

Division for Palestinian Rights

*Chronological Review of Events Relating to the
Question of Palestine***Monthly media monitoring review
October 2011***Monthly highlights*

- USAID projects are put on hold after US Congress cuts aid to PA ([3 October](#))
- PACE grants Palestinian National Council “Partner for democracy” status ([4 October](#))
- UNESCO Executive Board recommends submission of Palestinian request for full membership ([5 October](#))
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- New settlement neighbourhood at Givat Hamatos in annexed East Jerusalem close to approval ([14 October](#))
- Defence for Children International/Palestine Section appeals for release of 164 Palestinian children in Israeli prisons ([17 October](#))
- Gilad Shalit is released from captivity in exchange for 450 Palestinian prisoners, with the total of 1,027 Palestinian prisoners to be released under the prisoners swap deal ([18 October](#))
- World Bank reports donor aid keeps Gaza economy afloat, with significant portion of population near poverty line ([18 October](#))
- Under-Secretary-General Pascoe briefs the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question ([24 October](#))
- UNESCO admits Palestine as its 195th Member State ([31 October](#))
- US cuts funding to UNESCO after Palestine is admitted as a UNESCO Member State ([31 October](#))

I

An Israeli air strike on a military squad that had reportedly been preparing to launch rockets across the border into Israel had wounded three Palestinians in Beit Hanoun. The men had been taken to a hospital, one having sustained critical injuries. (*Reuters*)

The US Congress blocked nearly \$200 million in aid for the Palestinian Authority (PA), threatening projects such as food aid, health care and support for efforts to build a functioning State. The freezing of the funds fell under the threats by congressional leaders of an even wider halt to funding in the coming year if PA President Mahmoud Abbas continued with his pursuit of Palestinian membership at the United Nations. Annual US aid to the PA was estimated at \$600 million. (*AFP, The Independent, Wafa*)

Nabil Sha'ath, senior aide to PA President Abbas, said that Quartet Representative Tony Blair was “useless”. “Lately, he (Blair) talks like an Israeli diplomat, selling their policies. Therefore, he is useless to us.” Mr. Sha'ath told reporters in Ramallah that while the PA had not yet asked the Quartet to replace him, it was obvious that Mr. Blair was not favoured in Palestinian circles any longer. (*Haaretz*)

Hamas denied reports of any agreement to meet with Fatah to resume reconciliation talks. Hamas leader Ismail al-Ashkar said that there had never been an agreement to meet with Fatah and that there had been no contact between the two parties other than what had been decided in Cairo in May. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in an interview with Egypt's *Al-Hayat* television that the Palestinians needed to show flexibility and get back to the negotiating table. (*AFP*)

The European Union announced that it would make an almost €9.9 million aid contribution to the PA – its third contribution in 2011 – to facilitate the quarterly payments of social allowances to poor Palestinian households. The funds would be channelled through PEGASE, a European mechanism of support to the Palestinians, for the PA's three-year Reform and Development Plan. (*Wafa*)

Settlers from “Yitzhar” set fire to Palestinian olive tree fields near Huwwara, a village south of Nablus, according to local sources. (*Wafa*)

The Israeli military declared the West Bank village of Iraq Burin near Nablus a closed military area, installing a number of checkpoints at the village entrances and blocking residents from entering or leaving the village in an effort to prevent international and local activists from participating in protests against settlement activity held in the vicinity every Saturday. (*Wafa*)

A mosque in the village of Tuba-Zangariya in northern Israel had been set on fire overnight in an apparent "price tag" attack. Israeli police arrested a number of suspects who were caught possessing flammable materials, *Israel Radio* reported. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Palestinian National Council Chairman Salim Zannoun said that the Quartet statement calling for a return to negotiations lacked impartiality and credibility, and was timed to influence international public opinion and "to mislead the world by saying that negotiations are doable in light of settlement expansion". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

In its first official reaction, Israel accepted a call issued by the Quartet on 23 September to resume peace talks with the Palestinians without preconditions. A statement issued by the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said: "While Israel has some concerns it will raise them at the appropriate time." (*AFP, Reuters*)

The US Department of State welcomed Israel's announcement of accepting the terms of the Quartet proposal on peace negotiations and said: "The US once again calls on both parties to resume negotiations without preconditions, on the timetable proposed by the Quartet, as the best means to advance their interests, resolve their differences, and fulfil the [US] President's two-State vision." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Haaretz reported that despite Prime Minister Netanyahu's acceptance of the Quartet proposal, Israel would demand several changes in the document, including the freezing of the Palestinian membership bid at the United Nations. (*Haaretz*)

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat said that Israel's response to the Quartet's call to resume negotiations deceived the international community, as the true Israeli position was declared in Tel Aviv through the expansion of the Gilo settlement. (*Wafa*)

The Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, said that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu had foiled negotiations when he approved building 1,100 housing units in East Jerusalem. Ms. Merkel described her telephone conversation with Mr. Netanyahu as "very difficult" and said, "I am unable to believe anything Netanyahu says." (*Wafa*)

In a joint press conference held in Bordeaux, France, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé and his Italian counterpart, Franco Frattini, expressed regret over the continuation of Israeli settlement construction in East Jerusalem, stressing that the move would prevent the resumption of negotiations. Mr. Juppé added that "the international initiative, which called for the resumption of direct Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and reaching an agreement by the end of 2012, has not succeeded." (*Wafa*)

Following talks with PLO Executive Committee member Erakat and the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, the Foreign Minister of Egypt, Mohammed Amr, said that his country supported PA President Abbas' bid to resume peace talks with Israel once there was a settlement freeze. (*AFP, Wafa*)

Former US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell, in a telephone conversation, said that the Palestinians' bid for membership at the UN would worsen the prospects for peace with Israel because hostility and mistrust would increase and the chance of them getting back to negotiations would decrease. He said: "The Palestinians are going to get a State only when the people of Israel have a reasonable degree of security. Israel can only attain that security if the Palestinians have a State, [...] So they should be vested in accommodation as opposed to being vested in mistrust and hostility, which is now the case." He said that the UN could upgrade the Palestinians' status to non-member Observer State, allowing the Palestinians to seek full membership in many UN agencies and sign international conventions as a full State. (*AP*)

US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta warned that Israel was at risk of becoming isolated and more vulnerable if it did not take steps to repair ties with neighbouring countries and restart negotiations with the Palestinians. Mr. Panetta said that the US remained committed to helping Israel maintain its "qualitative military edge" in the Middle East, but added: "The question you have to ask is: 'Is it enough to maintain a military edge if you are isolating yourself in the diplomatic arena?'" (*The Wall Street Journal*)

Senior PLO official Erakat said that US threats to withdraw aid to the Palestinians because of the bid for membership at the United Nations were "unacceptable". Speaking after a meeting with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Nabil Elarabi, Mr. Erakat said that the PA was in daily contact with the US Administration, but remained "deeply at odds" over the US rejection of the Palestinian bid. (*Ma'an News Agency, The Jerusalem Post, Wafa*)

PA Foreign Minister Riyad al-Malki reviewed the latest developments in the Palestinian application to the UN during his periodical meeting with foreign diplomats to the PA in Ramallah. He also told the radio station *Voice of Palestine* that the US Administration "is following the principle of procrastination and postponement in dealing with our bid in the Security Council". (*Wafa, Xinhua*)

The League of Arab States appealed to its member States to bolster financial help to the PA following the US cut in aid. (*AFP*)

Settlers uprooted Palestinian olive trees in two villages in the Ramallah district and set fire to groves in the central West Bank villages of Nabi Saleh and Deir Nidham. After the settlers had left, witnesses said that Israeli forces had prevented the farmers from accessing their fields to put out the fire. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Palestinian Prisoners' Club (PPC) published the demands of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails who had been on hunger strike since 28 September. The PPC demanded a stop to the policy of solitary confinement imposed on almost 20 prisoners, strip searches, collective punishment and the imposition of fines, and daily inspections of prisoners' rooms. It also demanded improvement to the condition of vehicles that transfer prisoners, in particular, those taken ill. (*Wafa*)

The Palestinian Prisoners' Club said that Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli Ofer prison had decided to go on a gradual hunger strike in line with the move undertaken in the rest of the central prisons. (*Wafa*)

Palestinian National Council Chairman Zannoun said that the Israeli escalation against Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails aimed to divert attention from the ongoing expansion of settlements and from the Palestinian bid for membership at the UN. Mr. Zannoun affirmed his full support for the Palestinian prisoners' demands. (*Wafa*)

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Israeli police accompanying Israeli visitors arrested four Palestinian worshippers blocking the entrance to Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. (*Wafa*)

A 16-year-old Palestinian boy was wounded in the leg by the Israeli military while he was collecting scrap metal in the eastern part of Gaza. The boy was taken to a hospital with moderate injuries. (*IMEMC*)

PA President Abbas told visiting US Secretary of Defense Panetta that the Palestinians were prepared to return to the negotiating table if Israel stopped settlement construction and accepted the pre-1967 lines as the basis for a two-State solution. PLO Executive Committee member Erakat, who attended the meeting, indicating the "clear messages" conveyed by Mr. Panetta to the Palestinians, said: "The US Secretary of Defense said that the US sees that the most appropriate way is the resumption of the peace talks and the recent Quartet proposal provides a mechanism for this." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Despite the [Congressional] decision to halt aid to the PA, the US Government was still trying to convince lawmakers to proceed with the transfer of funds. State Department Spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said, "We still have some money in the pipeline," adding: "but the concern is that if we don't get this going with Congress in short order, there could be an effect on the ground." Government officials were concerned that if law enforcement officials did not receive their salaries, it could give Hamas the opening it needed to take over in the West Bank. (*ynetnews*)

The Ramallah-based daily *al-Quds* said that EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton had told PA President Abbas that the EU would not cut aid to the PA after Palestine's bid for UN membership. The previous day, League of Arab States Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby had also appealed to member States to bolster financial help to the Palestinians. "It is necessary for the member countries of the League to increase their financial aid to the Palestinian people so they can face this threat," he said after talks in Cairo with PLO Executive Committee member Erakat. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Hassan Abu Libdeh, PA Minister of National Economy, said that he was informed by officials of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that two projects worth \$55 million and \$26 million, respectively, were being put on hold for lack of funding. He said that one project was to support the development of the private sector and the other aimed to improve the investment environment. He added that 50 people involved in the projects had been laid off the previous week and 200 others would follow the following month. Other PA Ministries also reported that other USAID projects were in jeopardy, including an \$85 million five-year plan to improve Palestinian health services. USAID officials confirmed that some programmes would be affected by the US Congressional decision to halt aid to the Palestinians. (*AP*)

German mediator Gerhard Conrad arrived in Cairo to meet with several Egyptian officials in an attempt to restart talks regarding a prisoner exchange between Israel and Hamas. According to Egyptian sources, Hamas leaders were scheduled to arrive in Cairo in the next few days for reconciliation talks and there was a strong possibility that they would take the opportunity to advance a prisoner exchange. (*Haaretz*)

Some 500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails joined a hunger strike that had begun the previous week to protest against worsening prison conditions, PA Minister for Prisoners' Affairs Issa Qaraqe said. The strike was called after Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu had toughened restrictions on Palestinian prisoners as part of an effort to force Hamas to free Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. Sivan Weizman, a spokeswoman for Israel's Prisons Service, said that 160 prisoners went on a hunger strike and that some of them had stopped eating six days prior. (Reuters)

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The Israeli Air Force launched air strikes at Palestinian homes east of Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, witnesses said. No injuries were reported. A loud explosion was also heard in the centre of Gaza City as a result of a flyover by Israeli planes. (Wafa)

According to an Israeli military spokeswoman, two rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel without causing damage or injuries. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli border guards took in four Palestinians for questioning for throwing rocks at passing cars in the neighbourhood of At-Tur in East Jerusalem. No one was hurt in the attack. (Ynetnews)

