

Update on Conflict and Diplomacy

16 MAY–15 AUGUST 2014



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The Quarterly Update is a summary of bilateral, multilateral, regional, and international events affecting the Palestinians and the future of the peace process. More than 100 print, wire, television, and online sources providing U.S., Israeli, Arab, and international independent and govt. coverage of unfolding events are surveyed to compile the Quarterly Update. The most relevant sources are cited in JPS's Chronology section, which tracks events day by day. JPS Chronologies are archived on the JPS website at www.palestine-studies.org.

Highlights of the Quarter: Fatah and Hamas form a national unity govt. that is overshadowed by violence in the West Bank and Gaza; 3 teenage Israeli settlers are kidnapped nr. Hebron, and later found dead; Israel's consequent launch of Operation Brother's Keeper (OBK) to find the teenagers and their assailants is used to dismantle Hamas structures in the West Bank; settlers' revenge killing of a Palestinian teenager ignites widespread violence, with protests and clashes throughout East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and on the Gaza border; Israel launches its massive Operation Protective Edge (OPE), the largest assault on Gaza since Operation Cast Lead (OCL) in 2008–9.

THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

OPERATION BROTHER'S KEEPER

As the quarter opened, the latest U.S.-led peace talks, begun in July 2013 and spearheaded by Secy. of State John Kerry, were on hold following their breakdown as a result of continuing Israeli settlement expansion, an aborted prisoner release exchange, and the decision by the Palestinians to pursue membership of 15 international agencies in light of the lack of progress (see QU in *JPS* 172). Although both sides blamed each other for the breakdown, at an international level, the Israeli govt. faced criticism for having failed to

make progress with a Palestinian leadership that had demonstrated its commitment to a negotiated agreement and to Israel's security goals. As the quarter progressed, and Israel prosecuted a vicious military campaign and security crackdown undaunted by criticism or censure, strains appeared in the U.S.-Israeli relationship. The tension built on the mistrust that had already emerged between the 2 allies after the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian talks under U.S. sponsorship.

The key events of this quarter grew out of the failure of the negotiations. Specifically, while Kerry's efforts were on "pause" for him to "take a hard look" at the situation, as the U.S. secy. of

state indicated on 5/1, the major Palestinian parties, Fatah and Hamas, were pursuing efforts at national reconciliation. These efforts culminated in an agreement on 4/23 and in the successful formation of a national unity govt. on 6/2 (see “Intra-Palestinian Dynamics” below). While this development was broadly, if cautiously, welcomed by the international community, including Quartet mbrs. (the UN, U.S., EU, and Russia), Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu vociferously opposed it, insisting that it made Palestinian pres. Mahmud Abbas complicit in “terrorism.” Israel responded to the formation of the unity govt. with sanctions targeting Palestinian Authority (PA) officials (6/2) and an announcement of new settlement construction plans (6/5). By the end of the 1st week of 6/2014, the overall picture was one of increasing international criticism of Israel’s continued settlement expansion and inadequate efforts to advance a 2-state solution, and a positive reception of the Palestinian unity govt.

Within 10 days the picture shifted dramatically with the kidnapping on 6/12 of 3 teenage settlers, Eyal Yifrach (19), Gilad Shaar (16), and U.S.-Israeli national Naftali Frenkel (16). The Israeli govt. immediately launched a security crackdown across the West Bank designed to find the teenagers and their captors and to smash Hamas’s infrastructure in the territory. It later emerged in the media that OBK, which lasted almost 3 weeks, went ahead even though the Israeli govt. and the media, which was under a gag order, knew (and withheld the evidence) that the teenagers were already dead when the operation was launched (*Mondoweiss*, 6/23). On 6/15, Netanyahu accused Hamas of direct responsibility for the teenagers’ disappearance, an allegation the organization described as irresponsible “fabrications” (Ma’an News Agency, 6/15). Subsequently, senior Israeli and Palestinian

officials were reported as stating that the teenagers’ disappearance was known to have been the work of Hamas mbrs. acting on their own initiative without the organization’s sanction or foreknowledge (*Mondoweiss* 7/26, *Guardian* 8/21), further undermining the justifications for both OBK and the ensuing assault on Gaza, ostensibly to debilitate Hamas.

As with previous Israeli security crackdowns, OBK was characterized by a campaign of mass arrests that targeted thousands of Palestinians, including scores freed in the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange of fall 2011 (see QU, *JPS* 162 and 163). Many of those rounded up by Israel Defense Forces (IDF) troops were subsequently placed in administrative detention, taking the number of detainees held without charge or trial, according to the Israeli Prison Service, from 196 prior to the start of the operation (5/31) to 363 when it was called off after the bodies of the 3 settlers were found (6/30). UN reports estimated that Israeli forces carried out a total of 1,470 search and arrest operations and detained around 2,200 Palestinians in the West Bank between 6/2014 and 8/2014. The IDF rounded up 767 Palestinians in 6/2014 alone, almost double the monthly average for the previous 5 mos., and the highest such figure recorded since United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) established its Protection of Civilians database in 2005.

Some 1,400 Palestinian homes were raided, many of them in the Hebron governorate, which was hit hardest by OBK because of its proximity to the location of the kidnapping. In the course of these raids, the IDF used lethal force as they clashed with residents, killing 6 unarmed Palestinians (on 6/16, 1 in Jalazun r.c. nr. Ramallah; on 6/20, 1 in Dura nr. Hebron, and 1 in Qalandia r.c. nr. Ramallah; on 6/22, 1 in ‘Ayn Bayt al Ma’ r.c. nr. Nablus and 1 in

Ramallah; and on 7/1, 1 in Jenin r.c.). The IDF did not just target individuals allegedly affiliated with Hamas, they also raided and shut down over 15 charitable organizations deemed to have some kind of link with the group. The operation expanded in scope with every passing day with little apparent sign of progress being made in the search for the teenagers and their captors. (For more details on the effects of the operation, see the “Movement and Access” section below.)

Pres. Abbas responded to the unfolding events by condemning both the kidnapping of the 3 teenagers and the ensuing brutal Israeli raids on Palestinian communities, warning on 6/22 that the situation could spiral out of control and that Israel’s destructive actions would only serve to ignite the West Bank. Hamas officials, meanwhile, declined any responsibility for the abduction but praised its perpetrators. On 6/14, spokesperson Fawzi Barhoum said the group had no prior knowledge of the kidnapping and described it as a “success.” Barhoum also slammed the PA for its security cooperation with Israel during the crackdown, calling it a disgrace. After expressing “concern” to an Israeli govt. official at a meeting in London (6/13), Kerry released a statement on 6/15 saying the U.S. strongly condemned the kidnapping of the teenagers and encouraged security cooperation between PA and Israeli security forces.

Throughout the operation, the Israeli govt. framed the kidnapping as an illustration of the sort of influence Hamas would exert on the new Palestinian unity govt. “All those in the international community who rushed to bless this marriage should look into the eyes of the heartbroken parents,” Israel’s UN amb. said 5 days after the teens went missing (6/17), adding that “[they] bought in to a bad deal and Israel is paying for it.” Despite the knowledge in senior govt. circles that the boys were almost



Jerusalem city buses adorned with ads featuring the hashtag #BringBackOurBoys, a slogan supporting the IDF’s search and rescue efforts after the kidnapping of the 3 Israeli settlers. (22 June, Ahmad Gharabli/AFP/Getty Images)

certainly dead within 48 hours of the kidnapping. Israeli officials and public figures, including Netanyahu’s wife and the mayor of Jerusalem, spearheaded a plea for international sympathy under the hashtag #BringBackOurBoys. The social media campaign, modeled after the one that helped draw wide international attention to the Boko Haram kidnappings in Nigeria in 4/2014, was launched (6/14) by a relatively new *hasbara* group, University of Haifa Ambassadors Network, and it had gone viral within hours. Efforts to sway international public opinion were buttressed by robust domestic support, with some 76% of Israelis supporting OBK, according to a poll published on 7/2.

Almost 2 weeks after the start of the operation, Israeli officials revealed (6/26) the names of 2 suspects in the teenagers’ abduction, “Hamas activists” Marwan Qawasmeh and Amer Abu Aysha from Hebron. (On 7/8 an Electronic Intifada report indicated that Israeli officials knew who the suspected abductors were within 48 hours of the kidnapping.) The 3 teenagers’ bodies were discovered by security forces on 6/30, not far from where they had originally disappeared, in the vicinity of Hebron, and their murder was denounced by international leaders.

Spurred by vengeance, a small group of Jewish settlers in East Jerusalem kidnapped and killed 16-year-old Mohammed Abu Khdeir from the Jerusalem neighborhood of Shu'fat on 7/2. The discovery of his burned body in a forested area west of the city sparked intense Palestinian protests and violent clashes with Israeli security forces, leaving 170 people injured. Abbas declared Israel responsible for the attack; Netanyahu condemned it as "loathsome"; and Kerry described it as "sickening."

Protests spread from the Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem to Palestinian cities inside Israel and they continued to grow as frustration over Abu Khdeir's brutal murder dovetailed with the unrest and tension that followed the discovery of the teenage settlers' bodies and the official end of OBK. By 7/24, 3 weeks later, some 931 Palestinians had been detained, including 295 in Jerusalem and 636 in Israel. Hundreds of those arrested were under 18 and charged as adults under Israeli military law which regards Palestinian citizens of Israel as minors only up to 16.

GAZA ESCALATION

As violence spread across the West Bank and East Jerusalem, tension and hostilities also mounted in the Gaza Strip and s. Israel where rocket fire and Israeli air strikes escalated throughout 6/2014. As a result of such exchanges (6/11, 6/14, and 6/15), 2 Palestinians were killed (including 1 child).

Israeli media reported (6/15) that military sources were holding Islamic Jihad responsible for the rocket fire, rather than Hamas (a claim repeated on 6/24). From 6/17 to 6/19, Israel hit 16 targets across Gaza, injuring 7 people. There were further exchanges on 6/24, 6/27, 6/29, and 6/30, with rockets causing minor damage in Israel, and several dozen air strikes killing 3 and injuring another 9 in Gaza. Gaza's Popular

Resistance Comms. (PRC), made up of mbrs. from the various Palestinian factions acting independently of their individual organizations, claimed responsibility for the rocket fire describing it as retaliation for "Israeli crimes against our Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the ongoing violations against prisoners," in reference to the massive military deployment under OBK (Ma'an News Agency, 6/29). In perhaps the most emblematic incident of this period, the Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades fired 18 rockets into s. Israel on 6/30, the 1st time that Hamas's military wing had fired rockets since the 11/2012 truce that ended Operation Pillar of Defense (OPD). (See the online Chronology for details.)

Along with the escalation in violence, the rhetoric on both sides grew progressively more strident during this period. On 6/17, fighters from a number of groups, including Fatah, Hamas, and the PRC, held a press conference in Gaza City in which they denied responsibility for the kidnapping of the Israeli teenagers in the West Bank, adding that they were prepared to confront any Israeli "aggression." On 6/30, the day that the kidnapped teenagers' bodies were found, Netanyahu said at a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs Comm., "either Hamas will stop the rocket fire or we will." Hamas spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri warned (6/30) that by escalating hostilities or launching a war, the Israelis would "open the gates of hell" and added that Hamas did not want any kind of military confrontation with Israel but that "if . . . forced on us, it will look like in previous rounds" (Ma'an News Agency, 6/30).

Tensions and violence rose steadily on the border with the Gaza Strip, as the exchange of rockets and air strikes continued to escalate and the IDF called up its reservists and began massing troops on Israel's southern border. Altogether, between 7/1 and 7/7, some 200 rockets and

mortar shells were fired into Israel, causing damage and injuring 1 soldier, and more than 40 targets were hit in Israeli air strikes across the Gaza Strip, killing at least 11 Palestinian fighters (2 from Saraya al-Quds Brigades and 9 from al-Qassam Brigades) and causing injuries. On 7/3, Netanyahu said the IDF would stop its attacks on the territory if rocket fire from Gaza halted, and there were reports of a 24–48 hour ultimatum delivered to Hamas via Egyptian intelligence for the group to halt the projectile fire or face a significant Israeli escalation. On behalf of al-Qassam Brigades, spokesperson Abu Ubayda responded by saying that an Israeli escalation would draw the “hour of vengeance” closer. On 7/5, the PRC’s military wing in Gaza said it rejected any cease-fire that did not include ending the siege of Gaza or “bringing life back to the West Bank and Jerusalem” (Ma’an News Agency, 7/5). Two more days of hostile exchanges followed and after a 3-hour meeting on 7/7 to discuss the situation, Israel’s security cabinet decided to escalate attacks against Hamas and other armed factions in the Gaza Strip, effectively launching OPE. “We do not want to engage in a large-scale ground operation in Gaza,” stated a senior Israeli official at the meeting’s conclusion, “but we are prepared to broaden the operation in case the rocket fire does not stop” (*Haaretz*, 7/8).

OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE

Israel launches its most massive attack on Gaza to date, in which an estimated 20,000 tons of ordnance is dropped in 50 days, killing upward of 2,000 Palestinians, injuring and maiming some 10,000 more, displacing some 0.5 m. others, and destroying or rendering unusable thousands of structures, including homes, schools, mosques, hospitals, universities, factories, and farms, as well as infrastructure facilities (water, electricity, sewage, etc.).

The operation includes a 1st phase of blanket aerial bombardments supported by artillery shelling both from land and sea, a 2d phase comprised of a ground invasion, and a 3d phase of stop-and-start cease-fires interspersed with high-intensity bombing.

Phase 1: Aerial Assault (7/8–16)

The IDF initiated OPE in the night of 7/7–8 with a large-scale aerial assault. At the onset of the operation, the IDF’s stated mission was to stop Palestinian rocket fire into Israel and deter further attacks. In exchange for holding their fire, Palestinian armed groups, and principally Hamas, demanded (7/8) an end to Israeli military operations, a lifting of the blockade on the Gaza Strip, and the release of the Gilad Shalit prisoner swap veterans who had been rearrested in the West Bank during OBK. While ending the blockade was not always clearly defined, the various groups called for the establishment of an airport and seaport, free passage between Gaza and the West Bank, and the free movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza.

During the 1st phase of the operation (7/8–17) a broad pattern emerged whereby the IDF carried out blanket aerial bombardments and the Palestinian military factions fired projectiles into Israel, and also experimented with some new tactics such as deploying drones. In total, Israel’s air force carried out some 1,600 air strikes on Gaza in this period, killing more than 200 people, and Palestinian factions fired around 1,200 rockets into Israel, causing damage in at least 11 incidents and injuring 18, including 1 soldier and 2 bedouin. During the 1st 3 days of OPE alone, Israel hit more targets than it had for the entirety of OPD in 11/2012 (see *JPS* 166).

The IDF assault was multifaceted, reflecting long-term advance planning. The air strikes hit almost every part of the Gaza Strip and included

mosques and UN schools overrun with civilians seeking shelter. This intense aerial bombardment, both by day and by night, saw hundreds of targets struck across the territory, especially in Gaza City, Khan Yunis, and Rafah, and included both residential and agricultural areas, as well as sites used by security forces and armed groups. As with previous operations against the Gaza Strip, the Iron Dome missile defense system was vital to Israel's military campaign. The system, which prevents long-range projectiles from reaching Israeli urban centers, intercepted around 40 rockets directed toward Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Hadera on the 1st day of OPE, leading the IDF spokesperson to tweet on 7/9 that the rockets were "incapable" of penetrating the military's "defense systems." Being largely short-range and inaccurate, most of the 200 Palestinian projectiles fired that 1st day landed in agricultural or open areas adjacent to population centers.

Aside from their ferocity, IDF attacks were characteristic for targeting homes that the IDF claimed were Hamas "command and control centers," entailing hundreds of almost entirely civilian casualties. Frequently, the presence, or alleged presence, of 1 person affiliated with an armed group justified a strike on a home that killed and wounded numerous mbrs. of the alleged operative's family. Such attacks were often conducted using the so-called "knock on the roof" tactic, whereby a relatively small missile preceded the larger one destined to destroy the property. Of particular note, on 7/13, Israeli naval commandos landed briefly on the al-Sudaniyya beach in n. Gaza where they clashed with Palestinian fighters before withdrawing; also on that day, the IDF contacted Palestinians in n. Gaza via phone calls and a leaflet drop, telling them to leave the area urgently. Prerecorded messages were again used to warn residents on 7/16.

During this phase, the armed Palestinian groups deployed tactics to counter Israeli force largely similar to those used in earlier conflicts, although some, like the use of military tunnels to reach Israel, were quite novel. (Videos showing Hamas militants mounting a raid into Israel through one of the tunnels were later uploaded to the Internet.) In addition to Hamas's al-Qassam Brigades, the following groups carried out rocket attacks on Israeli targets: Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigades, the PRCs, al-Nasser Salah al-Din Brigades, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, the Ayman Judah Brigades (an offshoot of Fatah's al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades), and the al-Ansar Brigades. Rockets reached areas as far away as the vicinity of Haifa and Dimona, as well as Ashqelon closer to Gaza. The armed groups also made use of mortars during this operation, presenting a different kind of challenge to Israel, as their shorter range meant a much briefer time lapse between the sounding of warning sirens and impact. In an unprecedented move, Hamas also staged a sea landing of 5 fighters (7/8) nr. Kibbutz Zikim and deployed 2 small surveillance drones (7/14), but neither measure was successful: all 5 fighters were killed and the 2 drones were shot down. Finally, on 7/17, Hamas fighters emerged from a tunnel on the Israeli side of the border but retreated after being targeted by an air strike.

Virtually from the start of OPE, behind-the-scenes diplomatic efforts were underway to help secure a cease-fire. On 7/15, Israel's security cabinet accepted an Egyptian-sponsored cease-fire in a 6–2 vote with Netanyahu saying that if Hamas rejected the initiative, Israel would have "legitimacy" to take further action "to restore quiet." The terms of the proposal would have largely recreated the status quo following the 11/2012 cease-fire deal (see *JPS* 167 for

details) and was reportedly the result of a series of communications between Secy. of State John Kerry, PM Netanyahu, Pres. Abbas, and Egyptian FM Sameh Shoukri. It should be noted that the Egyptian-brokered talks involved various Palestinian factions and not the Palestinian unity govt. that was formed a mo. before the start of the conflict. Hamas and the other armed factions in Gaza rejected the proposal, which the al-Qassam Brigades described as “an initiative of kneeling and submission” (*Guardian*, Reuters, 7/15). Hamas spokesperson Abu Zuhri stated that the group was ignored during the talks, and Islamic Jihad’s Khalid al-Batsh commented that “initiatives shouldn’t be proposed through media outlets, but rather through the obvious channels, which are resistance factions and their leaders” (7/15, Ma’an News Agency). An unnamed senior Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) official told *Haaretz* (7/16) that “the Egyptians coordinated the initiative with Abbas and ignored Gaza,” and that “Hamas leaders felt humiliated by the fact that the proposal was released without them being consulted about its contents ahead of time.” Israeli media gave prominent coverage (7/16) to a reported Hamas counterproposal unveiled through the media, and outlining 10 conditions in exchange for a 10-year truce, including increasing the Palestinian fishing zone off the coast of Gaza to 10 naut. mi. (half of the fishing limit agreed under Oslo), the complete lifting of the siege, and the positioning of international forces at the borders. The counterproposal was mostly ignored or dismissed by Israel and the international community. On the same day, the UN successfully negotiated a 5-hour humanitarian pause in fighting to allow for the evacuation of the wounded and the removal of the dead from bombed-out areas.

On the eve of the ground offensive (7/17), diplomatic efforts showed little sign of progress, with significant gaps remaining between the

Egyptian proposal and the stated demands of the Palestinian armed factions, and Hamas’s continued mistrust of Egypt in light of its marginalization in the diplomatic arena.

Phase 2: Ground Invasion (7/17–31)

The 2d phase of the operation began on 7/17 when Israeli infantry troops, backed by tanks and intelligence units, entered the Gaza Strip with the stated goal of destroying tunnels leading into Israel and preventing the infiltration of Palestinian armed groups (7/17). Supported by extensive aerial and naval firepower, the ground invasion saw Israeli troops penetrating Shuja’iya (7/20), a densely populated neighborhood of Gaza City which was the scene of some of the fiercest fighting during OPE. This phase of the operation also saw the highest casualty tolls on both sides, and heavy damage to infrastructure, especially electricity lines with the reported deaths of 1,348 Palestinians, mostly civilians, and of 61 of Israel’s 66 total military fatalities (40 in ground combat, 11 as a result of tunnel attacks into Israel, and 10 from projectile fire landing on Israel’s side of the Gaza border). By 7/29, some 200,000 people were seeking shelter in the Strip’s UN-run schools, having either evacuated or been driven from their homes as the IDF continued to issue mass evacuation warnings via text messages and phone calls to residents of Jabaliya, al-Zaytun and Shuja’iya, as well as Bayt Hanun and Bayt Lahiya (7/28).

Palestinian armed groups caused the IDF some serious losses in ground combat. On 7/19, 6 IDF soldiers were killed, and 1 was pronounced missing, after a Palestinian antitank missile attack on their jeep; the al-Qassam Brigades announced Oron Shaul’s capture the following day but he was later confirmed dead, bringing the IDF death toll from the attack to 7; on 7/23, another 3 soldiers were killed in a Palestinian

booby-trapped building; and on 7/28, 1 Israeli soldier was killed by a Palestinian rocket-propelled grenade and another 4 died from mortar shells landing inside the Israeli border.

Several noteworthy incidents of the ground incursion stand out. On 7/20, an Israeli air strike killed 25 mbrs. of a single family. In an especially deadly overnight barrage (7/29), Israeli forces killed more than 100 Palestinians in strikes against 70 sites across the Gaza Strip. Targets that night included the home of senior Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, which had been evacuated, as well as the offices of al-Aqsa TV and radio. As Israeli ground forces advanced into the Strip, fighters from Hamas's al-Qassam Brigades launched several incursions into Israel using the very tunnels the IDF sought to disable. On at least 3 occasions, Palestinian fighters were able to emerge on the Israeli side of the border and engage IDF troops, inflicting losses. On 7/19, they killed 2 IDF soldiers; on 7/21, Palestinian fighters dressed in Israeli military uniforms exited from a tunnel and fired an antitank missile, killing 4 soldiers; and on 7/28, al-Qassam fighters killed 5 IDF soldiers on the Israeli side of the border.

On the diplomatic front, Israeli efforts during the 2d phase of OPE were focused on halting the conflict on the basis of the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip. Hamas and other factions, for their part, insisted on an end to Israeli attacks and the complete lifting of the blockade. Diplomatic developments during this phase were notable for the clear tension between Israel and the U.S., which built upon the mistrust already present between the 2 after the failure of the U.S.-sponsored Israeli-Palestinian talks in April (see *JPS* 171).

On 7/25, Secy. of State John Kerry delivered a draft set of cease-fire proposals to the Israeli govt., drawn up after his meetings with Turkish and Qatari diplomats negotiating on Hamas's

behalf. That night, the Israeli govt. convened to discuss the proposal and rejected it. (See more below.) In the absence of a breakthrough on issues of substance, there were several short-lived humanitarian truces, or pauses, in hostilities that were observed to varying extents by the conflicting parties. On 7/20, a humanitarian pause called for by the International Red Cross (IRC) lasted less than 1 hour and on 7/25, diplomats meeting in Paris agreed on a 12-hour humanitarian pause the following day, to which both Hamas and Israel acquiesced (with the proviso, on the Israeli side, that it would not stop the military's continuing work to locate "terror tunnels"). During the 12-hour pause that was duly observed on 7/26, dozens of bodies were recovered from neighborhoods that had been reduced to ruins; that evening, the Israeli security cabinet decided to unilaterally extend the humanitarian pause for a further 24 hours (again without the IDF desisting from its search and destroy mission on the tunnels). The al-Qassam Brigades and other Palestinian factions did not agree to the extension of the truce.

The tension between the U.S. and Israel, unlike any seen during previous Israeli assaults on Gaza (notably OCL in 2008–9 and OPD in 2012), was clearly apparent on 7/25 when Kerry delivered a set of cease-fire proposals to the Israeli govt. that hewed closely to an earlier Egyptian effort. Even though it allowed the IDF to proceed with the destruction of Palestinian tunnels during a weeklong cease-fire, Kerry's initiative did not specifically reference Israel's security needs or call for the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip. On 7/28, *Haaretz* columnist Ari Shavit reported that senior Israeli officials were outraged at the proposal, one of whom was quoted as having said it was a "strategic terrorist attack." The torrent of Israeli criticism was so severe that the U.S. pres. weighed in and called

PM Netanyahu directly. The White House published a “readout” of the phone call describing it as follows: “Building on Secy. Kerry’s efforts, the pres. made clear the strategic imperative of instituting an immediate, unconditional humanitarian cease-fire that ends hostilities now and leads to a permanent cessation of hostilities based on the 11/2012 cease-fire agreement.” The brusque and businesslike tone of the readout was followed the next day by remarks from State Dept. spokesperson Jen Psaki in which she said, “It’s simply not the way partners and allies treat each other.”

