



UNITED NATIONS

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  
occupied Palestinian territory

## PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

11 - 17 May 2011

### West Bank

#### Over 200 Palestinians injured in clashes with Israeli forces

This week, Israeli forces injured 204 Palestinians, including at least 60 children, the majority of them in demonstrations commemorating the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of what Palestinians refer to as the 1948 *Nakba* (the catastrophe). Four members of Israeli forces were also injured during the week. Thus far in 2011, 666 Palestinians have been injured by Israeli forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, compared to 628 in the equivalent period of 2010.

The *Nakba* demonstrations and clashes started on 13 May for a period of three days, with a significant escalation recorded on 15 May (the day of the anniversary). The clashes mostly involved stone-throwing by the demonstrators and the firing of live ammunition, rubber-coated metal bullets and tear gas canisters by Israeli forces. Overall 185 Palestinians were injured in this context. The bulk of the clashes and 153 of the injuries occurred in areas in East Jerusalem, mostly in and around the Old City and next to the Qalandiya and Shu'fat checkpoints, which control access to the city from the north and the east, respectively. At the latter location, 31 female students were injured on 16 April while in their school after inhaling tear gas fired by Israeli forces. Two Israeli policemen were also injured in East Jerusalem at a flying checkpoint in the Jabal Mukaber neighborhood, after a Palestinian ran over them with a vehicle. The remainder 32 Palestinians injuries in this context occurred in demonstrations and clashes in Hebron, Qalqiliya and Bethlehem.

Also this week, ten Palestinians were injured in the weekly protests against the Barrier in Bil'in and Ni'lin villages and the expansion of Hallamish settlement on An Nabi Saleh land, all in the Ramallah governorate. The remaining nine Palestinians sustained injuries in confrontations with Israeli forces at checkpoints and during search-and-arrest operations. Overall this week, Israeli forces conducted around 70 search-and-arrest operations throughout the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, a decline of 22 per cent compared to the weekly average for such operations since the beginning of 2011.

#### Settler violence increases; one Palestinian boy killed

During the reporting period, OCHA documented nine settler-related incidents that resulted in one Palestinian death, three injuries and damage to property. Since the beginning of the year, three Palestinians have been killed and 85 others have been injured in settler-related incidents. One Israeli settler was also injured this week when Palestinians threw stones at his vehicle in East Jerusalem.

On 14 May, a 16-year-old Palestinian boy died of injuries he sustained the day before when he was shot with live ammunition in the Silwan neighborhood of East Jerusalem. According to local witnesses, the shots were fired by an Israeli settler or settler guard from the third floor of Beit Yonatan settlement building within the context of wider clashes in various areas of Silwan between residents and Israeli forces following the Friday prayer. The Israeli Police has not confirmed how the boy was killed and opened an investigation. Since March 2009, another Palestinian has been killed in Silwan and 350 others have been injured, by Israeli forces, Israeli settlers or settler guards. Israeli settlers also physically assaulted and injured three Palestinians while they were working their land in Jit village (Qalqiliya governorate).

In three separate incidents this week, Israeli settlers reportedly vandalized a number of dunums of agricultural land, causing severe damage to trees and crops in the villages of Mikhmas and Deir Nidham in the Ramallah governorate and the villages of Burqa and Ramin in the Tulkarm governorate. Also, according to reports from Tuba village (Hebron governorate), masked settlers damaged a number of structures, including water tanks, a fence and a tent, and killed two sheep and stole seven others.

In two additional incidents during the week, settlers threw stones at Palestinian-plated vehicles driving on West Bank roads in Ramallah and Hebron, damaging six vehicles. A settler car was also damaged when Palestinians threw stones at Israeli-plated vehicles in the Ramallah governorate.

### **No demolitions recorded; stop-work orders issued**

This week, there were no demolitions reported in Area C and East Jerusalem. Since the beginning of 2011, 207 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem and Area C, displacing 433 people – a sharp increase compared to the equivalent period in 2010 (70 demolitions and 142 people displaced). This week, however, the Israeli authorities delivered stop-work and demolition orders against 12 Palestinian-owned structures, including seven residences, in Al Walaja village in the Bethlehem governorate and Deir Jir and Deir Dibwan villages in the Ramallah governorate due to a lack of Israeli-issued permits.

## **Gaza Strip**

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### **One Palestinian killed and around 100 injured near the fence**

Similarly to the West Bank, this week saw a significant increase in the number of injuries in the Gaza Strip due to clashes with Israeli forces that occurred in events commemorating the *Nakba day*; also this week Israeli forces killed a 16 year-old mentally disabled boy. However, for the second consecutive week, there were no reports of Israeli air strikes or rockets firing by Palestinian factions.

The killing of the boy occurred on 15 May near the perimeter fence around Gaza, east of Shejaye area. According to Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, it is not yet clear how the boy reached the restricted area as he was a resident of Jabaliya (approximately 8 kilometres away from Shejaye).

The same day, thousands of Palestinians organized a demonstration in the Beit Lahiya area, near the Erez Crossing, commemorating the *Nakba day*. As the unarmed civilian demonstrators began marching towards the fence, Israeli forces opened fire with live ammunition in an attempt to disperse the protesters, injuring 103 people, including 33 boys. Dozens other demonstrators, including children and paramedics, suffered from tear gas inhalation. In addition, a number of tank shells were fired around 300 meters from the demonstrators in order to stop the march. In a similar incident on the same day, two Palestinians were injured in a demonstration that took place east of Khan Younis.

Israeli forces continue to enforce restrictions on Palestinian access up to 1500 meters from the fence and to fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from the shore, affecting farming and fishing. On two separate occasions, Israeli forces fired 'warning' shots at farmers near the fence, forcing them to leave their land. Also, on one occasion, Israeli forces entered some 300 meters inside Gaza and withdrew after leveling land. In addition, in one incident, the Israeli navy opened 'warning' fire at Palestinian fishing boats, forcing them ashore.

