



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

10-16 AUGUST 2011

Key issues

Latest development 18 August: Violence escalates in Gaza and southern Israel. On 18 August, a series of attacks along the Egypt-Israel border and in southern Israel claimed the lives of eight Israelis and left about 30 injured. At least seven of the attackers who had infiltrated into Israel from Egypt were killed. The Israeli Air Force launched a series of air strikes on 18 and 19 August on Gaza. These targeted a number of houses, a police station, a military base, tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border and open areas, killing at least seven Palestinians, including reportedly members of the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) and a 13 year-old child, and injuring at least 20 others. More than a dozen rockets were launched from Gaza towards southern Israel, injuring seven Israelis. Also, the Israeli authorities re-instituted restrictions on access to prayers on the third Friday of Ramadan (19 August), with only men above 50 allowed to cross the checkpoints around East Jerusalem and enter the Old City. Men below this age were not allowed to access the Old City even if they are holders of Jerusalem IDs.

WEST BANK

Weekly protests resulted in 10 injuries

Protests throughout the West Bank continued, resulting in clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces. Ten Palestinians, including eight children (aged between 9 and 17), were injured this week in protests against restrictions on access to agricultural land near Karmeit Zzur settlement (Hebron governorate), the construction of the Barrier in Al Ma'sara village (Bethlehem governorate) and the continuing closure of the main entrance of Kafr Qaddum village (Qalqiliya governorate). Seventy olive trees were damaged as a result of tear gas fired by Israeli forces in the latter demonstration. Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian residents of Silwan neighbourhood continued but resulted in no casualties. The number of search-and-arrest operations conducted by Israeli forces in West Bank cities and villages this week (54) has remained lower than the weekly average of 90 operations since the beginning of the year. Also on 16 August, a 16 year-old Palestinian was killed when hit by an Israeli Border Police vehicle in Sur Baher in East Jerusalem.

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0

Killed in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 8 vs. 8

Injured this week: 11; 10 injuries in demonstrations.

Of whom children: 8

Injured in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 981 vs. 765

Settler woman injured; around 60 Palestinian olive trees vandalized

This week, Palestinians injured a settler woman when they stoned Israeli-plated cars driving on Road 60 in the Ramallah governorate. Also, OCHA documented three separate attacks by settlers from Migron settlement outpost, who cut down 55 olive trees, and burnt two and partially vandalized ten others belonging to Mikhmas village (Jerusalem governorate). On 2 August, the Israeli Supreme Court issued a ruling ordering the Israeli authorities to dismantle this outpost by March 2012. Attacks similar to those recorded this week by Migron settlers, occurred in the past in the context of the so-called "price tag" strategy, in which Israeli settlers

attack Palestinians and their property in retaliation for intended or implemented measures by the Israeli authorities affecting settlements. So far in 2011, OCHA has documented 48 settler-related incidents that led to damage to some 5,800 Palestinian trees.

Access to East Jerusalem for Friday Ramadan prayers remains restricted

The vast majority of the Palestinian population, including all Gazans and over 40 per cent of the West Bank, were restricted from accessing East Jerusalem for prayers at the Al Aqsa Mosque on the second Friday of Ramadan on 12 August. Only certain categories of people, including men over 50 and women over 45 holding West Bank IDs and children below 12 years of age, were allowed through the checkpoints into East Jerusalem without permits, while men between the ages of 40 and 50,

Settler-related incidents:

Incidents resulting in Palestinian injuries or property damage: 3
in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 223 vs. 172

Palestinians injured in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 120 vs. 66

Settlers injured in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 24 vs. 31

and women between 35 and 45 were eligible for special permits. According to the Israeli authorities, approximately 117,460 Palestinians entered East Jerusalem on 12 August through four authorized checkpoints (Qalandiya, Gilo, Shu'fat Camp and Az Zeitoun) along the Barrier. Also, Israeli forces deployed flying checkpoints on roads leading to the Old City in East Jerusalem.

GAZA STRIP

Two Palestinians killed as a result of air strikes and access restrictions

Tension inside Gaza and southern Israel, coupled with Israeli access restrictions near the fence and the fishing zones, resulted this week in the death of two Palestinians, including a boy, and the injury of seven others. On 16 August, the Israeli Air Force launched air strikes in response to the firing of rockets by armed Palestinian factions towards southern Israel. These targeted a military base inside Gaza City and tunnels under Gaza-Egypt border, killing one armed Palestinian and injuring five other Palestinians, including three civilians. The same day, Israeli forces positioned at the fence shot and killed a 17-year-old mentally-disabled Palestinian while he was approximately 400 meters from the fence. Also, a farmer and a fisherman were injured in two separate incidents when Israeli forces opened warning fire towards them in the context of Israeli restrictions on access to land near the fence

Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 2

Of whom children: 1

Killed in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 56 vs. 42

Injured this week: 7

Of whom children: 1

Injured in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 322 vs. 177

(up to 1,500 meters from the fence) and fishing zones (beyond three nautical miles from the shore). Palestinians remain restricted from accessing some 17 per cent of total land area in Gaza, where 35 per cent of Gaza's agricultural land is located, and some 85 per cent of fishing areas that they were entitled to access under the Oslo Agreement.

Movement through Rafah Crossing remains limited

Access for Palestinians into Egypt through the Rafah Crossing, controlled by the Egyptian authorities, continue to be limited to specific categories of people,

including patients, students, foreign passport holders and those with visas to other countries. As a result, the Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza continue to implement a registration mechanism, with nearly 25,000 to 30,000 of the above categories registered and waiting to exit in the coming months. During the reporting period, a daily average of 670 people left Gaza to Egypt (the majority were pilgrims) and another 598 entered Gaza per day, with a total of 55 people denied entry to Egypt for unspecified reasons.

Electricity blackouts persist throughout the Gaza Strip

Power cuts throughout the Gaza Strip have remained at eight hours per day, up from five hours a day in previous weeks, due to the ongoing power shortfalls and an increased demand for electricity as a result of the hot weather. Power cuts continue to disrupt the daily life of the population and to affect health provision, water supply and wastewater treatment. The current demand for electricity reaches up to 300 MW, of which only around 70 per cent is covered. On 15 August, the Gaza power plant (GPP) turned off one of its three turbines due to lack of maintenance. While a standby turbine was operated the next day, a shipment of spare parts (worth five million dollars) remains at an Israeli seaport due to the inability of the GPP authority to pay due to financial constraints.

Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

Imports:

Truckloads (TL) that entered Gaza this week: 1,101

Of which TL carrying food: 47%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2011: 944

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

Gaza Crossings; no exports left Gaza

Despite the Israeli restatement of its readiness to allow the export of textiles, furniture and agricultural produce in the context of a series of Ramadan easings, no exports have left Gaza since the beginning of Ramadan. An announcement to that effect was originally released on 8 December 2010 and later on 4 February 2011, but remained unimplemented. Since the beginning of 2011, a total of 187 truckloads of certain agricultural produce were allowed out of Gaza compared to over 5,700 truckloads of a wider range of exports, which exited during the same period in 2007.

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