Humanitarian Bulletin
occupied Palestinian territory

JULY 2017

OCHA

1967-2017 50 YEARS OF OCCUPATION



Nursery at Al Rantisi Hospital operating on backup generators, Gaza city, July 2017

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Only 24 per cent of the US$25 million appeal for urgent humanitarian interventions in the Gaza Strip, launched in early July, have been secured so far; ongoing electricity blackouts for 18-20 hours a day
- Since the 2014 conflict, UNMAS destroyed 29 metric tonnes of explosive material from 149 unexploded aerial bombs, bringing clearance operations to a close.
- Settler violence increases by 88% during first half of 2017, compared to the previous year, despite preventive measures by the Israeli authorities.
- Increase in the volume of West Bank Palestinians allowed access to East Jerusalem during Ramadan

JULY FIGURES

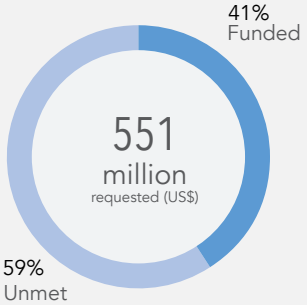
Palestinian killed (direct conflict)	15*
Palestinian injured (direct conflict)	1,772
Israelis killed (direct conflict)	5
Israelis injured (direct conflict)	23
Structures demolished in the West Bank	33
People displaced in the West Bank	18

** Excluding 3 Palestinian citizens of Israel killed on 14 July in an attack they perpetrated*

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN 2017

551 million
requested (US$)

41% funded



July overview

In his briefing to the UN Security Council on 25 July, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nikolay Mladenov, described the situation in the Gaza Strip as follows: "Two million people have been taken hostage in the political standoff between Fatah and Hamas. The humanitarian impact of the punishing measures taken against Gaza is appalling. In some parts of Gaza people have experienced electricity cuts of 36 hours. No electricity means no drinking water. Hospitals are struggling to survive. An environmental crisis is in the making." The exacerbation of internal Palestinian divisions in recent months comes in the context of already fragile living conditions stemming from the longstanding Israeli blockade and recurrent hostilities.

This Humanitarian Bulletin highlights a recent appeal launched by humanitarian agencies in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) to fund a US$25 million package of urgent lifesaving interventions in the health, water and sanitation, and food security sectors to stabilize the situation in the Gaza Strip. Most of the proposed interventions were already part of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), launched in December 2016, but could not be implemented due to lack of funding. Despite the gravity of the situation, only 24 per cent of the funds requested have been raised so far. A case featured in this Bulletin illustrates the tragic results of delays by the West Bank-based Ministry of Health in processing requests for the referral of patients for treatment outside Gaza. Hospitals in Gaza are already struggling to function due to the impact of power shortages.

There was a worrying rise in violence and tension in the West Bank during July. On 14 July, three Palestinian citizens of Israel shot and killed two Israeli policemen at the entrance to the Haram Ash Sharif/Temple Mount compound in East Jerusalem, and were subsequently killed in an exchange of fire. Citing the need to prevent similar incidents, the Israeli authorities installed metal detectors at the compound's gates. This measure was rejected by the Muslim Waqf and Jordan, triggering protests and clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces in which five Palestinians were killed and more than 1,000 injured. In connection to these events, on 19 July, a Palestinian youth stabbed to death three Israelis inside their home in the settlement of Halamish (Ramallah). Another four Palestinians were killed during July over the course of search and arrest operations or for alleged attacks. Tensions declined towards the end of the month following an Israeli decision to remove the metal detectors.

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© Photo by Mahmoud Illean.

Palestinians pray outside Al Haram Al Sharif/Tmeple Mount in protests against newly installed metal detectors. Old City of Jerusalem, 16 July 2017.

Tensions and violence in the West Bank in recent years have been exacerbated by the establishment and expansion of settlements, and related policies and practices.

Prior to these events, during the Muslim month of Ramadan (27 May-26 June), the Israeli authorities eased access restrictions into East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank for the traditional Friday prayers. As explained in this Bulletin, access arrangements were challenging for vulnerable groups, particularly at checkpoints. Nevertheless, the easing of restrictions allowed an increased number of West Bank Palestinians to reach East Jerusalem during this period, although residents of Gaza remained largely banned.

Tension and violence in the West Bank in recent years have been exacerbated by the establishment and expansion of settlements, and related policies and practices. In July, the Israeli authorities advanced plans for the construction of some 1,700 housing units in occupied East Jerusalem; these included plans for the establishment of four new settlement compounds in the Palestinian neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah. Subject to legal proceedings, these plans may result in the eviction of five Palestinian families and the demolition of their homes.

This Humanitarian Bulletin addresses the rise in settler violence during the first half of 2017 following three consecutive years of decline, which can be attributed at least partially to preventive measures adopted by the Israeli authorities. For many years, settler violence and gaps in law enforcement have undermined the physical security and agricultural livelihoods of tens of thousands of Palestinians, generating the need for assistance and protection by humanitarian actors.

