



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

21-27 SEPTEMBER 2011

Key issues

- ✦ This week, settler violence and related incidents remain high, resulting in the killing of two Palestinians, of whom one was a child, and two Israelis, including one child, in the West Bank. Over 900 Palestinian-owned trees were damaged by settlers, bringing this year's total to 7,500.
- ✦ This week, five workers were killed and seven others injured while they were working inside tunnels under the Egypt-Gaza border. Amid the ongoing Israeli blockade, Gazans continue to rely extensively on goods transferred through the tunnels into the Gaza Strip.

WEST BANK

One killed in a clash between Israeli forces and Palestinians

This week, Israeli forces shot and killed a 37-year-old Palestinian and injured at least 18 others in Qusra village (Nablus governorate) on 23 September. The incident occurred when Israeli forces, which were attempting to stop confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli settlers, also clashed with the residents (see next section). It followed clashes between settlers and Palestinians in the same village last week, which resulted in the shooting and injury of a Palestinian and the injury by stabbing of a settler.

Also this week, a number of demonstrations were organized by Palestinians at Qalandiya checkpoint and in Abu Dis (Jerusalem) to support the Palestinian Liberation Organization's bid for UN membership. The protests evolved into clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians, resulting in the injury of 16 protesters, including three children (aged between 15 and 17), one of whom lost his eye. Twenty-five (25) other Palestinians and two international and Israeli activists sustained injuries in the weekly demonstration against the expansion of Hallamish settlement in the Ramallah governorate. A number of clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians also occurred during search-and-arrest operations

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 1

Killed in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 9 vs. 10

Injured this week: 62; 42 in demonstrations

Of whom were children: 6

Injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 1,160 vs. 925

throughout the West Bank, resulting in no injuries. Overall this week, Israeli forces conducted around 60 search-and-arrest operations in West Bank cities and villages, well below the weekly average of operations since the beginning of the year (90). In addition this week, a Palestinian man and his 17-year-old daughter were injured when he lost control of his car while being pursued by Israeli forces after reportedly not stopping at a flying checkpoint in the Bethlehem governorate.

Tension high as settler-related incidents result in death of one Palestinian child and two settlers, including a child, as well as damage to over 900 trees

On 27 September, an 8-year-old Palestinian child resident of the Al Baq'a area of Hebron City died of wounds he sustained on 23 September, after he was hit by a settler vehicle. Clashes between the residents of Al Baq'a and settlers from the nearby

settlement of Kharsina took place following the incident, during which the Israeli police intervened and arrested two Palestinians. Since the beginning of the year, two Palestinians, of whom one was a child, have been killed and 19 others, including 14 children, have been injured after being hit by settler vehicles. Also in the Hebron governorate on 23 September, a settler, and his 18-month-old son, died in a car crash while he was driving on Road. According to the Israeli police, the fatalities occurred when the driver lost control of his car after being hit by stones thrown by Palestinians.

Also this week, in three separate incidents in the Bethlehem and Nablus governorates, a Palestinian was injured when settlers stoned his car and two others injured when physically assaulted by settlers. A settler was also injured when her car was stoned by Palestinians in the Hebron governorate.

During the reporting period, OCHA documented 14 settler attacks that led to extensive damage of Palestinian-owned property. This figure is well above the weekly average of such attacks since the beginning of the year (6). Settlers cut down, uprooted or set fire to over 900 trees in the governorates of Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron. Over half of the affected trees were damaged in two separate incidents in Qusra village (Nablus governorate). Since the beginning of the year, over 7,500 trees belonging to Palestinians have been vandalized by settlers. Israeli settlers also stoned Palestinian vehicles in the Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem and Ramallah governorates, damaging

Settler-related incidents:

Incidents resulting in Palestinian injuries or property damage:

in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 326 vs. 202

Injured this week: 3

Palestinians injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 139 vs. 74

Settlers injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 28 vs. 39

ten of them. Many incidents of access prevention and intimidation by settlers were also reported, resulting in no injuries.

Demolitions continue

There were no demolitions by the Israeli authorities this week for the first time in two weeks. However, a Palestinian resident of the Silwan area in East Jerusalem self-demolished a room, which had been built onto his house, after he received a warning from the Israeli authorities to do so due to lack of Israeli-issued building permit, along with a fine of 15,000 shekels. No displacement was reported. Also this week, the Israeli authorities confiscated a tractor and a water tank in 'Ein El Hilwa village (Jericho governorate).

Palestinian-owned structures demolished

Demolished this week: 1

Of which residences: 1

Structures demolished in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 409 vs. 290.

People displaced in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 804 vs. 374.

GAZA STRIP

Calm continues

Calm continues in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, with no reports of casualties for the second consecutive week. However, Palestinian armed factions fired a number of rockets towards southern Israel, and Israeli forces opened fire at Palestinians present near the fence separating Israel and the

Gaza Strip, resulting in no injuries or damage to property.

Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to land (up to 1,500 meters from the fence) and sea (beyond three nautical miles from the shore) continue

to disrupt lives and to hinder the livelihoods of thousands of Palestinians. In at least two separate incidents, Israeli forces opened warning fire towards farmers working in the vicinity of the fence, causing no injuries, but forcing farmers to leave their land. Also, Israeli tanks and bulldozers entered approximately 350 meters into Gaza and withdrew after conducting land leveling operations. Also on one occasion, the Israeli Navy opened warning fire towards Palestinian fishing boats, forcing them ashore.

Tunnels continue to claim lives; five killed and seven injured

In two separate incidents this week (on 24 and 27 September), five Palestinians were killed and seven others injured while they were working inside tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. These included two workers who died and seven others who were injured when a gas cylinder exploded inside a tunnel, and two other workers killed in a tunnel collapse after Egyptian forces allegedly pumped sewage water inside the tunnel. While tunnel activity has declined since the implementation of Israeli measures to ease the blockade in June 2010, and many tunnels have been reportedly closed by Egyptian forces, this activity remains a main source for construction materials that are still restricted through the official crossings with Israel, as well as fuel that is cheaper to purchase from Egypt than from Israel. Since the beginning of 2011, 30 Palestinians have been killed and 51 others injured in tunnel-related incidents, including air strikes, tunnel collapses and electrocution.

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0

Of whom children: 0

Killed in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 85 vs. 53

Injured this week: 0

Of whom children: 0

Injured in 2011 vs. same period in 2010: 417 vs. 194

Increased movement through Rafah Crossing

During the reporting period, around 4,080 people left Gaza through the Rafah Crossing controlled by Egypt, and 2,620 entered Gaza. This is an increase compared to the number of people who crossed into Egypt in recent weeks, however, it remains below the number of people who crossed per week in the first five months of 2006, before the partial closure of the crossing, when an average of 650 people crossed daily each way. Also this week, a total of 194 people were denied entry to Egypt for unspecified reasons. Despite the overall increase in the volume of people leaving Gaza through Rafah, due to the backlog generated prior to the reopening of the crossing, there are thousands of travelers registered with the Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza waiting to exit in the coming months.

Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

Imports:

Truckloads (TL) that entered this week: 1,099

TL carrying food: 53%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2011: 938

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

Exports:

Truckloads that left this week: 0 (zero)

Weekly average since the beginning of 2011: 6

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

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