US State Department Spokesperson Nuland said that the Quartet would meet the following weekend in Brussels in an attempt to bring Israel and the Palestinians back to peace talks. US Middle East envoy David Hale will attend the meeting after having had talks with officials in Berlin, Paris and London. (AP)

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) [voted](#) to grant "Partner for democracy" status to the Palestinian National Council. Presenting a report, Tiny Kox (the Netherlands) said that the status "created new opportunities for the Palestinian people" and could be seen as part of the Arab spring. Salim Zanoun, Speaker of the Palestinian National Council, hailed the decision as "historic" and said that it could contribute to establishing peace in the region. (www.assembly.coe.int)

PA Foreign Minister Malki told the radio station *Voice of Palestine* that he would visit Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia to guarantee their votes in favour of the Palestinian application for membership at the United Nations. He said that Palestinian and Islamic diplomatic means would be used in order to support the UN bid, including Arab and Islamic investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Russian Federation, as well as Serbian influence to support the bid. (Wafa)

PA President Abbas began a week-long tour of Europe and Latin America to lobby support for the UN membership bid. During his trip, he would visit Strasbourg where he would address the Council of Europe on 6 October. The following day, Mr. Abbas would be flying to Latin America to address the Dominican Republic Parliament, visit El Salvador, and then hold talks with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón in Bogotá. (AFP)

Bradley Goehner, Communications Director of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US Congress, said: "There is an informational hold on the funding. The Chairman, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and other Committee members are seeking further details about how funds have been used in the past, how they will be used, safeguards, and the system in place to phase the Palestinians away from dependency on the US. [...] Members believe that the funding cannot be considered in a vacuum and that the PA's activities at the UN, its arrangement with Hamas, and its failure to recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish State must all be taken into consideration," he added. (Reuters)

In an interview with *BBC Radio*, Quartet Representative Blair urged the US Congress to release \$200 million in funds for Palestinian State-building that it had placed on hold. (Wafa)

Israeli forces demolished a house and a barn in Beit Ola, a town north-west of Hebron, according to local sources. Members of the National Committee to Resist the Apartheid Wall in the town said that Israeli forces, accompanied by a civil administration officer, had also raided the Khamat Badwan area west of the town razing a 12-dunum farm planted with olive trees and confiscated two caravans belonging to the farm owner. (Wafa)

Israeli forces destroyed two barracks and a water well in an area south of the town of Kafr Ad Dik, west of Salfit in the West Bank, claiming that they had been built without permits. (Wafa)

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According to an Israeli military spokeswoman, Israeli forces entered West Bank villages near Qalqilya, Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron, detaining 11 people for security questioning. (Ma'an News Agency)

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh reconfirmed his organization's commitment to resistance as a strategic option for liberation of the occupied Palestinian land. "The resistance is capable of liberating the land, expelling the occupation and restoring the rights", he said in a speech during the Fifth International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Intifada, held in Tehran. (Alresalah News)

Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, U. Joy Ogwu, the Security Council President for October, said that experts on the Security Council Committee on the Admission of New Members would meet on 7 October. (AP)

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN, in an interview with a Qatar News Agency correspondent in Cairo, conveyed the Palestinian leadership's appreciation of Qatar's political, financial and informational support to the Palestinian cause at the UN. (Qatar News Agency)

Senior Fatah official Mohammed Shtayyeh added his voice to calls for the replacement of Quartet Representative Blair but the office of PA President Abbas said that it would continue cooperating with the former British leader. (Reuters)

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Executive Board voted in favour of a draft resolution recommending the submission of the Palestinian request for full membership in the organization to the UNESCO General Conference. Forty representatives of the 58-member Board voted in favour, with 4 voting against and 14 abstaining. The request would then be submitted to a vote during the General Conference, which would take place from 25 October to 10 November and include all 193 members. Full membership would require approval by a two-thirds majority. (AP, Reuters)

US Secretary of State Clinton said that UNESCO should "think again" on plans to vote on Palestinian membership, noting that such a move could cause the US to cut funds for the organization. US lawmakers warned UNESCO that it could lose tens of millions of dollars in US funding if it agreed to admit Palestine as a member before an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal was concluded. (AP, Reuters, Ynetnews)

PA President Abbas met with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton in Strasbourg. Ms. Ashton said she understood that full membership in UNESCO was a long-desired wish of the Palestinians but added that the request did not come at the right moment and should be dealt with once the UN membership request had been fully settled. (Agence Europe, Wafa)

France said that it opposed moves by the PA to seek recognition as a full member of UNESCO. "We don't think UNESCO is the appropriate arena," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bernard Valero said. (AFP)

The Palestine Monetary Authority announced in a press release that NIS 50 million had been transferred to Gaza banks to cover the salaries of employees. (Wafa)

A Jewish settler ran over a Palestinian man from Frush Beit Dajan, a West Bank village east of Nablus, and drove off. The man was injured and was taken to a hospital. (Wafa)

A PA official said that Israeli settlers had uprooted 200 olive trees in Qusra village near Nablus during the night. (Ma'an News Agency)

An Israeli army patrol in the West Bank was attacked by settlers who had blocked a road north-east of Ramallah and provoked a fight between the two sides, an army spokeswoman told AFP. Israeli media reports suggested that the settlers attacked the soldiers following rumours that they had been en route to dismantle an unauthorized settlement outpost, but the spokeswoman denied the report. Major-General Avi Mizrahi, head of the military's central command, had expressed concern about the actions of extremist settlers against local Palestinians that he said could threaten the calm prevailing in the West Bank. (www.reliefweb.int)

A juvenile court judge in Jerusalem took the police to task for its handling of the interrogation of an East Jerusalem teenager who had been charged with throwing stones. The case arose out of a 2009 incident in which stones had been thrown at an Egged bus and a 13-year-old boy, who had denied involvement, was arrested at his home and later acquitted. The judge noted shortcomings in the handling of the case, such as police attempts to extract a confession from the boy; the appointment of an investigator and an Arabic interpreter who both lacked the proper qualifications and exploited the boy's lack of experience with police interrogations, and his ignorance regarding his rights. (Haaretz)

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) the previous week increased the age for suspects to be tried as minors from 15 to 18 following criticism by human rights groups.

Israeli law considered teens as minors up to age 18 as opposed to military law in the territories, which had regarded suspects as minors only up to age 15. (Haaretz)

The Israeli Prison Administration started implementing a series of new measures to increase pressure on Palestinian detainees to break their open-ended hunger strike, such as depriving them of education, reducing the number of television channels permitted and withholding certain types of previously allowed food. (IMEMC)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) officially launched its education reform strategy for the period from 2011 to 2015. According to a press release, the reform would improve the quality of learning for Palestine refugee students in UNRWA's 700 schools and allow the agency to meet the evolving demands of an education system for the 21st century. (www.unrwa.org)

A teachers' strike closed 238 UN-run schools in the Gaza Strip. The strikers were protesting the three-month suspension of the leader of the union of local UN employees for alleged political activity linked to Hamas. Although Hamas did not organize the one-day teachers' protest, officials made clear that it supported the strike. (AP)

6

According to an IDF analysis, September was the most violent month of the past year and a half in terms of rock throwing in the West Bank. There had been 498 such incidents in the previous month, which represented a 33 per cent increase over the monthly average in 2010. (Haaretz)

The Israeli Government was considering a Palestinian request to transfer security control of additional territory in the West Bank to PA security forces as a goodwill gesture to PA President Abbas in an effort to get him to agree to resume negotiations. (The Jerusalem Post)

PA President Abbas, in his [address](#) to PACE, said that in the light of the stalemate in negotiations, the "only alternative" for Palestinians was to turn to the international community to open new horizons for the peace process through UN recognition of the State of Palestine on the basis of the 1967 borders. President Abbas also said that he was proud that the Palestinian National Council had been granted "Partner for democracy" status by the Assembly earlier in the week. (www.assembly.coe.int)

In an interview with *Israel Radio*, Israeli Minister of Defense Ehud Barak predicted that peace talks would soon resume on the basis of the Quartet's proposals. He said that Israel would be able to approach Palestinian statehood with more optimism if it saw that the Palestinians were willing to talk about all of the issues associated with a two-State solution, including that of Jerusalem, and displayed "total accountability". (The Jerusalem Post)

US President Barack Obama needs to make good on the promises that won him the Nobel Peace Prize, fellow laureate and former US President Jimmy Carter said. On the eve of the 2011 awards, President Carter told *Reuters* that he hoped President Obama would keep his promises on promoting human rights, Middle East peace and other issues. Noting his support for the Palestinian push in 2011 for their statehood to be recognized at the United Nations, he said that he hoped the Palestinians would secure backing in the General Assembly to at least enhance their status in the body. "The United States will veto any move in the Security Council if they get the votes there, which I think is a mistake. But that's the privilege of the President to decide," he said during a brief visit to Oslo to meet Norwegian diplomats. "But I think the entire Arab spring movement is at least breaking the ice and letting some more flexibility be introduced into a stalemated Middle East situation." (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli forces demolished houses, barns and sheds belonging to Palestinian shepherds in Wadi Al-Maleh and Al-Hamma areas north of the Jordan Valley, according to Aref Daraghmah, head of the village council. (Wafa)

Israeli police said that a suspect had been arrested in a mosque burning that sparked violent protests in an Arab village earlier during the week. Police gave few details about the suspect but his lawyer identified him as an 18-year-old seminary student with ties to one of the most hardline Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The suspect was one of 12 people served administrative orders on suspicion of planning violent attacks against Palestinians. (AP)

A group of armed Israeli settlers from the Ramat Shlomo settlement installed in Shu'fat, north of Jerusalem, set ablaze dozens of olive trees that belonged to two Palestinian families, the *Palestine News Network* reported. A group of settlers uprooted at least 200 olive trees that belonged to residents of Qasra village, south of the northern West Bank city of Nablus. (IMEMC)

Following a recent increase in "price tag" attacks on Palestinian holy sites, former high-ranking Israeli security officials warned of the risk of a surge in violence across the region. The attack on a mosque in the village of Tuba-Zangariya in northern Israel during the week was the most recent in a series of such attacks. (Ma'an News Agency)

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) issued a [statement](#) condemning the collective punishment measures being taken by the Israeli prison authorities against Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails who had organized a hunger strike to protest deteriorating detention conditions. (www.pchrgaza.org)

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics issued a [press release](#) stating that since occupying the Palestinian Territory in 1967, Israel had detained about 750,000 Palestinian citizens, including 12,000 women and tens of thousands of children. (Wafa)

7

Israel limited access to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound for fear of violence during the Muslim weekly day of prayer, which would directly lead into Yom Kippur, police said. The restrictions were part of a wider lockdown, with the army closing all entry points from the West Bank until midnight of Saturday. Police and border guard reinforcements had also been deployed in East Jerusalem. Under the restrictions, only Muslim men over the age of 45 with Israeli residency would be permitted access to the Mosque complex. No restrictions had been made on women. Israel systematically closed crossing points with the West Bank during its main holidays. (Ma'an News Agency, AFP)

For the period of 29 September to 5 October 2011, PCHR, in its weekly report on Israeli human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, reported that three Palestinians, including a child, were wounded by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip. A Palestinian was also wounded when Israeli forces attacked a non-violent protest in the West Bank. (www.pchrgaza.org)

Israel would launch a series of evictions of West Bank settlements and outposts after Yom Kippur but settlers had vowed to resist the move. The State planned to follow through with its pledge to execute a High Court of Justice order and raze some 85 permanent housing units in Migron, Givat Assaf and Beit-El's Ulpana neighbourhood, and evict close to 1,000 people in the process. The settlers had promised to mount a "tsunami of resistance". Givat Assaf, which was home to 30 families, posed the greatest risk for clashes between settlers and security forces as its residents had vowed "a violent struggle" against their impending removal. (Ynet news)