During July, Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) signed two important agreements to improve water and electricity supplies to parts of the oPt: one agreement provides for the establishment of the first Palestinian-owned electricity station in the West Bank (Jenin); the other covers increased quantities of water purchased by the PA from Israel for supply to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Closing his briefing to the Security Council, Special Coordinator Mladenov emphasized that "the events that we have witnessed over the past weeks in Jerusalem are a reminder of how easy it is to reach the precipice of a dangerous escalation". In regard to the Gaza Strip he stressed that "whatever the political differences between the Palestinian factions, it is not the people of Gaza who should be paying the price".

Appeal for funding to stabilize Gaza's deteriorating humanitarian conditions

In July, humanitarian agencies in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) appealed to the international community to provide US$25 million in humanitarian funding for urgent lifesaving interventions to stabilize the situation in the Gaza Strip.

At the centre of the crisis is an escalation in internal Palestinian divisions that exacerbated the existing energy crisis and resulted in energy outages of 18-20 hours a day since April 2017, up from 8-12 hours previously [*for details see "Further deterioration" box*]. The power shortage has taken an acute toll on the availability of essential services for two million residents, including health, water and sanitation services. Critical facilities have maintained minimal operation with emergency fuel provided by humanitarian agencies to run backup generators and vehicles. However, unless additional funds are raised, these fuel deliveries will be discontinued in the coming weeks. The shortage of electricity and fuel is also undermining Gaza's fragile economy, particularly the manufacturing and agricultural sectors.

In addition, the salary crisis in the public sector, also linked to internal Palestinian divisions, has worsened. In March 2017, the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority (PA) cut the salaries of some 62,000 employees in Gaza by 30-50 per cent, and in early July, reportedly decided to refer over 6,000 civil servants for early retirement. If implemented, this will further undermine the provision of basic services. Additionally, since 2014, about 22,000 employees recruited by the Hamas authorities have received less than half of their salaries on an irregular basis. The direct impact on staff and families also spreads to the wider economy as a result of declining consumption.

The appeal addresses urgent needs in three key sectors: health, water and sanitation, and food security. All except one of the proposed interventions were already part of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) launched in December 2016, but could not be implemented due to lack of funding.

"The coping capacities of Gaza's families to deal with these types of shocks are seriously depleted as the cumulative impact of 10 years of isolation, division and insecurity take their toll."

Robert Piper, Humanitarian Coordinator for the oPt (3 July 2017)



© Photo by OCHA

Untreated sewage discharged into the Mediterranean Sea.

Some interventions aim to secure fuel to operate backup electricity generators for hospitals and for 130 critical water and sanitation installations, as well as providing spare parts and maintenance for critical machinery, including generators. To prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases and respond to the heightened risk of diarrheal disease outbreaks, other interventions seek the provision of chemicals for water treatment and hygiene kits for very vulnerable households. The funding also targets shortages in medical supplies and includes assistance to food-insecure families and vulnerable farmers whose livelihoods are under threat.[1]

A month after the release of the appeal, $3.5 million had been raised in donations from the USA, Canada, Japan, the Islamic Development Bank and private donors. An additional $2.5 million will be allocated to various projects in the appeal by the oPt Humanitarian Fund (HF) in the coming weeks. The HF, which is administered by OCHA and supported by Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey, allows for the rapid and flexible allocation of funds in response to unforeseen circumstances. As of 3 August, these combined allocations form 24 per cent of the funding sought by the appeal.

"The situation in Gaza has become increasingly precarious over recent months. No one is untouched by the energy crisis and restrictions by the Palestinian Authority in the medical sector are hitting some of the most vulnerable adults and children in the Strip."

Robert Piper, Humanitarian Coordinator for the oPt (3 July 2017)

	Response to critical needs in health sector	Response to mitigate further deterioration in food insecurity for most vulnerable households	Response to basic lifesaving water, sanitation and hygiene needs to avoid an outbreak of water-borne and water-related diseases
People in need	2 M	1.45 M	1.45M
People targeted	0.6 M	0.15M	0.5M
REQUIREMENTS (US$)	8.5 M	8.8 M	7.9M
Funding received*	1.2 M	0.5 M	1.8 M
Percentage of required funding	13.6%	5.8%	23%

** These funds exclude US$2.5 million provided through the oPt Humanitarian fund.*

FURTHER DETERIORATION IN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

In mid-April 2017, Gaza's sole power plant (GPP), which had been producing a third of all the electricity supply to Gaza, was forced to shut down completely after exhausting its fuel reserves. This occurred due to a dispute between the Palestinian authorities in Ramallah and Gaza over the funding and taxation of fuel for the GPP. The situation was compounded in May following the Ramallah-based government's decision to cut its payments for electricity provided to Gaza by Israel, previously some 60 per cent of the total supply. As a result, Israel reduced its supply by 33 per cent in late June. Around the same time, the Hamas authorities in Gaza arranged with the Egyptian authorities to import fuel from Egypt at a lower price than from Israel, allowing the GPP to resume partial operations. This resumption only compensated for the loss of supply from Israel. Furthermore, direct supplies of electricity from Egypt (previously some 7 per cent of the total supply) were partially/totally disrupted since April due to the technical malfunctioning of feeder lines and the inability to repair them. As a result, outages continued at 18-20 hours a day during most of this period, occasionally increasing to up to 22 hours a day.