Aside from the growing tension with the U.S., Israel faced increasingly strident criticism internationally. The strongest diplomatic pushback came from Central and South America where, on 7/30, Bolivia’s Pres. Evo Morales announced that his country had revoked a visa exemption agreement with Israel and declared it a terrorist state. In addition, 5 other Latin American countries recalled their amb. from Tel Aviv: Ecuador (7/18), Brazil (7/23), Chile and Peru (7/29), as well as El Salvador (7/30).

Phase 3: Intermittent Cease-Fires (8/1–26)

The 3d and final phase of OPE began on 7/31 with the announcement by UN Secy.-Gen. Ban Ki-moon and U.S. Secy. of State Kerry of a 72-hour cease-fire to begin the following morning at 8:00 A.M. Marked by a number of such temporary truces and several rounds of talks in Cairo that were mediated by Egypt, this phase of OPE witnessed a marked drop in the severity of military operations and in the casualty toll, although there were some dramatic strikes against office buildings and other high-rises in the center of Gaza City as the operation drew to a close. Nevertheless, the diplomatic track progressed, with the 2 sides inching closer

to agreement on some basic principles, which reportedly included ending Israel’s offensive, easing the siege, expanding the fishing zone, and increasing imports into Gaza. Several serious cease-fire breaches threatened to derail the process, however.

The 1st such incident took place in the morning on 8/1, around the time that the U.S.-UN-brokered 72-hour cease-fire went into effect at 8:00 A.M. Reports of the incident differed on the specific time at which it occurred. According to the IDF, an Israeli patrol demolishing a tunnel in Rafah had been attacked by al-Qassam Brigades fighters 2 hours into the truce, with 2 Israeli soldiers being killed and 1 feared captured. Hamas, however, denied reports of the capture, saying that the soldier was most likely killed in clashes during the early morning hours, before the official start of the truce. The reported capture of an Israeli soldier unleashed a ferocious land and aerial bombardment of Rafah, resulting in the death of some 100 people, and the injury of scores of others. It was later revealed to be an attempt to implement what is known as the IDF’s Hannibal Directive, a procedure that allows the field commander to order fire in case of a soldier’s suspected capture at the risk of harming or killing the soldier rather than negotiating his release (*Haaretz*, 5/21/03). Despite the lack of evidence or confirmation, the alleged Hamas capture of Hadar Goldin prompted stern condemnation in the U.S. where Pres. Obama described the incident as a kidnapping. As air strikes and Palestinian projectile fire resumed, it later transpired that Goldin had in fact been killed in action and that Hamas was in possession of the soldier’s body.

Israel’s massive bombardment of Rafah that day and an Israeli attack on 8/3 that hit the compound of an United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the

Near East (UNRWA)-run school, killing 11 Palestinians, led to mounting pressure for a more substantial diplomatic breakthrough. After successful Egyptian mediation, another 72-hour cease-fire began on 8/5 during which the IDF withdrew all of its ground troops from Gaza and Palestinian and Israeli officials carried on indirect talks in Cairo. But as the talks petered out on 8/8, fighting resumed: air strikes and artillery barrages hit 50 targets across the Gaza Strip, killing 5 people, and dozens of projectiles were fired into Israel, injuring 3. A new 72-hour cease-fire was implemented on 8/11, with Israel reportedly agreeing to a gradual expansion of the fishing zone and a reduction of restrictions on the passage of people and goods in and out of the Strip. In Cairo, reps. from both sides agreed (8/13) to a 5-day extension of the truce to begin the next day, on 8/14. As the quarter ended, negotiators and mediators were struggling to forge a longer-term cease-fire, with Israel still angling for the demilitarization of Gaza and the Palestinian parties pursuing an end to the blockade.

By the end of the quarter, on 8/15, UNOCHA estimated the casualty toll and damage from OPE as follows: 1,975 Palestinians killed, including an estimated 1,417 civilians, of whom 459 were children and 239 women; 64 IDF soldiers killed, as well as 2 Israeli civilians and 1 Thai laborer; hundreds of Israelis injured and upward of 10,000 Palestinians wounded. An estimated 365,000 Palestinian residents of the Gaza Strip had been displaced, of whom some 218,000 were taking refuge in 87 UNRWA schools, and the rest in govt. shelters and private homes (UNOCHA, 8/15). The number of internally displaced people fluctuated throughout the assault, reaching at least 485,000 on 8/5. At this time also, it was estimated that 8,832 housing units had been destroyed and another 7,960 were so severely damaged as to be



A Palestinian man observes the devastation in northern Gaza hours after a 72-hour cease-fire goes into effect. (5 August, Mahmud Hams/AFP/Getty Images)

uninhabitable, affecting around 100,000 people. Another 5,635 damaged housing units were classified as still habitable, while a further 33,625 were described as having suffered minor damage. A total of 230 schools (90 UNRWA and 140 govt.-run) had been hit, 25 of which were severely damaged or entirely destroyed.

The conflict would go on for another 11 days until 8/26 when an indefinite cease-fire agreement would be implemented at 7:00 P.M. local time (see online Chronology for details and the forthcoming QU in *JPS* 174).

OCCUPATION DATA AND TRENDS

The death count this quarter was as follows: 2,026 Palestinians killed as a result of Israeli actions—34 in the West Bank and 1,992 in the Gaza Strip (1,975 during OPE and 17 when OPE began on 7/8)—and 70 Israelis killed as a result of Palestinian actions: 67 killed during OPE, see above, and the 3 teenage settlers. As of 8/15, the quarter's end, the comprehensive death toll since the beginning of the 2d intifada in 9/2000 stood at 10,278 Palestinians (including 51 Palestinian citizens of Israel and 19 unidentified Arab cross-border infiltrators), 1,199 Israelis (422 IDF soldiers and security

personnel, 228 settlers, and 545 civilians), and 67 foreign nationals (including 2 British suicide bombers). These numbers include individuals who died in noncombat-related incidents if their death was deemed to have directly resulted from Israel's occupation and the ongoing conflict (e.g., ailing Palestinians who died while being denied access to medical care and Palestinians killed in smuggling tunnel accidents).

Overview of the Violence

In the **Gaza Strip**, before the launch of OPE, violent exchanges between the IDF and armed Palestinian groups increased in frequency. Between 5/23 and 6/29, approximately 34 rockets and mortar shells were fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip, causing some damage (6/11, 6/18, and 6/28, and killing 1 Palestinian child in Bayt Lahiya when a rocket fired on 6/24 fell short). Then, from 6/29 to 7/6, the week prior to the launch of OPE that witnessed another upsurge in violence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem following the discovery of the 3 teenage settlers' bodies, Palestinians fired 120 more projectiles toward Israel, causing 1 injury (7/5) and some damage (7/3).

For its part, the Israeli military attacked Palestinians in Gaza on numerous occasions, primarily from the air. On 5/26, Israeli forces shot a Palestinian fisherman who later died of his wounds (6/5). On 6/11, Israel assassinated 1 PRC mbr. in a drone strike in the n. Gaza Strip and wounded 3 others including the assassinated man's 10-year-old nephew, who later died of his injuries (6/14). On 6/27, the IDF assassinated another 2 PRC mbrs. in a drone strike on their car; this was followed by another drone strike nr. Dayr al-Balah on 6/29, which killed 1 fighter from the al-Qassam Brigades who, the IDF alleged, was part of a group preparing to launch rockets. On 7/6, an Israeli air strike on al-Bureij r.c. killed 2 mbrs. of

Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigades. Later that night, IDF troops struck 14 more targets and 9 fighters from al-Qassam Brigades were killed (the IDF claimed that 6 of them died in a tunnel collapse unrelated to the air strikes).

As mentioned earlier, during the course of OPE (7/8 through the end of the quarter on 8/15), Israeli attacks had killed an estimated 1,975 Palestinians, of whom 1,417 were civilians, including 459 children; and Palestinians had killed 66 Israelis and 1 Thai laborer (UNOCHA, 8/18).

In the **West Bank**, the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces and settlers rose dramatically this quarter following the 6/12 kidnapping of the 3 teenage settlers: 9 unarmed Palestinians were shot dead in IDF raids and patrols (6/16, 6/20, 6/22, 7/1, 7/25, and 8/10) in the Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, and Ramallah governorates; the IDF also killed a Palestinian throwing a Molotov cocktail at a patrol jeep in al-Ram (7/21) as well as a wanted man whose house Israeli troops stormed (8/11) in Qabalan village nr. Nablus; on 6/10, friends and family reported that a Palestinian engineering student whose body was found on 6/6 had been killed by Israeli troops or settlers after trying to enter Israel without permission on 6/4; Israeli security forces using live ammunition killed 15 Palestinians during widespread protests in the Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah, and Tulkarm governorates (7/14, 7/20, 7/23, 7/24, 7/25, 8/1, 8/8); 1 Palestinian was shot dead by a Jewish settler on 7/25 at Hawara checkpoint nr. Nablus and another 6 died as a result of actions by Israeli forces, including heart attacks during raids (5/17, 6/21, 6/26), delays at checkpoints en route to hospital (6/25), and triggering unexploded Israeli ordnance (6/21, 8/11). Aside from the 3 murdered settler teenagers, there were no Israeli fatalities in the West Bank this quarter. There were, however, several instances of Palestinian

attacks on IDF forces and settlers, including shootings, Molotov cocktails, and stone-throwing (e.g., 5/30, 6/3, 6/6, and 6/18–21; see “Settler-Related Violence,” below).

East Jerusalem witnessed several violent incidents this quarter, numerous and large protests following OPE, and continued tensions around Haram al-Sharif, where regular clashes persist as far-right Jewish activists under Israeli police protection are allowed to visit the contested site while Muslim worshippers’ access is restricted (see QU, *JPS* 172). On 5/26, a Palestinian died from excessive tear gas inhalation suffered at home in Abu Dis on 5/23. On 7/2, Jewish settlers kidnapped Abu Khdeir from Shu’fat and burned him alive in a forested area nearby (see OBK above). On 8/4, a Palestinian drove an excavator into pedestrians on the sidewalk, killing 1 Israeli, in an incident described as a “terrorist attack” by Israeli police who shot the driver dead on the spot. Palestinian residents of the city gathered for large protests on multiple occasions in East Jerusalem, and were often violently dispersed by Israeli security forces, with Shin Bet estimating at 150 the number of stone-throwing incidents aimed at Israeli security. In addition, dozens of acts of vandalism targeted the city’s light rail.

Following the murder of Abu Khdeir (7/2) and the violent suppression of protesters and demonstrations in East Jerusalem, protests and clashes occur in Palestinian towns and cities of Israel, notably Nazareth, Shafa ‘Amr, Taiba, Qalansawa and Beersheba.

Movement and Access

OBK and OPE obviously resulted in a significant deterioration in movement and access for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip this quarter. In the **West Bank**, where a relatively stable situation had prevailed in terms of movement and access in recent

quarters, the IDF enforced draconian closures around the Hebron governorate where approximately 25% of the West Bank’s population, or 680,000 Palestinians, live, and where a strong pro-Hamas sentiment prevails. During OBK, initiated to find the 3 kidnapped teenage settlers, the IDF closed 3 of the 6 roads into the city of Hebron to vehicular traffic and set up mobile checkpoints that restricted access to the remaining 3 main arteries as well as to numerous other roads in the region. Male residents of the governorate aged 20–50 were banned from crossing the Wadi al-Nar checkpoint, effectively preventing them from traveling to Jordan via the Allenby Bridge.

The IDF restricted movement and access in other areas and in other ways during the operation, including on 6/18, when they closed the Zatarah and Hawara checkpoints, effectively blocking a major traffic artery between Nablus and Ramallah. In addition, the Israeli authorities revoked 23,000 permits for workers and 3,700 permits for businessmen to enter East Jerusalem and Israel from the West Bank. After the bodies of the 3 teenage settlers were found on 6/30, the IDF began dismantling the mobile checkpoints set up around the Hebron governorate. By 7/7, almost all of the restrictions imposed around the West Bank since the 6/2 kidnapping had been lifted (UNOCHA, 7/11).

