahu, who had asked Switzerland for help in organizing a referendum on a peace treaty with the Palestinians. Mr. Burkhalter also met with Palestine President Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in Ramallah. (www.swissinfo.ch)

Netanyahu and his advisers believe the Arab League declaration could undermine Israel's position in negotiations with the Palestinians, according to an Israeli source familiar with talks held in the past days. "The Prime Minister's advisers are not keen about the Arab League's announcement," the source said. (*Haaretz*)

A lawyer for a 27-year-old woman from Bethlehem in Israeli custody said that she was being mistreated and denied medicine. Hiba Bahjat said that when Israeli forces detained her on 2 April, she was blindfolded, handcuffed and deprived of sleep during interrogations in Ashkelon prison. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli court had rejected an appeal to stop the partial demolition of a mosque in Ras al-Amoud in East Jerusalem, the mosque's imam said. The court ruled that a section of the mosque had been built without a license. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

4

The Governments of Denmark and Finland announced plans to upgrade the status of the respective Palestinian Missions in Copenhagen and Helsinki to that of an embassy. (*Denmark Foreign Ministry*)

According to the Palestine Liberation Organization, Israel was causing "countless difficulties" for Palestinian Christians and Muslims to reach their holy sites as Orthodox Christians held the "Holy Fire" ceremony in Jerusalem. Thousands of Israeli police officers were deployed as throngs of Christians filled Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulcher and surrounding streets. (*AFP*)

Settlers raided the village of Ras Karkar near Ramallah, attacking several houses and prompting clashes between residents and Israeli forces. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

5

A group of settlers threw stones at a Palestinian near the "Beitar Illit" settlement, causing moderate injuries, witnesses said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

5

The IDF arrested three young Palestinians near the "Gush Etzion" settlement block south of Bethlehem on claims that they were in possession of weapons. (*Yediot Ahranot, Palestine News Network*)

More than 2,500 settlers visited Joseph's Tomb near the Balata refugee camp east of Nablus. Clashes erupted in the morning between Palestinian residents and IDF soldiers that accompanied the settlers. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Palestine Liberation Organization had condemned the "terrorist" attacks by Israeli settlers in the West Bank and held the Israeli Government accountable for such acts. (*KUNA*)

6

The IDF raided the Palestinian towns of Beit Fajjar, Al-Khader and Beit Sahour in the West Bank district of Bethlehem. Thirteen people were arrested. The IDF also arrested two residents in the town of Jenin. (*Radio Bethlehem 2000, IMEMC*)

Israeli police Spokesperson Luba Samri said that a Palestinian taxi driver was stabbed by an Israeli settler near the “Gilo” settlement. The motive was reportedly a disputed cab fare. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Israeli army arrested 10 people from the Bethlehem area, including a 16-year-old minor, according to security sources. (*Wafa*)

Three Palestinian youngsters were caught near the “Migdal Oz” [settlement] carrying improvised weapons and knives. (*Ynetnews*)

A report by Shin Bet showed an increase in attacks in April compared to March – 139 versus 125. Some 17 rockets were fired at Israel, including two at Eilat, as well as five mortar rounds. In Jerusalem, there were 36 attacks, compared to 21 in March. There had been a mild drop in the West Bank – 90, compared to 101. Most were firebombing attempts and the planting of roadside charges. A settler was stabbed to death. (*Haaretz*)

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with President Abbas in Beijing, with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu due to visit later during the week. Chinese State media called Mr. Abbas' trip a State visit, while officials describe Mr. Netanyahu's as an “official visit”. The two sides signed agreements on economic and technical cooperation and cultural exchanges. (*AFP*)

President Xi Jinping made a four-point proposal for the settlement of the Palestinian question during his talks with President Abbas. First, an independent sovereign State on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as capital is an inalienable right of the Palestinian people. At the same time, Israel's right to exist and its legitimate security concerns should also be fully respected. Second, negotiation should be taken as the only way to peace. The immediate priority is to take credible steps to stop settlement activities, end violence against civilians, lift the blockade of the Gaza Strip and properly handle the issue of Palestinian prisoners to create the necessary conditions. Palestinian reconciliation will also help the peace talks. Third, the parties concerned ought to build on the principle of “land for peace”, the relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative to advance the Middle East peace process across the board. Fourth, the international community should provide important guarantees for progress, and increase assistance to Palestine in such fields as training and economic development. (*Xinhua*)

In a letter from Knesset member Yitzhak Cohen to Prime Minister Netanyahu, the Shas party senior leader urged the Prime Minister to accept the Arab Peace Initiative. Mr. Cohen called for a “bridge of understanding” between Islam and Judaism. He called on Mr. Netanyahu to extend financial aid to Palestinian refugees and to translate the plan that the League of Arab States had proposed, and endorsed by Arab leaders in April, into concrete measures that would help rebuild neighbouring Arab States. (*Haaretz*)

Deputy Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs Ze'ev Elkin said that Google's decision to use the term “Palestine” set back the prospects of peace. An adviser to President Abbas described the move as a “victory for Palestine and a step toward its liberation”. (*Reuters*)

The Palestine Liberation Organization Negotiations Affairs Department said that the new road that the Israeli Government had opened in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Hanina, to connect area settlements, was another Israeli violation of international law. The highway was inaugurated by Prime Minister Netanyahu and named “Benzion Netanyahu”, after his father. (*Ynetnews, Wafa*)

The European Union contributed approximately €20 million to the payment of salaries and pensions for April of nearly 76,000 Palestinian civil servants and pensioners in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. (*European External Action Service*)

Egyptian forces uncovered 276 previously unknown smuggling tunnels under the border with the Gaza Strip. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli forces damaged agricultural lands and destroyed an electric network and wells in Beit Ula village west of Hebron, located in Area C, officials said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court released to house arrest a 22-year-old man from the “Alon More” settlement. He was suspected of assault and causing injury to three Palestinians at a bus stop near the “Kamei Shomron” settlement. (*Ma'an News Agency, The Jerusalem Post*)

Palestinian Minister of Health Hani Abdeen paid a visit to the Hadassah hospital, the first visit by the Palestinian Minister to Israel's largest medical facility.

Accompanied by a delegation of senior officials, he met the hospital's Director and distributed gifts to Palestinian patients. (*AFP*)

The IDF issued demolition orders to 11 homes in the town of Deir Nidham near Ramallah. Some 40 people would be rendered homeless if the demolition orders were to be carried out. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli court in Jerusalem had ruled to allow the demolition of parts of the Muhammad Al-Fatih Mosque located in the Ras al-Amoud neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. (*IMEMC*)

The Israeli Ministerial Committee had approved a draft law to implement the Prawer-Begin plan on the issue of unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev desert. Israeli human rights groups had warned that the plan would cause the displacement and forced eviction of dozens of villages and tens of thousands of Bedouin residents. (*Ma'an News Agency, Ynetnews*)

The IDF damaged the electricity network providing power to the Khamat Ad-Deeb and Attous areas of the Beit Ola town, south of Hebron. The IDF also razed tens of dunums adjacent to the separation Wall west of Hebron and demolished two wells. (*IMEMC, Wafa*)

Palestinian Legislative Council member Jamal Tirawi had been released from the Ofer prison following an Israeli military court decision. He had been convicted of planning a terror attack in Tel Aviv as well as two other attempted attacks in 2002. (*Haaretz, Ma'an News Agency, Ynetnews*)

Israel had begun allowing Gazan children to visit their imprisoned relatives. Only spouses and parents had been permitted to visit from the time prisoners had staged a hunger strike in 2012. A spokesperson from the International Committee of the Red Cross said that 61 people from the Gaza Strip, including seven children, had made the trip to visit their parents in the Nafha prison, south of Israel. (*The New York Times*)

The Palestinian Ministry of Detainees reported that the Israeli Prison Authority had been requesting Palestinian prisoners to pay for their own medical expenses and had refused to provide them with the needed medical equipment or medications. (*IMEMC*)

The United Nations Development Programme launched the second phase of a highly successful jobs and small business programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territory that had been implemented in partnership with the Palestinian Government and funded through the Islamic Development Bank in the amount of \$50 million. (*undp.org*)

Israeli and Turkish officials met and reached a draft agreement for the compensation to the families of those killed aboard the *Mavi Marmara* during the deadly Israeli commando raid on the 2010 Gaza-bound flotilla. The draft agreement stipulated that all legal complaints against IDF soldiers would be withdrawn, ambassadors would be returned and Turkey will normalize its relations with Israel. The draft agreement also said that the document would be presented to the parliaments in both countries for ratification as a binding international treaty (*Israel Radio, Maariv, The New York Times*)

A relief convoy with 30 Jordanian activists headed to the Gaza Strip to deliver medical and financial aid. (*KUNA*)