© Photo by OCHA.

Al-Rantisi Hospital, 20 July 2017.

Impact of the crisis on the health sector

This section was contributed by WHO

In response to the electricity crisis, health providers have adopted negative coping mechanisms that include the postponement of elective surgeries, discharging patients prematurely, and limiting sterilization and laundry services to coincide with the times electricity from the grid is available (4-6 hours per day). The latter have a direct impact on the prevention of infections in hospitals. Electricity disruptions have also caused the malfunctioning of medical equipment, including the MRI scanner at Shifa, Gaza's largest hospital. Backup generators, which are not designed to operate continuously, are also repeatedly in disrepair.

Essential medicines are hard to come by. An estimated 36 per cent of essential medicines and 32 per cent of medical supplies are at zero stock levels (less than four weeks of reserves) or completely depleted.

Patients requiring treatment outside of Gaza are increasingly affected. In recent months, the Hamas authorities have reported prolonged delays in financial approval for referrals outside Gaza by the West Bank-based Ministry of Health. Access by patients with financial cover to hospitals outside Gaza has also been impeded by the Israeli authorities. On average in the first half of 2017, more than half (53 per cent) of all applications for permits to exit Gaza through Erez checkpoint on medical grounds were denied or delayed by the Israeli authorities, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

"I feel helpless for being unable to help my patients and alleviate their pain. The health situation is on the brink of a real disaster."

Mohammed Abu Selmia
Head of Al-Rantisi Hospital

TWO-YEAR-OLD BOY DIES FOLLOWING PROLONGED DELAY IN HIS REFERRAL



Forty-three-year old physician Mohammed Abu Selmia has been Head of al-Rantisi Hospital for Children for the past seven years. When asked about the impact of the electricity blackouts on the hospital's operations, Dr. Abu Selmia, explained:

"The situation at the hospital is extremely sensitive. A few days ago the electricity went out and the backup generators did not work immediately, causing a 15-minute blackout. It was disastrous! All personnel working in the hospital rushed to the intensive care unit to manually pump air to patients who cannot breathe independently in order to save lives."

On 28 May 2017, a two-year-old boy suffering from a rare kidney disease was admitted to the hospital. Two days later (30 May), a referral request for the boy to be treated in the West Bank was sent to the Ministry of Health, based in Ramallah, because the hospital could not provide him with the necessary treatment. The child's situation deteriorated quickly and he became completely dependent on a respirator to breathe.

"On 27 June 2017, I visited the toddler, took a photo of him and of the referral request, and published them on my own Facebook page. I received many calls after that stressing the importance of referring the boy abroad. I personally called Israeli hospitals as well, in vain. The toddler could not survive longer and passed away a few hours later. Referral abroad would have saved his life."

Dr. Abu Selmia had contacted the Ministry more than once to urge them to expedite the process but no response to the referral request was received.

"I feel helpless for being unable to help my patients and alleviate their pain. The health situation is on the brink of a real disaster."

This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

UNMAS

This section was contributed by UNMAS

End of major aerial bomb clearance operations in Gaza

In April 2017, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) cleared the last known accessible aerial bomb in Gaza, marking an important milestone in addressing the legacy of unexploded ordnance contamination in Gaza. Since the 2014 conflict, UNMAS has cleared and destroyed 29 metric tonnes of explosive material from 149 unexploded aerial bombs. This critical work protects both Gaza communities directly impacted by the presence of unexploded ordnance and the wider community through the removal and destruction of explosive materials which could be harvested and reused for improvised explosive devices.

