



PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

23 - 29 June 2010

Latest Developments since Tuesday, 29 June

- Following the delivery of a limited shipment of industrial fuel on June 30, the Gaza power plant resumed operation. The plant was completely shut down for the previous four days due to a lack of fuel.

West Bank

Violent clashes in East Jerusalem result in at least 36 injured

Violent clashes took place this week between Israeli military forces, Israeli settlers and their security guards and Palestinian residents of the Silwan neighborhood in East Jerusalem on 26 and 27 June. At least 36 Palestinians were injured, half of them children. The Israeli media reported ten policemen and settler security guards also injured. The majority of Palestinian injuries were caused by tear gas canisters and rubber-metal coated bullets. One 17 year-old Palestinian boy lost his eye. Although the situation had calmed by 28 June, tension in the neighborhood prevails. The confrontations were triggered by an attempt by Israeli settlers to return to the "House of Honey" settlement, which they abandoned a month ago. Other recent developments in the area added to local tensions; the Local Planning and Building Committee of Jerusalem recently approved an urban plan for the Al Bustan quarter in Silwan that entails the demolition of dozens of Palestinian homes in the neighborhood; Israeli settlers have also threatened to evict four families (35 people, including 15 children) from their homes, which the settlers claim rights to.

Four additional Palestinians were injured this week by Israeli forces in the course of various demonstrations. During two demonstrations against construction of the Barrier in Bil'in village and the expansion of the Hallamish settlement in Ramallah area, three Palestinians, including a 13 year-old boy, were wounded. In the former protest, three dunums of land planted with olive trees were partially burnt as a result of tear gas canisters fired by Israeli forces. One Palestinian was injured in another demonstration against settler violence in 'Iraq Burin village (Nablus). During a weekly demonstration protesting the continued closure of the main street in the Old City of Hebron for Palestinian traffic, Israeli forces physically assaulted a number of protestors but no injuries were reported. In the same area, Israeli forces continue to close the gates leading to a number of internal roads, forcing four families to make a one kilometre detour to reach their houses.

Another three Palestinians were injured this week when physically assaulted at flying checkpoints in the Qalqiliya area (two) and the Old City of Hebron (one).

Overall this week, Israeli forces injured at least 43 Palestinians compared to six wounded last week. In 2010, seven Palestinians and two members of the Israeli security forces have been killed and another 737

Palestinians and 101 Israeli soldiers and policemen were injured in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Settler violence

No Palestinian casualties were reported in the context of Israeli settler violence this week, and OCHA recorded one incident that led to damage to Palestinian property. This is the second consecutive week with a low number of settler attacks and no casualties, compared to a weekly average of six incidents resulting in property damage or casualties since the beginning of 2010. On two different occasions during the week, Palestinians stoned Israeli-plated vehicles with stones while travelling on West Bank roads in the Ramallah (Road 443) and Qalqilya areas, injuring two Israeli settlers.

The property incident involved Israeli settlers who set fire to around five dunums of agricultural land belonging to a Palestinian from the village of Burin (Nablus); the fire resulted in only minor damage as the Palestinian fire brigade managed to extinguish the fire.

An additional incident resulting in no casualties or damage occurred when Israeli settlers from the settlement of Bat 'Ayin entered the nearby village of Safa (Bethlehem), throwing stones and bottles at Palestinian houses and vehicles. This incident came in the context of the "price tag" strategy after Israeli forces demolished two houses in the nearby settlement outpost of Mitzpe Erez.

Demolitions and issuance of eviction and demolition orders continue

In East Jerusalem, the Jerusalem municipality, together with workers from the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, demolished stone walls and barbed-wire fences surrounding Palestinian agricultural land in Al 'Isawiya neighbourhood for lack of permit. Two animal barracks and a toilet, and the roof of another room constructed on the land were also demolished. The demolitions resulted in damage to 28 fruit and olive trees. In the same area, Israeli forces sealed the road leading to hundreds of dunums of agricultural and grazing fields by digging a trench and placing a number of earth mounds along the road, causing damage to property and denying access of many families to their land. Last week (previously unreported), the Israeli authorities demolished an historical Palestinian house in a part of Beit Jala village (Bethlehem), located within the Israeli-defined boundaries of Jerusalem municipality, due to the lack of permit. In 2010, the Israeli authorities have demolished 13 structures in East Jerusalem, 12 of which were non-residential; four other structures, including three residential, have also been self-demolished. During the same period in 2009, 42 structures were demolished in East Jerusalem, displacing 170 people.