7

Israeli forces detained 16 people in the West Bank. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Residents of the a-Tur neighbourhood in East Jerusalem threw rocks at Israeli police. An officer was slightly wounded. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The IDF detained nine people in the West Bank overnight including in East Jerusalem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israel will negotiate in the coming weeks the renewal of its cooperation with the Human Rights Council. (*Haaretz*)

Jordan's Parliament unanimously voted that the Jordanian Government should demand that Israel's Ambassador in Amman leave the Kingdom following the incident in the Al-Aqsa Mosque during which Israeli soldiers, Likud party affiliates and some 40 settlers, guarded by Israeli police, entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque. (*The Daily Star*)

Israeli Economy Minister and Religion Minister Naftali Bennett said that a Palestinian State will never be formed because Israel will never allow the division of Jerusalem, adding that “a nation cannot be an occupier in its own capital city”. Jerusalem's mayor, Nir Barkat, also said that Palestinians will never have sovereignty in the Holy City, suggesting that they rename Ramallah as “northern Jerusalem” instead. (*The Jerusalem Post, Times of Israel*)

Prime Minister Netanyahu ordered a freeze on publishing tenders for scheduled settlement construction in “Ma'aleh Adumim” near East Jerusalem. (*The Daily Star, PNN, Xinhua*)

Palestinian Chief Negotiator Erakat said that Israel had not notified the PLO of any changes to its settlement activity, as Israeli media reported a new moratorium on settler homes in the West Bank. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

On the occasion of the forty-sixth anniversary of the so-called “reunification of Jerusalem”, 40 extremist settlers, including members and leaders of the Likud Party, broke into the Al-Aqsa Mosque under the protection of Israeli soldiers and policemen. Clashes broke out after Palestinians under the age of 50 were prevented from entering the Mosque. Eight Palestinians, including a woman, were injured and three were arrested. (*Jordan News Agency, Ma'an News Agency, Palestine*)

News Network, Wafa)

Israeli settlers set fire to 20 dunums of agricultural land in the town of Burin, south of Nablus. They also threw stones at a dozen Palestinian vehicles near the Za'tara checkpoint, causing material damages to the cars. (The Jerusalem Post, Palestine News Network, Xinhua)

Hamas police thwarted a rally in southern Gaza organized by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to protest Israel's air strikes on Syria. (Xinhua)

8

Shin Bet said that the agency and the IDF had arrested members of a Hamas cell in the West Bank that had been planning to manufacture and fire rockets, kidnap and kill a soldier. The arrests had taken place in January and February and had disrupted the cell's plan to plant explosives. (The Jerusalem Post)

A Palestinian farmer was shot and injured by Israeli soldiers east of Khan Yunis, in the south of the Gaza Strip, according to witnesses. (Wafa)

Local residents said that Israeli military vehicles had entered a border area in the northern Gaza Strip. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu arrived in Beijing for an official visit. (AP)

US Secretary of State Kerry updated President Abbas on the progress of the US initiative to renew negotiations with Israel, Arab media outlets reported. (Ynetnews)

Israeli Minister of Justice Livni, who was overseeing the Israeli effort to re-launch negotiations, met and discussed the peace process with US Secretary of State Kerry in Rome. "I think it is fair to say that we are working through threshold questions and we are doing it with a seriousness of purpose that has not been present in a while," Mr. Kerry told reporters. Ms. Livni, for her part, said that re-launching the negotiations and achieving an agreement with the Palestinians was an Israeli interest. Mr. Kerry would also meet with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Jordan, Nasser Judeh, in Rome. (Ynetnews.com)

A group of settlers, accompanied by Israeli forces, entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound for the second consecutive day, with Muslim worshippers again prevented from praying at the holy site, locals said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli police arrested and then released without charges the Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Muhammad Hussein, after questioning him on his alleged involvement in riots at the Temple Mount (Al-Haram Al-Sharif) the previous day. (The Jerusalem Post, Reuters)

Israeli President Peres sent a calming message to Jordan after the Jordanian Parliament had voted in favour of expelling the Israeli Ambassador from Amman and recalling the Jordanian Ambassador from Israel in connection with recent incidents at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israel's Religion Minister Bennett will seek to amend the law prohibiting Jews from praying at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City, a top ministry official said. Mr. Bennett told a parliamentary committee that he would like to ensure that Jews who want to pray at the Mosque would have the right to do so. (AFP)

Israeli media reported that Israel's Civil Administration had approved 296 new housing units in the "Beit El" settlement near Ramallah. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces with bulldozers demolished three privately-owned Palestinian houses in the village of Al-Oja, in the Jordan Valley. (Wafa)

Dozens of Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian cars at the entrance of Nabi Saleh village, near Ramallah, and hurled stones at them.

British cosmologist Stephen Hawking, according to Cambridge University, had pulled out of a prestigious Israeli conference organized by Israeli President Shimon Peres that would be held in June, joining an academic boycott of Israel to protest against the occupation of Palestinian lands. (Reuters)

9

Israel's Channel 10 reported that the IDF had arrested a Palestinian man armed with a knife and a gun in Kfar Duma near Ramallah. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli soldiers entered the town of Ithna near Hebron and the city's Bab Az-Zawiya area, and searched several homes. (IMEMC)

Israeli forces arrested five minors from Burqin village, south of Jenin, after raiding and searching their houses. (Palestine News Network)

At the sidelines of a tour of the Great Wall of China, Prime Minister Netanyahu told reporters that he had discussed the situation in the Middle East with US President Barack Obama in an overnight phone call from China. He said, "There is an understanding that we are concerned about the security and stability of Israel, and the region surrounding it." (The Jerusalem Post)

US Secretary of State Kerry was expected to return to the Middle East in the next two weeks in a new effort to advance peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

During Mr. Kerry's trip, his fourth to the region, he would be holding talks with Prime Minister Netanyahu and Palestine President Abbas. (Haaretz)

Ahead of his meeting with President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu, scheduled for 21 or 22 May, US Secretary of State Kerry said the Israelis and Palestinians were serious about pursuing peace. (Reuters)

Peace negotiations were expected to resume in June, a senior Israeli official said. The official said that Israel had presented to the United States a list of measures it would be willing to take, including freezing or slowing the pace of construction outside the settlement blocks. (Ynetnews)

The European Council on Foreign Relations launched a new report entitled "Europe and the Vanishing Two-State Solution" aimed at guiding European Union member States in dealing with Israelis, Palestinians and Arabs and concluded with specific actions that the EU can take. (ECFR)

El Salvador and Palestine established diplomatic relations. (Prensa Latina)

Commenting on the approval of new units in the "Beit El" settlement, Palestinian Chief Negotiator Erakat said, "We condemn this new decision which is proof that the Israeli Government wants to sabotage and ruin the US Administration's efforts to revive the peace process". (AFP)

A Palestinian father and his three sons were injured after Israeli settlers hurled stones at their car near Nablus. Several extremist settlers invaded the Beit Einoon area, east of Hebron, and fired rounds of live ammunition at a number of homes. (IMEMC, Palestine News Network)

Israeli forces raided a village of in the Yatta region, south of Hebron, and handed out notices to demolish nine homes and sheds. The President of the village council said that some 60 people resided in the houses threatened with demolition. (Palestine News Network)

As construction of 300 homes in the settlement of "Beit El" near Ramallah had been given the go ahead by Israel, State Department Spokesman Patrick Ventrell said that Israel's plans to build additional settlement housing in the West Bank were "counterproductive". (Al-Arabiya, AFP)

Palestinian official Ratab al-Jabour said that Israeli forces had handed demolition notices to two Palestinian brothers, Mahmoud and Mohammad al-Najadeh, from the Yatta region, for their nine homes and sheds where some 60 people reside. (Palestine News Network)

A large force of Israeli police entered the Bedouin village of al-Arakib in the Negev as bulldozers demolished homes for the fiftieth time in two years, locals said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israel released the oldest administrative detainee in Israeli prisons, Dirar Abu Menshar, 34, from the city of al-Khalil, the Ahrar centre for prisoners' studies and human rights said. (Palestine News Network)

Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem published a report reviewing harm inflicted on civilians during Operation Pillar of Defense that had taken place from 14 to 21 November 2012. The report provided statistics on the numbers of Palestinians and Israelis killed over the course of the operation. The report found that 80 per cent of the Palestinian civilian casualties had been reported in the latter part of Operation. It also found that the IDF had faced difficulties with opponents mixed with civilians and that less civilian harm was caused compared to Operation Cast Lead. (www.btsselem.org)

While on a visit to the Gaza Strip, Yusuf al-Qaradaw, a Qatar-based prominent cleric and host of a popular TV show, declared that Israel had no right to exist and voiced his support for rocket fire on Israel, giving a boost of legitimacy to Hamas rulers. (AP)

10

Israeli forces detained a Palestinian security officer in a village near Qalqilya, in the northern West Bank. An Israeli military spokeswoman also informed Ma'an that soldiers arrested two Palestinians in the Qalqilya and Ramallah districts for security questioning. (Ma'an News Agency)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton, in a statement issued by her spokesperson, underlined her concerns on recent developments in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, particularly on recent Israeli approval of new settlement plans and increasing tensions on the ground. (consilium.europa.eu)