The mosque-burning campaign by settlers had expanded into Israel after "price-taggers" had vowed to avenge any move by Israeli authorities to uproot settlement outposts built in the occupied West Bank without Israeli Government permission. Israeli settlers, waging a vigilante campaign strike in the dead of night, set fire to mosques and daubed walls with "price tag" graffiti, on a few occasions when Israeli army bulldozers had torn down structures at the outposts. The "price tag" campaign had widened to include vandalism at an Israeli army base in the West Bank and the torching of two mosques, one during the week in a Bedouin village inside Israel. "Israel had better know that it will pay for this," said a resident of Tuba-Zangariya in the Galilee, where a mosque was burned on 3 October, which prompted dozens of Israeli Arabs to take to the streets and hurl rocks at police who responded with tear gas. (Reuters)

UNRWA Spokesman in Jerusalem Chris Gunness said that teachers in the Gaza Strip should return to work permanently, welcoming a suspension in the workers' union strike that had started on 5 October to protest the dismissal of their union chief, Suheil al-Hindi. The union said that Mr. Al-Hindi had been fired three months ago for participating in functions attended by Hamas leaders. The strike affected all of UNRWA's 243 schools. The union said that it would suspend its strike until the following Monday while officials met to end the standoff. Mr. Gunness said: "This would be a great relief to nearly a quarter of a million children whose education is suffering and to some 7,000 teachers whose monthly incomes are going down with each strike day." (Ma'an News Agency)

A smuggling tunnel under the border of Egypt and the Gaza Strip collapsed, Egyptian security sources said. Security officials informed *Ma'an News Agency* that a truck had been unloading construction materials near the site of the collapse in the cross-border town of Rafah and had overturned into the tunnel. Police arrived at the scene but the smugglers had escaped. (Ma'an News Agency)

8

Israel's Jerusalem municipality gave the green light for the construction of 11 new apartments in the settlement of "Pisgat Ze'ev". (AFP)

9

The Israeli Air Force bombarded several areas in the northern part of the Gaza Strip while the navy fired shells at coastal areas. Damage was reported, but no

injuries. (IMEMC)

The Israeli forces stormed the town of Azzun, east of Qalqilya, conducting raid and search operations in several Palestinian houses and shops, according to witnesses. Israeli police detained two men in south Bethlehem, witnesses said. (Ma'an News Agency, Wafa)

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy hosted a meeting of Quartet envoys in Brussels. She issued a [statement](#) after the meeting which said: "... Following the successful meeting we had with my Quartet colleagues in New York, we discussed what to do next to encourage our Israeli and Palestinian partners to resume substantive negotiations as soon as possible. With that in mind, we will be contacting the parties to invite them to meet in the coming days." (www.consilium.europa.eu)

PA President Abbas arrived for an unofficial visit in Colombia to seek support for his UN bid. He will meet with President Santos on 11 October. Mr. Abbas had visited El Salvador where he met with President Carlos Mauricio Funes after visiting the Dominican Republic. "Mr. President, you can play that conciliatory role mediating between Palestine and Israel on a final settlement," Mr. Abbas told the Salvadoran President. "Before staking out any position, we want to listen to President Abbas' point of view," Salvadoran Foreign Minister Hugo Martínez had said. (AFP, www.colombiareports.com)

A spokesperson for Quartet Representative Blair said that Mr. Blair had never spoken against the Palestinian move at the UN, rejecting the Palestinian criticism that he was not an "honest broker". (Haaretz)

Settlers inflicted damages to several Palestinian villages' land in the Qalqilya and Nablus districts, PA settlement affairs official Ghassan Daghlal said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli authorities, according to local officials, rescheduled Palestinian farmers' access to their land confined behind the separation wall to pick olives to 21 October owing to the escalating settlers' attacks. (Ma'an News Agency)

A car carrying Governor of Ramallah Laila Ghannam and police chief Abdul Latif al-Qadumi was stoned by settlers while passing by the "Yizhar" settlement in Nablus, causing the driver to swerve, slightly injuring both passengers. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu was seeking ways to legalize unauthorized settlement outposts built on Palestinian land, Haaretz reported. Mr. Netanyahu told ministers from his Likud party that he would order Justice Minister Yaakov Neeman to set up a task force to explore ways of legalizing such construction. (AFP)

At least three Palestinians were injured when dozens of settlers from "Itamar", armed with sticks and stones, attacked a group of about 50 workers harvesting olives on land belonging to the Awwad family from the nearby village of Awarta, an AFP correspondent reported. (AFP)

Israeli bulldozers destroyed agricultural land belonging to the village of al-Walaja, north-west of Bethlehem, local officials said, to expand the separation wall. (Ma'an News Agency)

An IDF spokesman said that the army had returned to the PA the remains of Palestinian militant Abu Zant 35 years after he was killed. (Haaretz)

10

A 22-year-old Palestinian was killed in an Israeli air strike near the Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing in the north of the Gaza Strip, eyewitnesses said. (IMEMC, Ma'an News Agency)

Clashes broke out in East Jerusalem between Palestinian residents and Israeli soldiers and policemen. (IMEMC)

Israeli soldiers broke into houses and detained two Palestinians from Arroub refugee camp in Hebron. During raids across the West Bank, Israeli soldiers detained 11 Palestinians for security questioning. (IMEMC, Ma'an News Agency, Wafa)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said that she would call PA President Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to try to set a date for a restart of stalled peace talks. Prime Minister Netanyahu told Ms. Ashton that he would be willing to meet PA President Abbas anytime. (AFP, Reuters, The Jerusalem Post)

At a meeting with members of the Palestinian community in Bogotá, PA President Abbas said that the Palestinians were willing to peacefully coexist with Israel as long as it recognized their right to statehood and halted all settlements activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially East Jerusalem. (Wafa)

PLO Executive Committee member Hanan Ashrawi said that there would not be any problem resuming negotiations if the Quartet could persuade Israel to curb settlement building. If not, "We would be making the mistake of negotiations for their own sake," she said. (AP)

The EU's 27 Foreign Ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, adopted [conclusions](#) which reiterated full support to High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton in her continuing efforts on behalf of the EU to create a credible perspective for the relaunching of the peace process, and reiterated their appeal to the parties to resume negotiations under the terms and within the timelines indicated in the Quartet Statement of 23 September 2011. (Reuters, The Jerusalem Post, www.consilium.europa.eu)

"Israel's approval of more settlement housing, this time in Pisgat Ze'ev, is a clear violation of the Quartet's initiative, which calls for negotiations without preconditions and without provocations," a PA statement said. "The Quartet must tell Israel that it cannot pretend to accept its initiative while flagrantly breaching its terms," it added. "It is not enough for the Quartet merely to regret or condemn these Israeli provocations." (Ma'an News Agency)

Fatah central committee member Nabil Sha'ath said that nine countries in the Security Council were committed to supporting Palestine's bid for membership in the UN.

"The nine States that have confirmed voting to us, and we do not question their stance, are the following: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Gabon, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Russia Federation and South Africa." (Ma'an News Agency)

The Palestinian bid for statehood was starting to create cracks in European unity, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé said after discussing the issue with his EU counterparts in Luxembourg. (Haaretz)

Hamdan Taha, a PA Minister dealing with antiquities and culture said that the Palestinians would seek World Heritage status for Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity once UNESCO admitted them as a full member. He described as "regrettable" the objections by some Governments, including the US, to its membership application. The Bethlehem nomination had been rejected earlier during the year because Palestine had not been a full UNESCO member. The PA had listed ancient pilgrimage routes and Nablus and Hebron among 20 cultural and natural heritage sites, which, Mr. Taha said, could also be nominated. (Haaretz, Reuters)

A number of Likud ministers want to block any future plans the IDF might have to demolish unauthorized settlement and outpost construction on private Palestinian property in the West Bank. (The Jerusalem Post)

Dozens of settlers attacked Palestinian farmers harvesting their olive trees in the village of Azmoot east of Nablus. (IMEMC, Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli military bulldozers demolished a house in the village of Al-Jab'a, south-west of Bethlehem. (IMEMC, Wafa)

Israeli forces prevented Palestinian firemen from putting out a fire in an olive tree field behind the separation wall in the village of Anin, west of Jenin. (Wafa)

Hamas imposed new entry restrictions requiring most foreigners to obtain a visa to enter the Gaza Strip. The rules could make it difficult for international non-governmental organizations to function in Gaza as many groups were barred by Governments from contacts with Hamas. (Haaretz)

At least 60 activists in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel had started an open-ended hunger strike in support of Palestinians already fasting in Israeli jails against worsening conditions. Approximately 234 prisoners were now on a hunger strike, according to the Israeli Prison Service. (Al-Jazeera, www.imra.org.il)

PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad called for the UN to support Palestinian prisoners' rights in Israel as he visited sit-in tents in solidarity with the detainees' hunger strike. He said that the strikers' refusal of food since 27 September was their "means to express their rejection of the practices of the occupation that denies them basic human rights". (Ma'an News Agency)

The PA called on the Arab League to hold an emergency meeting to discuss the hunger strike of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. (Wafa, Xinhua)

The Palestinian Prisoners' Club in a press release said that Palestinian prisoner Tareq Al-Amouri, 20, was brutally beaten by an Israeli interrogator at Etzion Israeli prison, to force him to admit that he had thrown stones at Israeli soldiers. (Wafa)

PA Minister of Health Fathi Abu Moghli sent urgent messages to both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Committee of the Red Cross, calling upon them to negotiate with the Israeli military authorities to stop the oppressive actions against the striking prisoners. (IMEMC, Ma'an News Agency)

The PA Ministry of Culture and the United Nations Development Programme signed a three-year aid agreement worth \$60 million to develop the Palestinian cultural infrastructure. (Wafa)

IDF soldiers had arrested six Palestinians in the West Bank overnight. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The US is hopeful that Israel and the Palestinians will hold a preliminary meeting to revive peace talks, US State Department Spokeswoman Nuland told reporters. "The proposal they [the Quartet] are discussing with the parties is for 23 October in Jordan and we are very hopeful that both parties will take up that offer," she said. (*Reuters*)

PA President Abbas and French President Sarkozy will meet in Paris in the coming days to discuss the Palestinian bid for UN recognition, said PA Foreign Minister al-Malki. (*AFP*)

The Israeli Foreign Ministry circulated a document to its representatives abroad, spelling out legal arguments against the Palestinian statehood bid. The five-page paper, written by the Foreign Ministry's legal department at the request of Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman, was to serve as a basis for Israel's envoys to rebut the Palestinians' argument that they were ready for statehood. (*Jerusalem Post*)

Colombian President Santos reiterated during a visit by PA President Abbas that Colombia would only recognize a Palestinian State that had been established through negotiations with Israel. Mr. Santos did not say how Colombia would vote in the Security Council. President Abbas said in a joint appearance with President Santos that there was no contradiction between negotiations and the Security Council bid. (*AP*)

At a meeting with the Palestinian Ambassador, Nasri Abu Jaish, the Foreign Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, Bernard Membe, affirmed his country's continuous and concrete support for Palestine and its legitimate rights to achieve national independence. (*IMEMC*)

Fatah Central Committee member Sha'ath criticized EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton's failure to call on Israel to stop settlement activities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. "The Palestinian Authority will resume negotiations if Israel freezes settlement activities and the international community shows willingness to stand up to the Israeli occupation," he said, adding that the PA was not ready to change its position, particularly after its successes in gaining support in the international arena. (*Wafa*)

Rupert Colville, Spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, urged Israel to stop Israeli extremist settlers from attacking Palestinian civilians in the West Bank. He told reporters in Geneva that Israel had legal obligation "to protect Palestinian civilians and property in the Occupied Palestinian Territory". (*AP*, *Haaretz*)

Israeli soldiers demolished a mosque in Khirbit Izra village in the north of the Jordan Valley, allegedly built without a construction permit. (*IMEMC*)