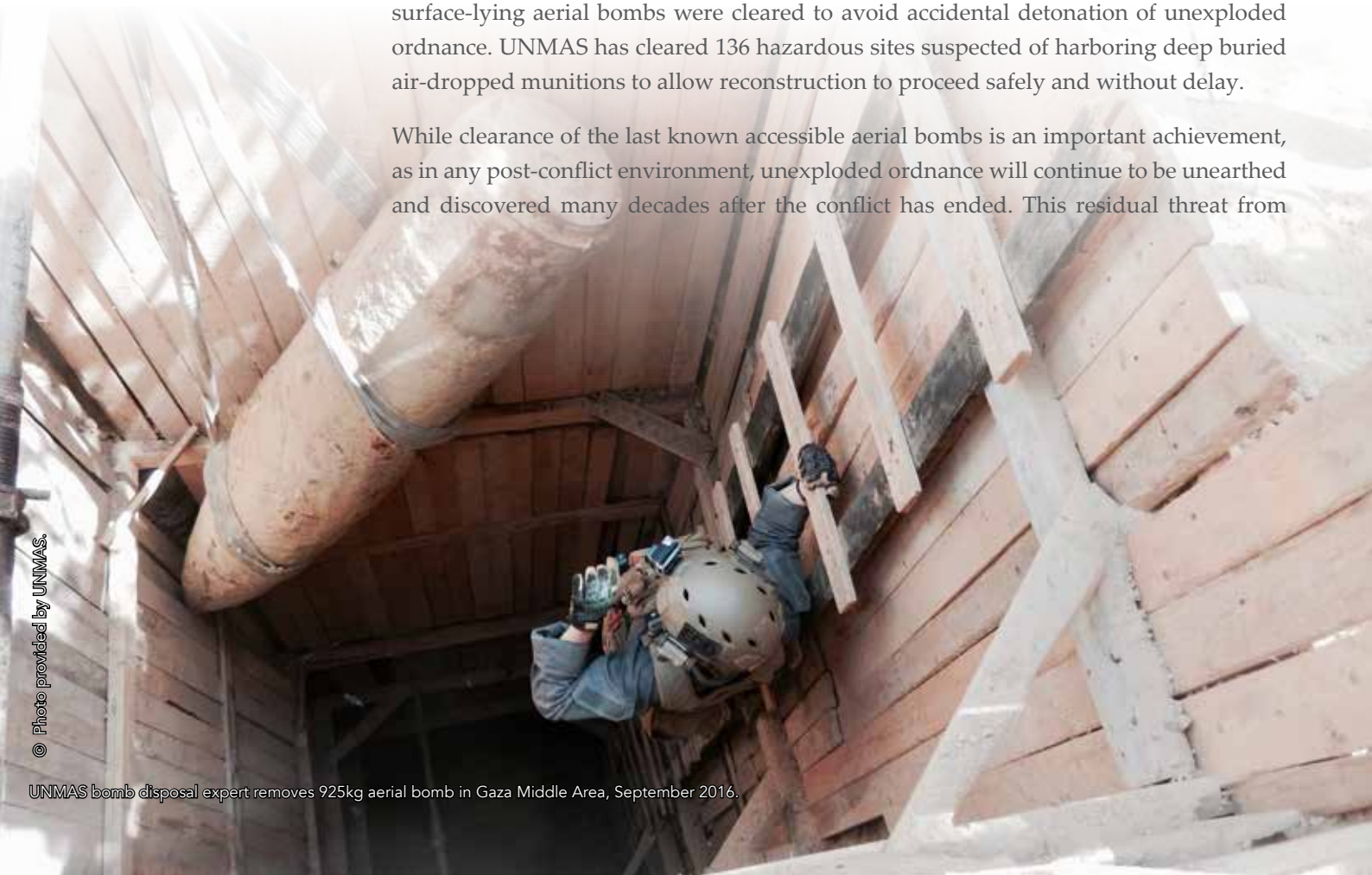
There have been 280 victims of ERW-related accidents in Gaza verified by UNMAS since 2009 as listed below. Most ERW victims verified by UNMAS were related to contamination following the 2014 conflict.

2009-2017	Injured		Injured Total	Killed		Killed Total	Grand Total
Gender	Adult	Child		Adult	Child		
Female	17	24	41	1	1	2	43
Male	95	108	203	21	13	34	237
Grand Total	112	132	244	22	14	36	280

Since the 2014 conflict, UNMAS has cleared and destroyed 29 metric tonnes of explosive material from 149 unexploded aerial bombs.

The presence of explosive hazards within destroyed or damaged buildings impedes the clearance of destroyed buildings, reconstruction and socio-economic development. With reconstruction and rehabilitation projects ongoing, it was imperative that both buried and surface-lying aerial bombs were cleared to avoid accidental detonation of unexploded ordnance. UNMAS has cleared 136 hazardous sites suspected of harboring deep buried air-dropped munitions to allow reconstruction to proceed safely and without delay.

While clearance of the last known accessible aerial bombs is an important achievement, as in any post-conflict environment, unexploded ordnance will continue to be unearthed and discovered many decades after the conflict has ended. This residual threat from



© Photo provided by UNMAS.

UNMAS bomb disposal expert removes 925kg aerial bomb in Gaza Middle Area, September 2016.

undiscovered contamination and the possibility of renewed escalation of hostilities necessitate a continued, albeit scaled-down, UNMAS capacity. For this reason, UNMAS will maintain a minimal presence to continue to support the humanitarian and development community, including emergency preparedness.

The clearance of unexploded bombs has allowed a sense of security to return to families and communities living, farming and building in areas they knew – or feared - to be contaminated. For example, reconstruction workers were unable to safely clear the collapsed remains of a three-story property belonging to Ibrahim Mafouz al Farra, leaving the three families who had lived there internally displaced. UNMAS determined that multiple bombs had landed on the property. After weeks of careful rubble removal, an UNMAS explosive ordnance disposal technician working on the site reached the rear of an unexploded 227 kg aerial bomb at 11 vertical metres underground. He found the fuse unit "armed" and solidly jammed in the body of the bomb due to deformation upon impact. Following the clearance of this and one other bomb found at the same location, al Farra and his neighbors were able to begin rebuilding their homes. As former Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon has noted: "Mine action is an investment in humanity. It helps nurture peaceful societies where those in need can receive aid, and refugees and internally displaced persons can safely return home, and children can go to school".