Palestine was to seek full membership in Interpol and would be submitting an official application to the organization in August so that a vote on the application can be held during the annual meeting in November. (IMEMC)

Settlers uprooted approximately 80 olive trees and scrawled "price-tag" graffiti near the village of Al-Tiwana, east of Yatta, according to police and witnesses. (Yahoo News)

The Ambassador of Palestine to Egypt, Barakat al-Farra, said that Palestine had called an emergency meeting of the League of Arab States to discuss the recent escalation of violence in Islamic and Christian holy places in Palestine. He said that the assaults by Israelis against East Jerusalem, Al-Haram Al-Sharif, Al-Aqsa Mosque and other Muslim and Christian holy places were outrageous violations of international laws. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

11

Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the northern West Bank hurled stones at each other after the settlers marched into the Palestinian town of Burin. (*AFP*)

12

Israeli police allegedly hit a priest and several Egyptian diplomats during the centuries-old sacred Holy Fire rite which had taken place the day before Easter in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Several heads of Jerusalem's churches had spoken out against the "brutal treatment" meted out by the Israeli police. (*AFP*)

The IDF arrested three Palestinians, including siblings, in the northern West Bank Governorate of Nablus. (*Wafa*)

A delegation from the League of Arab States visited Washington, D.C., in late April, to discuss the Arab Peace Initiative with US Secretary of State Kerry, but no amendments to the proposal had been made, Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli opposition leader Yacimovich met with President Abbas in Ramallah and stated her support for a two-State solution, contingent on the security of Israeli citizens. (*Haaretz*)

During a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee, President Abbas called on Arab and Islamic States, and the international community, to intervene against Israeli settler attacks on Palestinians and violations at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Prime Minister Fayyad said at a photography awards ceremony in Ramallah that freedom of press must be an essential component of the Palestinian State. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Palestinians importers and exporters launched an indefinite general strike and blocked the Allenby crossing for all movement of goods between Jordan and the West Bank. They claimed that the rate of transfer of goods had plummeted since the appointment of the latest Commissioner of Customs. (*Ynetnews*)

Israeli settlers from the "Har Samuel" settlement drowned Palestinians' land with wastewater in An Nabi Samuel, north-west of Jerusalem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli settler from the "Efrat" settlement, south of Bethlehem, prevented a farmer entry to his land near the town of al-Khader, west of Bethlehem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli military court imposed a four-year sentence on a Palestinian who had planned attacks on Israelis while in prison. (*Haaretz*)

13

Israeli forces arrested six Palestinians from the West Bank cities of Jenin, Nablus and Hebron, in addition to a 21-year-old from the town of Anata, north-east of Jerusalem. (*Wafa*)

The IDF arrested three Palestinians in the West Bank as they attempted to light Molotov cocktails. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

A delegation of Fatah and Hamas officials were in Cairo holding talks on reconciliation and the formation of a unified Palestinian Government. The Head of Fatah's delegation, Azzam Al-Ahmed, said that President Abbas would meet with Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi in the coming days to help with the reconciliation effort. (*Daily News Egypt*)

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics revealed that the gross domestic product in Palestine had witnessed a growth of 5.9 per cent during 2012. (*Palestine News Network*)

Hundreds of Arab and Jewish students commemorated *Nakba* Day in a joint ceremony in the entrance square of the Tel Aviv University. (*Xinhua*)

Gaza religious affairs official Ismail Radwan said at a press conference that a war of religions would break out because of the attacks and violations of Israel against the Al-Aqsa Mosque. (*World Bulletin*)

Israeli military authorities notified Palestinian residents of the town of al-Oja, north of Jericho, of their intention to demolish 14 homes under the pretext they had been built without permit. (*Wafa*)

The Israeli Civil Administration is planning to build a new Palestinian city just north of Jericho to relocate Palestinian Bedouins who currently live in the Jordan Valley. (*Ma'ariv*)

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk, called for an immediate halt to the construction of a settlement highway in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Safafa that, if completed, would ruin the livelihoods of the 9,300 Palestinian residents. (*UNOG*)

Tenders to build 1,500 units in the "Ramat Shlomo" settlement in East Jerusalem had been delayed by at least three weeks. The plan was approved by the Jerusalem District Planning and Building Committee late the previous year. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli settlers attacked a Palestinian-owned property in the town of al-Sawyeih, south of Nablus. The settlers destroyed a plants nursery, two agricultural tractors and vandalized a number of graves, spraying racist slogans on them. (*Palestine News Network*)

Dozens of Israeli settlers from the "Shilo" settlement set fire to Palestinian fields in Nablus, destroying nearly 15 dunums of land. Israeli settlers also torched two dunums of wheat fields in the south Hebron Hill. (*Ma'an News Agency, Wafa*)

Former US President Jimmy Carter was pushing the European Union to implement a law forcing products coming out of Israeli settlements in the West Bank to be labeled as such. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Ahrar Centre for Detainees' Studies and Human Rights reported that all of the current Palestinian administrative detainees held by Israel without charges were former political prisoners who had been repeatedly arrested and incarcerated by Israel. (*IMEMC*)

Israel informed the High Court of Justice that, in response to a petition filed by human rights groups, the IDF would refrain from using phosphorous shells in populated areas, except in two cases, which were specified to the Court behind closed doors. (*Ynetnews*)

The Newseum, a Washington D.C. museum that chronicles the news industry, announced that it had decided to retract its decision to commemorate two cameramen from the Hamas-affiliated *Al-Aqsa TV*, who were killed in the Gaza Strip in 2012 in an Israeli air strike. (*Wafa, Ynetnews*)

14

The IDF arrested 10 Palestinians from Jenin, Hebron and Nablus, including seven university students. (*Wafa*)

The IDF detained two Palestinian men from the Gaza Strip after they tried to cross a border fence into Israel. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

A Palestinian official, speaking on condition of anonymity, stated that Egyptian President Morsi had informed the President Abbas that Egypt was trying to restore its leading role in reviving peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians. (*Xinhua*)

The Parliament of Spain's Balearic Islands called on the international community and the Spanish Government to compel Israel to implement its international obligations, including dismantling settlements and withdrawing from Palestine. (*Wafa*)

Moussa Abu Marzouq, a senior Hamas official, said that Hamas and Fatah had held "positive" talks in Cairo and had agreed to form a unity Government within three months. (*AP, Ma'an News Agency*)

In a speech broadcast on official Palestinian State television on the occasion of the sixty-fifth anniversary of the *Nakba*, President Abbas said that the Palestinians would not accept projects that detracted from their right to a free and sovereign State of the entire territory, occupied in 1967. The President added, "Our people today are more aware and more and more seasoned in their struggle and, with more presence on the international scene, are armed with a programme for progress approved by the national official institutions in line with international legitimacy". (*Emirates News Agency*)

The PLO Executive Committee issued a statement marking the sixty-fifth anniversary of the *Nakba*, in which it emphasized that the Palestinian people in the Diaspora had always remained united and resolved to gain their independence and return to their homeland. (*Bahrain News Agency*)

Several Palestinians were injured by tear gas during a rally marking the anniversary of the *Nakba* that kicked off from the Dheisheh refugee camp in Bethlehem. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In a statement released from his prison cell, Palestinian political leader Marwan Barghouti said, on the occasion of the sixty-fifth anniversary of the *Nakba*, that the Palestinians reaffirm their legitimate and inalienable right of return to their homeland. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli Minister of Defense Moshe Ya'alon had given orders to suspend the construction of a new Palestinian city in the Jordan Valley after Israeli settlers protested an earlier decision to transfer lands in Area C to the Palestinian Government. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israel decided to shut down the Kerem Shalom crossing in the Gaza Strip due to Jewish holidays and specified that the crossing would reopen on 16 May. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) rejected media accusations that it was "erasing Israel from the map" because its officials and stakeholders had stood next to a map that did not show Israel. The map was an embroidery depicting a pre-1948 map and therefore antedated the creation of Israel. (*UNRWA*)

Dutch authorities said that they would not prosecute the company Lima Holding B.V. for renting out equipment for the construction of the separation Wall. (*AP*)
Fatou Bensouda, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, announced that she would open a preliminary examination into events surrounding the 2010 Israeli raid on a humanitarian aid flotilla bound for the Gaza strip. In a statement, she stressed that she was obliged to open such a preliminary examination following a referral from the Indian Ocean island nation of Comoros, where one of the vessels that was raided in 2010 had been registered. (*Reuters*)

15

According to local sources, dozens of Israeli military jeeps invaded Zabbouba town, in the north of the West Bank, and clashed with local youths. The army also invaded the nearby towns of Rommana and At-Tayba. (*IMEMC*)

