

Israeli Attacks on Fishermen in the Gaza Sea

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Israeli Naval forces continued to carry out attacks on Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip during the reporting period^[1] (1-30 April 2014), including 11 shooting incidents; 3 chasing incident that led to the arrest of 2 fishermen, and confiscation of 2 fishing boats and fishing equipment (22 pieces of fishing net) belonging to Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip.

Although on 21 May 2013 Israeli authorities limited the fishing distance in Gaza Sea to 6 nautical miles, they neither complied with that distance nor allowed Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip to sail and fish freely, and continued their attacks against them. PCHR documented all attacks carried out within the distance of 6 nautical miles, which proves that Israeli forces' policies aim to tighten restrictions on the Gaza Strip's fishermen and their sources of livelihood.

Violations of the International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law

Israel's attacks against Palestinian fishermen, who do not pose any threat to Israeli soldiers, in the Gaza Strip constitute a flagrant violation of international humanitarian and human rights law, relevant to the protection of the civilian population and respect for its rights, including every person's right to work, and the right to life, liberty and security of person, as codified in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), despite the fact that Israel is a State Party to the Covenant. Furthermore, these attacks occurred in a time where the fishers did not pose any threat to the Israeli naval troops, as they were doing their job to secure a living. Israeli violations in the reporting period were as follows:

First: Shooting Incidents

During the reporting period, PCHR documented 11 cases in which Israeli forces fired at Palestinian fishermen in the sea off the Gaza Strip shore. Those attacks took place off Beit Lahia shore in the northern Gaza Strip, and Khan Younis shore, in the southern Gaza Strip. As a result, fishermen were forced to flee and leave the sea in all attacks. It is noted that all these incidents happened within the 6 nautical miles allowed for fishermen to sail and fish in, according to the cease fire agreement concluded between Israel and Palestinian armed groups under Egyptian and international auspices

Second: Arrest of two Fishermen:

PCHR documented incidents in which Israeli Naval forces arrested and chased 2 fishermen while they were sailing within about 1 nautical mile off Beit Lahia shore, in the northern Gaza Strip.

- At approximately 5:00, on 24 April 2014, Israeli gunboats stationed northwest off Beit Lahia shore, in the northern Gaza Strip, opened fire at Palestinian fishing boats sailing within 1 nautical mile off the shore. An Israeli gunboat surrounded the Palestinian fishing boat and arrested the freshmen on board. The fishermen were identified as:
 1. Saddam Abdel Bari Mohammed al-Sultan (21); and
 2. Mohammed Yasin Ali Zayed (19), both are from Salateen neighborhood in Beit Lahia.

Israeli Navy Forces confiscated the aforementioned boat.

Third: Confiscation of Fishing boats

During the reporting period, PCHR documented chasing incidents and confiscation of fishing boats and other fishing equipment (22 pieces of fishing nets).

- At approximately 15:00, on 03 April 2014, Israeli gunboats chased a fishing boat belonging to Mithqal Mohammed Ghazi Fares Baker (40) from al-Shati refugee camp, in Gaza City. Baker was sailing within about 4 nautical miles off al-Sudanya shore, in the northern Gaza Strip. Israeli Naval Forces confiscated the boat and took it to an unknown destination.
- On 5 April 2014, Israeli gunboats confiscated 12 pieces of fishing nets (600 meters) belonging to Hatem Jomaa Abu Salima (42) from the Sweden village, west of Rafah.
- On 6 April 2014, Israeli gunboats confiscated 10 pieces of fishing nets (500 meters) belonging to Ahmed Mohammed al-Najjar (30) from the Sweden village, west of Rafah.
- At approximately 05:00 on 24 April 2014, Israeli gunboats confiscated a fishing boat belonging to a Palestinian fisherman and arrested two of them. (see the abovementioned section on arrest of two fishermen).

Table of Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza City in April 2014

Month	Firing	Shelling incidents	Killed Persons	Injuries	Arrest Incidents	Number of Detainees	Confiscation of Fishing Boats and Fishing Equipment	Damaging Fishing Equipment
April 2014	11	0	0	1	2	2	2	0

[1] This fact sheet issued by PCHR is the twenty Sixth of its kind. It addresses violations carried out by the Israeli forces against Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip while practicing their work. For more details, see Fact Sheets at: www.pchrgaza.org.