

This was the home of a family in the Ras al 'Amud area of East Jerusalem. The family was forced to demolish it following orders by Israeli authorities citing lack of a building permit, which is rarely granted for Palestinians. Photo by OCHA

Humanitarian Situation Update #175 | West Bank

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The Humanitarian Situation Update is issued by OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory three times per week. The Gaza Strip is covered on Mondays and Fridays, and the West Bank is covered on Wednesdays. The "Humanitarian Situation Update" is a rebranding of the "Flash Update". The next Humanitarian Situation Update will be published on 7 June, and the next Humanitarian Response Update will be published on 12 June.

Key Highlights

- More than 500 Palestinians and 12 Israelis have been killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since 7 October.
- About 280 olive and fig trees and 580 grape vine trees were vandalized by Israeli settlers in seven communities across the West Bank during the week-long reporting period.
- A Palestinian family in the Batn Al Hawa area of Silwan, in East Jerusalem, faces the risk of imminent forced displacement after the Israeli Supreme Court rejected their appeal against eviction.
- The DCO checkpoint, one of the main entrances to Ramallah and Al Bireh cities, was re-opened for the first time in eight months.

Latest developments (after 3 June)

- On 5 June 2024, ten diplomatic missions, led by the Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Muhannad Hadi, participated in a visit to the central West Bank. The group visited Palestinian herding and Bedouin communities, where members and organizations supporting them shared concerns over the humanitarian impact of heightened violence, settler activities, access restrictions, demolitions and other coercive policies and practices. Hadi stated during the visit: "While all eyes are on Gaza, the people of the West Bank must also be supported and protected. The situation here is volatile. We can't wait for the West Bank to become another Gaza."
- On 4 June, Israeli forces shot and killed two Palestinian men near a military gate located in the Barrier west of Tulkarm city, after the two men reportedly opened fire at them. Their corpses have been withheld by Israeli forces.

Humanitarian Developments (28 May – 3 June)

- During the reporting period, Israeli forces shot and killed six Palestinians and a Palestinian man ran over two Israeli soldiers in the West Bank (see detailed descriptions below). In addition, 38 Palestinians were injured by Israeli forces, the majority (37) during search-and-arrest operations, and a Palestinian man died of suffocation (not counted above) while working in a landfill when a fire broke out, reportedly ignited by tear gas cannisters, Molotov cocktails or sound grenades, during confrontations between Israeli forces and Palestinians in Al Bireh city.
    - On 29 May, a Palestinian man ran over two Israeli soldiers (both aged 20 years) with a commercial vehicle at Nablus-Awarta checkpoint that controls access to and from Nablus city from the east. The man fled the area and handed himself over to Palestinian authorities, reportedly noting that the ramming incident was an accident. The two soldiers died of their wounds by the morning of 30 May. For several hours following the incident, Israeli forces further restricted access to Nablus city and Balata Refugee Camp, conducted search operations, and confiscated a vehicle allegedly used in the alleged attack.

- On 30 May, Israeli forces shot and killed a 21-year-old Palestinian man, and injured four others with live ammunition, during a search-and-arrest operation in Ramallah and Al Bireh cities. During the operation, Israeli forces raided a money exchange shop and threw tear gas canisters and sound bombs toward Palestinian stone throwers, causing a large fire in the two cities' main vegetable market. Dozens of shops and goods were destroyed or damaged, affecting the livelihoods of tens of families.

- On 1 June, Israeli forces shot and killed two Palestinian children (aged 16 and 17 years) near Aqbat Jaber Refugee Camp in Jericho. The circumstances of the incident remain unclear. According to documentation collected by Defense for Children International – Palestine (DCI), the boys "were carrying stones while heading toward a parking square for cars confiscated from Palestinians, and they discovered that there were Israeli forces behind the cars from a distance of 50 to 80 metres (164 to 262 feet) away when they were shot." One of the boys died immediately and the second boy was reportedly injured and taken by Israeli forces to an Israeli hospital where he was pronounced dead.