A Molotov cocktail was thrown at an IDF jeep patrolling the Palestinian village of Hursa south-west of Hebron. Four soldiers were lightly wounded. (*Ynetnews*)
Militants fired a projectile from the Gaza Strip that hit an open field in southern Israel causing no damage or casualties, according to police. No group had claimed responsibility. (*AFP*)

Israeli forces detained overnight a 24-year-old Palestinian woman, ransacked her house and confiscated computers. Palestinians threw stones at military vehicles and Israeli forces fired tear gas and sound grenades wounding one Palestinian. An Israeli military spokeswoman said that soldiers arrested three Palestinians overnight in Iktaba, north of Tulkarm, and Dura and al-Tabaqa, south-west of Hebron. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Tens of thousands of Palestinians took to the streets in the West Bank and Gaza to mark the sixty-fifth anniversary of their mass displacement during the war over Israel's 1948 creation. (*AP*)

Clashes broke out at the Qalandia checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah as Palestinians marked *Nakba* Day. According to an IDF spokeswoman, some IDF soldiers employed crowd dispersal methods when Palestinians began throwing stones. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Germany "unreservedly supports" the US initiative to revive the peace process, German Minister for Foreign Affairs Guido Westerwelle told President Abbas in a phone conversation. Mr. Westerwelle was set to visit Israel later during the week and meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Peres. On 18 May, Mr. Westerwelle would meet with Prime Minister Fayyad in the West Bank. (*AFP, The Jerusalem Post*)

Malta was closely following the current international efforts, led by the commendable diplomatic work of US Secretary of State Kerry, to revive the peace process, a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs read. (www.independent.com.mt)

Jordan's Ambassador to Israel, Walid Obeidat, called on Israel to stop their regular attacks against the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. Such acts, he added, violated international resolutions and charters, undermined efforts to achieve peace in the region and provoked anger among Arabs and Muslims around the world. (*Petra*)

Based on UNRWA statistics, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics released a report that noted that approximately 5.3 million Palestinians, i.e., 44.2 per cent of the estimated 11.6 million Palestinians worldwide were refugees. It reported that 59 per cent of the refugees lived in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, 24 per cent lived in the Gaza Strip and 17 per cent lived in the West Bank. (*Anadolu Agency*)

Jordan rejected a recent decision by Israeli authorities to demolish the extensions of two mosques in East Jerusalem. (*The Jerusalem Post, Kuwait News Agency*)

Palestinian sources reported clashes with settlers from "Havat Gilad" in the village of Far'ata, south of Nablus. (*Ynetnews*)

16

The Palestinian Prisoners Society said that Israeli forces detained a 25-year-old Palestinian at a flying checkpoint in Tubas. (*Ynetnews*)

Israeli forces interrogated two Palestinian children, aged 5 and 6, in Jerusalem, their father said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In Cairo, President Abbas discussed the Palestinian reconciliation and the peace process with Egyptian President Morsi. (*Wafa*)

During a meeting with journalists in Tel Aviv, Israel's Minister of Finance Yair Lapid said that Israel should not change its policy on settlements in order to revive the peace process, and that Jerusalem should not serve as the capital of a future Palestinian State. He advocated for the immediate creation of an interim Palestinian State in parts of the West Bank where no Jews lived, with final borders drawn in perhaps three, four or five years. (*The New York Times*)

The Israeli NGO Peace Now said that the Israeli Government planned to give retroactive approval to four outposts it had previously pledged to at least partially demolish. The State Attorney's office said that settlers had now purchased the private Palestinian land on which they had built the outposts, paving the way for the Government to approve "Givat Assaf", "Givat HaRoeh", "Maaleh Rehavam" and "Mitzpe Lachish". The Supreme Court was to hear the Peace Now petition on 22 May. Palestinian Minister for Foreign Affairs Riad Malki had condemned the Israeli Government plan. (*Wafa, YahooNews.com*)

US Secretary of State Kerry telephoned the Israeli Ambassador to the US, Michael Oren, to protest [the planned legalization](#) of four West Bank outposts. (*Haaretz*)

Settlers attacked Palestinian students in the southern Nablus area and, according to an official, had attempted to set a school on fire. No injuries were reported. (*Wafa*)

A Palestinian official said that Israeli forces uprooted over 1,200 olive tree saplings and razed land belonging to a Palestinian farmer near Nablus. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli police spokesman announced that police had temporarily barred Israeli Jews and tourists from entering the Al-Haram Al-Sharif (Temple Mount) as a precautionary measure following violence that erupted the previous day on the occasion of the *Nakba*. (*AFP, YahooNews.com*)

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had phone conversations with both Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas and strongly encouraged the ongoing efforts toward the resumption of peace talks. (www.un.org)

Kuwait donated \$15 million to UNRWA to help the 500,000 Palestine refugees in Syria. (*GulfNews*)

17

Egyptian policemen blocked the crossing into the Gaza Strip to protest the kidnapping of Egyptian security forces in the Sinai, witnesses and sources said, leaving hundreds of Palestinians stranded on both sides. (*Reuters*)

German Minister for Foreign Affairs Westerwelle began a visit to the region by urging Israel and the Palestinians to use a "window of opportunity" when US Secretary of State Kerry begins a new mission in the coming week. Israeli Minister of Justice Livni told Mr. Westerwelle that the US bid should be regarded by all sides with "enthusiasm". (*Deutsche Welle*)

"We have been insistently and for a long time drawing attention of our partners to the fact that the ... Quartet is impermissibly passive. It almost does not work, its activity is paralyzed," Russian Federation Minister for Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with Lebanon's *al-Mayadeen* TV channel. "At first, they cited the upcoming [US] election, and after it took place, the Americans started to cite the election in Israel. Recently, we wanted to organize the Quartet's meeting on the sidelines of the G-20 meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, but it did not work out again," Mr. Lavrov said. (*Interfax*)

"According to my plan, most probably I would be visiting Gaza in June," Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan said after meeting President Obama. "I will also go to the West Bank." (*AFP*)

An initiative to change the legal standing of "price-tag" attacks to that of an act of terror would be brought before the Israeli Cabinet in the coming week by Minister of Justice Livni, Minister of Internal Security Yitzhak Aharonovitch and representatives from the police and security forces. (*Ynetnews*)

A new education programme was approved by the Prime Minister's Office the previous week that would focus on the Hilltop Youth [extremist settler group] and convince them to cease "price-tag" attacks. It would be run by the Israeli Education Ministry, Shin Bet Internal Security Service, Social Affairs Ministry and Justice Ministry. (*Ynetnews*)

Palestine's Ambassador to Azerbaijan, Naser Abdel Karim, said that a conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on assistance will be held on 11 June in Baku. The aim of the conference would be the establishment of an Islamic Financial Security Network with the view of supporting the Palestinian people. ()

Palestinian Minister for Foreign Affairs Malki said that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will send a mission of experts to assess the state of conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls on 20 May. (Ma'an News Agency)

The 11th Palestinians in Europe Conference will be held in Brussels the following day. It will discuss the Israeli occupation, Jerusalem, refugees, prisoners, borders, statehood and other issues. (www.abna.ir)

18

One Palestinian was killed and three others were wounded in clashes between Fatah and Islamist gunmen in the Palestine refugee camp of Ein El-Hilweh in Lebanon. (The Daily Star)

In an interview with Israel's *Army Radio*, Minister of Justice Livni commented on Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's call for Palestinian reconciliation by saying that there was no chance that Israel could reach a peace agreement with Hamas. She said that Mr. Erdogan had for years viewed Hamas positively, adding, "This perception is not correct." (The Jerusalem Post)

Settlements monitoring official Ghassan Daghlis said that three Palestinians had been injured in clashes in the Urif village, south of Nablus. In addition, dozens of settlers had set fire to lands in the villages of Urif, Einabus and Asira al-Qibliya, south of Nablus. They had assaulted citizens and had thrown burning tires at people's homes, he said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Settlers from "Beit El" threw Molotov cocktail towards Palestinian vehicles on the Ramallah-Nablus road and near the Jalazone refugee camp, north of Ramallah, setting on fire a Palestinian car. The driver was able to escape without incident. (Ma'an News Agency)

During a march near the Damascus Gate in East Jerusalem, dozens of Palestinians protested Israeli violations at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The IDF fired tear gas canisters, water cannons and rubber-coated steel bullets, and clashed with protesters, arresting five young men. (Ma'an News Agency)

19

An Israeli panel of inquiry said that a Palestinian boy, Mohammed al-Dura, who had appeared in an iconic footage from the start of the second intifada as having been caught by IDF bullets, did not actually die in the incident. (Haaretz)

The Palestinian Ministry of the National Economy said that a joint Palestinian-Israeli institution, run by Palestinian and Israeli businessmen and dealing with economic exchanges and commercial arbitration between the two sides, began work on 17 May after weeks of preparations. The establishment of the institution was overseen by Turkey. (Xinhua)

Yesh Din, an Israeli rights group, said that Israel had informed the High Court of Justice the previous week that land near Jenin, formally the site of the "Homesh" settlement, would be returned to its Palestinian owners. Yesh Din had submitted a petition on behalf of the villagers. (Ma'an News Agency)

Commenting on the reported decision by the European Union to delay labelling products from settlements upon a request from Washington, D.C., Hanan Ashrawi, member of the PLO Executive Committee, said that the US role "encourages Israel to go ahead in its settlement programme and steal the land without any deterrent."