Due to a Jewish holiday, operating hours at the border crossing between Jordan and the West Bank would be reduced the following two days. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

UNRWA Spokesman Chris Gunness said that Israeli demolitions had affected 990 Palestinians in the West Bank during the previous month, showing that Israeli authorities "are becoming more efficient" at displacing Palestinians. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Some 2,000 Palestinian prisoners had joined the prisoners' hunger strike overnight, said Qadura Fares, head of the Palestinian Prisoners' Club. He said that many of them had already been participating by refusing to eat three days a week. (*AP*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu announced that his Government and Hamas had finalized a prisoner swap pact, which had been initialled on 6 October. Israel would free 450 prisoners in the coming days in the first phase of the exchange while Hamas would release IDF soldier Gilad Shalit. A further 550 Palestinians would be freed at a later date, with the total of 1,027 Palestinian prisoners to be released under the swap deal. Shin Bet Chief Yoram Cohen said that according to the deal mediated by Egypt, 203 prisoners would go into exile in the Gaza Strip or countries not yet named, 110 would go home to the West Bank and East Jerusalem and 131 would go to Gaza. Six Israeli Arabs would also be released. The list would not include Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti or Ahmed Saadat of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. (*Haaretz*, *Reuters*)

PA President Abbas said from Caracas: "I welcome this concluded deal, which we have been waiting for a long time." He expressed hope that all Palestinian prisoners would be released from Israeli jails. Mr. Abbas also thanked Egypt for the role it played in concluding the deal. (*Wafa*)

Israeli forces arrested the secretary of the Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements, Abu Hasham, and his son Yousef, aged 18, in Beit Ummar. (*IMEMC*, *Wafa*)

Dozens of Israeli activists demanding the release of Gilad Shalit blocked a bus transporting families on their way to visit Palestinian prisoners at Shata Prison. Police forces that arrived at the scene to disperse the protest sent the bus back, cancelling the prison visit. (*Wafa*)

12

Israeli soldiers assaulted dozens of female Palestinian students in Hebron, injuring at least 10, after they refused to pass through metal detectors and X-ray machines. (*IMEMC*)

An Israeli soldier shot a 19-year-old Palestinian man near Hebron and took him away in a military car. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

PA President Abbas met with Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez in Caracas. Mr. Chávez reiterated his support for a Palestinian State and said he hoped to establish a joint Palestinian-Venezuelan committee headed by the Foreign Minister that would be responsible for agriculture and trade cooperation. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Fatah leader Azzam Al-Ahmad said that his meeting in Cairo with Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal had been "positive" and that reconciliation talks would start soon.

Mr. Mashaal telephoned President Abbas during the meeting and expressed his full support for the UN membership bid, Mr. Al-Ahmad said. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli Brigadier General Nitzan Alon said in an interview reflecting a consensus among Israeli defence officials: "Stability in the region includes the ability of the Palestinian Authority to pay its salaries [...] Reducing the Palestinians' ability to pay decreases security. American aid is relevant to this issue." (*The New York Times*)

PLO Executive Committee member Erakat denied reports that the Quartet had proposed a meeting between the Palestinians and Israelis in Jordan later during the month. PA President Abbas will meet with US Special Envoy Hale and senior White House official Dennis Ross following Mr. Abbas' arrival in Paris on 13 October, added Mr. Erakat. (*Wafa*)

Delegations from Hamas and Fatah will meet today in Cairo, said Fatah Central Committee member al-Ahmad. Mr. Al-Ahmad, speaking to the radio station *Voice of Palestine*, said that he would meet with Hamas leader Mashaal and his deputy, Musa Abu Marzuq. He added details of the prisoners exchange deal between Israel and Hamas and the implementation of the reconciliation agreement would be discussed. Mr. Al-Ahmad noted that any obstacle against proceeding with the political process was gone following the swap deal since most Western countries had pressured the Palestinian leadership against the reconciliation because of the Shalit issue. (*Wafa*)

US Secretary of State Clinton told *Reuters* that many nations were making the case to the Palestinians that their UN bid "is not going anywhere for the foreseeable future, and even if it were, you are not going to get a State through the UN [...] So you have done what you needed to do to signal your seriousness of purpose, now get back into negotiations where you can actually start talking about borders," she added. She said that "...hearing this from so many different places really makes a difference ... I am hoping that by the end of the month we will see a meeting between them." Ms. Clinton said that she had made the case to US lawmakers that the US Government should have the flexibility to decide whether to cut off aid to UN agencies if they admit the Palestinians. "There are significant problems if this begins to cascade" to the International Atomic Energy Agency, WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, she said. (*Reuters*)

Israeli authorities gave Palestinian olive growers less time to harvest their crops for the year, saying that they wanted to protect them from settler violence and vandalism. For farmers, picking the olives before they ripen could seriously decrease their value. Settlers claim that harvests had been used as cover for "terrorist activity" and that the Israeli military needed to oversee them. (*Al-Jazeera*)

A Palestinian man was moderately injured as a group of armed settlers attacked farmers in the Jit village near Nablus. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Settlers razed land in the towns of Iskaka and Yasuf, east of Salfit in the northern West Bank, and set up four caravans. (*Wafa*)

The US Department of State [said](#) regarding Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's initiative to legalize outposts on private Palestinian land: "Our position on this issue remains unchanged. The United States has a clear policy – we do not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlement activity. We oppose any effort to legalize settlement outposts, which is unhelpful to our peace efforts and would contradict Israeli commitments and obligations." (www.state.gov)

Issa Qaraqe, PA Minister for Prisoners' Affairs, told *Voice of Palestine* that the fact that jailed senior Palestinian leaders would not be among the 450 prisoners expected to be released the following week in the first round meant that "the deal had some shortfalls" and "was less than expected". (*DPA*)

"We are pleased that this long overdue development is finally taking place," UK Foreign Secretary William Hague said, adding: "Holding [Shalit] in captivity has been utterly unjustified from the beginning and yet it has gone on for 5 long years [...] The UK supports all such efforts to build confidence and trust between all parties". (*Haaretz*)

French President Nicolas Sarkozy called the prisoner swap agreement a "major success" for Israel. Mr. Sarkozy's office said that the President was "delighted" at the news and "thanked all those who contributed to this agreement, notably Egypt, for the essential role it played". (*AFP*)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton said in a [statement](#): "I warmly welcome the news that Gilad Shalit will soon be able to return home after five years of captivity, putting an end to the long ordeal that he and his family have endured [...] I pay tribute to the work of all those who have worked tirelessly to secure his release, and in particular the Egyptian and German negotiators." (www.consilium.europa.eu)

UNRWA received an in-kind contribution of over 180,000 cans of corned beef for poor Gaza Strip refugees from the World Assembly of Muslim Youth. The generous contribution worth more than \$113,000 had arrived in Gaza where it would be distributed as part of the Agency's emergency food assistance programme. (www.unrwa.org)

13

The Israeli army arrested three residents in the village of Beit Ummar near Hebron. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli extremists severely beat a 15-year-old Palestinian boy, Mohammad Maghribi, in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Musrara. No arrests were made. (*Wafa*)

The US Embassy in Paris said that US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace Hale would meet with President Abbas during his visit to Paris. (*AFP*)

PA President Abbas discussed the stalled peace talks in the Middle East with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton in a telephone conversation. Nabil Abu Rudeineh, Spokesman for the Palestinian President, said that no new initiatives were presented by Ms. Ashton to prepare for a meeting between Israel and the Palestinians. (*China Daily*)

Palestinian official Omar Awadallah, head of the UN Department at the PA Foreign Ministry, said in an interview: "Our policy is now towards gaining membership of all international organizations and specialized organizations of the United Nations as a full member. [...] We are not looking for confrontation. We are looking to secure our rights." (*Reuters*)

The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US House of Representatives voted for a bill that would withhold contributions to any UN agency or programme that upgrades the current "observer" status of the PLO, a step that would also end US contributions to UNRWA. The bill's future was uncertain, because, even if it passed the House of Representatives, the Democrat-controlled Senate would be unlikely to approve it. (*IPS News Agency*)

The EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS), several European Consuls-General and representatives as well as other senior European officials, helped Palestinian farmers to harvest their olives in the northern West Bank. The participation of EUPOL COPPS and the Palestinian Civil Police strengthened the concept of community policing and also ensured the safety of Palestinian farmers. (*Wafa*)

In his update to the Parliament on the Middle East, British Foreign Secretary Hague condemned the expansion of settlements calling them "illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace". He expressed support for a settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with borders based on 1967 lines, and said: "The Israeli Government needs to take bolder steps than Israeli leaders have been prepared to do in recent years." (*Wafa*)

The Al-Aqsa Institute for Waqf and Heritage revealed that Jewish extremists set fire to a large tree and destroyed roughly 15 graves in the Ma'man Allah cemetery in East Jerusalem. (*Wafa*)

Israeli authorities handed demolition orders for several water wells and greenhouses to a number of Palestinian farmers and also stopped work on the rehabilitation of a 10-year agricultural road in an area in Kufri Al-Deek. Israeli authorities had also recently demolished animal barns and tents belonging to Palestinian shepherds in the same area. (*Wafa*)

Settlers set fire to about 300 olive trees in the town of Burqin in the northern West Bank. (*Wafa*)

Al-Hayat newspaper reported that Hamas leader Mashaal and the leader of Hamas' armed wing, Ahmed Al-Ghannouch, arrived in Cairo the previous night in order to coordinate the final details of the prisoner exchange deal involving Gilad Shalit. Egyptian sources said that Mr. Shalit would be transferred to the Egyptians on 18 October as part of the first phase of the deal. (*Haaretz*)

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People issued a [statement](#) that expressed grave concern at the situation of Palestinian political prisoners who had joined the open-ended hunger strike. The Bureau expressed particular concern for the situation of the vulnerable prisoners – women, children and the sick. The Bureau called on Israel to reverse its repressive measures and called on the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross and WHO to monitor and ensure Israel's compliance with international obligations. (*UN News Centre*)

UNRWA called on Israel to lift the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip since 2006 once the prisoner swap deal between Israel and Hamas had been completed.

(*Ynetnews*)

The Palestinian Authority's representative in the US, Ambassador Maen Rashid Areikat, formally severed ties with the American Task Force on Palestine, a leading Palestinian-American group, for failing to support the PA's bid for statehood at the United Nations. The Task Force decided not to take a position on President Abbas' UN push and pressed instead for a compromise at the UN. (*politico.com*)

PCHR welcomed the prisoner swap deal signed between Hamas and Israel. Once the swap deal was concluded, PCHR called for the immediate lifting of the Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip and an end to all collective punitive measures imposed on the civilian population. (*IMEMC*, www.pchrgaza.org)

14

A man, angered by the prisoner swap deal to secure the release of Gilad Shalit, vandalized a memorial to Israel's slain premier Yitzhak Rabin writing "Price tag" and "Free Yigal Amir" in white spray paint on the memorial. The suspect, whom a police spokeswoman said had "mental health issues", had lost his parents and three younger siblings in the bombing of a pizzeria in Jerusalem in August 2001. (*AFP*)

PA President Abbas, seeking further support at the Security Council after claiming to have received the backing of nine member nations, failed to persuade French President Nicolas Sarkozy to support the Palestinian UN statehood bid. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

During an official visit to Lebanon, the Foreign Minister of Greece, Stavros Lambrinidis, expressed Greece's support for a Palestinian State living in peace alongside Israel. (*The Daily Star*)

Plans for a new settlement neighbourhood at Givat Hamatos, in annexed East Jerusalem, was close to the end of an approval process. Peace Now called the new district a "game changer" and said: "The new neighbourhood will complete the isolation between Bethlehem and East Jerusalem, and will destroy any possibility of a territorial solution in Beit Safafa and Shurafat." "Givat Hamatos" is the first neighbourhood to be planned since the establishment of "Har Homa" in 1997. (*NOW News*)

The following statement was issued by the Spokesperson UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

