# PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

## REPORTING PERIOD: 3-9 FEBRUARY 2015

**OCHA** 

## Key issues

- Israeli forces injure 36 Palestinians across the West Bank.
- One structure demolished in Area C due to lack of Israeli-issued permits.
- One Palestinian injured in the Access Restricted Areas in Gaza.
- Israel intends to upgrade its crossing with Gaza.
- Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt remains closed.

# WEST BANK

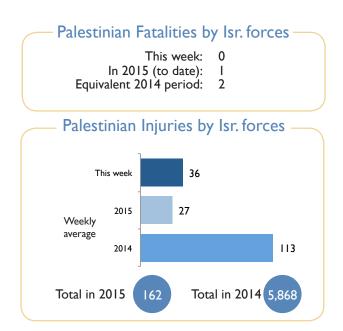
Israeli forces injure 36 Palestinians across the West Bank

Israeli forces injured 36 Palestinians, including nine children, in various clashes across the West Bank. Of these, six were injured with live ammunition, including four children. The incident resulting in the single largest number of injuries (21), including a 15-year-old child, took place on 6 February during the weekly protest against the longstanding closure of the entrance to Kafr Qaddum village (Qalqiliya).

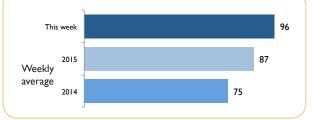
On 4 February, Israeli forces raided As Sawiya Al Lubban Secondary School while students were in class, and fired sound bombs in the school premises, disrupting classes and forcing all the students to leave the school. The incident occurred after Israeli settlers alleged that they had been hit by stones thrown from the school premises. According to initial information provided by the Working Group on Grave Violations, a steep increase was observed in incidents affecting students and/or disrupting schooling in the West Bank, with 152 such incidents recorded in 2014 compared to 46 in 2013. Out of the total number of such incidents in 2014, eight involved As Sawiya Al Lubban Secondary School.

On 6 February, in the south Hebron Hills, near the settlement of Ma'on, Israeli forces beat and detained two 15-year-old children over night, following complaints by the settlement head that they were grazing their sheep on land planned for the expansion of the settlement.

Overall, Israeli forces conducted 96 search and arrest operations during the week, compared to a weekly average of 87 during 2014. One third were carried out in the Jerusalem governorate, and three triggered clashes resulting in five injuries, including two children, injured by live ammunition in the village of Ya'bad (Jenin); two men injured in the village of Ajja (Jenin): one as a result of physical



#### Search and arrest operations by Isr. forces



assault by Israeli forces and the other due to tear gas inhalation; and a woman injured due to tear gas inhalation in the village of Kharbatha al Misbah (Ramallah). During various search and arrest operations Israeli forces reportedly caused damage to doors and furniture and confiscated money; these include several cases in Salfit city and the village of 'Illar (Tulkarem).

Also this week, on 4 February, a 13-year-old Palestinian boy was injured as a result of unexploded ordnance he found on the side



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of the road in Jayyus village (Qalqiliya). This is the second injury attributed to the detonation of unexploded ordnance during 2015. In 2014, 18 Palestinians, including ten children, were injured in similar incidents.

### Israeli forces unblock main entrance to a village and ease restrictions on checkpoint

During the previous reporting period, on 31 January, Israeli authorities re-opened the main entrance to the village of Sinjil (Ramallah) on Road 60. The entrance had been closed since 2000, following the beginning of the second uprising (Intifada). Prior to re-opening, residents of Sinjil, around 6,500 Palestinians, were forced to take a 15 minute-detour to reach the other side of the blocked entrance.

According to media reports, the Israeli Civil Administration announced the intention to open, on 11 February, Al Jib checkpoint for Jerusalem and Israeli ID holders, for travel into Ramallah only. Passage through the checkpoint has been restricted, until now, to Palestinian residents of Al Khalayleh neighborhood, which is located between the Barrier and Israeli settlement of Giv'at Ze'ev, and Palestinians workers with time bound permits, to work in the Giv'at Z'e'ev settlement. The opening of Al Jib checkpoint should reduce pressure on Qalandiya checkpoint, which has so far been the main crossing point for Palestinians travelling between East Jerusalem and the remainder of the West Bank. Currently, throughout the West Bank, there are around 500 closure obstacles, including 85 permanent and partially manned checkpoints, restricting the movement of Palestinians.