She said that the role of the US in reviving Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations lacked credibility. "Contrary to what was recently reported in the Israeli media, work on the effective enforcement of EU legislation with regard to the labelling of settlement products has not been delayed. Nor has the EU been asked to postpone such work," an EU statement said. (AFP, Xinhua)

The City Hall of Paterson, New Jersey, officially raised the Palestinian flag, becoming the first American city to do so at its city hall. Mayor Jeffrey Jones declared 19 May as Palestinian-American Day in the city, allowing Palestinian residents to hold heritage and other cultural activities. (Wafa)

20

Israeli forces detained two Palestinian fishermen off the coast of Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip. (Ma'an News Agency)

Clashes broke out in Hebron after Israeli forces physically searched a Palestinian woman at a checkpoint. Young men from the neighbourhood attempted to stop the soldiers who were harassing the girl. As news of the incident spread, dozens of men flooded the area and hurled stones and empty bottles at the Israeli soldiers, who responded with tear gas and rubber-coated steel bullets. (Ma'an News Agency)

Sheikh Khalifa bin Khalifa of Qatar said that the emergence of "people power" had put Arabs in direct confrontation with Israel and made a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict more pressing. (Ynetnews, Reuters)

Israeli bulldozers demolished five Palestinian-owned commercial facilities in the village of Bartaa, south-west of Jenin. The IDF also handed demolition notices regarding other facilities to several residents in the industrial zone, according to a local source. (Wafa)

Israeli Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein told the State the previous week to remove the empty structures at the evacuated outpost of "Migron" in the coming days. "Migron" was evacuated in 2012, but some 50 prefabricated homes remained. (Haaretz)

Israel called off a planned visit by a delegation from UNESCO to inspect preservation work in Jerusalem's Old City because the Palestinians had "politicized" the delegation's visit, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. The agreement in April had stipulated that the visit was to be a purely professional, not a political visit, he added. The Palestinians had violated the agreement, with Minister for Foreign Affairs Malki characterizing it as a fact-finding mission to investigate Israeli steps in Jerusalem. The spokesman said that the PA now insist on taking the delegation to the Temple Mount (Al-Haram Al-Sharif), and meet with Palestinian political personalities, not just "engineers, architects and professional people". (The Jerusalem Post)

A recent trial before an Israeli military court showed that Palestinian prisoners had obtained forbidden cell phones thanks to a connection with an employee of at least one Israeli cell phone company. The prisoners had allegedly used the forbidden mobile phones to plot terror attacks. (Haaretz)

According to *Haaretz*, the Salem Israeli Military Court had issued an arrest warrant for the Palestinian Minister for Prisoners' Affairs, Issa Qaraqe, in relation to the allegations that the Ministry had been involved in illegally providing detainees with mobile phones, a claim Mr. Qaraqe had denied. Mr. Qaraqe said that he had never been informed of such a warrant. (Ma'an News Agency, IMEMC)

The International Committee of the Red Cross said that 87 family members from Gaza had been allowed to visit their relatives in an Israeli prison after having receiving permission from Israel. (Ma'an News Agency)

In his [briefing](#) to the Committee of the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People at its 352nd meeting on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and developments in the political process, Chief Palestinian Negotiator and member of the PLO Executive Committee Saeb Erakat, describing the situation in the West Bank as apartheid, said that the Palestinians had done all the legal work necessary to join 63 UN agencies, conventions and treaties but had not applied yet mainly to give the latest US peace effort led by Secretary of State Kerry a chance to succeed. Mr. Erakat furthermore said that a settlement freeze and the release of Palestinian prisoners were not conditions for returning to negotiations, but rather obligations that Israel must fulfil. (UN press release GA/PAL/1262, Division for Palestinian Rights)

21

Israeli forces shot a 13-year-old Palestinian in the back in the Jalazone refugee camp near Ramallah. The victim was transferred to a hospital where he underwent surgery. An Israeli military spokesperson said that soldiers had opened fire on a Palestinian trying to hurl a firebomb during a demonstration. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli navy boats opened fire on Palestinian fishermen off the Gaza coast. No injuries were reported. (Wafa)

Israeli soldiers arrested four Palestinians during raids in Nablus. Two Palestinian children were also arrested in Abu Dis in East Jerusalem by Israeli forces after breaking into the houses of the children's families. (IMEMC)

A discussion at the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee regarding the peace process with the Palestinians had uncovered deep divisions on the issue in the Israeli Government and within the ruling coalition. While Minister of Justice Livni, who was in charge of talks with the Palestinians, explained why a Palestinian State was in Israel's interest, Knesset member Habayit Hayehudi attacked her, saying that her statements did not represent the Government's position. Ms. Livni pointed out that "construction in the isolated settlements in the West Bank is intended to prevent an agreement with the Palestinians. [...] Non-construction in those places has no strategic significance, and I think there are prices we can pay". She warned the Committee that if the negotiations were not renewed, the Palestinians would return to their unilateral moves in the United Nations and European countries would push diplomatic initiatives of their own and then try to force them on Israel. She said, "Not reaching an agreement with the Palestinians will lead to the end of Zionism". (Haaretz)

Israel expanded Gaza's fishing zone from 3 to 6 nautical miles. (Reuters)

The Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza remained closed for the fifth day. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Hinaya Center for Journalists Defending Human Rights reported that more than 2,400 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip were stuck at the Rafah Border Terminal, waiting to be allowed through. In a press release, the Center called on Egyptian authorities to open the terminal without any delays. (*IMEMC*)

UNESCO issued the following statement: "Following certain media announcements reporting on the cancellation of the UNESCO mission to the Old City of Jerusalem, Director-General Irina Bokova wishes to underscore that contrary to such information, consultations are being pursued by the Government of Israel, and the Palestinian and Jordanian authorities, with a view to finalizing the terms of the mission and determining its date." (www.unesco.org)

The Israeli municipality of West Jerusalem demolished two buildings in Jabel al-Mukaber, an all-Palestinian neighbourhood in East Jerusalem, under the pretext they were built without permit. (*Wafa*)

Israeli authorities handed residents of Um al-Khair, south of Hebron, notices for the demolition of seven houses. (*Wafa*)

Israeli forces demolished a house in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of al-Tur, leaving eight persons homeless, under the pretext that the home was built without permit. (*Petra*)

Israeli settlers severely battered a 16-year-old handicapped boy in the town of Yatta, south of Hebron. (*Wafa*)

Shin Bet arrested six Palestinians, two from Hamas and four from Islamic Jihad who were accused of having planned to kidnap civilians and soldiers to use them in bargaining for the release of Palestinian prisoners. (*Ynetnews*)

The Jerusalem District Court rejected a damages suit filed by the family of Akal Srour, a Palestinian who was killed during clashes between protesters and border guards over the construction of the separation Wall, near the village of Na'alim in June 2009. The court rejected the claims that Mr. Srour had been shot for no apparent reason and that responsibility for his death rested on Israel, and accepted the State's position that the officer who had shot him had done so because the lives of three of his friends were in danger. (*Ynetnews*)

During his visit to Gaza, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Erkki Tuomioja, announced a contribution of an additional € 1.5 million to the General Fund of UNRWA, to support its regular programme for Palestine refugees living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. (www.unrwa.org)

In its Health Department 2012 Annual Report, released during the World Health Organization's sixty-sixth Annual World Health Summit, UNRWA said that despite hard times it had been facing due to the conflict in Syria, it was committed to deliver health services to Palestine refugees, and called for donor support. (www.unrwa.org)

22

Palestinians threw several Molotov cocktails at an IDF patrol near the Fawwar refugee camp in the Hebron area. No injuries or damage were reported. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli soldiers arrested six Palestinians during raids in the West Bank. Israeli soldiers also arrested 12 students at an orphanage school in East Jerusalem claiming that they had hurled stones at settler vehicles. (*IMEMC*)

US Secretary of State Kerry's round-the-clock efforts would hopefully create a conducive environment to re-launch talks between Israelis and Palestinians, Nasser Judeh, Jordan's Minister for Foreign Affairs, said in Amman. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein called on Minister of Defense Ya'alon to create an investigatory unit to enforce criminal law against [unauthorized] settlement building in the West Bank. (*Palestine News Network*)

Israeli bulldozers demolished two residential buildings in East Jerusalem for having been illegally constructed in a national park, the Interior Ministry said.