While no demolitions took place in Area C, the Israeli authorities delivered eviction orders against residential tents and animal pens belonging to the Bedouin communities of 'Ein al Faw and Al Farisiya in the northern Jordan Valley on the basis that they are located in a closed military area. The orders affect 17 families of 115 members, including 32 children, and state that they should leave the area within 24 hours; to date, no eviction has taken place. Demolition and stop-work orders were also issued against 13 Palestinian-owned structures located in Area C, 12 of them inhabited, in the villages of 'Ein al Beida (Tubas) and Al Burj (Hebron), due to the lack of building permits. An additional stop-work order was issued against an agricultural road under construction in Artas village (Bethlehem). In 2010, the Israeli authorities have demolished 70 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C of the West Bank, displacing 129 people, compared to 163 structures demolished, displacing 319 people, in the equivalent period in 2009.

Gaza Strip

Various new items continue to enter Gaza (20-26 June)

Following the 20 June decision by the Israeli government concerning the easing of the Gaza blockade, 22 out of 34 new categories of permitted items have actually entered. Most of the new items are consumer goods (toys, chocolate, towels, shaving blades and paste, biscuits, nuts, canned fruits, etc), along with a few agricultural materials.

During the week there was an increase in the amount of construction materials designed for projects supervised by the UN and other international organizations allowed into Gaza. However, extensive procedures and coordination efforts required in order to obtain approval for the entry of every truckload for one of these projects, have continued to increase administrative costs and slow progress. For example, only 36 percent of the amount of materials needed for the housing project implemented by UNRWA in Khan Younis has been allowed into Gaza since the resumption of this project in March 2010. Entry of glass, aluminum and wood, for the commercial market continued during the week.

In addition, six vehicles designed for the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) in Gaza entered Gaza this week. This is the second shipment of vehicles that the CMWU has received since the imposition of the blockade in June 2007 (with the previous shipment allowed entry last week).

Overall the number of truckloads allowed into Gaza during the week increased by six percent compared to the previous week (696 vs. 654 truckloads); however this constitutes only one-quarter of the weekly average of truckloads that entered during the first five months of 2007 (2,807 truckloads), before the imposition of the blockade. Similar to previous weeks, food and hygiene items made up the majority of imported goods (456 truckloads or 70 percent of total imports).

Exports from Gaza have remained prohibited since the imposition of the blockade (with few exceptions), and were not included among the easing measures recently announced by the Israeli government.

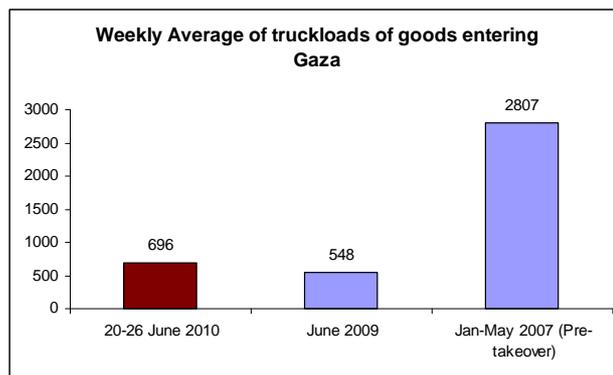
Three killed in air strikes

This week, Israeli forces killed three Palestinians, including two civilians, and injured four other Palestinian civilians. Since the beginning of 2010, 34 Palestinians (including eleven civilians), three Israeli soldiers and one foreign national have been killed in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel. Another 128 Palestinians (including 111 civilians) and five Israeli soldiers have been injured.

This week's fatalities occurred as a result of air strikes. In one incident on 25 June, the Israeli Air Force targeted tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border, killing two Palestinians workers and injuring another inside the tunnels. On 28 June, an Israeli aircraft targeted a group of Palestinian armed faction members, killing one of them, after the armed men reportedly opened fire at Israeli troops patrolling the Gaza-Israel border. In 2010, 18 Palestinians have been killed and 81 others injured in Israeli airstrikes.