In the **Gaza Strip**, restrictions at both Israeli-controlled and Egyptian-controlled crossings were exacerbated by the conflagration this quarter. According to UNOCHA statistical reports, a total of 3,723 truckloads of goods entered Gaza in 6/2014, compared with a monthly average of 4,130 during the 1st 5 mos. of the year, and just 4 truckloads of exports had left the territory between the start of the quarter (5/16) and the launch of OPE (7/8). As the quarter opened, Egypt reopened Rafah (5/18) for 3 days after a 12-day closure, allowing

3,000 people to cross in both directions and 140 truckloads to enter the Strip with basic construction materials designated for Qatari-funded projects. The crossing was then closed for 9 days, and reopened from 6/1 to 6/3 when another 2,500 people (mainly Hajj pilgrims) were allowed through; it was then closed for another 12 days, reopened for 3 on 6/15–18, allowing 4,600 people to cross in both directions, and closed again until 6/29.

Following the kidnapping of the 3 teenage settlers on 6/12, Israel began restricting passage at Erez, allowing access only to medical patients, foreigners, and a few dozen Palestinian merchants. Similarly, it kept the Kerem Shalom crossing closed to all imports, except for fuel from 6/13 to 6/17, and allowed the entry of a few basic goods and a limited quantity of fuel on the eve of OPE (7/6–7).

After the launch of OPE on 7/8, the Israeli authorities kept the Kerem Shalom crossing open for goods almost without interruption, according to UNOCHA, and Erez was used for evacuating some of the wounded and for humanitarian staff traveling in and out of the Strip. From 8/3 to 8/9, Erez saw 1,161 truckloads of goods and 117 truckloads of fuel enter Gaza. Meanwhile, as stated above, the Egyptian authorities kept the Rafah crossing largely closed, with sporadic openings (e.g., 7/10, 8/4) to let shipments of medical supplies into Gaza and to allow Egyptian nationals and critically injured Palestinians to leave for Egypt. According to the Egyptian Health Ministry, as of 8/1, only 140 Palestinians had been allowed into the country for treatment since the start of OPE. (On 8/1, Ma'an News Agency reported that hundreds of Palestinians were using the crossing for shelter in the hope of fleeing when it next opened.)

Israeli forces continued their frequent attacks on Palestinians in the unilaterally defined buffer zone along the border fence and fired on

fishermen working off the Gaza coast. On 19 different occasions prior to the start of OPE, the IDF at the border fence shot at civilians who had gathered in protest or strayed too close, injuring 11 people. Israeli forces also conducted limited incursions to level land and clear lines of sight close to the border fence (e.g., 5/21, 5/22, twice on 6/1, 6/18, and 6/23; see Chronology for details).

As the quarter opened, Israel was allowing Palestinian fishermen to go within 6 naut. mi. off shore. In 3 incidents, on 5/17, 5/26, and 5/30, Israeli naval forces opened fire on Palestinian fishing boats, injuring several fishermen, one of whom died of his wounds 10 days after the attack (6/5). On 5/28, Egyptian naval forces opened fire on Palestinian fishermen off the coast of Rafah, injuring 1. In addition to the incidents that caused casualties, the Israeli navy fired at Palestinian fishing vessels on 16 other occasions. On 7/6, 2 days prior to launching OPE, Israel reduced Gaza's fishing zone to 3 naut. mi.

During Ramadan (6/28–7/28), Israeli authorities permitted West Bank residents over 60 years of age to enter **Jerusalem** without special permits, while women of all ages and men above 40 were allowed to enter without permits on Fridays. Women and men under 35 needed to obtain permits, up to a maximum of 20,000 Palestinians per day. On the 1st Friday of Ramadan (7/4), Israeli security forces restricted access to the al-Aqsa mosque compound to male Jerusalem ID-holders aged over 50 and women of all ages, as well as West Bank residents with entry permits.

Regular Protests in the Occupied Territories

The peaceful protests against the occupation, settlements, and the separation wall that have become a regular feature of West Bank life

continued this quarter. Palestinians and Israelis, as well as internationals, took part in such protests at localities nr. Ramallah (Bil'in, Nabi Salih, Ni'lin), Bethlehem (al-Ma'sara), and Qalqilya (Kafir Qaddum). IDF soldiers routinely resorted to the use of force (tear gas, rubber-coated bullets, and live ammunition) to disperse the protesters, often causing serious injuries, including in Bil'in (5/30, 6/6, 6/13, 7/25), Nabi Salih (7/18, 8/1), Ni'lin (5/30, 6/6, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1), and Kafir Qaddum (5/16, 8/1, 8/8).

Settler-Related Violence

Reflecting the steadily increasing tension and violence, the number of incidents between settlers and Palestinians also rose this quarter. The number of settler attacks causing injury to Palestinians and damage to Palestinian-owned property and agricultural assets reached 100 this quarter (up from 97 and 88 in the 2 previous quarters, respectively). Such attacks included a fatal shooting at Hawara checkpoint (7/25); nonfatal shootings in al-Bireh (6/22), nr. Hebron (7/3), and nr. Bethlehem (7/31); shootings that caused no injuries nr. Ramallah (6/16, 6/22); physical assaults causing injury nr. Ramallah (5/23, 5/27, 7/6), nr. Hebron (6/1, 6/14, 7/5, 8/7), and in Bayt Hanina (7/25); stoning of vehicles nr. Nablus (6/14), nr. Salfit (6/15), nr. Nablus (6/15), nr. Jaba' (7/2), and nr. Bethlehem (7/6); the destruction of some 150 fruit trees as well as agricultural land nr. Bethlehem (5/16, 6/24, 6/29), nr. Salfit (5/19), nr. Nablus (5/26, 6/4, 7/2), nr. Hebron (6/30), and nr. Jenin (7/5). In addition, on 8/14, a Jewish settler ran over and killed a Palestinian man nr. Salfit.

There were also 54 reported attacks by Palestinians on settlers, up steeply from 19 and 22 during the 2 previous quarters. These included a shooting attack (5/30) on a car nr. al-Ram, causing no injuries, as well as several



Palestinians protesting the assault on Gaza clash with Israeli soldiers outside the Beit El settlement near Ramallah. (9 July, Abbas Momani/AFP/Getty Images)

incidents of vehicle stoning. On 6/3 and 6/6, cars carrying Israeli settlers were stoned on 2 separate occasions in the Hebron governorate, causing damage but no injuries. From 6/18 to 6/21, there were 4 separate incidents in which Palestinians threw stones and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles in the Ramallah and Jerusalem governorates, causing damage but no injuries.

Demolitions and Confiscations

As a result of OPE, approximately 18,000 homes were either destroyed or severely damaged in the Gaza Strip. Another 37,650 housing units were damaged but remained habitable. As the quarter ended, some 365,000 Palestinians were internally displaced and living in govt. shelters, UNRWA schools, or with host families. Aside from the large-scale destruction caused by OPE in Gaza, 124 structures, including 11 in East Jerusalem, were demolished by Israel this quarter, displacing 214 Palestinians. The figures are similar to those of the previous quarter when 120 structures were demolished, displacing 246.

The most salient incidents this quarter included a series of demolitions (5/20) in 6 residential sites in Area C east of Jerusalem, in or nr. the E1 settlement area. In total, 13 structures

were demolished, displacing 37 people, including 23 children. On the same day, Israeli forces bulldozed 8 dunams (4 dunams = 1 acre) of land nr. Nahalin, uprooting approximately 600 fruit trees belonging to a Palestinian family. IDF forces also demolished 20 Palestinian-owned structures in the n. Jordan Valley village of Jiftlik (5/21). On 6/18, the IDF demolished 7 houses across the s. West Bank, leaving 7 families homeless: 3 in al-Khadir nr. Bethlehem and 4 nr. Hebron. On 6/17–18, Israeli forces demolished 14 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C of the West Bank, displacing 42; 11 of the structures were in the Hebron governorate.

This quarter also saw Israel resume a policy of punitive home demolitions that had officially ended in 2005 (see QU in *JPS* 136). On 6/20, the IDF demolished the home of the exiled Hamas political bureau mbr., Saleh al-Aroui, in 'Aroua village nr. Ramallah. Aroui, who lives in Turkey, was subsequently implicated by Israel in the case of the kidnapped and murdered Israeli teenagers. In Hebron, on 7/1, Israeli forces partially demolished the houses of Amer Abu Aysha and Marwan Qawasmeh, 2 named suspects in the same case. Finally, on 7/2, the IDF destroyed a house nr. Hebron belonging to Ziad Awad, charged with the 4/14 killing of a high-ranking Israeli intelligence police officer. The govt. said that the demolition was intended to deter others from such actions.

In addition, Israeli forces also demolished an unauthorized structure in the Givat Assaf settlement outpost nr. Beit El on 5/16.

INTRA-PALESTINIAN DYNAMICS

Forming a National Unity Government

As the previous quarter was coming to an end, reps. of the PLO and Hamas announced a historic

reconciliation deal on 4/23, ending the 7-year rift between Fatah and Hamas. On the domestic front, Palestinian energies this quarter focused primarily on the formation of a national unity govt.

Despite broad agreement between the parties, a couple of major differences remained that threatened to derail the process. At a press conference in Gaza on 5/27, reps. of Hamas and Fatah announced that they had finalized a list of independent technocrats to comprise the PA cabinet. That same day, the Hamas-run cabinet in the Gaza Strip held what it described in a statement as its 343d and last meeting, in preparation for handing over “full responsibility” to a Palestinian unity govt. Two days later (5/29), Abbas announced that the unity govt. headed by PM Rami Hamdallah would maintain current PA policies. However, on 5/30, senior Hamas leader Shaykh Hassan Yousef said in an interview with al-Quds TV that disputes over the FM's portfolio had delayed the formation of the new govt., with Hamas rejecting Abbas's insistence on Riyadh al-Maliki as FM and the dissolution of the Prisoners' Affairs Ministry. The same day, Hamas spokesperson Abu Zuhri stated that the disputes had delayed the announcement of the unity govt.

By 6/2, Fatah and Hamas had resolved to replace the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs with a comm. headed by PM Hamdallah and to allow al-Maliki to stay on as FM. Abbas swore in the ministers of the new national unity govt. in Ramallah on that day and the 18-mbr. cabinet (including a secretary with ministerial rank but no portfolio) took the oath of office in a televised ceremony, with the 4 Gaza-based ministers participating remotely after being denied passage to the West Bank by Israel. Abbas indicated that the govt.'s principal task would be to organize legislative and presidential elections within 6 mos., preparations for which would begin immediately.

The Unity Government's Early Challenges

The new Palestinian unity govt. faced 2 immediate problems: (1) active Israeli opposition; and (2) payroll for govt. employees in the Gaza Strip.

Israel voiced its opposition to the unity govt. from the moment it was announced. On 5/30, for example, an official told the media that if the deal went through, Abbas would be “accountable” for “violence” emanating from the Gaza Strip. Netanyahu also urged (5/30) the “international community not to rush to recognize a Palestinian govt. which has Hamas as part of it and which is dependent on Hamas.” The next day (5/31), *Haaretz* reported that Israel had warned Abbas that once a unity govt. was sworn in, other than for security coordination all contact with the PA would be severed and the transfer of tax revenue that Israel collects on the PA’s behalf would cease.

In a move seen as reflecting the Israeli govt.’s interest in maintaining a stable PA as well as security coordination, Israel transferred over NIS 500 m. to the PA in regular tax revenues on the day of the swearing-in ceremony (6/2), and Israel’s security cabinet convened to study possible responses to formation of the new govt., reportedly including plans for the annexation of some West Bank settlement blocs. After the meeting, Netanyahu’s office issued a statement saying Israel would work against the inclusion of Hamas candidates in the planned Palestinian elections and would not negotiate with the Palestinians as long as a Hamas-backed unity govt. was in power.

On 6/3, PLO Executive Comm. mbr. Hanna Amira said that in response to the formation of the unity govt., Israel had notified the PA of the following sanctions: the revocation of select PA officials’ VIP status, a “reduction” in tax revenue

transfers, and further travel restrictions between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The disappearance (6/12) of the 3 teenage settlers in the West Bank and the subsequent Israeli security crackdown (OBK) purportedly targeting Hamas complicated matters significantly. As the IDF raids and closures proceeded across the West Bank, Netanyahu said (6/19) that he expected Abbas to dissolve the Palestinian national unity govt. Hamas officials, meanwhile, urged an intifada in response to the West Bank operation, and denounced Israeli-PA security coordination in light of the arrest of Hamas mbrs. by PA security forces. As tension also escalated between the IDF and Gaza-based armed Palestinian groups, the Israeli govt.’s focus shifted from undermining Hamas’s role in the new unity govt. to its large-scale military attack against the organization launched under the banner of OPE.