Increase in settler violence during the first half of 2017

After a three-year decline, settler violence has been on the rise during the first half of 2017. During this period, OCHA documented 89 incidents attributed to Israeli settlers resulting in Palestinian casualties.

Despite preventive measures by the Israeli authorities concerns remain about lack of accountability

Settler violence and poor law enforcement by the Israeli authorities have been longstanding concerns. They have undermined the physical security and agricultural livelihoods of tens of thousands of Palestinians in some areas of the West Bank and generated the need for assistance and protection by humanitarian actors, especially for vulnerable groups such as children and women. Humanitarian interventions coordinated by the Protection Cluster include the deployment of a protective presence in high-risk areas; psychosocial support to victims; the installation of protective infrastructure (see case study); the documentation of cases and advocacy; and legal counselling.

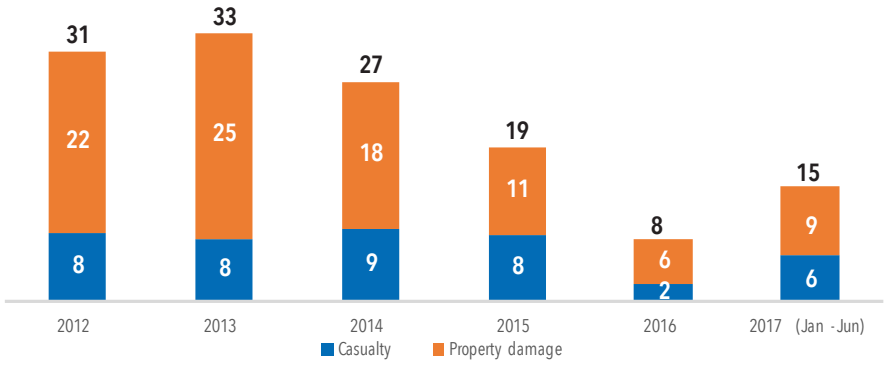
After a three-year decline, settler violence has been on the rise during the first half of 2017. During this period, OCHA documented 89 incidents attributed to Israeli settlers resulting in Palestinian casualties (33 incidents) or in damage to Palestinian property (56 incidents).[2] On a monthly average, this represents an increase of 88 per cent compared with 2016. These incidents led to three Palestinian fatalities[3] and 48 Palestinian injuries, including seven children, as well as damage to over 2,700 trees and 52 vehicles, amongst other consequences.

These figures exclude incidents involving threat and intimidation, trespass on private property or access restrictions imposed by Israeli settlers which did not result in casualties or damage. Although such incidents are more frequent, they are difficult to monitor systematically.

This trend has also been noted by the Israeli Security Agency (ISA or Shabak), which, according to Israeli media reports, has been calling on the government to adopt urgent measures to prevent further deterioration.[4]

This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

MONTHLY AVERAGE OF SETTLER INCIDENTS LEADING TO PALESTINIAN CASUALTIES OR PROPERTY DAMAGE



The increase in settler violence against Palestinians occurred alongside a major rise in Palestinian attacks against Israelis, 95 per cent of which consisted of stone-throwing at vehicles travelling in the West Bank.

The increase in settler violence against Palestinians occurred alongside a major rise in Palestinian attacks against Israelis. During the first half of 2017, OCHA recorded 172 incidents resulting in injuries or damage to property of Israeli settlers. On a monthly average, this constitutes a more than three-fold increase compared with 2016 (112 incidents).[5] Some 95 per cent of these incidents consisted of stone-throwing at vehicles travelling in the West Bank, and the remainder involved the throwing of Molotov cocktails and shootings (four incidents each). As a result, 49 Israeli settlers were injured and dozens of cars were damaged.

Some of the attacks by settlers during this period were reportedly carried out "in response" to the Israeli authorities' forcible evacuation of the Amona settlement in February 2017.[6] This followed a protracted legal battle that ended in an Israeli High Court ruling ordering removal of the settlement as it had been established on privately owned Palestinian land.

The main types of incident against Palestinians recorded during the first half of 2017 included stone-throwing at Palestinian homes and travelling vehicles; physical assault; uprooting or damaging trees; setting fire to agricultural property; and other acts of vandalism against property. As in previous years, Nablus governorate accounted for the largest number of incidents (34 per cent), followed by Hebron, Jerusalem and Ramallah. The majority of incidents in the Nablus area took place in the six villages,[7] home to some 20,000 Palestinians, surrounding the settlement of Yitzhar and its adjacent outposts.

For example, on 22 April 2017, groups of armed Israeli settlers from Yitzhar settlement approached the villages of Huwwara and Urif (Nablus) and threw stones at a number of homes and vehicles: in Huwwara, three Palestinians were injured, including a 72-year-old woman who was hospitalized as a result. In Urif, the attack triggered clashes with local residents, following which Israeli soldiers intervened by firing rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at Palestinians. Five Palestinians were injured, one by settlers and four by soldiers, and a house and several vehicles incurred damage.

In the same area, on 18 May, an Israeli settler shot and killed a 21-year-old Palestinian after his vehicle was blocked and stoned by Palestinians holding a demonstration in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners. The incident was followed by a series of settler attacks, including the setting on fire of Palestinian crops and stoning of vehicles.