- On 3 June, undercover Israeli forces raided a wedding hall in Nablus city where they shot and killed the bride's brother (22-years-old) when he attempted to escape. His body has been withheld by Israeli forces. Israeli forces subsequently raided Nablus city and an exchange of fire ensued between Israeli forces and armed Palestinians; two Palestinian bystanders (aged 28 and 30 years) were shot and killed by Israeli forces and nine were injured by live ammunition. The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) reported that its ambulances were denied access by Israeli forces while trying to evacuate the injured. Thirteen (13) per cent of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces in the West Bank since 7 October 2023 (63 out of 491) were in Nablus Governorate.

- Between 7 October 2023 and 3 June 2024, 508 Palestinians, including 124 children, were killed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem; these include 491 killed by Israeli forces, ten by Israeli settlers, and seven where it remains unknown whether the perpetrators were Israeli soldiers or settlers. In addition, over 5,150 Palestinians, including about 800 children, were injured, more than a third of whom were injured by live ammunition. During the same period, 12 Israelis, including seven Israeli soldiers and five settlers, were killed by Palestinians and at least 105 Israelis, including 70 soldiers, were injured in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In addition, attacks by Palestinians from the West Bank resulted in the killing of eight Israelis and four Palestinian perpetrators in Israel.

- On 4 June, the UN Human Rights Chief, Volker Türk, condemned the daily killings in the occupied West Bank, noting that a third of Palestinian fatalities (164) were killed within the context of "militarized operations, involving airstrikes by unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) or planes and the firing of ground-to-ground missiles on refugee camps and other densely populated areas." Türk stated that Israeli forces have "often used lethal force as a first resort … in cases where those shot clearly did not represent an imminent threat to life," and added that there is "a pattern of the denial of medical assistance to those injured." The Human Rights Chief further highlighted that "pervasive impunity for such crimes has been commonplace for far too long in the occupied West Bank … [and] has created an enabling environment for more and more unlawful killings" by Israeli forces, emphasizing that international law must be respected and enforced, and accountability ensured.

- During the reporting period, OCHA documented 17 attacks perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property, including vandalism of about 860 trees and saplings. In seven incidents, Israeli settlers vandalized trees and other property in: Duma (110 olive trees), Qusra (25 olive trees and 40 dunums) and Burin (30 olive saplings) in Nablus governorate; Kafr Ad Dik (17 olive trees) in Salfit governorate; Burqa (17 olive trees and 45 metal fencing poles) in Ramallah governorate; Ramin (80 fig trees) in Tulkarm governorate; and Al Khader (580 grape vine trees) in Bethlehem governorate. Furthermore, settlers set fire to two residential structures and two animal shelters in Khallet Al Maghara herding community (Ramallah); set fire to solar panel batteries and stole about 350 metal fencing poles in Khirbet An Nahla (Bethlehem); and set fire to two agricultural structures and 50 dunums (12 acres) of land in At Taybe herding community (Hebron). Also in Hebron, settlers have continued to graze their livestock on Palestinian land in Khirbet at Tabban community in Massafer Yatta area, damaging a total of 100 dunums (25 acres) of land over a two-month period. Twenty other attacks were documented that did not result in injuries or property damage, almost half involved raids into Al Mu'rrajat (Ramallah) and Ras Ein al 'Auja (Jericho) Bedouin communities.

- Since 7 October 2023, OCHA has recorded 943 attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians, which led to Palestinian casualties (96 incidents), damage to Palestinian property (748 incidents), or both (99 incidents); during these attacks, Israeli settlers killed ten Palestinians, injured 231 others, and destroyed or damaged over 43,000 Palestinian-owned trees and saplings.