### **Tunnels continue to claim lives; two people killed**

In two separate incidents this week (11 and 12 May), two Palestinians working in tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border died, including one worker killed when a bulldozer accidentally ran over him and a 17 year-old boy by electrocution while working inside a tunnel. Since the beginning of 2011, 13 Palestinians have been killed and 25 others have been injured in tunnel-related incidents, including

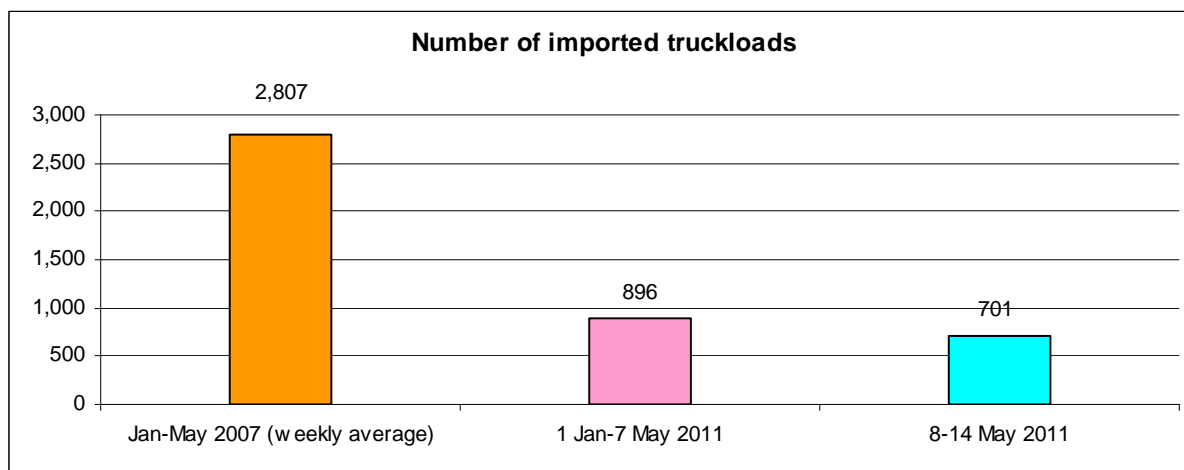
air strikes, tunnel collapses and electrocution. 20 Palestinians were killed and 34 others injured in the same period in 2010. While tunnel activity has declined since the Israeli decision to ease the blockade on 20 June 2010, it remains a main source for construction materials that are still restricted through the official crossings with Israel, as well as fuel that is significantly cheaper in Egypt than in Israel.

## Gaza crossings with Israel

A total of 701 truckloads of goods entered Gaza this week (8-14 May), over 38 per cent below the weekly average of truckloads that entered since the beginning of the year (1,139). This decline mainly resulted from the closure of the crossing during the Israeli Remembrance and Independence holidays. This week's figure represents only one-quarter of the weekly average of 2,807 truckloads that entered Gaza during the first five months of 2007, prior to the imposition of the blockade. Most goods that enter Gaza remain consumer products, with food constituting 60 per cent. Prior to the blockade, food items made up less than 20 per cent of all imports.

The entry of aggregate for international projects approved by Israel into Gaza resumed after a three-week halt. A total of 15 truckloads carrying over 1,000 tonnes of gravel entered for the first time through the alternative facility at the Kerem Shalom Crossing, which is designed to replace the conveyer belt at the Karni Crossing. In addition to the recently transferred 57,700 tonnes of aggregate shared by international agencies, UNRWA reports that in the coming weeks it would require an estimated 69,000 metric tonnes of aggregate for its approved humanitarian construction projects. The entry of essential construction goods including cement, gravel, steel bars for the private sector has remained prohibited.

Shortages of cooking gas continue mainly due to reduced capacity of the fuel pipes at the Kerem Shalom Crossing, which occurred two weeks ago due to a broken pump. This week, 457 tonnes of cooking gas entered Gaza, representing 38 per cent of the weekly required amount of 1,200 tonnes. The Gas Stations Owner Association in Gaza reports that less than ten out of the 28 cooking gas stations are partially operating due to lack of cooking gas, while a rationing system remains in place.



## Export season of approved agricultural produce ended

This week, the 2010/2011 export season of cut flowers ended, with the last truckload (over 58,500 stems) exiting during the reporting period. According to the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC), less than 50 per cent of the planned agricultural produce was allowed to be exported via Israel to the outside world during this season. This is due to various factors, including the vulnerability of the crops, which can quickly become unfit for export purposes, and the recurrent delays at the Kerem Shalom Crossing.

Since the beginning of the current export season, which started in late November 2010, a total of 290 truckloads have been allowed out of Gaza, 98 percent of which consisted of strawberries and cut

flowers. A monthly average of over 960 truckloads of textiles, furniture and agricultural produce left Gaza in the first six months of 2007, before the imposition of the blockade.

## Rafah Crossing Update

The Rafah Crossing controlled by the Egyptian authorities remains partially operational. During the reporting period, approximately 1,729 Palestinians were allowed into Gaza and over 1,929 others left Gaza through the Rafah Crossing. A further 283 people were denied entry into Egypt. Since the beginning of April 2011, approximately 1,800 people have been denied entry into Egypt for unspecified reasons.

Due to the current access restrictions and the limited operations of the crossing (five days a week), the Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza continue to implement a registration mechanism to facilitate the travel of a maximum of 300 travelers per day to Egypt, mainly those registered as urgent and humanitarian cases, including patients, students and foreign passport holders. Nearly 3,000 people are so far registered and scheduled to travel until the end of June.