Prevention and accountability

As the occupying power, Israel has the obligation to protect Palestinian civilians from all acts or threats of violence, including by Israeli settlers, and ensure that attacks are investigated effectively and perpetrators held accountable. The existence of gaps in this regard has been a longstanding concern of the humanitarian community in the oPt.

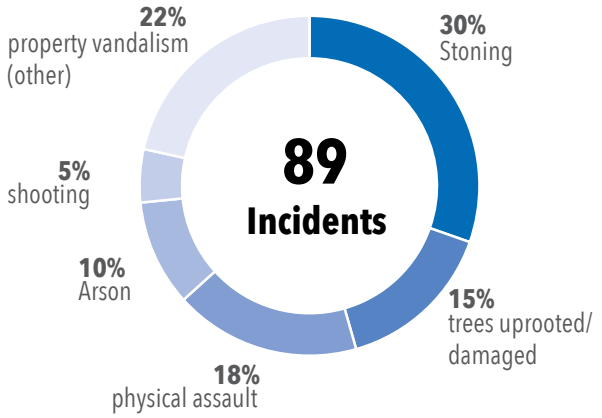
In a report issued in June 2017, the Israeli Ministry of Justice (MoJ) outlined a series of measures adopted by the Israeli authorities in recent years that have contributed to a reduction in settler violence and higher levels of accountability.[8] These measures include the establishment of the Nationalistic Motivated Crimes Unit (NMCU) within the Judea and Samaria police district in 2013; the use of "restraining orders" against settlers suspected of planning attacks that prohibit entry to the West Bank or detention under administrative orders; and the implementation of special security arrangements in "areas of friction" during the olive harvest period. Recently, the Israeli police arrested a leader of a radical settler group and indicted him for incitement to violence.[9]

In addition to the decline in settler attacks since 2013, according to the MoJ, there has been a gradual increase in the percentage of cases of settler violence leading to the prosecution of suspected perpetrators: from 19 per cent of cases investigated in 2013 to nearly 30 per cent in 2015.[10] However, the MoJ's figures appear to merge settler attacks against Palestinians and those against Israeli forces, thereby hindering analysis of trends regarding accountability in cases of Palestinian victims.

A recent report by Yesh Din, an Israeli human rights organization that has documented complaints about settler violence filed by Palestinians with the Israeli police since 2005, suggests that there has been no progress in accountability.[11] Only 8 per cent of the investigation files monitored by the organization between 2013 and 2016, which reached a final decision (20 out of 245), led to the prosecution of offenders. The other 92 per cent of investigations were closed, the majority on the grounds of 'offender unknown'. The rate of indictment during this period is nearly the same as that in 2005 when Yesh Din began tracking this indicator.

According to the Israeli human rights organization Yesh Din, only 8 per cent of the investigation files monitored by the organization between 2013 and 2016, which reached a final decision, led to the prosecution of offenders.

INCIDENTS RESULTING IN PALESTINIAN CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE TO THEIR PROPERTY- JAN-JUN 2017



This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

PREMIERE URGENCE INTERNATIONALE

This case study was contributed by PUI

"AFTER INSTALLING THE GENERATOR AND LIGHTS, SETTLERS STOPPED COMING AT NIGHT"

The Ras at Tawil valley (referred to by Israeli settlers as the Shilo valley) between Ramallah and Nablus governorates is a hot spot for settler violence. Since the mid-1990s, this area has been the focus of intensive settlement activities, including the establishment of six unauthorized settlements (outposts), some on privately owned Palestinian land with the informal support of the Israeli authorities.[12] While the number of settler attacks resulting in casualties or property damage has declined in recent years (see above), Palestinians still face settler harassment that undermines their security and livelihoods. In May 2017, the Israeli military approved the boundaries of an additional settlement (Amichai) to be established in this area, allegedly to relocate settlers removed from Amona settlement. *See map.*

Ein ar Rashash (population ~90) is located entirely in Area C, partially within an area designated as a "firing zone" for military training to the south-east of the Ras at Tawil valley. It is one of the 46 Bedouin communities in the central West Bank at risk of forcible transfer due to a coercive environment that includes the denial of infrastructure for basic services; the demolition of homes and livelihood structures on the grounds of lack of building permits;[13] military training in the vicinity; and systematic intimidation by Israeli settlers.