The Secretary-General is deeply concerned at continued efforts to advance planning for new Israeli settlements in occupied East Jerusalem. Recent developments in this regard have been unacceptable, particularly as efforts are ongoing to resume negotiations, and run contrary to the Quartet's call on the parties to refrain from provocations. The Secretary-General reiterates that settlement activity in East Jerusalem and the remainder of the West Bank is contrary to international law and to Israel's obligations under the Road Map, and must cease. He further reiterates that the international community will not recognize unilateral actions on the ground and that the status of Jerusalem can only be resolved through negotiations. (www.un.org)

Palestinian Ambassador to Lebanon Abdullah Abdullah urged the Government to create job opportunities for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, particularly for doctors and engineers. He said that employing Palestinian engineers would not affect the work of more than 30,000 Lebanese engineers, and he added that Palestinians living abroad funnel more than \$780 million a year in remittances to their families in Lebanon. (*The Daily Star*)

Turkey had agreed to take in the 40 Palestinian prisoners set for exile abroad as part of an exchange deal between Hamas and Israel. Israel had refused to deport the

prisoners to be released in the first round to Egypt, Lebanon or the Syrian Arab Republic. According to Hamas Political Bureau member Izzat al-Rishiq, the second phase of the prisoner release would be implemented after two months. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The prisoner swap deal created great tension among different groups of prisoners held in Israeli jails because released prisoners from the West Bank would be expelled to various countries while most Gaza Strip detainees would be allowed to go home. In addition, despite declarations by Hamas that any swap would be brought up for the prisoners' approval, no such vote was held. (*Ynetnews*)

In the prisoner swap deal, Hamas did not agree to an Israeli request to abolish plans for any future kidnappings of IDF soldiers. But as part of the deal, Israel agreed not to target any of the more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners once they had been freed. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

The Arab League called on the General Assembly to request a probe into the legal status of Palestinians in Israeli prisons. The General Assembly was expected to pass the request to the International Criminal Court. PA Minister of Prisoner Affairs Qaraqe hoped that the Court would issue an advisory opinion on the legal status of Palestinian and Arab prisoners in Israeli prisons as well as their status under international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

15

In a [statement](#), Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, deplored the Israeli settlement plans, calling them "unacceptable" and "against road map obligations". She said: "The proposed constructions in Givat Hamatos are of particular concern as they would cut the geographic contiguity between Jerusalem and Bethlehem." (www.consilium.europa.eu)

Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu strongly condemned Israel for its decision to build 2,610 settlement units on lands between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. (www.oic-oci.org)

Israel's President Shimon Peres began the process of formally pardoning hundreds of Palestinian prisoners to be exchanged for Gilad Shalit. (*AP*)

Issa Qaraqe, the PA Minister for Prisoners' Affairs, said that the Israeli Prisons Service would not ease restrictions imposed on jailed Fatah leader Barghouti, who would remain in solitary confinement until further notice "after recommendations from Shin Bet". (*arabnews.com*)

16

The Israeli army closed a Palestinian school in the Old City in Hebron for the fourth day in a row. An official in the Hebron Education Department said that Israeli soldiers gave students a 10-minute warning to evict the school before forcefully dispersing them by shooting rubber bullets and tear gas. Four people fainted after inhaling tear gas during a protest against the closure which had forced classes to be held in the street. (*Palestine News Network, Wafa*)

The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Agriculture signed a memorandum of understanding with the World Food Programme (WFP), by which Saudi Arabia will grant \$2 million to the WFP Coupons Programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. (*Wafa*)

PLO Executive Committee member Erakat in a [press release](#) called Israel's plan for a new settler district a "mockery" of international efforts for peace, stressing that the building of 2,610 homes in "Givat Hamatos" "physically sever(s) the Palestinian cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem" and urging the Quartet to hold Israel to account. (www.nad-plo.org)

The Arab League strongly condemned the Israeli Government's decision to build 2,610 housing units in "Givat Hamatos". It called on Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as well as the international community and human rights organizations to send a fact-finding mission to Jerusalem to investigate the deteriorating situation and Israeli violations against Jerusalem and its residents. (*Wafa*)

Israeli forces detained two people from the West Bank village of Beita, according to witnesses and the Israeli army. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israel released the names of the first 477 Palestinian prisoners that it will exchange for Gilad Shalit. Four petitions were filed with the Supreme Court by the Almagor Terror Victims Association and relatives of Israelis killed in Palestinian attacks. However, judging from similar appeals in the past, the court was unlikely to intervene in what it considers a political and security issue. (*Reuters, The New York Times*)

Officials said that Israel had no intention of easing its blockade of the Gaza Strip because of the release of Gilad Shalit. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israel bused 430 Palestinian prisoners under heavy guard to a holding facility in the Negev desert in preparation for them to be exchanged for Gilad Shalit. (*Reuters*)

Jordanian Prime Minister Marouf Bakhit had a telephone conversation with Hamas leader Haniyeh, during which they discussed the prisoner swap with Israel. (*Petra News Agency*)

Israeli right-wing activists broke into the home of Justice Minister Neeman to protest the prisoner exchange deal. (*Haaretz*)

Fatah Central Committee member Jibril Rajoub expressed the hope that the PLO, not Hamas, would be the body that would conduct the second phase of the prisoner exchange deal, in which 550 Palestinian prisoners were set to be released in two months. (*Ynetnews*)

The Jordanian Department of Palestinian Affairs stressed its rejection of any reduction in the level of services provided by UNRWA to refugees, pointing out that any service shortage would create costs for Arab countries beyond their financial capacity. (*Petra News Agency*)

17

The Israeli army detained three Palestinians from Jericho and three from Nablus. (*IMEMC*)

The Quartet would not be able to revive direct Israeli-Palestinian peace talks by the end of the week, missing the first deadline in its plan, US State Department Spokesman Mark Toner said. The Quartet would meet separately with Israeli and Palestinian officials on 26 October. (*AP, Haaretz*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said: "We welcome the efforts of the Quartet to bring about direct talks with no preconditions, but we deplore the fact that during the Quartet meeting scheduled for 26 October, such direct negotiations won't be taking place because of the opposition from the Palestinians... Only direct talks without preconditions can advance the peace process," Mr. Netanyahu stressed. (*AFP*)

Hamas leader Mahmoud Zahhar said that ending the blockade of the Gaza Strip was part of the agreement between Hamas, Egypt and Israel for the return of Gilad Shalit. Israel agreed to this long ago, in talks with a German mediator, and was still part of the agreement. (*Haaretz*)

France condemned the decision taken by the Jerusalem City Hall to create a new settlement in "Givat Hamatos" in East Jerusalem, pointing out that colonization, whether in the West Bank or in East Jerusalem, was illegal under the terms of international law, and asked the Israeli Government to block the implementation of this project. (*Wafa, www.ambafrance-us.org*)

Moscow was worried about the Israeli Government's new settlement plans in the southern part of East Jerusalem, the Foreign Ministry said. (*Itar Tass*)

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that the announcement on the exchange of prisoners was "very welcome" and expressed the "hope that this will give some positive momentum for their [Israeli-Palestinian] relationship for peace and security". (www.un.org)

Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey had reportedly agreed to absorb Palestinian prisoners who would be deported after their release. (*AFP, Haaretz*)

According to a poll, 79 per cent of Israelis supported the prisoner swap and only 14 per cent opposed the deal. (*AP*)

In a joint statement, prisoner rights group Addameer and Al-Haq said that while the prisoner swap deal was cause for celebration for 1,027 families, aspects of the exchange were "fundamentally at odds with international law". Israel and Hamas had reportedly agreed to deport over 200 prisoners to the Gaza Strip or third countries. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Palestinians jailed in Israel suspended a three-week hunger strike after Israeli prison authorities agreed to end the practice of solitary confinement, PA Minister for Prisoners' Affairs Qaraqe said in Ramallah. (*Wafa*)

The Defence for Children International/Palestine Section urged the Israeli authorities to release all Palestinian children currently held in detention. They stated in an appeal that "at the end of September 2011, there were 164 Palestinian children (ages 12-17 years) in Israeli detention facilities, including 35 between the ages of 12 and 15; 76 had been sentenced, while 88 were being held in pretrial detention". (*The Jerusalem Post*, www.dci-palestine.org)

18

After a closed-door Security Council meeting, diplomats said that the Council had agreed that the Committee on the Admission of New Members would produce a report by 11 November. One diplomat said that unless there was consensus, it would just be a summary of different positions. The Committee would meet at the ambassadorial level on 3 November to discuss the experts' work and a report would then be drafted for their consideration on 11 November, the diplomats said. (AP)

Palestinians awaiting the return of prisoners at the Beitunia Crossing in the West Bank clashed with Israeli security forces who responded with tear gas after the route buses carrying the prisoners had been scheduled to take was changed. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

China pledged support for international efforts to resume negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians at an early date. "It is a key period now for the peace process in the Middle East," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Liu Weimin said at a daily press briefing. (*Xinhua*)

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) [said](http://www.ochaopt.org) that 38 per cent of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip lived in poverty, 26 per cent of the workforce, including 38 per cent of youths, were unemployed, 54 per cent of the population were food insecure and over 75 per cent were aid recipients. (www.ochaopt.org)

A new [report](http://web.worldbank.org) of the World Bank revealed a precarious economic situation in the Gaza Strip, where donor aid was keeping the economy afloat, and was driving a decline in poverty, even as unemployment increased and the economic structure demonstrated no improvement. The report was the first major analysis of poverty in the West Bank and Gaza since 2001. (web.worldbank.org)

Settlers from "Rafafa" and Israeli soldiers prevented a number of Palestinian farmers from reaching their land near the settlement to harvest olive trees. (Wafa)

OCHA [reported](http://www.ochaopt.org) that more than 7,500 olive trees belonging to Palestinians had been uprooted, set on fire or otherwise vandalized by Israeli settlers between January and September 2011. (www.ochaopt.org)

Hundreds of thousands rallied in Ramallah and Gaza City to celebrate the return of prisoners. PA President Abbas told the crowd at his compound: "We will see, God willing, very soon, our brother Marwan Barghouti and Ahmad Saadat, whom we wish a quick recovery." He thanked Egypt for its help in brokering the agreement and promised to finalize reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

The Spokesperson for Hamas' military wing, Abu Ubeida, said that the movement's treatment of Gilad Shalit was in accordance "with our religious laws". He added, "The deal is an achievement for our entire nation. We'll keep fighting until all prisoners are released." (*Ynetnews*)

Hamas leader Zahhar confirmed that Gilad Shalit had officially been turned over to Egypt. After his release, Mr. Shalit told *Egyptian TV* that he was glad Palestinians were being released and hoped they would not return to violence. He said: "I hope this deal will lead to peace between Palestinians and Israelis and that it will support cooperation between both sides." (AP, *The New York Times*, *Haaretz*)

Among the Palestinian prisoners released by Israel, 1 arrived in Jordan, 15 in Qatar, 16 in Syria and 10 in Turkey. (*Haaretz*)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu warned the Palestinian militants freed in the prisoner swap that they would be punished if they returned to violence. Some 300 of released Palestinian prisoners had been serving life sentences for attacks on Israel. (AP)

The Spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued the following statement:

The Secretary-General welcomed the recent prisoner exchange agreement and views today's releases as a significant humanitarian breakthrough. He has long called for the end of the unacceptable captivity of Gilad Shalit and has also called for the release of Palestinian prisoners. For several years, the United Nations has actively supported channels of dialogue to resolve this issue. The Secretary-General thanks Egypt for its contribution to this outcome, and Germany for its efforts. In the aftermath, the Secretary-General hopes that more far-reaching steps will be taken to end the closure of Gaza and enable reconstruction. He continues to call in the same context for an end to the smuggling of weapons and a sustained calm between Israel and Gaza. (*UN News Centre*)

The Spokesman for UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, Rupert Colville, said:

"It was with a sense of great relief that we have received news of the agreement to exchange prisoners. We do however have concerns regarding reports that hundreds of Palestinian prisoners from the West Bank may be released to the Gaza Strip or abroad. ... If in some cases this has been without the free and informed consent of the concerned individuals, this may constitute forced transfer or deportation under international law." (*Reuters*)

Israeli forces detained four Palestinians near Hebron. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli President Shimon Peres met with German mediator Gerhard Konrad and thanked him for his efforts over the years to secure Shalit's release. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

British Prime Minister David Cameron welcomed the release of Gilad Shalit after his five-year-long "cruel and unjustified captivity". Foreign Secretary Hague welcomed the release and called on Israel to build on the momentum. "It provides a glimmer of hope in an often bleak scene that a successful negotiation can be carried out on this difficult subject," Mr. Hague said. (*Reuters*)

The United Nations Children's Fund appealed to the Israeli Government to release all Palestinian children currently in Israeli military detention. The agency reported that, of the 164 Palestinians under the age of 18 detained by Israeli authorities, most were understood to be detained on charges of stone-throwing. It was not known if any were included on the list of 1,027 Palestinian prisoners who were to be released. (*Irish Times*)

The proposed "Givat Hamatos" development would complete a settlement band around a part of East Jerusalem, complicating any future partition of the city. "This is a game changer," Daniel Seidemann, a Jerusalem expert, said of "Givat Hamatos". While relatively small in size, "this is a mega-settlement in terms of impact," he added. (AP, *NPR*)

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An IDF force prevented a stabbing attack in the settlement block of "Gush Etzion" by a Palestinian woman. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Quartet Representative Blair said that Quartet mediators would press Israel and Palestinians to table their ideas on security arrangements and the borders for a two-State solution within three months. He added that the mediators would hold separate meetings with the Israelis and Palestinians the following week in Jerusalem. (*Reuters*)

PA Prime Minister Fayyad told a dinner hosted by the American Task Force on Palestine in Washington, D.C., that there was little point in Israeli-Palestinian talks without first establishing "terms of reference". "My own assessment is that conditions are not ripe, at this juncture, for a meaningful resumption of talks. [...] All it is likely to produce under current conditions is defensiveness [...] to try to establish a position where it is the other party's fault," he said. (*Reuters*)

Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN, said that the US was deliberately trying to stall the Palestinian membership bid in the Security Council, but that the Russian Federation was to offer a proposal to sway the others. The PLO wanted a vote in October but would wait until the November vote in order to give the proposal time, he added. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Russian Federation Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that his country was ready to support Palestinian membership in UNESCO. (*RIA Novosti*)

PLO Central Committee member al-Ahmad said that two meetings between Hamas and Fatah would be scheduled shortly after President Abbas' tour of the Arab world to discuss methods to implement the reconciliation agreement and address Mr. Abbas' statements regarding the Palestinian strategy and future, which were positively received by Hamas leader Mashaal. Mr. Al-Ahmad also denied reports that Hamas and Fatah had agreed to conduct public elections at the beginning of 2012. (Wafa)

Senior Hamas official Zahhar said, "We invite Abu Mazen [President Abbas] to enter into elections to see the measure of his popularity on the Palestinian street." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Yediot Ahranot quoted Israeli security officials as saying that released detainees in the West Bank would be required to report to the nearest military base on a regular basis, and that they would be sent back to prison to serve the remainder of the original sentence if they missed the set appointment. (IMEMC)

A spokesman for Hamas' armed wing announced that Egypt would oversee the release of 550 Palestinian prisoners as part of the second phase of the prisoner swap. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

In a press release, the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) condemned Israel's incarceration of 21 Palestinian legislators and demanded their immediate release. The IPU stressed that incarcerating Fatah's Marwan Barghouti and Ahmad Sa'adat of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine were clear violations of international law. (Wafa)

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, the Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center, the Civic Coalition for Defending the Palestinians' Rights in Jerusalem, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies, Defence for Children International – Palestine Section and the Arab Association for Human Rights called on the EU to uphold standards for the protection of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. In a joint letter to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton, they asked the EU "to seize the opportunity to examine the conditions of those prisoners who remain in Israeli detention and those civilians who remain imprisoned in the Gaza Strip as a result of the illegal closure". (Wafa, PCHR)

The Israeli army detained a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, Dmitri Dalyani. (IMEMC)

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According to Presidential Spokesman Abu Rudeineh, PA President Abbas will officially propose to Hamas that elections be held in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on January 2012 during a meeting with Hamas officials in Egypt in early November. (Ma'an News Agency, Time Magazine)

Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN Mansour said: "We are serious about this application and we want it to reach its logical conclusion in the hope that we succeed," in remarks published in *Al-Ayyam* newspaper. "But if we do not succeed, we want this effort to end in a near time frame so we can resort to other options available to us." (Reuters)

The Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Ibrahim Khraishi, said that diplomats were trying to muster support for a Security Council vote on 11 November on Palestinian membership, adding that he was hopeful of getting the necessary backing of 9 of the Council's 15 members. (AP)

Oxfam, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees and the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees said that the destruction of Palestinian olive trees by Israeli settlers would reduce the year's harvest by an estimated \$500,000 as 7,500 olive trees had been destroyed. (www.maltatoday.com.mt)

A group of settlers from "Anat Cohen" attacked students of Qurtuba School in Hebron. When the principal tried to intervene with the help of several Palestinian residents, Israeli soldiers arrested the deputy principal and a resident. Israeli soldiers also stormed Susiya School in Hebron, beating several students and forcing the teachers and students to leave. (Wafa)

Israeli soldiers detained a Palestinian resident from Hebron. (IMEMC)

PA President Abbas said that Israel should release Fatah prisoners, citing a promise that he said he had received from former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. In an interview, he told *TIME* that Mr. Olmert had promised to release Fatah prisoners following any Shalit deal. (Haaretz, Time Magazine)

In a statement, Palestinian civil society groups had called on European research bodies to halt cooperation with Israeli institutions implicated in violating human rights. They stated that Israel's association agreement with the EU gave it equal access to research funding as members, "despite Israel's consistent violation of the Agreement's human rights clause". The campaigners pointed to European collaboration with and funding of the military companies Elbit Systems and Israeli Aerospace Industries. (Ma'an News Agency)

A letter was sent by 84 international archaeologists to the board members of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, the Mayor of Jerusalem and the Director-General of the Israeli Antiquities Authority expressing their concern and opposition regarding the plans by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre to commence construction of a museum of tolerance on the site of Mamilla cemetery in Jerusalem. (www.ccrjustice.org)

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Popular Resistance Committees leader Ayman al-Shashniya survived a car bombing outside his home in the Gaza Strip during the night, a spokesman of the movement said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said that he was willing to partially freeze construction in West Bank settlements in return for PA President Abbas agreeing to resume direct peace talks. A senior Israeli official said that the proposal had been relayed to Mr. Abbas on 19 October by Colombian Foreign Minister Maria Angela Holguin, who had arrived on a surprise visit to Israel and the PA. PLO Executive Committee member Erakat said that Palestinians had rejected the offer because it applied only to Government construction and most settlement construction was carried out by private contractors. Mark Regev, Mr. Netanyahu's Spokesman, told *DPA* that no such offer had been made and that Israel's position remained that direct peace talks must begin without preconditions. (AP, DPA, Haaretz)

PLO Executive Committee member Saeb Erakat said that the committee in charge of studying the Palestinian application had submitted its legal and procedural report to the Security Council. The Council would now be asked to provide a subsequent report denoting the stances of members regarding the UN membership, and whether the application had met all of the requirements. "When the stances of the countries are clear, when each State makes a decision on our application, we will be asking for a Security Council vote," he said. (IMEMC)

Settlers attacked a group of about 200 Palestinians picking olives near Jalud village, some 15 km south of Nablus. "Settlers attacked us while we were picking olives and then there was rock throwing and fist fighting," residents told *AFP*, saying that an Israeli army unit had broken up the confrontation by firing tear gas. (AFP)

Six US medics arrived in the Gaza Strip to provide treatment not available in the blockaded coastal strip, the Union of Health Work Committees said in a press release. The delegation included a urologist, a cardiologist, a psychiatric nurse and a paediatric nurse, the release stated. (Ma'an News Agency)

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PA President Abbas held a meeting with the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces of Egypt, Mohammad Tantawi, during which they discussed the implementation of the Palestinian reconciliation agreement. Mr. Abbas praised Egyptian efforts to achieve the prisoner exchange deal with Israel. (Wafa)

At the World Economic Forum meeting in Jordan, King Abdullah II said that a peace deal between Israelis and Palestinians would have to ensure Israel's security and acceptance and enable the creation of a Palestinian State. According to the *Petra News Agency*, King Abdullah met with PA Prime Minister Fayyad on the sidelines of the Forum, affirming his support for a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli soldiers attacked a weekly non-violent protest against settlements and the wall in Beit Ummar, north of Hebron, said Mohammed Awad, spokesman for the National Committee against the Wall and Settlements in Beit Ummar. The area of protest at the "Karmi Tzur" settlement, which had been constructed on Beit Ummar property, was a closed military zone, preventing the protesters from reaching the settlement gate. The protesters were battered before tear gas, stun grenades and smoke grenades were hurled at them. (Wafa)

Israeli authorities have started the construction of a watchtower near the unauthorized settlement outpost of "Nofei Nehemia", the head of a local village council said, to monitor Palestinian farmers and citizens in the village. The outpost was being built on private Palestinian land, he added. (Ma'an News Agency)

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A Palestinian armed with a 14-cm-long knife was arrested by Israeli border police, who took the suspect into custody for questioning, saying that he had intended to launch a knife attack on Israelis near the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. Israeli police also continued their investigation into the stabbing of a 17-year-old resident of the "Ramot" settlement the previous day. (The Jerusalem Post)

Israeli forces entered Tulkarm, sparking clashes with local youth, who pelted them with stones. Israeli soldiers responded by firing tear gas, but no injuries had been reported. (Ma'an News Agency)

The IDF decided to dismiss the commander of the force that had shot and killed a Palestinian man near the village of Qusra on 23 September, hours before PA President Abbas presented his statehood bid at the UN. (Ynetnews)

An Israeli military court sentenced two Palestinians to multi-year jail terms. Both men, from the Nablus district village of Beita, had been charged with being activists in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. (Ma'an News Agency)

Quartet Representative Blair said that Arab pro-democracy uprisings spelled more regional instability that could complicate peace efforts between Israel and the Palestinians, but also made it necessary to get the process back on track. (Reuters)

Gabon was set to endorse the Palestinian bid in the Security Council, PA Foreign Minister al-Malki said. (Ma'an News Agency)

A meeting between PA President Abbas and Hamas Political Bureau Chief Mashaal is due to take place in November, a Hamas official was quoted as saying, as part of an effort to form a unity Government. (Haaretz)

Israeli authorities reopened the sole goods crossing at Kerem Shalom in the Gaza Strip following a week-long closure when Israel used it for the prisoner exchange deal with Hamas. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli forces issued a military order to confiscate 37,000 m² of private land near the Cremisan Monastery in Beit Jala. One of the landowners said that the land slated for confiscation was being used for agricultural cultivation, adding that Israel was annexing the area to construct a separation wall. (Ma'an News Agency)

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At least six people were wounded when a bomb exploded in the Ein El Hilweh Palestine refugee camp, Lebanese police said. (DPA)

Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman said that if there was one immediate and removable obstacle in the path to negotiations with the Palestinians, it would be PA President Abbas. Mr. Liberman said that he was also sure that Mr. Abbas was the worst leader that Israel could ever find itself dealing with. (Ynetnews)

PLO Executive Committee member Erakat said that Israel was impeding the peace process and that the Quartet should publicly recognize Israeli intransigence. Israel insists on publicly announcing new settlement plans and pays no attention to the guidelines of the peace process, Mr. Erakat said. He added that Israel was intentionally trying to "judaize" [East] Jerusalem to the detriment of its Palestinian population. (Ma'an News Agency)

Jordan's King Abdullah II said in an interview that Israel was not interested in the two-State solution, adding that, for the first time, he was "very pessimistic" as to the chances of ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (Haaretz)

Western diplomats said that nothing short of a political miracle was needed to see the stalemate plaguing the Israeli-Palestinian peace process from dissipating. (Ynetnews)

General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Armed Forces, reaffirmed the UAE's support for the efforts by the PA to realize the aspirations of the Palestinian people in establishing its independent State with Jerusalem as capital. He made the remarks during the visit of PA President Abbas. (Khaleej Times)

The composition of the Security Council following the election of new non-permanent members to the body would be less inclined to vote for Palestinian admission to the UN, diplomatic officials and news analysts in New York had said. (Haaretz)

Senior Israeli security sources said that the Israeli Government was concerned about Egyptian and Jordanian intentions to allow Hamas to open offices in Amman and Cairo and considered the move as "granting legitimacy to terror". (IMEMC)

The World Bank announced the revival of the West Bank and Gaza Investment Guarantee Fund that had been set up in 1997 to assist the PA in attracting investment.

