



# PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS WEEKLY REPORT

## 3-9 AUGUST 2011

### Key issues

- As the month of Ramadan begins, the majority of the Muslim population in the oPt remains unable to exercise its right to freedom of worship, due to the Israeli restrictions on access to East Jerusalem and the Al Aqsa Mosque.
- Electricity shortages throughout the Gaza Strip have increased to eight hours a day. This is severely disrupting the functioning of households, including adequate refrigeration of food, as well as the provision of essential services, including water supply, sewage removal and treatment and medical services.

## WEST BANK

### Significant decline in injuries and raids

While protests and related clashes continued, this week has seen the lowest number of Palestinian injuries by Israeli forces since early April 2011. Seven out of eight Palestinian injuries this week, including two children (14 and 16), occurred during clashes with Israeli forces at the entrance of Beit Ummar village (Hebron governorate), where Israeli forces maintain a permanent presence at an observation tower. The weekly protests against construction of the Barrier and access restriction in the Ramallah, Nablus and Bethlehem governorates involved some clashes but ended without injuries, although many cases of tear gas inhalation among protesters were reported. This week Israeli forces conducted a total of 39 search-and-arrest operations throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, a significant decline compared to a weekly average of 90 operations since the beginning of the year.

### Access to East Jerusalem for Ramadan prayers remains restricted

On the first Friday of Ramadan (5 August), the majority of the Muslim population in the oPt, including all of Gaza's population and over 40 per cent of the West Bank population,

### Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0

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

Injured this week: 8; no injuries in demonstrations.

Of whom children: 2

Injured in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 970 vs. 777

was prevented from accessing the Al Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem. As in previous years, 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, and women between 35 and 45 were eligible for special permits. According to Israeli authorities, approximately 62,225 Palestinians entered Jerusalem through four authorized checkpoints (Qalandiya, Gilo, Shu'fat Camp and Az Zeitoun) along the Barrier. Access through the checkpoints was reported to be smooth and organized.

### Access restrictions eased for the period of Ramadan

The Israeli authorities have implemented a number of easing measures on the occasion of the month of Ramadan, facilitating access to Ramallah, Nablus and Tulkarm cities. Israeli forces have allowed

Palestinian-plated vehicles to enter and leave Ramallah through the checkpoint controlling the main route into the city from the east (DCO/Beit El checkpoint), between 10pm and 6am only. Palestinian vehicles are otherwise prohibited to use this route, except for ambulances, VIP-card holders, utility services, and international vehicles. As a result, this route is used almost exclusively by Israelis from the nearby Beit El settlement and military base. Over 40,000 Palestinians living to the east of the city must therefore rely on a longer and winding route, through densely populated streets, to reach Ramallah. Additionally, one entry point to

Road 60 from a cluster of villages east of Ramallah was opened.

In the northern West Bank, the Israeli military also opened the main entrance to the village of An Naqura in the Nablus governorate, which was blocked for a period of ten years, thus reducing the travel time of some 1,700 residents to Nablus City from 35 to 15 minutes. Also, Israeli forces removed an obstacle blocking the road that links the main part of Shufa village to one of its neighborhoods (Izbat Shufa) and to Tulkarm City, significantly reducing travel distance for the period of Ramadan.

## GAZA STRIP

### Violence in Gaza escalated

Tension inside Gaza and southern Israel intensified this week, with Palestinian armed factions firing rockets towards southern Israel and Israeli forces responding with tank shells and air strikes on Gaza. On 3 and 4 August, Palestinian armed factions launched three Grad rockets that fell in an open area next to Ashkelon City. No injuries or damage to property were reported. Israeli forces responded by launching a series of air strikes during 4 and 5 August, targeting a number of military training sites throughout the Gaza Strip and tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. While no injuries were reported, the training bases sustained damage. Also in two separate incidents (4 and 9 August), two Palestinian civilians sustained injuries by Israeli tank shells that struck an open area in the vicinity of the border fence, east of Gaza City. In another incident, one woman shepherd was injured when Israeli forces opened fire towards female shepherds who were grazing their herds approximately 400 meters from the fence in Johr al Dik area. Thirteen sheep were reportedly killed by Israeli gunfire in the same incident.

Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access to areas up to 1,500 meters from the fence continue to affect

#### Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces

Killed this week: 0  
Killed in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 54 vs. 41  
Injured this week: 3  
Of whom children: 0  
Injured in 2011 vs. same period 2010: 315 vs. 176

and disrupt the lives of thousands of Palestinians living inside or near the restricted areas. On two separate occasions on 7 August, Israeli tanks and bulldozers entered approximately 50 meters inside the Gaza Strip, and withdrew after conducting land levelling. Restrictions continue to be enforced on access to fishing zones beyond three nautical miles from the shore.

### Movement through Rafah Crossing remains limited

Access for Palestinians through the Rafah Crossing continue to be limited to specific categories of people, including patients, students, foreign passport holders and those with visas to other countries. Due to the ongoing restrictions, at the beginning

of Ramadan, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in Gaza announced that priority would be given to the above mentioned categories of people only. Other travelers, such as those attending training courses, would no longer be allowed to cross due to the overwhelming number of people registered to travel. The Border and Crossing authorities in Gaza continue to implement a registration mechanism through the MoI, with tens of thousands people so far registered and waiting to travel in the coming months. During the reporting period, a daily average of 602 people left Gaza to Egypt and another 294 entered Gaza per day, with a total of 67 people denied entry to Egypt for unspecified reasons.

## Electricity blackouts throughout the Gaza Strip increased

Due to the ongoing shortage of the electricity supplies, since the beginning of Ramadan, power cuts have increased to eight hours a day throughout the Gaza Strip, up from five hours in previous

### Movement of goods (Kerem Shalom Crossing):

#### Imports:

Truckloads (TL) that entered this week: 1,204

TL carrying food: 45%

Weekly average of TL since the beginning of 2011: 935

Weekly average of TL before the blockade: 2,807

#### Exports:

Truckloads that left this week: 0 (zero)

Weekly average since the beginning of 2011: 7

Weekly average before the blockade: 240

weeks. This is primarily due to high demand for electricity as a result of the hot weather, despite the fact that for the past three months the Gaza Power Plant has increased its production from 65 to 80 megawatts (MW). Health provision, water supply and normal activities are directly affected by the lack of electricity. The current demand for electricity reaches up to 300 MW, of which only around 70 per cent is covered.

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