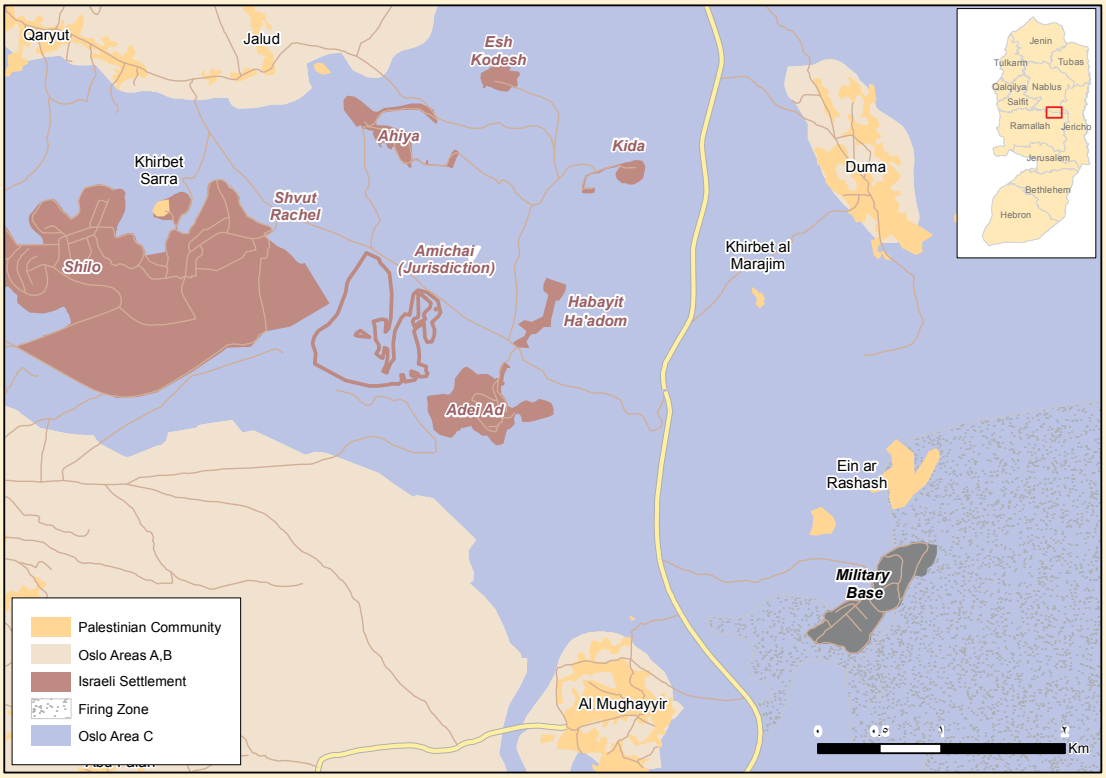
"Settlers want to force us to leave…We are in a continuous struggle with them. They prevent us from reaching our land, steal our sheep, follow our children on their way to school…"

Sami, resident of Ein ar Rashash

Sami,[14] 40 years old, lives in the western hamlet of Ein ar Rashash (also known as Khirbet Jib'it), which is the most exposed to settler violence. "*Settlers want to force us to leave*", said Sami. "*We are in a continuous struggle with them. They prevent us from reaching our land, steal our sheep, follow our children on their way to school and direct spotlights onto our tents at night while singing and dancing* […] *Last year I went into debt and had to sell some of my sheep to buy around 120 tons of fodder because settlers prevented us from reaching our water wells or planting barley.*"

In August 2016, after conducting an assessment, PUI and other international NGOs working in the West Bank provided the residents of this hamlet with a generator and a lighting system; two water tanks; and a fencing unit for the livestock for each family.

In a follow-up visit in April 2017, Sami's wife, Fatmeh, highlighted the improvement: "*Life is easier with the water tanks at steps away from my tent. Previously, we had to get water from the wells in the field and were subject to settler harassment. Settlers also came at night to our front yard, wandered around, made noise, threw things and intimidated us. We used to hide in our tents to guard our young children until the settlers would leave. Since we got the generator and the lights, the settlers stopped coming at night. The generator also enables us to charge our mobile phones, be connected with others and ask for help if needed.*"



This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

Some 348,000 Palestinians permitted into East Jerusalem for Ramadan Prayers

Vulnerable groups most affected by access arrangements

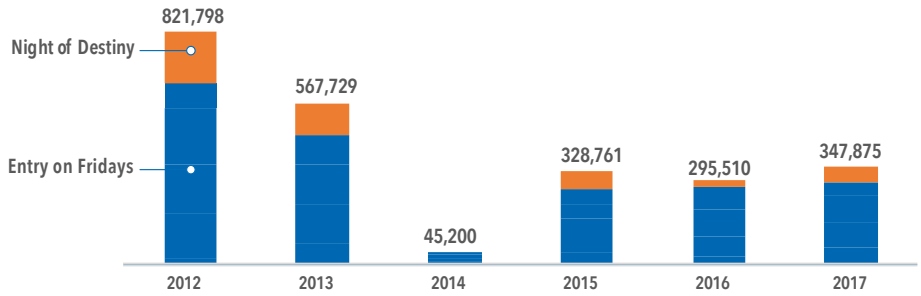
During the month of Ramadan (27 May-26 June), Israeli authorities reported that around 348,000 Palestinians holding West Bank ID cards entered East Jerusalem for Friday prayers and Laylat al Qadr (the night of destiny[15]) at Al Aqsa Mosque in relaxed measures to mark the month of Ramadan. This represents an increase of 15 per cent over the equivalent figures in 2016. Additionally, 453 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip were allowed access to East Jerusalem for these events. While arrangements at checkpoints to facilitate travel to Al Aqsa Mosque, were put in place, vulnerable groups including elderly, children, and people with disabilities faced several challenges. During the month, one major Palestinian attack resulted in the death of an Israeli police officer and led to the partial suspension of the relaxation measures.