- On 3 June, Palestinians opened fire at an Israeli bus and a settler's vehicle travelling near Qalqas Junction, south of Hebron city. Both vehicles sustained damage; there were no reported injuries. Israeli forces launched a large-scale search operation in the area and closed all entrances to Hebron city for two days, impeding the movement of about 850,000 residents of Hebron governorate. Moreover, on 3 and 4 June, Israeli forces closed all except one entrance to Jericho city, citing security reasons, causing severe traffic congestion and impeding access to the city. The movement of people across the West Bank is controlled by at least 790 obstacles to movement, including checkpoints, roadblocks, road gates and earth-mounds. In a positive development, on 3 June, the DCO checkpoint, which is one of the main entry and exit points into and out of Ramallah and Al Bireh cities, was re-opened by Israeli authorities for the first time since 7 October 2023. The checkpoint is now scheduled to open daily between 8:00 and 15:00, whereas before 7 October it was open 24 hours a day. Following the announcement, settlers gathered on Road 60 and threw stones at Palestinian vehicles.

- During the reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished or forced the owners to demolish 15 Palestinian-owned structures due to the lack of Israeli-issued building permits. These include seven inhabited residential homes in Al 'Isawiya (1), Ras al 'Amud (1), Silwan (1) and Al Walaja (1) in East Jerusalem as well as Jalbun (2) and Jericho (1) in Area C. As a result, seven households comprising 36 people, including 14 children, were displaced. Eight other structures were demolished in East Jerusalem and Area C

of the West Bank, including five under-construction buildings and three agricultural structures, affecting 28 people, including 11 children.

- Since 7 October and until 3 June, the Israeli authorities demolished, confiscated or forced the owners to demolish 904 Palestinian structures, of which 39 per cent (350 structures) were inhabited homes. As a result, 2,038 people, including 890 children, were displaced. These include: 1,082 people (53 per cent) displaced by the demolition of homes during operations by Israeli forces, particularly in refugee camps in and near Tulkarm and Jenin cities; 797 people (39 per cent) displaced by demolitions due to the lack of building permits; and 159 (8 per cent) by demolitions on punitive grounds.

- Two Palestinian families in the Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah areas of East Jerusalem are at imminent risk of displacement from their homes after receiving final eviction orders from Israeli courts who ruled in favour of Israeli settler organizations. In the Karm al Jaouni area of Sheikh Jarrah, the Israeli Magistrate Court issued a final eviction order against Diab family on 14 April 2024, demanding that the family vacate their home by 15 July and pay a penalty of 80,000 NIS (US$21,562) in legal fees to Nahalat Shimon, a settler organization. In the Batn Al Hawa area of Silwan, the Israeli Supreme Court rejected on 26 May a petition filed by the Shehadeh family to challenge a prior court ruling that ordered them to vacate their four-storey building by 1 June in favour of the Ateret Cohanim settler organization. With this decision, the Shehadeh family of five households, comprising 35 people, has exhausted all domestic legal procedures and faces the risk of imminent forced displacement at any moment. Currently, 218 Palestinian households in East Jerusalem have eviction cases filed against them in Israeli courts, the majority by settler organizations, placing at least 970 people, including 424 children, at risk of displacement.

Funding

- As of 5 June, Member States have disbursed about US$1.05 billion out of $3.42 billion (31 per cent) requested to meet the most critical needs of 2.3 million people in Gaza and 800,000 people in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, between January and December 2024. For funding analysis, please see the Flash Appeal Financial Tracking dashboard.

- The oPt HF has 118 ongoing projects, for a total of $72.5 million, addressing urgent needs in the Gaza Strip (85 per cent) and West Bank (15 per cent). The HF has allocated an additional $22 million to bolster prioritized HF-funded projects in Gaza. Recently, 14 projects for a total of $5 million have been approved under the Third Reserve Allocation titled "Critical Humanitarian Aid for Gaza Amidst Escalating Conflict and Displacement (Phase 3)." Following a steep rise in displacement from Rafah to Khan Younis and Deir al Balah and to capitalize on the operational presence of national partners, these projects will be implemented by national NGOs (12 projects) or through a partnership between international and national NGOs (2 projects). Since 7 October, the oPt HF has mobilized over $100 million from Member States and private donors, designated for programmes throughout Gaza. A summary of the oPt HF activities and challenges in May 2024 is available through this link and the 2023 Annual Report of the oPt HF can be accessed here. Private donations are collected directly through the Humanitarian Fund.