However, Meretz city councilman Meir Margalit said that the Government was confiscating land from Palestinians under false pretences. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry, in his briefing to the Security Council, concluded that the efforts to achieve the negotiated two-State solution were "likely to reach a critical point in the coming weeks ahead", and said that he hoped that the leaders on both sides would demonstrate their commitments and seize the opportunity. (*UNSCO*)

Palestine had asked the Security Council to press Israel to end its "provocations", including restricting access to holy sites in East Jerusalem, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN Riyad Mansour told reporters during a media stakeout at UN Headquarters, flanked by Morocco's Permanent Representative to the UN, Mohammed Loulichki. (*Xinhua*)

The Arab International Women's Forum held a conference, in cooperation with and hosted by Birzeit University, where it launched the Young Arab Women Leaders Initiative. (*Palestine News Network*)

23

Israeli forces arrested eight Palestinians from Jenin and Hebron, according to local and security sources. (*Wafa*)

Israeli tanks and bulldozers infiltrated Gaza and went nearly 300 meters into the eastern part of Khan Yunis, according to witnesses. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In a speech delivered at the National Defence University in Washington, D.C., US President Obama said: "We are working to promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians — because it is right and because such a peace could help reshape attitudes in the region". (www.whitehouse.gov)

UK Foreign Secretary William Hague said that London fully backed US efforts to restart negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel. Mr. Hague met with President Abbas in Ramallah where the two discussed the latest efforts to revive the peace process. President Abbas stressed to Secretary Hague that Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank and settler attacks against Palestinian civilians "obstruct international efforts to revive the peace process". (*DPA*, *Wafa*)

US Secretary of State Kerry held separate talks with Prime Minister Netanyahu, President Abbas, and Israeli President Peres. "It is our hope that by being methodical, careful, patient, but detailed and tenacious, we can lay out a path ahead that can conceivably surprise people but certainly exhaust the possibilities of peace," he told the press. Mr. Kerry and Mr. Netanyahu discussed ways to advance peace, and Mr. Kerry's ideas for an economic plan to boost Palestinian growth, a senior State Department official told reporters. (*Reuters*)

The Israeli Government was ideologically divided on the issue of peace with the Palestinians, its top negotiator and Minister of Justice Livni said ahead of a meeting with US Secretary of State Kerry. The stalling of the peace process since September 2010 "only serves the interests of those who think that each passing day allows them to build a new [settlement] house," she said, "but this is not the position of the majority of Israel's population." (*AFP*)

Palestinian officials said that US Secretary of State Kerry had given them a 7 June deadline for finding a framework for talks. American officials said that they had never set a formal deadline for peace talks resuming or any other benchmark being reached. (*AP*)

A US source told *Haaretz* that the "high-ranking" recipient of Secretary Kerry's phone call regarding the plan to legalize outposts was Mr. Netanyahu, and not the Israeli Ambassador to the US, Oren, as previously reported. (*Haaretz*)

Talks between Fatah and Hamas earlier during the week accomplished little as the parties had failed to reach any agreement, top Islamic Jihad official Abu Imad al-Rifaei said, adding that the talks had focused on the makeup of the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Palestinian National Council. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The World Bank authorized a \$55 million replenishment of the West Bank and Gaza Trust Fund that would support investment in municipal services, energy, water and sanitation, as well as social protection and education. (www.worldbank.org)

Vandals spray painted "price-tag" on five vehicles, mostly belonging to Arabs, in the "Gilo" settlement in East Jerusalem. (*The Times of Israel*)

The Israeli Embassy in Germany called the efforts of the Green Party to label products from the West Bank [settlements] "another try to negatively single out Israel while promoting an economic boycott of it." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli forces detained three Palestinian Authority (PA) security officers who had recently been released from PA custody after having served a year for the death of

a settler in Nablus. In 2011, the settler was shot dead and four others were injured after they tried to enter Joseph's Tomb in Nablus without coordinating with Palestinian or Israeli security officials. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Palestinian Liaison Office in Ramallah secured the release of four Palestinians who had been detained after Israeli troops had accused them of throwing stones. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

An Israeli military court extended until 28 August the administrative detention of a 62-year-old university lecturer, Ahmad Qatamesh, who had been in prison for two years, according to Jawad Boulus, director of the legal department in the Palestinian Prisoners' Club. (*Wafa*)

Israel released Hamas lawmaker Fathi Barqawi, 55, after six months under administrative detention in Israel, according to prisoners' advocacy groups. Israel was still holding 12 lawmakers, most without trial. (*Wafa*)

Palestinian prisoner Ayman Abu Dawood accepted an Israeli proposal to send him to the Gaza Strip for 10 years after he ends his hunger strike. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Israeli authorities renewed the house arrest of Fathiyeh Khanfar, mother of a Palestinian prisoner held in Israel. She was arrested in February and charged with attempting to smuggle a SIM card. (*Wafa*)

"We have registered approximately 530,000 Palestinian refugees [in Syria]. We believe that almost all of them, certainly maybe 70 to 80 per cent, are displaced," UNRWA Commissioner General Filippo Grandi said during a visit to Syria. (*AFP*)

Amnesty International issued a report on the war on Gaza of November 2012, and stated that both Israel and the Palestinians in Gaza violated international humanitarian law, and committed war crimes. (*IMEMC*)

President Abbas welcomed the expected visit of the Spanish football Club FC Barcelona to Palestine in early August. (*Wafa*)

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights refuted the findings of the recently-published report by the Israeli Government regarding the killing of a 12-year-old Palestinian boy, Mohammed al-Durrah in 2000. (*PNN*)

On the 65th anniversary of *Nakba* Day, Palestinian activists of different political persuasions made a declaration for a democratic State for all its citizens with the establishment of a new organization called Popular Movement for One Democratic State. Fatah veteran Radi Jarai, one of the founders, said: "We will respect the Israel law of return of 1951 and will also defend the Palestinians' right of return." (*Al-Monitor*)

Hamas had begun preparing new school textbooks to be introduced in Gaza in 2014 that would teach children about "plans to liberate Palestine and the legitimacy and various forms of resistance," Jamal Abu Hashem, advisor to the Hamas-controlled education authorities, said. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

24

Former commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan Gen. John Allen had been appointed US Special Envoy on security issues in negotiations between Israel and the PA. Gen. Allen will deal with the US position on Israeli security needs and the security arrangements that would accompany the establishment of a future Palestinian State. (*Haaretz*)

Following a round of meetings with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, US Secretary of State Kerry said that the next 18 to 24 months would be a crucial period for achieving a breakthrough in the peace process and the creation of an independent Palestinian State. In remarks made before his meeting with Israeli President Peres, Secretary Kerry said that he was "convinced... that this moment is a really critical one for the region and particularly for Israel, for Palestine, for Jordan." (*The Jerusalem Post, The New York Times*)

"We are reaching the time where leaders need to make hard decisions," Mr. Kerry said at the end of his visit. "I made clear in my discussions that the parties should be focused on making progress toward... direct negotiations," he said, adding that each side needed to "refrain from provocative rhetoric or actions". UK Foreign Secretary Hague told reporters he had not yet seen any significant progress. (*Reuters*)

Ma'ariv reported that according to an Arab diplomatic source, Secretary Kerry had asked Prime Minister Netanyahu whether he would be willing to freeze construction officially in the settlements, fully and publicly, both the main blocks and beyond them. Mr. Kerry added that he would ask President Abbas whether the move would meet his requirements for renewing negotiations with Israel. (*Ma'ariv*)

The Jerusalem Post obtained and published for the first time a copy of a map sketch said to reflect the offer made by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to President Abbas in 2008. According to it, Israel had asked to keep the "Ariel", "Ma'aleh Adumim" (including E-1) and the "Gush Etzion" settlement blocks that made up 6.3 per cent of the West Bank, in return for Israeli territory representing 5.8 per cent. It had reportedly included a tunnel between Gaza and the West Bank, a five-nation committee to oversee the holy sites of Jerusalem, Israeli evacuation from the Jordan valley and the absorption of 1,000 refugees into Israel every year for five years. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

During his visit to Israel, UK Foreign Secretary Hague said that "Israel has lost some of its support in Britain and in other European countries over time – this is something I've often pointed out to Israeli leaders – because of settlement activity, which we condemn." (*Sky News*)

Dozens of settlers from "Gush Etzion" and "Kiryat Arba" demonstrated along Route 60 near the Palestinian village of al-Khader to protest escalating stone throwing and firebomb attacks in the area. (*ynetnews*)

Settler leaders reportedly plan protest marches to demand that the IDF ease the West Bank rules of engagement that instruct commanders to minimize the use of live fire. "Kiryat Arba" Mayor Malachi Levinger said that protest vigils would be put in place in volatile areas beginning the following week. (*Haaretz*)

Dozens rallied outside the offices of President Abbas in Ramallah to protest Washington's perceived "Israel bias" as Secretary of State Kerry arrived in Ramallah. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