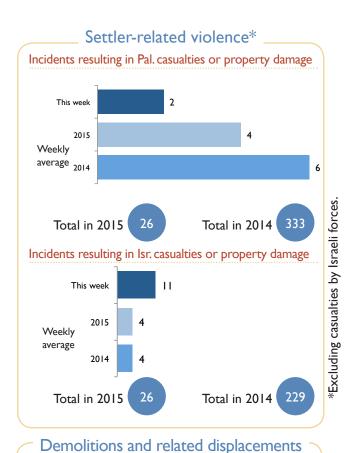
# Two Israeli settler attacks recorded this week

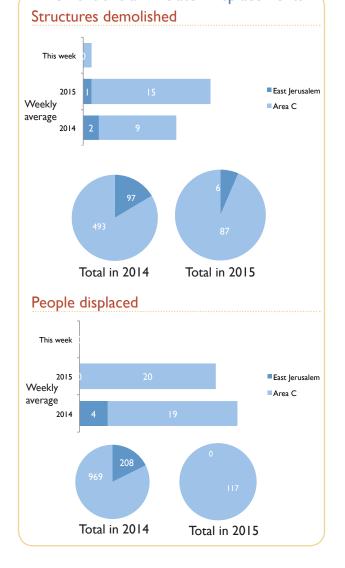
Two Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians were recorded this week. So far this year, there has been a weekly average of five such attacks on Palestinians, compared to six in 2014.

On 8 February, Israeli settlers from Asfar settlement uprooted 80 olive saplings that were planted the previous week near the village of Sa'ir on privatelyowned Palestinian land. The saplings were donated by the YMCA on land that was rehabilitated in 2010.

On 5 February in the village of Kafr Qaddum (Qalqiliya), six trees were discovered burnt by chemicals presumably by settlers from the nearby settlement of Qedumim, on privately-owned Palestinian land in an area to which access by Palestinians is restricted and requires prior coordination.

In a hit-and-run incident (not included in the count), on 5 February, an Israeli settler vehicle ran





over a five-year-old boy in the H2 Area of Hebron city, seriously injuring him. This is the second such incident so far in 2015. During the whole of 2014, 23 Palestinians, including 17 children, were injured and two others were killed in traffic-related incidents involving Israeli settlers.

On 9 February, in the old city of Jerusalem, Israeli police intervened to prevent members of the settler organization "Ateret Cohanim" from taking over a house, to which they claim ownership. The Palestinian family residing in the house since 1956 asserted that they have been regularly paying rent to the Israeli General Custodian within the Israeli Ministry of Justice<sup>1</sup>.

According to Israeli media reports, during the week, there were 11 Palestinian attacks on settlers, ten of which took place in the Jerusalem governorate, and one in the Ramallah governorate. All incidents involved Molotov cocktail and stone throwing by Palestinians at Israeli vehicles and residences. Of these, one incident resulted in injury to a settler woman who was injured by glass near Beit Hanina (Jerusalem) on 4 February. The remaining incidents resulted in damage to eight vehicles and busses and four houses. Israeli forces carried out search and arrest operations in connection to all incidents, with no arrests reported.

#### One demolition in Area C

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During the reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished one Palestinian-owned structure in <u>Area C</u>, due to lack of Israeli-issued building permits, affecting ten farmers. This brings the number of structures demolished and the number of people displaced since the beginning of the 2015 to 87 and 117 respectively. Additionally, 41 stop-work orders and four demolition orders were delivered.

# GAZA STRIP

One Palestinian injured in the Access Restricted Areas (ARA)

Incidents involving Israeli forces opening fire into the Access Restricted Areas (ARA) on land and at sea continued on a daily basis, with at least 26 such incidents reported during the week, including one leading to injury. On 8 February, Israeli forces special units reportedly entered Gaza, shot and injured and subsequently detained a 21-year-old Palestinian man while he was working on agricultural land, 300 meters from the perimeter fence, east of Al Magazi Camp. The injured man continues to be held in Israeli custody. In at least seven incidents, Israeli naval forces opened fire at Palestinian fishing On 9 February, near Jericho city, Israeli authorities demolished an agricultural irrigation pool, for being built without an Israeli-issued permit. The irrigation pool was established by the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture for the benefit of farmers through donor funds.