It said that the Fund would support the development of two date-palm farms in Jericho, with the aim of revitalizing the local agriculture sector. (The Jerusalem Post, World Bank)

US Commerce Deputy Secretary Francisco Sanchez said that the US was committed to strengthening the commercial relationships between the US and the PA. The Palestinian National Economy Minister, Hassan Abu Libdeh, met with Mr. Sanchez to discuss the economic situation and talk about the US-Palestinian trade relationship. Mr. Sanchez stressed that the most important component of an independent Palestinian State was a strong private sector. (Wafa)

The Head of Ireland's Representative Office to the PA, James Carroll, and PA Prime Minister Fayyad signed a deal for a €1.5 million donation to the PA. Mr. Fayyad said that €1 million would be used to pay civil servants' salaries and the remainder on social welfare aid, through the PEGASE mechanism. (Ma'an News Agency)

Palestinian lawmakers in Jerusalem welcomed the Israeli High Court ruling to cancel the decision by Israeli Interior Minister Eli Yishai to withdraw Palestinian lawmakers' residency in Jerusalem on the pretext of disloyalty to Israel. (Wafa)

The PA said that the Israeli Government was "implicitly encouraging settlers to continue on their rampage" by failing to hold them accountable for violent crimes. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli military police investigators arrested an Israeli soldier following suspicions that he had leaked information on IDF operations in the West Bank to settlers.

Following the arrest, settlers vandalized an IDF post in a so-called "price tag" attack. IDF officials called the incident grave and unprecedented. (Haaretz)

Israeli forces had made multiple arrests overnight in several districts across the West Bank, the Israeli army and Palestinian police said. Palestinian police said in a statement that nine men had been detained, including a 16-year-old and two 18-year-olds. An Israeli army spokeswoman said that the men would be taken for routine security questioning. (Ma'an News Agency)

The General Staff of the IDF had recommended that the Israeli Government make a series of gestures to the PA, including a release of prisoners. But Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's advisers vehemently opposed the idea, as did several members of his forum of eight senior ministers. (Haaretz)

Hamas leader Zahhar said that Israel would not release top security prisoners or common criminals in the second phase of the prisoner swap deal with Hamas. (Ma'an News Agency)

Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe briefed the Security Council ahead of an [open debate](#) on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. He said that the recent prisoner exchange agreement between Israel and Hamas showed that it was possible, with sufficient exercise of political will, to overcome long-standing impasses in the Middle East. Several Member States renewed their pleas for Palestine's UN membership, while Israel and the US were among those who said that the move would be counterproductive. (UN press release SC/10420)

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A smuggling tunnel underneath the Egypt-Gaza Strip border collapsed, killing a 29-year-old man from Khan Yunis, medics said. (Ma'an News Agency)

Israeli soldiers arrested 10 Palestinians in the West Bank, Palestinian police said in a statement. (Wafa)

Israeli police forces shut down the offices of Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in East Jerusalem. (Ynetnews)

The PA laid down its final strategy to dissolve Fatah's Armed Struggle in Lebanon, which was charged with preserving security in Palestine refugee camps across the country, Palestinian sources said, adding that the move was a prelude to establishing a new security body. (The Daily Star)

The Foreign Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, Bernard Membe, stressed his country's complete support of the Palestinian application for membership in the UN, according to the Palestinian embassy in the United Republic of Tanzania. (Wafa)

In a statement, South Africa said that it "looks forward, sooner [rather] than later, to welcoming Palestine as the 194th member of the United Nations". It reaffirmed "its conviction that Palestine is a State, that Palestine is a peace-loving State, and that Palestine is willing and able to carry out its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations". (AFP)

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan received the Palestinian International Award for Excellence and Creativity 2011 for his contribution and support to the plea of the Palestinian people for the establishment of a sovereign State of Palestine, the *Anatolia* news agency reported. (www.todayszaman.com)

Comments by Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman urging the replacement of PA President Abbas represented a direct threat on Mr. Abbas' life, an official PA letter addressed to Prime Minister Netanyahu said. (Haaretz)

Israeli President Peres said: "[President] Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad are serious leaders that want peace and are working to prevent violence and extremism in our region." (Reuters)

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton chastised Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman a day after he had called on President Abbas to resign. "The reported remarks of Israel's Foreign Minister ... are regrettably not helpful to create the environment of trust conducive to negotiations," said a spokeswoman for Ms. Ashton. "The EU has consistently called for reconciliation behind President Abbas as an important element for reaching a two-State solution," she said. (Haaretz)

The Palestinians submitted a letter to the Security Council which stated, "We unequivocally reject and object to such incitement [by Foreign Minister Liberman], which we consider to be a clear threat against the life of President Mahmoud Abbas, whose commitment to peace is absolutely unquestionable." In a letter sent to Prime Minister Netanyahu's office, the PA condemned Foreign Minister Liberman's comments and demanded a formal apology from the Israeli Government. (Haaretz)

Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman's remarks calling for PA President Abbas' resignation were "deeply troubling," said the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Spokesman, Richard Miron. He added that the statement "appears to be an attempt to delegitimize President Abbas". (Ma'an News Agency)

The Campaign of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for the Relief of the Palestinian People of Gaza will send 175 tons of rice during the week. (UNRWA)

PLO Executive Committee member Erakat said that the US had not officially informed the Palestinian leadership of any proposal to partially freeze settlement-building.

Ma'ariv had reported that the US had made an offer to the Israeli Government and the PA suggesting that Israel halt the construction of new [settlements] but could continue building in existing settlements, apparently to cope with natural growth. Settlement construction must be completely stopped, including in East Jerusalem, Mr. Erakat said, including "so-called natural growth". (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli Major-General Mizrahi issued a warning over the threat posed by far-right [settler] elements in the West Bank, stating that the IDF might have to "confront the extreme fringes on the right, who could bring the whole area to an escalation [in violence]". Major-General Mizrahi also condemned "price tag" attacks launched on random Palestinian targets and Israeli forces following the demolition of outposts. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Palestinian farmers from the West Bank village of Bitulu reported that 25 of their olive groves had been vandalized by settlers. (*Ynetnews*)

The PA was set to demand that the Quartet pressure Israel to release prisoners in fulfilment of a pledge made by former Israeli Prime Minister Olmert to PA President Abbas that Israel would release prisoners to the PA if a deal went through for the release of Gilad Shalit. Among the prisoners the PA wants released are Fatah leader Barghouti and the Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Ahmad Saadat. (*Haaretz*)

Member of Knesset Amir Peretz (Labour) called on Israel to release senior Fatah leader Barghouti in the second batch of prisoners. "We can take advantage of the deal [for soldier Gilad Shalit] to free 550 additional prisoners to release those prisoners that can help Abbas, including Barghouti," he said. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

Israeli authorities released an 11-year old Palestinian boy after he had spent five months in the Israeli Ofer prison. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli forces detained a Palestinian prisoner who was among those released in the prisoner swap. He was subsequently released after 13 hours in detention.

(*Wafa*)

A defence source said that Israeli security officials had read out statements to Palestinian prisoners prior to their release the previous week in which they had been "personally informed of the consequences of returning to terrorism" after the prisoners had refused to sign pledges not to return to terrorist activities. The Prime Minister's Office confirmed this adding, "The Prime Minister publicly declared that every terrorist who returns to terror is placing their life at risk." (*The Jerusalem Post*)

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The Israeli army arrested 19 Palestinians in the West Bank. (*The Jerusalem Post*)

More than 15 Israeli military vehicles and three ambulances entered the area of Um Rokba near Bethlehem after a large explosion was heard followed by a heavy gunfire, according to witnesses. (*Wafa*)

Members of the Palestinian Civil Police participated in a week-long study trip to Cyprus to learn about police practices, strategic planning and administrative matters.

(*Ma'an News Agency*)

Germany was "reconsidering" its decision to sell Israel a sixth Dolphin class submarine. The move was reportedly due to German Chancellor Merkel's frustration over the new [settlement] plans approved for East Jerusalem. (*Ynetnews*)

Palestinian officials expressed pessimism that meetings between representatives of the Quartet and Palestinian and Israeli officials could see Israeli-Palestinian direct peace talks get under way. PLO official Nabil Sha'ath told *Voice of Palestine* : "The Quartet, and particularly the US, does not seem to have a clear vision on how to restart negotiations. [...] Our demands are very clear and they will not change for any reason." (*DPA*)

Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman's office released a document to a number of foreign embassies, saying that PA President Abbas was the main obstacle to the peace process. Quartet Representative Blair, however, said that President Abbas was a man of peace and a main partner in the peace process. (*Haaretz*, *Wafa*)

Chief Palestinian Negotiator Erakat told reporters in Ramallah that Palestinian negotiators had advised the Quartet that they were willing to engage in any effort to resume peace talks "provided that the Israeli side honour its commitments emanating from the Road Map, when we say Israel must stop settlement activities including in Jerusalem and accept the two-State solution of 1967" adding that "these are not Palestinian conditions, these are Israeli obligations." (*CNN*)

After separate meetings with Quartet envoys in Jerusalem, Israel and the Palestinians expressed their readiness "to overcome the current obstacles and resume direct bilateral negotiations without delay or preconditions," an [EU press release](#) said, in line with a Quartet statement issued 23 September. They agreed to come forward with proposals on issues of territory and security within three months. (www.consilium.europa.eu)

Quartet Representative Blair said in an interview: "It's not quite proximity talks, but it is more that [the Quartet] needs to see if there's a basis for negotiation. If you come out with proposals and there's a vast gap between the two sides' position, you may conclude that it's not possible." (*The Los Angeles Times*)

Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja said that warning time was running out for a two-State solution. He said, "If you are occupying areas inhabited by...