25

At the opening of the World Economic Forum in Jordan that gathered some 900 business and Government leaders from 23 countries, King Abdullah II said that extremism had "grown fat" off of the long-standing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. He pointed to the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative and demanded a halt in Jewish settlement construction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. (*AP*)

In his speech at the World Economic Forum, President Abbas appealed to Israel to "make peace a reality". He stressed that among his top priorities were ending Palestinian divisions, ending settlement activity and Israel's occupation of the West Bank, and freeing Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails. He called for investment and joint ventures in tourism, energy and industry to help improve the economic prospects and security of his people. President Abbas further said that time was running out for the two-State solution. "I have warned before that the current conditions are unbearable. Ongoing settlement building, the changing identity of Jerusalem, and arrests will close the window for the two-State solution. [...] The new generation is losing confidence in the idea of the co-existence of two States". He said that the Palestinian people would not agree to interim agreements or a State with temporary borders, and welcomed the peace initiative entitled "Breaking the Impasse" organized by Palestinian and Israeli businessmen to support the re-launching of the peace process. (*AP, www.arabianbusiness.com, Wafa*)

Palestinian President Abbas said that the leadership in Ramallah was working to form a unity Government within weeks. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs said that Israel had relocated 35 Palestinian prisoners held in the Negev prison to the nearby Nafha prison, also in the Negev Desert, adding that violence had been used against the prisoners during the relocation process. (*www.saudigazette.com*)

26

Israeli forces detained a young man from Jenin after erecting a flying checkpoint south of the city. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli President Peres met with Palestinian President Abbas. Mr. Peres stressed the importance of quickly renewing peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians. "The agreement will be based on the principle of two States to two nations – a Jewish State, Israel, that will live in peace and security, alongside Palestine as an Arab State", President Peres said. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

In an effort to revive the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, US Secretary of State Kerry announced a plan to invest \$4 billion to develop the economy of the West Bank. Mr. Kerry said that an infusion of private sector investments could increase the gross domestic product of the West Bank by 50 per cent over three years and slash unemployment. In highlighting the plan at the World Economic Forum, Mr. Kerry hoped to spur Israel and the Palestinians to begin talks on a

comprehensive Middle East peace agreement. The investments under the plan would be made in the areas of tourism, light manufacturing, agriculture, construction, energy and technology. The idea would be to give the Palestinians an incentive to negotiate and to ensure that a Palestinian State in the West Bank would be viable. *(The New York Times)*

A [statement](#) issued by the Office of the Quartet Representative, Tony Blair, said that the economic initiative proposed by US Secretary of State Kerry was intended to parallel the political process and not replace it. *(www.quartetrep.org)*

Israeli forces arrested four people in East Jerusalem during clashes near the Old City. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

Israeli forces razed Palestinian-owned land in Hebron and Nablus, claiming that they were searching for ruins. *(Palestine News Network)*

A shipment of Qatar-donated fuel to the Gaza Strip would be delivered in a day or two, Egyptian security sources said. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

27

Deposed Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh said that the meeting between President Abbas and Israeli President Peres at the World Economic Forum was "normalization". "We do not count much on such meetings which are aspects of normalization and attempt to bring into life a dead body called negotiations", he said. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

In the closing statement of the 21st Summit of the African Union in Addis Ababa, the organization granted Palestine non-member observer status. The AU voiced support for the Palestinian struggle to establish an independent, viable State, with East Jerusalem as its capital. *(www.egyptindependent.com)*

Israeli Minister of Justice Livni and Prime Minister Netanyahu's envoy, Yitzhak Molcho, secretly met with US Secretary of State Kerry in Amman in a bid to renew peace negotiations. *(Haaretz)*

UNRWA reported a large explosion in Sbeineh Camp in Damascus Governorate. Early and still unverified reports suggested that the explosion had been caused by a ground-to-ground missile or air strike. UNRWA condemned the attack that claimed the lives of at least five Palestine refugees. A further eight had been wounded and dozens of refugee homes had reportedly been destroyed. *(www.unrwa.org)*

Dozens of female Israeli soldiers stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City, according to the Al-Aqsa Foundation for Endowment and Heritage, and performed a military march. *(www.saudigazette.com)*

Israeli settlers slashed the tires of 15 Palestinian-owned cars in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah. *(Palestine News Network)*

Israeli soldiers demolished three homes, two greenhouses and two barns in the Al-Jiftlik Palestinian village in the Jericho district of the West Bank. *(IMEMC)*

The 66th World Health Assembly adopted a resolution on the health conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, reaffirming the need for full coverage of health services while recognizing that the acute shortage of financial and medical resources was jeopardizing access of the population to curative and preventive services. *(www.healthcanal.com)*

The Government of Liechtenstein announced a contribution of CHF 100,000 (approx. \$ 104,000) to UNRWA. The funding would support UNRWA's regular programme to Palestine refugees living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. *(www.unrwa.org)*

28

Israeli forces stormed the Palestinian village of Beitonia near Ramallah, arresting a Palestinian resident and injuring a woman. *(Palestine News Network)*

Four Palestinians suffered from tear gas suffocation during clashes that erupted between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians in the old section of the town of al-Khader, south of Bethlehem. *(Wafa)*

Israeli forces set up a number of patrol towers in the centre of Hebron, said witnesses. *(Wafa)*

IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz said that he would not ease the strict rules of engagement pertaining to the use of live fire in the West Bank, warning that doing so would be "irresponsible" and result in heightened tensions. *(Haaretz)*

As US Secretary of State Kerry tried to set the stage for negotiations, Palestinian officials said that he had asked them to hold off on seeking membership in international forums, a request that they said they would comply with only until 7 June. *(The New York Times)*

Chinese Special Envoy Wu Sike began a 10-day trip to Jordan, Egypt and the Arab League headquarters in Cairo. He said before leaving: "We hope to renew ideas and further coordinate positions on this issue with these sides, which all play important roles during the process." The US will retain its vital say in the peace process, but the international community will benefit if countries, such as China, add balance to the sometimes-biased US stance, Mr. Wu added. *(China Daily)*

Israeli Minister of Justice Livni, laid out her case for resuming negotiations with the Palestinians at an Israel Project conference, and claimed that some in Israel were using security as an excuse not to engage in a peace process. *(The Jerusalem Post)*

"The Palestinian leadership will not offer political concessions in exchange for economic benefits", read a statement by Mohammad Mustafa, President of the Palestine Investment Fund and economic adviser to President Abbas. "We will not accept that the economy is the primary and sole component", the statement said. *(AFP)*

Addressing foreign diplomats and journalists, Israeli Minister of Justice and Chief Negotiator Livni likened any agreement with President Abbas to a signed cheque on an empty account because he did not control Gaza. She also acknowledged doubts over his legitimacy in the West Bank because he had not held elections for several years. The only solution was a "dual strategy" of reaching an agreement, combined with an international effort to isolate and delegitimize Hamas, she said.

(The Telegraph)

Hamas Spokesperson Fawzi Barhum said that "the so-called economic plan mentioned by US Secretary of State Kerry deluded the public and gave more time to the Israeli entity". *(AFP)*

The Palestine Liberation Organization marked 49 years since its establishment. *(Wafa)*

Israeli police arrested a guard of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Jerusalem's Old City who had attempted to stop Jewish extremists from holding rituals at the Muslim holy site. *(Palestine News Network)*

In the course of 2012, Israeli settlements in the West Bank had legally expanded by nearly 8,000 dunums (1,977 acres). *(Haaretz)*

Israeli settlers set up a tent on Palestinian-owned land in an area east of the town of Yatta, south of Hebron, blocking a road between two villages in the area.

Settlers also set fire to more than five dunums of Palestinian-owned agricultural land planted with wheat and barley in the village of Zeef, east of Yatta. *(Wafa)*

Representatives from Palestinian and Israeli high-tech companies were scheduled to meet in Tel Aviv for a joint forum entitled "Business not barriers", *Israeli Radio* reported.