No sooner had the national unity govt. been sworn in than it was confronted by a crisis regarding the payment of public sector salaries in the Gaza Strip. Two days after the swearing-in ceremony, the PA had announced (6/4) that it would be depositing govt. employees’ salaries into their accounts. However, only PA govt. employees who had been hired prior to the 2007 advent of the Hamas administration in Gaza were paid. Because of the strings attached to the PA’s own funds, largely supplied by foreign donors, the more than 25,000 post-2007 govt. hires in the Gaza Strip who were expecting to have their salaries covered by the unity govt. remained unpaid in order for the PA not to contravene the stipulations of its financial sponsors (no funds to Hamas). Coming on the heels of mos. of late or partial pay, this measure provoked outrage among public servants hired under the Hamas govt.; violence erupted on the streets and after clashes in various parts of the Strip, the Gaza police closed the banks and

their ATMs. Clashes persisted through the next day (6/5), with PA security forces spokesperson Adnan Damiri accusing Hamas police of preventing PA civil servants from withdrawing their salaries and Hamas protesting that its officers had intervened to restore order. Meanwhile, discussions on finding a solution to the problem went on in Qatar where Hamas leader Haniyeh announced (6/5) that the Qatari govt. had pledged to help pay the salaries of Hamas-appointed employees. Following the banks' regular weekend closure, Hamas-affiliated police kept the banks closed on 6/8–9, as PA employees and other residents of Gaza gathered to protest the unity govt.'s failure to manage the payroll crisis. Banking services in the Gaza Strip finally resumed on 6/12 as the spokesperson for the new unity govt., Ehab Bseiso, announced that Hamas-appointed civil servants would be paid thanks to "the formation of a special fund" of \$20 m. which, the Qatari PM had promised PM Hamdallah, would cover salaries for the 3 mos. from 5/2014 through 7/2014.

When employees of the Hamas-run govt. had still not been paid 2 weeks later, Gaza's govt. ministries and other public institutions declared a general strike on 6/26. Later, a senior Hamas official revealed (6/29) that Qatar had unsuccessfully attempted to transfer the money and that the national unity govt. was still looking for a "mechanism" through which to have the funds transferred. Tension continued to climb and on 7/5 Hamas stated that to "prevent security chaos and solve the crisis of salaries" (Ma'an News) and after consultations with nationalist and Islamist factions in the Gaza Strip, the formation of a new govt. was being considered, one which would have an "all-faction leadership" as opposed to a leadership of independent technocrats in line with the prescriptions of the international community. As banks closed again on 7/7, the salary crisis in

Gaza was soon overshadowed by the launch of Israel's OPE on 7/8.

During the assault on Gaza, the unity govt. stood by helplessly as individual factions represented the Palestinian side in the Egyptian-mediated negotiations. Speaking from Gaza, however, Dep. PM Ziad Abu 'Amr stated (8/15) that his govt. would take responsibility for reconstruction in the territory, marking the 1st time that Israel had allowed a mbr. of the unity govt. to enter Gaza from the West Bank.

PALESTINIAN OPINION

The following data was excerpted from a poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) on 5–7 June 2014. Results are based on a survey of 1,270 men and women from the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. The poll, the 52d in a series, was taken from PSR's website at <http://www.pcpsr.org/>.

Conducted shortly after the new Palestinian unity govt. was sworn in by Pres. Abbas on 6/2, this quarter's poll focused on public reaction to that development. Indicating a good deal of optimism, a majority of respondents (some 62.2%) expected reconciliation to continue and succeed while only 3.5% were certain it would fail. With regards to the implications involved, a majority (59.3%) did not see reconciliation as closing the door on Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, and only 20% favored disarming Gaza's armed groups following the national unity govt.'s formation.

Asked to contrast the strategies of Hamas and Fatah, 42% of respondents said Hamas's was the best way to end Israel's occupation and build a Palestinian state while only 38.7% opted for the strategy pursued by Pres. Abbas and Fatah. Among the 3 potential presidential candidates

proposed (Marwan Barghouti, Haniyeh, and Abbas), Haniyeh scored 33.7%, up from 28.7% the previous quarter, Barghouti garnered the most support despite a 0.5% drop from 36.2% to 35.7%, and Abbas dropped from 30.1% to 27.9%.

The distribution of Palestinians doubting the feasibility of establishing an independent Palestinian state in light of Israeli settlement expansion broke down as follows: 60.6% expressed skepticism that a Palestinian state could be created, versus 36.9% who said it still was possible (comparable figures for the previous quarter were 57.3% and 38.5%, respectively).

1. What expectations do you have for the future of reconciliation? Will it continue and succeed or will it fail leading to a return to the split?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly will succeed	7.2%	3.6%	13.3%
b. Will succeed	55.0%	51.7%	60.7%
c. Will not succeed	30.2%	36.5%	19.5%
d. Certainly will not succeed	3.5%	4.2%	2.3%
e. Don't know/No answer	4.1%	4.0%	4.2%

2. In your view, does the implementation of reconciliation mean closing the door for Palestinian-Israeli negotiations?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly yes	5.4%	4.2%	7.4%
b. Yes	32.0%	29.4%	36.5%
c. No	52.7%	57.8%	44.1%
d. Certainly no	6.6%	4.5%	10.2%
e. Don't know/No answer	3.3%	4.1%	1.8%

3. The Palestinian Authority in the West Bank has dissolved all armed groups that belonged to political factions or parties. Now after reconciliation, under what conditions do you think armed groups in the Gaza Strip should be dissolved?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Only after signing a peace agreement with Israel	15.3%	16.2%	13.9%
b. Only after the ending of the siege and blockade of the Gaza Strip	15.9%	17.0%	14.1%
c. Only after the upcoming legislative and presidential elections	11.6%	11.2%	12.3%
d. Now, having formed a reconciliation govt.	19.2%	17.3%	22.4%
e. I oppose the dissolution of the armed groups in the Gaza Strip under any circumstances	32.9%	31.5%	35.4%
f. Don't know/No answer	5.0%	6.7%	2.1%

4. When thinking about the experience of Hamas and its former govt. under Ismail Haniyeh, and the experience of Fatah and Pres. Abbas and the way the 2 sides deal with Israel, in your view whose way is the best to end the Israeli occupation and build a Palestinian state: Hamas's way or Abbas's way?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly Hamas's	21.5%	19.2%	25.6%
b. Hamas's	20.5%	20.8%	19.9%
c. Abbas's	24.3%	23.1%	26.5%
d. Certainly Abbas's	14.4%	13.7%	15.7%
e. Don't know/No answer	19.2%	23.3%	12.3%

5. If new presidential elections were to take place today, and the competition was between Marwan Barghouti, Ismail Haniyeh, and Mahmud Abbas, for whom would you vote?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Marwan Barghouti	35.7%	37.0%	33.7%
b. Ismail Haniyeh	33.7%	30.0%	39.0%
c. Mahmud Abbas	27.9%	28.5%	27.1%
d. Don't know/No answer	2.7%	4.5%	0.2%

6. Some believe that the 2-state solution, an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel, is no longer viable due to settlement expansion while others believe that it is still viable today as settlements can be dismantled or evacuated when an agreement is reached. What do you think?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly no longer viable	24.2%	21.1%	29.5%
b. The 2-state solution is no longer viable	36.4%	38.9%	32.0%
c. The 2-state solution remains viable today	28.2%	29.4%	26.0%
d. Certainly remains viable today	8.7%	8.2%	9.6%
e. Don't know/No answer	2.6%	2.4%	2.8%

officials mediated between reps. of Israel and Palestinian factions during indirect negotiations in Cairo. Following the military coup that ousted Muslim Brotherhood-backed pres. Mohamed Morsi in 7/2013, and the subsequent marginalization of the Muslim Brotherhood under the post-coup govt., the Egyptian govt.'s relationship with Hamas was upended, leading to a new dynamic of hostility and mutual suspicion. Thus, in stark contrast to Egypt's posture during OPD in 11/2012, the govt. of Pres. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi approached its mediation role from the vantage point of considerable and long-term hostility toward Hamas and overall sympathy for Israel's security policies. Still, as Hamas leaders were all too aware, an end to the blockade required Egyptian cooperation, and thus Egypt was the mainstay of efforts to secure a cease-fire, although its role shifted as the conflict escalated.

Throughout the assault, Egypt attempted to broker a number of temporary cease-fires. Starting soon after the IDF launched OPE on 7/8, the 1st proposal presented to Israel and Hamas on 7/14 called for: a 48-hour truce, mediated talks in Cairo, and a limited opening of border crossings. The following morning, Israel accepted the proposal after its security cabinet discussions, but the initiative ultimately failed with the rejection of the proposed text by Hamas's al-Qassam Brigades. Spokesperson Abu Zuhri said (7/16) Hamas was simply ignored by Egyptian mediators, a statement echoed by a senior PLO official who said "the Egyptians coordinated the initiative with Abbas and ignored Gaza" (*Haaretz*, 7/16).

This early Egyptian proposal continued to be a reference for subsequent efforts directed at securing an end to hostilities. Secy. of State Kerry met with Pres. al-Sisi in Cairo on 7/22, commenting afterward that "there is a framework available to end the violence, and that framework

FRONTLINE STATES

EGYPT

Egypt played a significant role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this quarter, especially during Israel's assault on Gaza, when Egyptian

was the Egyptian initiative.” Later, following several short-lived or aborted humanitarian pauses sponsored by the UN and the IRC, the 1st 72-hour truce drawn up by Egypt went into effect on 8/5 with a view to facilitating further mediated talks in Cairo. A 2d 72-hour cease-fire proposed by Egypt was also observed by all parties (8/11–13), as was a subsequent 5-day extension. At that point, it became clear that an eventual breakthrough would occur thanks to Egyptian mediation, which both Israel and Hamas accepted, even though the latter also sought to involve Qatar and Turkey. Cairo’s role was repeatedly endorsed by the U.S. administration, through Secy. of State Kerry and also through the dispatch of special envoy Frank Lowenstein (8/6).

The security situation in the Sinai Peninsula remained volatile this quarter, with numerous clashes between security forces and jihadist factions based in the region. Suspected Salafi jihadist gunmen launched attacks on Egyptian security forces on 5/28, 7/13, 7/19 and 7/25, killing a total of 26, including 7 civilians. The Egyptian authorities continued with their pushback against the jihadists, deploying a new infantry battalion nr. Taba (6/11), and killing 21 militants in various operations (7/25 and 7/29).

On 5/26, polls opened for Egypt’s presidential elections in Egypt. Al-Sisi had stepped down as commander of the Egyptian military on 3/26 in order to run, and leading up to the vote, he was widely expected to win by a large margin. Al-Sisi’s only opponent was Hamdeen Sabahi of the left-wing Egypt Popular Current Party. On 5/29 judicial sources confirmed al-Sisi’s victory, stating that he had won 93.3% of the vote while Sabahi had secured just 3%.

JORDAN

This quarter saw the intensification of tension between Jordan and Israel as disturbances

continued at Haram al-Sharif in the wake of official discussions to declare Israeli sovereignty over the contested site, and as a result of Israel’s assault on the Gaza Strip. On 6/4, Jordan lodged an official note of protest with the Israeli Foreign Ministry over Israel’s restrictions on Muslim worshippers’ access and the repeated provocations of far-right Jewish activists at Haram al-Sharif.

When Israel began OPE, the Jordanian govt. resorted to mostly diplomatic channels to express criticism, with officials condemning the aggression and calling for a cease-fire on a variety of platforms. The day after the operation’s launch, Jordanian govt. spokesperson Mohammad Momani said (7/9) Jordan “condemns the military aggression that Israel has launched in the Gaza Strip” and called for the “immediate halt” of the operation, which he described as “barbaric.” Days later, on a visit to Washington, King Abdallah told (7/11) U.S. VP Joe Biden that the “dangerous escalation” would compromise efforts to achieve a 2-state solution. On 7/14, Abdallah spoke with UN Secy.-Gen. Ban, and his spokesperson said the 2 men had discussed “developments in the Gaza Strip” with the Jordanian king warning “against their repercussions for the entire region.” Soon after the start of the ground invasion in Gaza, Jordan, acting as a nonpermanent mbr.-state, requested an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council (UNSC) on 7/18, where mbrs. expressed “serious concern about the growing number of casualties.” Nine days later, the UNSC agreed on a Jordanian-drafted presidential statement (7/27) calling for “an immediate and unconditional humanitarian cease-fire.”