Israeli authorities delivered stop-work orders against 15 donor-funded caravans in Area C belonging to Palestinian families in Al Hathroura (Jericho) for being built without Israeli-issued permits, affecting a total of 69 Palestinians, including 27 children. These orders were preceded by eviction orders on 12 January, against the same families on the grounds of "illegally trespassing" in areas declared by Israel as 'state land'. Al Hathroura is one of 46 residential areas in Area C in the central West Bank, included in the Israeli plan to "relocate" around 7,000 Bedouins, most to an Israeli established Bedouin town in An Nuwei'ma, next to Jericho city. The UN Secretary-General has stated<sup>2</sup> that the implementation of the proposed plan could amount to individual and mass forcible transfers and forced evictions, prohibited under IHL and human rights law.

Additionally, stop work orders were issued against a donor-funded water tank that was installed in Frush Beit Dajan community (Nablus) as part of a project to provide water to the community including to a school, and affecting over 160 children; and against 25 structures, including 20 residential, mostly donor-funded, in Dkaika in the south Hebron Hills.

Also this week, on similar grounds, demolition orders were delivered against four agricultural water wells in the village of Silwad (Ramallah); and a scrap yard in Idhna (Hebron). Israeli authorities confiscated one bulldozer belonging to the owner of the scrap yard. A total of 54 people are affected.



The Israeli Custodian General, is the legal entity that serves as a trustee of any property in East Jerusalem which, prior to Israel's occupation and annexation of the area in 1967, was held by the Jordanian Custodian of Enemy Property.
Report by the UN Secretary General to the UN General Assembly, A/69/348, pp. 6 and 7. See also A/67/372, 14 September 2012, para. 37.

boats reportedly sailing within the Israeli declared six-nautical-mile fishing limit, forcing them ashore.

In at least two separate incidents this week, on 3 and 5 February, Egyptian security forces opened fire at two Palestinian military posts near the border fence between Gaza and Egypt after a bomb exploded near Egyptian forces at the border. No injuries were reported. Egyptian coastal guards fired warning shots at Palestinian boats approaching Egyptian waters, west of Rafah. No injuries or damage were reported.

In at least two incidents on land, Israeli tanks and bulldozers entered approximately 150 meters into Gaza, northeast of Khan Younis, and east of Rafah, and leveled land.

During the week, Israeli forces arrested two Palestinians, including one merchant who was arrested at Erez crossing.

Also this week, on 8 February, a 31-year-old Palestinian man from Rafah died of wounds sustained on 3 August 2014 during the July/ August escalation of hostilities. The man was injured when the Israeli air force fired a missile at an UNRWA School in Rafah, used as a collective centre for internally displaced persons (IDPs) by UNRWA , killing 13 civilians and injuring 28 others, including, children. This incident brings the number of Palestinians killed during the July-August hostilities to 2,220, including 551 children and 299 women.

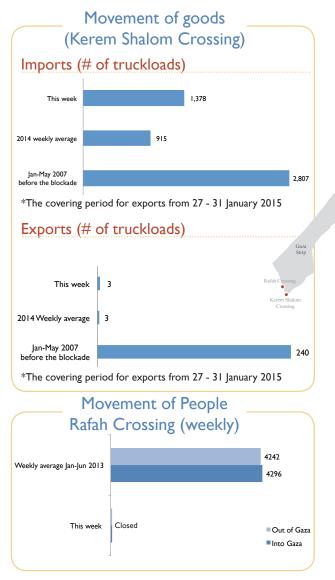
# Daily scheduled power outages continued across the Gaza Strip

As the Gaza Power Plant (GPP) continues to run at only half of its operating capacity, the daily scheduled power outages across the Gaza Strip continue at between 16 and 18 hours in some areas, disrupting the routine provision of basic services and forcing service providers to depend on back-up generators, also run by fuel.

Rafah crossing between Gaza and

### Egypt remains closed

The Rafah Crossing between Gaza and Egypt remained closed during the entire reporting period. More than 30,000 Palestinians, including 17,000 registered, are waiting to cross into Egypt, including patients and students. The Rafah Crossing between



Gaza and Egypt was last exceptionally opened in both directions between 20-22 January, including for a humanitarian convoy of medical and food supplies.

The vast majority of Palestinians in Gaza remain unable to leave through either Rafah or Erez crossings. During the whole of 2014, the Rafah crossing was opened on 158 days, allowing 97,690 Palestinians through the crossing in both directions compared to 2013, when the crossing was opened on 262 days allowing 302,240 Palestinians through in both directions.

Please note that the figures in this report are subject to changes upon the receipt of additional information. For more information, please contact us at ochaopt@un.org