The event is organized by the Peres Center for Peace, the Union of High-tech Companies in Israel and the Union of the Chamber of Commerce. President Abbas' adviser on high-tech affairs, Sabri Saydam, said that such meetings were "unacceptable" and urged Palestinian companies to reconsider their participation. *(Ma'an News Agency)*

The first study of its kind about the transfer against their will of 150 Palestine refugee Bedouin families stated that their situation had become socially and economically "non-viable". The joint UNRWA-Bimkom report analysed the consequences of the relocation that started in 1997 in order to expand the "Ma'ale Adumim" settlement. The study highlighted the deterioration of the social and economic conditions of the Bedouin refugees transferred to Al Jabal village. According to UNRWA Spokesperson Chris Gunness, "the Israeli authorities are currently considering plans to create a second centralized Bedouin village in the West Bank. [...] However, the stark conclusions of this report may lead to a reassessment of this policy." *(www.unrwa.org)*

At the opening of the regular twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, while

updating the Council on her Office's activities, regretted that serious violations of the rights of Palestinians continued and that Israel was still expanding its settlements in blatant violation of international law. (www.unog.ch)

29

Israeli forces severely beat up Palestinian farmers and shepherds and raided several Palestinian homes in the town of Yatta, south of Hebron, according to a local source. (Wafa)

A number of Israeli military vehicles invaded Rommana village, west of Jenin, with soldiers breaking into the home of a Palestinian prisoner held by Israel. (IMEMC)

Israeli forces arrested leaders from Hamas, Fatah and Islamic Jihad overnight in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, locals said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces briefly entered the Gaza Strip overnight with five military bulldozers. They damaged agricultural fields near al-Qarara village, east of Khan Younis, as army planes hovered above the area and naval troops fired at the coast, setting fire to farmland. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israel's military police launched an investigation into the case of a Palestinian whose beating while under arrest was caught on tape by a security camera at a nearby settlement. (Haaretz)

"The Government's position is very clear, and I support it: we do support [a] two States for two peoples solution," Israeli Minister of Intelligence, International Relations and Strategic Affairs Yuval Steinitz told *The Times of Israel*. A member of Likud, Mr. Steinitz acknowledged that key members of the coalition were staunchly opposed to a two-State solution, but "it's the Government's positions, and especially the Prime Minister's positions, that matter." (The Times of Israel)

Israeli forces demolished two Palestinian homes in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Hanina built without municipal permission because Israel kept refusing to issue permits, the owner said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Fourteen Palestinian vehicles were vandalized in the West Bank and East Jerusalem in what appeared to be attacks by militant settlers following the killing of one of their own last month. (Reuters)

Eyewitnesses reported that a group of Israeli settlers from the "Gildad" settlement burned several Palestinian olive trees and farmland planted with wheat in an area located between the villages of Far'ata and Jeet, east of the northern West Bank town of Qalqilya. (IMEMC)

According to a European Union press release, following the adoption of the new European Neighbourhood Policy Joint Action Plan, the European Union and the Palestinian Authority had started two days of meetings in Ramallah as part of an annual policy dialogue to guide their partnership. The two days were to be dedicated to the work of two separate sub-committees: one covering social affairs and health, and the other to be focused on research, innovation, info society, audiovisual and media, education and culture. (Wafa)

The World Bank transferred \$31.6 million to the PA from the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan Trust Fund. (Wafa)

Saudi Arabia donated \$86 million to UNRWA for projects in the West Bank, Lebanon and Gaza, UNRWA said. (Wafa)

A groundbreaking Australian initiative that will help treat critically ill Palestinian children had been launched in Melbourne, Australia. Project Rozana, a collaboration of Hadassah Australia, Anglican Overseas Aid, and Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, will also train Palestinian doctors and psychologists at one of Israel's leading hospitals. (Haaretz)

In a letter addressed to *The Guardian* by prominent figures, including former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, European football's governing body, the Union of European Football Association, had been accused of "rewarding Israel's cruel and lawless behaviour" by granting it the honour of hosting the European Under-21 finals in June. (The Jerusalem Post)

30

An 11-year-old Palestinian boy was shot in the face with a rubber-coated bullet during clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces in the town of al-Khader, south of Bethlehem. (Wafa)

Israeli forces severely beat up a 17-year-old Palestinian shepherd east of the town of Yatta, south of Hebron. IDF also raided several houses in the area, according to the Popular Committee Coordinator in Yatta. (Wafa)

Israeli forces shut down a main road connecting the southern West Bank villages of Idhna and Taffuh with Hebron. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli police launched a wide arrest campaign in the East Jerusalem towns of Abu Dis and Al-Aizaryeh and arrested 24 Palestinians, including a Fatah member, according to local and security sources. (Wafa)

President Abbas and Israeli President Peres met separately with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Dimitris Avramopoulos. Mr. Avramopoulos stressed to President Abbas that settlement activities violate international law and undermine any chances to achieve the internationally backed two-State solution, according to Wafa. (The Jerusalem Post)

Fatah and Hamas reportedly had come to an agreement, during a meeting in Cairo, to remove the remaining obstacles on the way to reconciliation as part of earlier agreements signed in Cairo and Doha. The sides had agreed to ensure political freedom for all factions in the territories under their control, end political arrests and respect the "principles of a free society, including the freedom of speech and opinion". (The Voice of Russia)

Chief PLO Negotiator Erakat told AFP that Israel's decision to build 1,100 new settler homes in occupied East Jerusalem was "destroying" efforts by US Secretary of State Kerry to revive the peace process. (AFP, Ma'an News Agency)

Israel's Housing Ministry said that it had given the final go-ahead for the construction of 300 new homes in the "Ramot" settlement in East Jerusalem. (AP)

Some 10 extremist Israeli settlers broke into a residential building owned by a Palestinian family in Shu'fat, in East Jerusalem, and tried to move into the apartment formerly occupied by a Jewish renter. (IMEMC)

Israeli settlers installed mobile homes near the unauthorized outpost of "Sde Boaz" in the Ein al-Qassis area south of Bethlehem. (Ma'an News Agency)

Abdul Salam Seyam, Hamas Government Chief of Staff, said in a press statement that the Qatari committee to reconstruct Gaza was to consider opening competition for Arab companies to execute construction plans. "We requested that Arab construction companies join the process under condition that they provide construction experts while the labour force should be fully Palestinian," said Mr. Seyam (www.xinhuanet.com)

Israel's Channel 7 reported that a leaked Israeli document revealed that Israeli Justice Minister Livni was weighing the possibility of releasing Palestinian detainees who had been held by Israel since before the first Oslo Agreement was signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1993. (IMEMC)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine condemned in a press statement the decision of Israel preventing a technical mission of UNESCO from carrying its monitoring mission in the Old City of Jerusalem and its walls. (Palestine News Network)

The United Church of Canada had approved the start of a boycott campaign against three Israeli companies, encouraging "economic action" against Keter Plastic, SodaStream and Ahava with operations in Jewish settlements. The church also promised to contact Canadian retailers carrying products from the manufacturers to request that such items should no longer be sold in their stores. The United Church claims some two million followers. (The Jerusalem Post)

31

Israeli forces raided a plastics factory in Jalboun village, east of Jenin. (Palestine News Network)

Yediot Ahronot reported that the US Administration had presented a new diplomatic formula – a joint control of the Jordan Valley by Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians, with US Secretary of State Kerry having had intensive talks in the past weeks with the Jordanian Government. (Yediot Ahronot)

Quoting an anonymous US source, *Al-Quds* newspaper reported that US Secretary of State Kerry was working on holding a "summit that aims at restarting direct peace negotiations without preconditions". (IMEMC)

US State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said that the issue of settlement building had come up with the Israelis in the last few weeks, but added that what was most important was that both sides, Israelis and Palestinians, had made the choice to move to negotiations. (The Jerusalem Post)

The spokesperson for European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said that, "In the light of recent media reports about renewed plans for Israeli settlements in and around East Jerusalem, the High Representative feels compelled to reiterate the EU's long-standing position.

Settlements are illegal under international law and threaten to make a two-State solution impossible. The EU has repeatedly urged the Government of Israel to immediately end all settlement activities in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem in line with its obligations." (The Wall Street Journal)

Palestinian Minister for Foreign Affairs Malki issued a press statement saying that "at a moment when the international community is trying its best to open a political horizon for the two-State solution to be realized on the ground, Israeli occupation illegal practices, including settlement activities and settlers terror, under the protection of Israeli soldiers, are destroying the prospects of a two-State solution." (Palestine News Network)

Israeli Supreme Court Justice Noam Sohlberg, whose appointment to the court had stirred up a public storm because of his residence in a settlement, had been replaced on the bench by Supreme Court President Asher Grunis before deliberations had begun on a petition against his settlement. (Haaretz)

An Israeli police spokesman said that "price-tag" vandalism had been discovered on the Church of the Dormition in Jerusalem's Old City and an investigation was underway to find the vandals. (AP)

Former US Attorney and Seattle University law professor John McKay is to move to Ramallah for the next two years to work for the US State Department to help the Palestinian courts and law-enforcement system prepare for statehood. (*The Seattle Times*)

Israeli Defense Minister Ya'alon had reportedly withdrawn his opposition to the continued implementation of the plan to build another large Palestinian city, similar to Rawabi, provisionally called "Nueimeh", in Area C. (*Ma'ariv*)

Palestinian medical school graduates protested their exclusion from Israeli hospitals owing to the fact that the Al-Quds School of Medicine, east of Jerusalem, was considered neither Israeli nor foreign, leaving the graduates ineligible to take the Israeli licensing exam. (*Haaretz*)

UNRWA launched a new School Health Strategy at a meeting of its health professionals in Amman. (www.unrwa.org)