During the month of Ramadan, the number of Palestinians holding West Bank ID cards who entered East Jerusalem for Friday prayers and Laylat al Qadr increased by 15 per cent over the equivalent figures in 2016.

As in previous years, UNOCHA and humanitarian partners monitored checkpoints controlling access into East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. The purpose of this activity has been to identify protection risks and mitigation measures, particularly for vulnerable groups such as the disabled, the elderly and children, and contribute to UNOCHA's analysis of broader access trends.

Since 2008, the Israeli authorities have applied gender-based age criteria to regulate access to East Jerusalem during Ramadan. In 2017, access without a permit was permitted for men above 40 years of age and women of all ages, men between 30-40 years of age were eligible for permits but males aged between 13 and 29 years were banned. Family visitation permits allowed West Bank ID holders to access East Jerusalem and Israel on all days except Fridays and Saturdays. These permits (200,000) were suspended following a Palestinian attack, in East Jerusalem, on 16 June, resulting in the killing of an Israeli border police officer, and the three suspected Palestinian perpetrators.

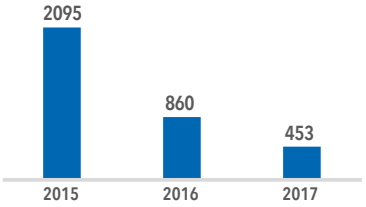
WEST BANK ID HOLDERS ALLOWED INTO EAST JERUSALEM DURING RAMADAN



This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

Entry to East Jerusalem from the remainder of the West Bank was allowed through one of three checkpoints along the Barrier separating the city from the rest of the West Bank: Qalandiya, Gilo and Az Zeitun. As in previous years, special arrangements were put in place to facilitate the crossing of people at these checkpoints, including separate lanes for men and women and a special lane for humanitarian cases.

GAZA RESIDENTS ALLOWED INTO EAST JERUSALEM DURING RAMADAN



Challenges for vulnerable groups included the lack of clear criteria on eligibility to use humanitarian lanes, long walking distances leading to the checkpoints, and the lack of shaded waiting areas on the Jerusalem side of checkpoints

Challenges included inter alia the lack of clear criteria on eligibility to use humanitarian lanes especially at Qalandiya checkpoint, long walking distances leading to the checkpoints especially at Gilo/Bethlehem checkpoint, and the lack of shaded waiting areas for women on the Jerusalem side of checkpoints who generally crossed checkpoints at a much faster rate than men due to the lack of age restrictions

Since October 2014, a negligible number of Palestinians from Gaza, generally over 60 years of age, have been granted permits to exit Gaza and access East Jerusalem for Friday prayers at Al Aqsa Mosque during Ramadan. This year, the Israeli authorities announced a number of relaxation measures, including up to 100 permits for women and men above 55 years of age for prayer on Fridays, and up to 300 permits for Sundays through Thursdays for people above 50, only for employees with international organizations and worker unions. In practice, 435 Palestinians were granted permits compared with 860 Palestinians, in 2016. As the Egyptian-controlled Rafah crossing remained closed during the month of Ramadan, those hoping to make the pilgrimage to Mecca were prevented from crossing.



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Gilo checkpoint, 2 June 2017.

Endnotes

1. See *Appeal for funding to stabilize Gaza's deteriorating humanitarian conditions* at https://www.ochaopt.org/content/gaza-crisis-urgent-funding-appeal
2. Incidents resulting in both casualties (deaths or injuries) and property damage are classified as "casualty incidents".
3. Two of these fatalities were persons shot by settlers during two alleged stabbing and ramming attacks.
4. Alex Fishman, "Jewish terrorism is rearing its head again", Ynet news, 14 June 2017.
5. The source for incidents targeting Israeli settlers is primarily the Israeli media.
6. Settler attacks against Palestinians and Israeli forces in this context have also been termed "price tag" attacks.
7. Burin, Urif, Huwwara, Madama, Asira al Qibliye and Ein Abus.
8. Israeli Ministry of Justice, Israel's Investigation and Prosecution of Ideologically Motivated Offences against Palestinians in the West Bank, June 2017.
9. Yotam Berger, "West Bank Rabbi to Stand Trial for Incitement to Violence against Arabs", Ha'aretz, 14 June 2017.
10. Israeli Ministry of Justice, Ibid, p. 8.
11. Yesh Din, Law enforcement on Israeli civilians in the West Bank, Data Sheet, February 2017.
12. Government support for the establishment of unauthorized settlement outposts was carefully documented by a fact-finding committee appointed by the Government of Israel (also known as the Sasson Committee after its chair Talia Sasson), which published its conclusions in 2005.
13. On 15 February 2016, the Israeli authorities demolished 43 structures, including ten residences, 25 animal shelters and eight external kitchens.
14. Names in this case study were changed to protect individuals.
15. Laylat al Qadr falls on the 27th of the month of Ramadan, and is considered by Muslims as the holiest night of the year.

This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.