The three other injuries were sustained near the border areas in the context of Israeli restrictions on Palestinian access. In one incident, a Palestinian boy (aged 16) was wounded when Israeli forces opened fire at a group of Palestinians collecting scrap metal. In another incident, Israeli forces

opened fire at a demonstration organized by the “Popular Committee against the Buffer Zone”, wounding two Palestinian protestors. Such demonstrations are conducted on a weekly basis. On at least two occasions, Israeli forces opened warning fire towards Palestinian farmers working in this area, forcing them off their land. Israeli tanks and bulldozers also launched a number of incursions a few hundred metres inside Gaza and withdrew after conducting land leveling operations. Similar access restrictions apply to fishing areas beyond three nautical miles from the shore; this week Israeli naval vessels opened “warning” fire towards Palestinian fishing boats on one occasion; no casualties were reported.



Palestinian armed factions fired a number of rudimentary rockets towards southern Israel, including at military bases located on the border, resulting in no injuries or damage to property.

Tunnel-related incidents

In addition to the above-mentioned casualties, two other Palestinians tunnel workers sustained injuries on 26 June when a fire broke out inside a tunnel. Additionally, three tunnels were allegedly destroyed by the Egyptian authorities. In 2010, 32 Palestinians have been killed and 53 others injured in tunnel-related incidents, including air strikes, tunnel collapse, electrocution and the explosion of gas cylinders; in 2009, 65 Palestinians were killed and 119 others were injured in similar incidents. In spite of the risks, tunnels constitute a lifeline for the Gaza population, providing goods, which are unavailable through the official crossings with Israel, due to the Israeli imposed blockade in place since June 2007.

A second attack on UNRWA summer games locations

During the night of 28 June, a group of masked gunmen entered an UNRWA summer games camp, north of Deir El Balah, setting it alight and causing substantial damage. This is the second such attack against an UNRWA summer camp in a month. The affected camp is one of 35 beach locations constructed for UNRWA’s annual Summer Games programme, which aim at providing recreational and educational activities for up to 250,000 children in Gaza. The identity of the perpetrators remains unknown. The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, condemned the incident and called on the local authorities in Gaza to combat any incitement against UN operations and ensure the safety of UN personnel and programmes, which serve the most vulnerable in Gaza.

Fuel crisis further deepens; long power cuts of up to 16 hours a day

Between 20 and 26 June, only 19 percent of the quantity of fuel needed to operate the Gaza power plant at its full capacity was supplied. As a result, since 26 June, the plant has been forced to shut down completely after exhausting its reserves of industrial fuel. Operation of the plant has been steadily declining since December 2009 due to the shortage of industrial fuel, stemming from an ongoing funding crisis. This is the longest period, in which the Gaza only power plant has shut down since the beginning of this year; the plant has been forced to run only one turbine on most days in 2010 due to fuel shortfalls, producing only 30 megawatts (MW) of electricity. The power deficit is

now at 60 percent as a result of increased demand for electricity (280-300 megawatts (MW)) due to high summer temperatures and low power supply; total provision of electricity in Gaza now stands at 137 MW, including 120 MW and 17 MW purchased from Israel and Egypt, respectively. This new development has triggered power outages of between 12 and 16 hours per day throughout the Gaza Strip.

These power cuts affect daily life in Gaza, as well as the provision of essential services, including water supply, sewage removal and treatment as well as medical treatment. Public institutions providing these services have to rely extensively on backup generators and other alternative devices, which are extremely vulnerable due to the inconsistent supply of spare parts. According to the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, as a result of limited power supply, 30 percent of households in Gaza now have access to running water for only four to eight hours per week, 40 percent receive water once every four days; and the other 30 percent obtain it once every two days. The PCHR (Palestinian Centre for Human Rights) reports that power cuts cause extreme distress to at least 36,800 students who are currently sitting their final school exams, the General Certificate of Education (Tawjihi).

According to World Health Organization, the electricity failure in the Gaza Strip could cause disruption to the delivery of health services such as the suspension of elective surgical operations and the delay of diagnostic procedures. Moreover, intermittent electricity supply may damage sensitive medical equipment. The shortage of electricity also affects supportive services such as hospital laundries, kitchen and sterilizers.