Away from the diplomatic scene, there were significant Jordanian demonstrations against the Israeli assault on Gaza and the perceived lack of official Jordanian action to stop it. On 7/20, hundreds of mainly Islamist protesters gathered nr. the Israeli Embassy, chanting

“Death to Israel” and burning flags. Then on 8/8, more than 15,000 Muslim Brotherhood supporters held a pro-Hamas rally in Amman. Two days later, King Abdallah condemned Israel’s attack in the daily newspaper, *Al-Ghad* (8/10), using stronger language than he had done previously and urging the world community to act to end the occupation. In response to criticism that Jordan’s stance on OPE was insufficiently robust, the monarch said, “We prefer to work actively and deliberately to end the Israeli aggression.”

LEBANON

For a few days in mid-7/2014, the Israeli-Lebanese border heated in parallel with the escalation of OPE in Gaza. Between 7/11 and 7/14, there were repeated incidents of rocket fire from s. Lebanon into Israel and of return artillery fire by the IDF, none of them reportedly causing injuries or damage. A total of 8 rockets were fired from the Lebanese side of the border in that period (2 on 7/11, 3 on 7/12, 2 on 7/13, and 1 on 7/14) causing no damage or injuries and the Israeli army responded using artillery toward “the source of fire,” which remained unidentified as no group or individual claimed responsibility. On 7/13, Lebanese security forces arrested a man suspected of firing the rockets on 7/11, but there were no indications of his affiliation to a specific group.

The 6-year term of Pres. Michael Suleiman ended on 5/25 without parliament able to agree on electing his successor. The Lebanese Constitution requires the presence of two-thirds, or 86, of the 128 mbrs. of parliament for a presidential vote, a quorum that was never met on the dates of the scheduled vote on successive occasions during the quarter (6/18, 7/2, 7/23, and 8/12). The UNSC addressed the burgeoning crisis in a unanimous declaration

(5/30) expressing “disappointment and concern” at the failure to elect a new president. On 6/4, during a 1-day visit to Beirut, U.S. Secy. of State John Kerry described the political stalemate as “deeply troubling.”

Lebanon continued to be affected by spillover from the Syrian civil war. After numerous incidents this quarter—notably 3 suicide bombings targeting security or police forces (6/20, 6/23, 6/25) that killed 2 and wounded 31; a grenade attack injuring 4 in Tripoli on 7/2; a 5-day pitched battle between Lebanese troops and fighters from al-Nusra Front and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in 8/2014, which claimed the lives of 19 soldiers, an estimated 120 militants, and 42 civilians in the n. border town of Aarsal adjacent to Syria; as well as the kidnapping of 36 Lebanese army soldiers—the U.S. Amb. to Lebanon David Hale announced (8/14) that Washington would soon deliver additional weaponry to the Lebanese army. The weapons, mostly armed aircraft, to be paid for by Saudi Arabia, were being supplied in recognition of the growing threats the country faced from “extremist groups” that had crossed its borders.

As a mbr. of a group of senior clergy accompanying Pope Francis on his Holy Land pilgrimage, Cardinal Beshara Rai, head of Lebanon’s largest Maronite Christian denomination, became (5/25) the 1st Lebanese religious leader to ever visit Israel. Critics in Lebanon viewed the cleric’s visit as implying normalization with Israel when the 2 countries remain formally at war.

SYRIA

Tensions increased on the Israeli-Syrian border this quarter. Between 6/2 and 6/5, the IDF and unknown, armed Syrians traded fire across the border, with mortar shells lobbed into the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights from

inside Syria and the IDF responding with antitank missiles. Following the back and forth, the IDF said that the mortars were likely inadvertent spillover from the civil war.

Then on 6/22, there was a serious upsurge in tension when an antitank projectile fired from Syrian territory into the Israel-occupied Golan Heights hit a vehicle being driven by a Defense Ministry contractor, killing the man's 14-year-old son and wounding 2 other civilians. This was the 1st time an Israeli citizen had died as a result of violence at the border since the start of Syria's civil war, for which Israel's DM Moshe Ya'alon immediately held the Syrian govt. responsible. In response, the IDF pounded military outposts on Syrian territory, and that night Israeli fighter jets struck 9 Syrian military targets, causing 10 military casualties, as reported by Syrian sources the next day.

After several weeks of calm, there were 2 more major border incidents this quarter. On both 7/7 and 7/13, a projectile fired into the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights from inside Syrian territory provoked IDF gunfire and artillery fire in response. None of these incidents caused damage or injuries.

As the civil war raged on, Syrian authorities proceeded with a planned presidential election. Syrians in govt.-controlled areas went to the polls on 6/3 to choose between current Pres. Bashar al-Asad and 2 parliament-approved candidates, Hassan al-Nouri and Maher Hajar. State Dept. dep. spokesperson Marie Harf said (6/3) that the U.S. saw the election as "a disgrace" and that Pres. al-Asad "has no more credibility today than he did yesterday." French FM Laurent Fabius called it "a tragic farce." The following day, Syria's parliament speaker, Jihad Lahan, announced that the turnout was 73.42% and that Pres. al-Asad had secured another 7-year term with 88.7% of the vote.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

The Arab League as an organization did not play as significant a role during Israel's assault on Gaza and the corollary cease-fire negotiations as individual mbr.-states. On the day OPE began, Arab League Secy.-Gen. Nabil al-'Arabi stated (7/8) that the organization was calling on the UNSC to hold an emergency session to discuss Israel's assault. One week into the assault, on 7/14, Arab League FMs met in Cairo for discussions "aimed at finding a solution to stop the shedding of Palestinian civilians' blood and to formulate a common Arab stance on the issue." Following the meeting, Egypt's Foreign Ministry unveiled an initiative to halt fighting, notably a cease-fire to begin the next day, followed by talks in Cairo, a proposal the league welcomed. On 7/16, Secy.-Gen. al-'Arabi held talks with Pres. Abbas in Cairo but after the failure of Egypt's 1st cease-fire proposal, the Arab League took an even lesser role as an institution.

On 7/25, Secy. of State Kerry met with al-'Arabi, but their discussions on the situation in Gaza produced no particular result. At a meeting of the league in Cairo on 8/11, while a 72-hour cease-fire was being observed in Gaza, Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erakat called on the league to coordinate aid deliveries to Palestinians in Gaza and to work with the EU, the UN, and other world powers to end the blockade. On 8/12, Saudi FM Prince Saud al-Faisal told a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah—also attended by Palestinian PM Hamdallah—that "Israel has to realize that peace is the only solution for its survival." Al-Faisal also criticized Muslims for being divided and for failing to prevent Israel's attack.

TURKEY

Turkey's relations with Israel came under further strain this quarter, with familiar

tensions aggravated by official Turkish statements during OPE. The quarter began with attention returning to the main point of contention between the 2 countries: the Israeli attack on the *Mavi Marmara*, a ship in a Gaza-bound aid flotilla, in 5/2010. However, last quarter's diplomatic progress was not undone by this quarter's legal proceedings, which were primarily a Turkish internal affair. On 5/22, a Turkish NGO, the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), announced that it would oppose what it called an imminent Israeli offer to provide compensation to the victims of the attack. A lawyer for IHH, Ugur Yildirim, said that the IHH rejected the proposed condition that court cases against Israeli officials involved in the attack would have to be dropped. On 5/26, Istanbul's Seventh High Criminal Court released arrest warrants for 4 senior Israeli officers over their role in the 2010 raid: former IDF chief of staff Gabi Ashkenazi, former Navy chief Eliezer Marom, former Military Intelligence chief Amos Yadlin, and former Naval Intelligence chief Avishai Levy. The court also passed the international arrest warrants on to Interpol, even though the agency is not obligated to publicize these or call on other countries to extradite the wanted officials. Despite this development, Israeli DM Ya'alon said the following day (5/27) that he was hopeful that "affairs with Turkey will work out." Ya'alon dismissed the arrest warrants as part of "a campaign taking place for internal Turkish reasons."

As tensions on the ground in Israel and the oPt heightened and the situation escalated into a full Israeli assault on Gaza, Turkey's close relationship with Hamas came under international scrutiny. First, during OBK, IDF troops demolished (6/20) the West Bank home of Turkey-based political bureau al-Aroui

whom Israel suspected of involvement in organizing and financing the 3 teenage settlers' abduction. Once OPE was under way, Turkey continued to play the role of go-between for Hamas and international diplomats, lending behind-the-scenes support to Egyptian cease-fire efforts. Pres. Abbas went to Turkey for talks with PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan on 7/17, on the heels of a similar visit to Egypt's al-Sisi, and he also enlisted France's help (7/18) to lobby Turkey and Qatar to pressure Hamas into accepting the Egyptian-sponsored cease-fire proposal. On 7/24, Secy. of State Kerry reached out to FM Ahmet Davutoglu and on 8/1, Kerry called on Turkey once more to pressure Hamas into releasing an Israeli soldier that was presumed captured that morning.

Meanwhile, throughout the assault, the Turkish PM and other Turkish officials made numerous denunciations of OPE, with Erdogan calling for an end to the "cruelty" of the Gaza blockade and Pres. Abdullah Gul telling journalists in Ankara that an Israeli ground invasion would "plant seeds of hatred in the region" (7/11). The following week, Erdogan accused Israel of "using terrorism" in Gaza (7/14).

IRAN

P5+1 and the IAEA

Talks on Iran's nuclear program continued during the quarter with no signs of an imminent breakthrough as the countdown toward the 7/10 deadline approached. Going into the quarter, the major sticking points remained confined to the 3 main areas of the talks: the number of centrifuges used to enrich uranium; the status of the Arak heavy water reactor and the amount of weapons-grade plutonium it produces; and restrictions on IAEA inspectors' access to nuclear facilities. On 5/16, discussions between Iran and the P5+1 (the 5 mbrs. of the

UNSC + Germany) had ended in Vienna inconclusively, prompting Dep. Iranian FM Abbas Araghchi to say the talks had seen “no progress.” His assessment was confirmed by an unnamed U.S. official, who said that there had been “great difficulty” in moving toward a consensus, with “significant” differences in positions. Two days later, Araghchi announced (5/18) that the next round of talks would take place from 6/16 to 6/20.

In a completely separate development, following 2 days of negotiations in Tehran between International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iranian officials, the IAEA team announced (5/21) that it had agreed on 5 new transparency measures with Iran, including a probe into alleged previous efforts to develop atomic weapons. Shortly after the announcement, the IAEA published (5/23) a quarterly report that revealed Iran had cut its stockpile of higher-enriched uranium by around 80%, leaving Tehran with less than 90 pounds of the material, far below the amount that experts say would be needed to manufacture 1 bomb with further processing. (The amount of uranium necessary to form the core of a warhead varies by level of enrichment. For reference, the atomic bomb the U.S. dropped over Hiroshima on 8/6/1945 contained 141 pounds of enriched uranium.) The report also said Iran is meeting its other obligations.

A week prior to the new round of talks in 6/2014, Iranian and U.S. officials, including FM Araghchi, U.S. Dep. Secy. of State William Burns and Under Secy. of State Wendy Sherman, met (6/9) in Geneva for their 1st private discussions since the start of the talks in Vienna. The aim of the meeting was to break the logjam and facilitate the goal of a comprehensive agreement by the 7/20 deadline. Although “divergences remain,” Araghchi said after the

meeting, the discussions were “fruitful.” On 6/10, Iranian Pres. Hassan Rouhani said that Tehran would “do its best” to secure a deal over its disputed nuclear program. The new round of Iran-P5+1 talks began in Vienna as scheduled on 6/16 and wrapped up on 6/20 without evidence of substantial progress, but the parties agreed to reconvene on 7/2. Iran’s FM Mohammad Javad Zarif told a press conference after the talks that despite work having started on the wording of a final draft agreement, there were still “disagreements on basic issues.” He alleged that “in some cases the other party is not realistic.” Senior diplomats from the P5+1 met in Brussels (6/26) to discuss ways they could make progress before talks resumed one week later.