Palestinians who do not have the same rights as the Israelis in Israel, that is apartheid and that is not sustainable". (*AFP*)

The former US Special Envoy to the Middle East, George Mitchell, said in a lecture that he had delivered the previous week at London's Chatham House: "Order and personal security in the West Bank have been established in a way that never was previously. The problem is that that effort cannot be sustained in the absence of progress, or at least the hope of progress on the political front." (*KUNA*)

Qatar, on behalf of the Arab group at the UN, called on the Security Council to uphold its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter regarding the Palestinian bid to seek full UN membership. (*Wafa*)

Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman was in Bosnia and Herzegovina to lobby against the Palestinian UN bid. (*AFP*, *The Jerusalem Post*)

In response to a growing housing crisis in the Gaza Strip, several new building projects had been initiated by Hamas authorities and thousands of families had begun purchasing properties in new communities, officials said. (*IRIN*)

Hanan Ashrawi, member of the PLO Executive Committee, speaking to *Gulf News*, said that the Israeli offer to freeze Government construction [in settlements] was a mere "gimmick" to get the Palestinians to give up the statehood bid and resume peace negotiations. "We know that Government construction constitutes only 12 to 18 per cent of all illegal colonial activities," she said. "There is no way the Palestinian leadership would consider such an offer," she added. (www.gulfnews.com)

Settlers prevented Palestinian farmers from picking their olives in Hawara, a town south of Nablus. (*Wafa*)

Gilad Shalit did not face violence while in captivity, Salah al-Aroui, a senior member of Hamas' leadership told *Israel Radio*. Mr. Al-Aroui said that for most of the period of his captivity, the conditions had been good and Sergeant-Major Shalit had been allowed to watch television and listen to the radio. (*DPA*)

Israeli and Palestinian Olympic officials met in Ramallah to discuss the free movement of Palestinian athletes and coaches and preparations for the 2012 London Games. The meeting marked the third round of talks between the two parties since dialogue was established last year. (*The Washington Post*)

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Israeli war planes launched four air strikes in central and southern Gaza, causing no injuries after Palestinian militants had launched a Grad rocket at the southern Israeli city of Ashdod. Locals said that Israeli fighter jets had shelled three open areas and a site used by Hamas' armed wing in Khan Yunis in the south and Deir al-Balah in central Gaza. The Israeli army said in a statement that its forces had targeted "three terror activity sites" in central Gaza and a weapons storage facility in the southern Gaza Strip. (*AFP*, *Ma'an News Agency*)

Israeli forces shut off the entire area of Um Rokba, an area south of the town of al-Khadr, near Bethlehem, declaring it a closed military zone, Palestinian security sources said. A local said that the army had brought a bulldozer and what appeared to be a special explosives machine to the area. (*Wafa*)

Israeli forces entered the Balata refugee camp, east of Nablus, raiding 10 homes and destroying their contents, according to the camp services committee. (*Wafa*)

A Palestinian shepherd was shot and wounded by an Israeli soldier while grazing his sheep near the Rafah border in the southern part of the Gaza Strip. (*IMEMC*)

Israeli troops detained three children, aged 9, 12 and 13, in the Bethlehem-district village of Al-Asakira. (*Ma'an News Agency*)

PLO Executive Committee member Erakat denied reports that an agreement was reached with Quartet envoys to present comprehensive proposals on borders and security within three months. Mr. Erakat said that the Palestinians had submitted three files on Israeli settlement activities since January, on changes done on the ground in Jerusalem and on prisoners who should be released as promised by former Israeli Prime Minister Olmert. (*Wafa*)

In a meeting, US Ambassador to Israel Shapiro told Interior Minister Yishai that the suspension of construction in the West Bank settlements would bolster US efforts at the UN to battle the Palestinian bid. Mr. Yishai replied that his Shas Party would not be able to support a settlement freeze. (*Ynetnews*)

The three-member presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina said that they could not agree on whether to support the Palestinian bid for UN membership, indicating that Sarajevo would likely abstain. (*Reuters*)

US Department of State Spokeswoman Nuland said that in individual and bilateral consultations, the US had made clear "that there are consequences if UNESCO votes in this direction" [of admitting Palestine]. She said: "We have concerns about our ability to continue to participate and our ability to ensure that UNESCO

has the full benefit of US support.” (AFP)

US Secretary of State Clinton urged Congress not to cut security aid to the PA in response to the Palestinian bid at the UN. She warned that the collapse of the PA would cause a power vacuum “that could then be filled by radicals like Hamas”. Ms. Clinton told the House Foreign Affairs Committee: “I will certainly underscore publicly again our strong preference that aid not be cut, particularly aid for the security forces.” (AFP)

Palestinian officials denied rumours that President Abbas planned to resign or dismantle the PA. The rumours were described by PLO Executive Committee member Shaka’ah as unfounded. (The Jerusalem Post)

The first convoy from the Russian Federation, organized by the Solidarity Association Foundation, an Islamic charitable society in the Russian Federation, arrived in the Gaza Strip carrying urgently needed medications and supplies. (IMEMC)

In a meeting with Israel’s Interior Minister Yishai, US Ambassador Shapiro requested a freeze in settlement construction in order to bolster political goodwill as the US tried to counter Palestinian efforts to seek full UN membership. According to Army Radio, Mr. Yishai replied that Israel had given in to the request to freeze settlements in the past and that there was no reason for the current Government to do so at the present time. (The Jerusalem Post)

In a possible “price tag” attack, 20 olive trees belonging to a Palestinian family in Jerusalem were cut down. No suspects had been arrested so far. (AFP)

Settlers blew up a room in the home of a Palestinian family in Nablus and also firebombed the family’s jeep. PA settlement affairs official Daghlis said that the attack marked an escalation in settler violence and urged the international community to intervene. (Ma’an News Agency)

An Israeli court rejected a lawsuit filed by a Palestinian family that had lost two relatives after their home in the Gaza Strip had been bombed during an IDF operation, ruling that the fatal 2006 bombing was a legitimate act of war. (Haaretz)

The boycott, divestment and sanctions movement claimed victory over the French Alstom group, which was involved in Israel’s Jerusalem light rail project, after the company lost a nearly \$10 billion bid for a railway project in Saudi Arabia. Boycott activists say the train line’s purpose was partially to cement Israel’s hold on the settlements built in and around Jerusalem. (Ma’an News Agency)

28

In response to the delivery of another sophisticated German-made Dolphin submarine to the Israelis, the Arab League called upon Germany to stop arming Israel with new, advanced weapons to be used for aggression against the Palestinians. The Arab League also urged Berlin to take into account the Palestinians’ interests and the peace process in the Middle East. (SANA)

Portuguese Foreign Minister Paulo Portas said, following a meeting with PA Foreign Minister al-Malki: “The position of the Portuguese Government is clear and unaltered: Palestine has the right to be a State and Israel has the right to live in security.” (The Portugal News Online)

PA Foreign Minister al-Malki arrived in Sarajevo, where he would meet with the three-member presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina to lobby for support of the UN bid, while Israeli Foreign Minister Liberman met Serbs in Banja Luka. (AP)

UNESCO’s General Conference will vote on whether to grant Palestine full member status on 31 October, the same day that PA Foreign Minister al-Malki addresses the assembly, UNESCO sources said. A positive vote would spark a crisis between Washington and UNESCO due to two US laws passed in the 1990s that ban the financing of any UN agency that grants full membership to the Palestinians. UNESCO stands to lose \$70 million, or 22 per cent of its annual budget. (AFP)

UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry said in a Haaretz interview that Israel must take heed of PA President Abbas’ threats to resign and dismantle the PA. He added that the deadlock between Israel and the Palestinians could cause violence to erupt in the West Bank, and the rest of the world would not bail out Israel if that happened. “The Palestinians feel growing alienation towards the Oslo process,” and he said that he had heard from Mr. Abbas that he intended to resign within a few months if no progress was made in negotiations. At a Fatah Revolutionary Council meeting in Ramallah on 19 October, President Abbas had called on the Council to consider dismantling the PA. After three days of debate, the Fatah leadership decided to establish a committee to discuss “the future of the PA in light of the continued Israeli occupation”. “Abbas is a wise man and he is committed to non-violence and to the two-State solution, but even he starts to think that it might be impossible,” Mr. Serry said. (Haaretz.com)

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Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood visited the Gaza Strip for the first time, signaling a shift in Cairo’s posture towards the Palestinian Islamists since the fall of President Hosni Mubarak. A delegation led by deputy Brotherhood chief Goma Amin met Hamas Prime Minister Haniyeh. (Reuters)

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Militants in the Gaza Strip renewed rocket fire towards Israel in a day that saw both the announcement of an Egyptian-mediated ceasefire between Israel and Islamic Jihad, and an IDF strike on a suspected rocket-launcher squad. Three rockets were launched, apparently targeting the Hof Ashkelon Regional Council but ultimately landing in an open field, with no reports of either damages or injuries. Militants had fired dozens of rockets at Israel in recent days, 20 of them the previous day and another 11 overnight. (Haaretz.com)

Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani of Qatar met with PA President Abbas, who was in Qatar to attend the Arab Peace Initiative Committee conference. The meeting reviewed bilateral relations and the latest Palestinian developments. (Gulf-Times.com)

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed deep concern at the recent escalation of violence and bloodshed in both southern Israel and the Gaza Strip that had reportedly left around a dozen people dead. In a [statement](#) issued by his spokesperson, Mr. Ban condemned the rocket fire launched from inside Gaza, which had killed an Israeli civilian in the southern part of the country, and called for its complete cessation. He also urged Israel to exercise maximum restraint after the country’s military forces reportedly killed 10 alleged militants in Gaza. (www.un.org/)

Copies of demolition orders were posted at the entrance of 22 houses in Silwan in East Jerusalem and other copies were delivered to the owners of those houses in Ain Al Louzah, Wadi Yasoul of Silwan (Gulfnews.com)

UNRWA [appealed](#) to the staff union in Gaza not to drag some 219,000 children into their escalating campaign of industrial action. “We appeal to the union to call off the strike, which is damaging the education of our children in 243 UNRWA schools. They have already lost two full days of classes because of your decision to strike. Don’t punish them further,” said the statement. (Wafa)

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Two militants had been killed overnight as Israeli forces targeted the Gaza Strip, bringing the death toll in the coastal enclave to 12 since the previous day. The Al-Ansar Brigades, a military wing of the Al-Ahrar movement, who vowed retaliation, said in a statement that the victims had been fighters in the group. The Israeli army released a statement just after midnight, confirming a direct hit on a militant group that had fired projectiles at Israel. There had been no new reports of violence since the overnight air strike, with an Egyptian-brokered truce seemingly holding. A spokesman for Islamic Jihad’s armed wing said that the Al-Quds Brigades would abide by the truce as long as Israel did, warning of an immediate and harsh response if Israel escalated hostilities. Late the previous day, Israel’s Channel 10 cited an Egyptian official as saying that a new truce would come into effect from 10 p.m. (Ma’an news)

The Abu al-Abed restaurant in Jaffa was torched and spray-painted with “price tag” and “Kahane was right” slogans. The restaurant staff discovered the messages in the morning hours. (Ynetnews)

Israel had proposed to the Palestinians to launch a secret channel of talks but the Palestinians had refused. This had been indicated by talks held recently by senior officials in Prime Minister Netanyahu’s office with high-ranking diplomats in Israel. (Maariv)

The UNESCO General Conference voted to admit Palestine as a Member State of the Organization. The vote was carried by 107 votes in favour, with 14 votes against and 52 abstentions. Admission to UNESCO for States that are not members of the United Nations requires a recommendation by the Organization’s Executive Board and a two-thirds majority vote in favour by the General Conference. The vote brought the number of Member States of UNESCO to 195. (www.unesco.org/)

Following UNESCO’s vote granting Palestine full membership, the Israeli Foreign Ministry in a statement vehemently condemned the move, saying that it was merely a symbolic gesture which would hinder Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. “This is a unilateral Palestinian manoeuvre which will bring no change on the ground but further removes the possibility for a peace agreement,” the statement read. Moreover, the statement suggested that Israel might now stop its cooperation with the

cultural agency. "Following the decision to accept Palestine as a regular member of UNESCO, the State of Israel will consider its further steps on ongoing cooperation with the Organization," it read. (*Haaretz.com*)

Acting under a legal requirement to cut US funds to any UN agency that recognized a Palestinian State, the State Department announced that the US had stopped funding UNESCO because of the vote. US Department of State Spokesman Nuland told reporters that the Obama administration would not make a planned \$60 million payment to the agency due in November. (*The Washington Post*)

Israeli authorities demolished three Palestinian residences in Khan al-Ahmar area, north-east of East Jerusalem, according to local sources. The area had been heavily targeted by Israeli forces in an attempt to deport Arab residents in order to expand the surrounding settlements and army camps. (*Wafa*)