On 7/2, the negotiations in Vienna resumed, with no plans to break before the 7/20 deadline. On 7/15, FM Zarif said that it was unlikely a final agreement would be concluded by the end of the 6-mo. deadline, though negotiations were making progress. The following day, White House spokesperson Josh Earnest said that Pres. Obama and Secy. of State Kerry met to discuss the question of an extension. Earnest also described Iran’s track record on implementing the interim agreement as “surprisingly favorable.” Finally, on 7/18, and 2 days before the July 20 deadline, Iran and the P5+1 powers announced that they had agreed to extend nuclear talks until 11/24.

INTERNATIONAL

UNITED STATES

Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process

As the quarter began, the U.S.-led peace negotiations had broken down, and there was no sign that the White House was in a hurry to

resuscitate talks. The administration's main focus quickly shifted from the failed negotiations to managing a response to the formation of the Palestinian unity govt. and to the escalating violence in the oPt, culminating in OPE.

The U.S. govt. gave a cautious welcome to the new Palestinian govt., with U.S. State Dept. spokesperson Jen Psaki stating on 6/2 that the Obama administration would work with the unity govt., meaning that it would maintain its aid to the PA, which had averaged an annual \$400 m. since 2008. Psaki said that Kerry and Abbas had spoken on the phone, and that the Palestinian leader had assured the secy. of state that the new govt. and all of its ministers would be committed to the principles of nonviolence, recognition of the State of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements—obligatory assurances for the PA to maintain U.S. aid that is contingent on a series of limitations and restrictions, specifically, the annual provision tagged onto congressional appropriations bills since Hamas won the Palestinian elections in 2006 (see below). The most recent active provision with the relevant language was signed into law as part of an omnibus appropriation act on 1/17 stating that U.S. aid would be withheld if a new Palestinian power-sharing govt. was formed based on an agreement with Hamas, if a mbr. of Hamas was a part of such a govt., or if Hamas exercised “undue influence” over such a govt., with the proviso that the U.S. pres. may waive the restrictions if he certifies that the PA govt. and all its ministers have “publicly accepted” and complied with 2 principles: recognition of Israel and acceptance of all previous bilateral agreements. (See “Israel and the U.S. Congress” below.)

Also during this quarter, Martin Indyk, who had been specifically hired by Secy. of State Kerry for the purpose, resigned from his position as U.S. special envoy for Israeli-Palestinian

negotiations on 6/27, although the State Dept. indicated he would continue to be an adviser to Kerry, working “on the Obama administration’s efforts to help Israelis and Palestinians resolve their conflict.”

Israel and the U.S. Congress

After focusing much of its Israel-related attention on the negotiations surrounding Iran in the spring of 2014, this quarter saw Congress’s focus shift to the 2 burning issues of the period: the Palestinian unity govt. and Israel’s assault on the Gaza Strip (OPE).

Following the announcement of the 4/23 reconciliation deal between Fatah and Hamas and the 6/2 formation of the PA unity govt., there was a strong and popular sense in Congress that the issue of U.S. assistance to the Palestinians needed to be reexamined, if not completely overhauled. Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Comm. Ed Royce (R-CA) said (6/2) that “while the ‘unity govt.’ hides behind the façade of nonpartisan bureaucrats, it was only born out of support from Hamas—a terrorist organization that continues to call for Israel’s annihilation.” Later, Trent Franks (R-AZ), and the 20 other reps. who cosponsored his res., called (6/12) for a hold on aid to the Palestinians and for the PA to be classified as a foreign terrorist organization. On 7/31, Marco Rubio (R-FL) introduced a bill which would have reformed the way the U.S. provides aid to the Palestinians, notably via UNRWA and to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Other mbrs. of Congress argued a rival interpretation of existing law, like the bipartisan group of 88 senators who wrote (6/12) to Pres. Obama and described the unity govt. as “a serious setback to efforts to achieve peace.” Their letter stated that Hamas’s role in the formation of the govt. “undermined congressional support for U.S.

assistance to the Palestinians.” The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) welcomed the bipartisan letter, and described (6/5) the unity govt. as a “setback to peace.”

During OPE, as was the case with prior Israeli assaults on Gaza, vast majorities in Congress signed onto multiple letters and symbolic resolutions supporting Israel’s “right to self-defense” and condemning Hamas’s “indiscriminate” rocket fire. In total, there were 12 such measures introduced (4 of which passed), up from 2 during OPD in 2012 (both passed), and 5 during OCL in 2008–9 (2 passed). Of the 4 measures that passed, 2 were symbolic resolutions condemning rocket fire and affirming Israel’s right to defend itself. They were adopted in their respective chambers by unanimous consent. The House res. collected 166 cosponsors and passed on 7/11 while the Senate version passed on 7/17 with 78 cosponsors. The other 2 measures comprised a symbolic res. condemning Hamas in the Senate (passed 7/29 by unanimous consent), and a joint res. that approved a transfer of \$225 m. to Israel for its Iron Dome missile defense system. The joint res. passed both chambers on 8/1, Congress’s last day before its summer recess, by overwhelming majorities. It was signed into law on 8/4.

In addition to the various congressional resolutions, legislators showed their support for Israel in other ways. On 7/28, a bipartisan congressional delegation attended and spoke at a National Leadership Assembly for Israel gathering in Washington, organized by the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations. Those in attendance included Royce, incoming Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), chair of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa. Soon after, a congressional delegation visited Israel as guests of AIPAC.



In the southern Israeli city of Ashdod, an Iron Dome battery launches a missile designed to intercept and destroy incoming projectiles. (8 July, David Buimovitch/AFP/Getty Images)

Egypt

Following the election of al-Sisi in Egypt’s presidential elections, the White House urged (6/4) the new head of state to adopt democratic reforms, and expressed concerns about the “restrictive political environment.” However, when Secy. of State Kerry visited Cairo on 6/22, a different tack was on display. During the trip, State Dept. officials revealed that the U.S. had released \$575 m. in military aid to Egypt, which had been frozen since the military’s removal of former pres. Morsi. The officials said the aid had been released to Egyptian authorities after Congress had given it the green light. Also promised were 10 Apache attack helicopters, for use against insurgents in the Sinai Peninsula.

Kerry said the delivery would “come very, very soon.”

Subsequently, during OPE, the U.S. relied heavily on Egypt to advance cease-fire efforts, with Kerry reaching out to Cairo as early as 7/10, and continuing to endorse other Egyptian measures designed to secure a cessation of hostilities.

Also this quarter, the Senate confirmed (6/26) the appointment of Robert Beecroft as U.S. amb. to Egypt.

Syria

This quarter, mbrs. of Congress and the Obama administration took further steps toward arming the Syrian rebels in their fight against Pres. Bashar al-Asad and the Syrian govt.

On 5/22, Sen. Carl Levin announced to reporters that the Senate’s Armed Services Comm. supported military training and equipment for Syrian rebels by including a provision to that effect in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2015 (see S. 2410 of 6/2/14 at congressionalmonitor.org for more). The provision would authorize U.S. forces to travel to Jordan to train “vetted” mbrs. of the Free Syrian Army and other select rebel groups. Less than 1 week later, in a speech at the West Point Military Academy (5/28), Pres. Obama confirmed that his administration favored increased assistance to the Syrian opposition while also articulating concerns about the nature of the disparate opposition groups. “In helping those who fight for the right of all Syrians to choose their own future,” the U.S. pres. said, “we also push back against the growing number of extremists who find safe-haven in the chaos.”

Four weeks later, the Obama administration asked (6/26) Congress to approve \$500 m. to train and equip vetted Syria rebels. National Security Council spokesperson Caitlin Hayden

indicated that the aid would “help defend the Syrian people, stabilize areas under opposition control, facilitate the provision of essential services, counter terrorist threats, and promote conditions for a negotiated settlement” (*Washington Post*, Reuters, et al., 6/27).

On 7/17, the Senate Appropriations Comm. endorsed the \$500 m. proposal, but conditioned the transfer on congressional approval of the administration’s strategy and “appropriate vetting” of select rebel groups.

Iran

As the Obama administration continued its push for a diplomatic resolution of Iran’s disputed nuclear program, in the framework of the P5+1 talks, many mbrs. of Congress kept up the pressure for oversight of any potential deal, especially regarding sanctions (see Iran under “Regional Affairs” above). On 7/9, a bipartisan letter initiated by Royce and the ranking mbr. of the House Foreign Affairs Comm. Eliot Engel (D-NY) and signed by 344 legislators, was delivered to the U.S. pres., urging him to consult with Congress on the matter. Signatories pointed out that notwithstanding a deal, concerns would still remain over Tehran’s ballistic missile program and its support for “international terrorism” and made clear their concern for congressional approval of any sanctions relief granted to Iran.

Following the extension of the P5+1 talks to the new deadline of 11/24, Under Secy. of State Wendy Sherman assured (7/29) a Senate Foreign Relations Comm. panel that the administration would “consult Congress along the way.” Comm. chair Robert Menendez (D-NJ) told Sherman that he was as “skeptical” of “the Iranians’ sincerity” then as he had been “6 mos. ago.” With AIPAC’s backing, Menendez had introduced (12/19/13) and supported a bill that would have increased and

expanded sanctions on Iran had it violated the 6-mo. interim deal signed in 11/2013.

Meanwhile, Congress also took action to destabilize Hizballah this quarter. The House Foreign Affairs Comm. adopted (6/26) the Hezbollah [*sic*] International Financing Prevention Act of 2014 (H.R. 4411), introduced by Reps. Mark Meadows (R-NC) and Brad Schneider (D-IL) on 4/7. The bill, slapping sanctions on foreign financial institutions that knowingly financed Hizballah activities, collected 313 cosponsors, and passed in the House (7/22) by a vote of 404-0.

RUSSIA

Prior to the Israeli assault on Gaza, Russia stayed largely uninvolved in matters relating to Israel and the Palestinians although it conducted several meetings with high-ranking Palestinian officials. Like most govts. around the world, the Russian govt. endorsed (6/3) the Palestinian unity govt. once it was sworn in by Pres. Abbas. On 6/12, Palestinian amb. to Russia Faed Mustafa met in Moscow with Pres. Vladimir Putin's Middle East envoy Mikhail Bogdanov and with the Russian Foreign Ministry's director for MENA affairs Sergey Vershinin. Following their discussions, Bogdanov reiterated Russia's pledge to continue working with all international actors to reach a just solution for the Palestinian question based on internationally-binding resolutions and international law. On a 3-day trip to Moscow later that mo., Pres. Abbas met for discussions with Russian PM Dmitry Medvedev (6/25) and also received an honorary degree from the Russian Diplomatic Academy. Prior to their meeting in which the 2 leaders discussed Israel's security crackdown in the West Bank (OBK) and recognizing the State of Palestine, Fatah official Nabil Shaath had commented, "we will discuss with Russian officials a strategic vision to end the current impasse."

During OPE, Moscow played a low-key role, staying updated in conversations with Israeli and Palestinian leaders and issuing statements urging restraint, while remaining very much on the periphery of diplomatic efforts by the U.S., UN, and regional actors such as Egypt and Qatar. On 7/10, Israeli PM Netanyahu requested a phone conversation with Pres. Putin, who urged an end to the violence as soon as possible. On 7/21, the chmn. of the Foreign Affairs Comm. of the Federation Council of Russia, Mikhail Margelov, said Moscow stood ready to "facilitate the peace process at the bilateral level and within international organizations." He added that, according to his sources in Jerusalem, Israel had "no final plan of action" but instead would simply "react" to what Hamas did. After another conversation with Netanyahu on 7/23, Pres. Putin stressed that there was "no alternative to cease-fire and a political settlement." Responding to the growing civilian death toll, including the attack on the UN school in Bayt Hanun, on 7/25 the Russian Foreign Ministry called for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

EUROPEAN UNION

There was no significant new EU initiative with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this quarter and official reactions to events on the ground consisted of statements rather than any involvement of substance.

The EU welcomed the formation of the Palestinian unity govt., and its foreign affairs chief Catherine Ashton hailed the move (6/4) as an "important step." She added that the EU's "engagement with the new Palestinian govt." would be based on the latter's adherence to "policies and commitments" that had long shaped EU and Quartet demands regarding Palestinian political representation: nonviolence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements.

After the disappearance of the 3 teenage settlers (6/12) and the subsequent IDF crackdown on Hamas in the West Bank, the EU condemned (6/28) the incident and also urged Israel to operate with restraint in its search for the missing youths and their abductors. After the launch of OPE in Gaza, the EU's response continued in the same vein. Ashton's office issued a statement on 7/8 condemning the "indiscriminate fire" by Gaza-based "militant groups" but also deploring "the growing number of civilian casualties, reportedly among them children, caused by Israeli retaliatory fire." A statement published on 7/22 after a meeting of the 28 EU FMs in Brussels was much more sympathetic to Israel: the statement condemned "the indiscriminate firing of rockets into Israel by Hamas and militant groups in the Gaza Strip" as "criminal and unjustifiable acts" that were "directly harming civilians." Perhaps more significantly, the statement repeated the Israeli claim that Hamas was calling on civilians "to provide themselves as human shields." (See document A1 for the full text.) Following the FM's meeting, Ashton told a press conference that Israel's attacks must be "proportionate and in line with international humanitarian law," and she condemned "the loss of hundreds of civilian lives, among them many women and children."

As OPE continued into 8/2014, the EU floated a specific suggestion as part of a comprehensive cease-fire deal, namely the reactivation of the EU Border Assistance Mission at the Rafah Crossing Point (EUBAM; see Documents and Source Material in *JPS* 144). In the press release issued after the meeting of the FMs Council held in Brussels on 8/15, the EU said it was prepared "to play a strong role" in managing the crossings while guaranteeing Israel's security. Speaking on behalf of the assembled diplomats, Ashton said a return to the pre-OPE status quo was "not an option."



Over 2,000 people gather in the streets of Marseille (France) to protest the Israeli assault on Gaza. Hundreds of thousands of protestors attended similar demonstrations throughout the world, notably in the UK, South Africa, Japan, Australia, Chile, the U.S., Pakistan, and others. (2 August, Franck Pennant/AFP/Getty Images)

UNITED NATIONS

One UN official in particular was active and vocal in the lead-up to Israel's assault on Gaza. In early 6/2014, Robert Serry, the UN's special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, joined other international leaders in welcoming the PA unity govt. Less than a week after the cabinet was sworn in, he met (6/8) with the 4 Gaza-based ministers in Gaza City to congratulate them and discuss "the many practical challenges ahead" and to reiterate UN support for the "govt. of national consensus." Serry later criticized OBK, the Israeli security crackdown in the West Bank, and issued a statement of concern (6/20) that called for "restraint" and expressed the expectation that Israel would act "in compliance with international law and respect for the lives, dignity, and livelihoods of Palestinians."

In response to these candid positions, Serry briefly drew the ire of Israeli FM Avigdor Lieberman. According to the Israeli media (6/21), Lieberman threatened Serry with expulsion and accused him of transferring

\$20 m. in Qatari funds to Hamas authorities in Gaza. Serry rejected Lieberman's claims, describing them as "crazy" and "baseless" accusations. A few days later, Lieberman indicated that no steps would in fact be taken to expel Serry, now that Israel's message had been "clearly received in the UN" (6/24).

During the early stages of OPE, the UN was involved in repeated cease-fire efforts, through both the UNSC and the personal involvement of Secy.-Gen. Ban. As the offensive got under way, Ban condemned (7/8) rocket fire and urged Israel to "exercise maximum restraint and to respect international obligations to protect civilians." Two days later, at an emergency meeting of the UNSC, Ban said he had been in contact with Israel, as well as Pres. Abbas, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, the Arab League, the U.S., and the EU. It was thanks to UN efforts, and specifically Serry, that the 5-hour humanitarian "pause" in hostilities took place on 7/17. The next day, the UNSC held (7/18) an emergency meeting, and on 7/19, Ban was in the Middle East for several days of talks with regional actors, notably Qatar, Egypt, and Israel as well as Pres. Abbas and Secy. of State Kerry. Meanwhile, the UNSC held another emergency meeting at the request of Jordan on 7/20, urging all sides to respect international humanitarian law and agree to an immediate cease-fire. On 7/31, Kerry and Ban announced a 72-hour cease-fire agreed to by all parties, but it broke down shortly after it started on the morning of 8/1.

As the violence wore on, Ban's criticism of Israeli tactics grew sharper. On 7/21, he condemned Israel's killing of scores of civilians in the Shuja'iya bombing as an "atrocious action." And on 7/28, he raised concerns about the proportionality of Israel's actions, saying that the destruction in Gaza

had been described by some observers as a "man-made hurricane."

There was even more anger, however, when the IDF struck UN-run facilities. On 3 separate occasions, the IDF shelled UNRWA schools (7/23, 7/30, 8/3), killing some 45 people, including 17 children. Describing it as "outrageous" and "unjustifiable," Ban, as well as numerous other UN officials, condemned the 7/30 attack in particularly harsh terms.

Before the worst of the violence had even passed, the UNHRC took steps to begin accounting for the possible violations of human rights law during OPE. As it had in response to OCL in 2008–9, the UNHRC decided (7/23) to commission an inquiry into alleged war crimes in the oPt, in light of "widespread, systematic and gross violations of international human rights and fundamental freedoms" arising from Israeli military actions since 6/13. (See document A2 for the full text.) The UNHRC adopted the res. in an emergency session by a vote of 29 to 1, with 17 abstentions. The U.S. cast the sole "no" vote. On 8/11, the UNHRC named the 3 mbrs. of the commission: Prof. William Schabas, a Canadian expert on international law as chair of the inquiry; Doudou Diène, a Senegalese human rights expert; and Lebanese-born British lawyer Amal Alamuddin, who immediately declined the invitation, citing "existing commitments." As the quarter ended, it was still unclear who would replace Alamuddin. On 8/12, Palestine's rep. at the UN, Ibrahim Khreisha, said that the panel would start working in the Gaza Strip in 9/2014, entering via Egypt since Israel had refused to cooperate. Israel's Amb. to the UN Ron Prosor told his country's army radio (8/13) that Prof. Schabas had a preexisting anti-Israel bias and that forming an investigatory comm. headed by the Canadian was "like inviting ISIS to organize religious tolerance week at the UN."

DONORS

There was no Ad Hoc Liaison Comm. session this quarter but a few notable donor-related developments.

On 5/21, the World Bank announced it had approved a \$40 m. grant to the PA to support “strategic reform priorities” focused on public finances and improving the Palestinian business environment. In a statement, Steen Lau Jorgensen, the bank’s country director for the West Bank and Gaza, said that the grant was offered in the context of “the current stalemate in the peace process and the decline of economic growth and donor aid,” to “ease some of the PA’s fiscal stress.” The statement also indicated that the grant was the 6th in a series totaling \$240 m.

On 5/28, the EU made €200 m. (\$253 m.) available to support both the PA and UNRWA—€130 m. through the PEGASE mechanism [*Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l’Aide Socio-Economique*] to the PA and €70 m. to UNRWA’s general fund. The EU PEGASE contribution for 2014 also included a €13 m. component earmarked to alleviate the debts of East Jerusalem hospitals. It was the 1st transfer of EU support to the Palestinians in 2014.

On 6/6, Norway announced that it had transferred \$13.3 m. of 2014 budget support to the PA, the 2d of 3 transfers of an equal amount. The Norwegian money was channeled through a World Bank Trust Fund, to which Australia, France, Japan, Qatar, and the UK also contribute.

On 7/2, Saudi Arabia announced that it had donated \$89.5 m. to UNRWA for projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Soon after the IDF initiated OPE, Qatar donated (7/10) \$5 m. to help provide Gaza hospitals with medicines, medical equipment, and fuel for power generators.

BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT, SANCTIONS

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement was launched in 2005 by over 170 Palestinian civil society groups. Its aim is to create an international campaign of boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against Israel “until it complies with international law and Palestinian rights.”

BOYCOTT EFFORTS

The Israeli assault on the Gaza Strip drew opprobrium from many in the international community this quarter, and it led to the growth of the BDS movement’s reach and visibility.

Most noteworthy was the 1st endorsement of the campaign by a head of state, as Bolivian pres. Morales put his name (8/8) to a statement declaring Israel guilty of “terrorism,” alongside Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Other state-based boycott efforts followed, starting on 7/17 when Chile announced that it was suspending negotiations with Israel on a new free trade agreement and considering a withdrawal of its amb. from Tel Aviv in response to the escalating violence in Gaza. On 7/21, the govt. of the Maldives declared that it had dissolved 3 bilateral trade agreements with Israel and was reviewing the possibility of prohibiting Israeli imports. On 7/27, Israeli media reported that a fruit juice manufacturing company had seen an export deal to Sweden collapse after the buyers requested that the product’s country of origin be concealed. Buyers in Belgium and France had apparently made similar requests.

Meanwhile, there were developments unrelated to the assault on Gaza, primarily in keeping with the trend of growing EU restrictions on Israeli West Bank settlement products. On 5/22, Israeli media reported that EU officials had informed Israel’s Agriculture

Ministry that, starting 9/1, the EU would not recognize the ministry's veterinary supervision beyond the Green Line and would therefore stop importing poultry and eggs from West Bank settlements. It was later revealed (8/15) that the ministry sent notices to dairy and livestock producers requiring them to separate oPt products from the rest to ensure that none of the former was exported to the EU.

Also during this quarter another 15 European countries published online guidelines warning citizens and businesses about the risks involved in trade and other economic links with Israeli settlements. Following in the footsteps of the UK and the Netherlands, which published such guidelines in 2013, the countries in question were: France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Malta, Ireland, Finland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Greece, Slovakia, Belgium, and Croatia.

Both prior and in reaction to the devastation in Gaza, many cultural institutions and public figures answered the call to boycott Israel this quarter. On 7/4, U.S. hip-hop artist Talib Kweli canceled his planned appearance at an Israeli music festival, "in solidarity with Palestinians who will not have access to my show." On 7/24, Irish singer-songwriter Sinéad O'Connor also refused to play in Israel, declaring that "nobody with any sanity, including myself, would have anything but sympathy for the Palestinian plight." Days later, dozens of Spanish film stars, directors, musicians, and writers, including actors Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem, and film director Pedro Almodovar, condemned the (7/28) Israeli attack on Gaza, describing it as "genocide." (See *Palestine Unbound* for more on celebrities' reactions to OPE.) In the UK, a high-profile controversy developed around Britain's Jewish Film Festival (UKJFF) after festival officials refused to drop the Israeli Embassy's sponsorship as requested by the

festival venue, London's Tricycle Theatre.

Tricycle offered to replace the money with its own alternative funding and explained (8/5) that, given the violence in Gaza, it did not wish to "accept sponsorship from any govt. agency involved in the conflict." UKJFF condemned the decision as a boycott of a Jewish event, and on 8/12, UK Secy. of State for Culture, Media, and Sport Sajid Javid criticized Tricycle's decision as "misguided." On 8/15, the Tricycle and UKJFF issued a joint statement declaring that the theater had withdrawn its objection and welcomed the festival back with no restrictions on embassy funding.

There were also significant academic boycott developments this quarter, especially in the U.S. On 7/18, the Critical Ethnic Studies Association (CESA) passed a res. endorsing BDS and instituting a boycott of Israeli academic institutions. The New York state-based association joined other disciplinary-based associations in endorsing a boycott of Israel, notably the American Studies Association, the Association for Asian American Studies, and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association. The CESA measure was followed by a similar move (7/22) on the part of the African Literature Association shortly after its annual meeting in Johannesburg. On 8/5, the U.S. Cultural Studies Association Executive Comm. also expressed its support for "economic and military sanctions against Israel." Then on 8/6, 2 other groups published calls for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions: more than 100 scholars and librarians within Middle East studies and 1,200 Spanish professors and researchers. There was also a notable development in Australia. On 7/16, the Federal Court dismissed a case brought by Israeli-based NGO Shurat HaDin against pro-BDS academic Jake Lynch. Shurat HaDin had claimed that Lynch was in breach of

antiracism laws, having refused to endorse an Israeli professor's application for a fellowship at the University of Sydney. Lynch hailed the dismissal as "a win for political freedom."

DIVESTMENT

Divestment movements on college campuses in the UK and U.S. gained ground this quarter.

In the UK, the Black Students Campaign of the National Union of Students (NUS) endorsed (5/18) the call for BDS at their annual summer conference by an "overwhelming" majority vote, according to one of the group's leaders. The self-organized, autonomous section of the NUS claims to represent "the largest constituency of black students in Europe." In the U.S., student campaigners at DePaul University secured a victory in a referendum (5/24) on divesting from corporations that profit from human rights violations in the oPt. The referendum passed by a vote of 1,575 to 1,333. On 5/28, UC Santa Cruz's student govt. passed a divestment res. 22–14, making it the 5th UC undergraduate campus (out of 9) to pass divestment in the student govt. The res. demanded that UC's governing body pull investments from General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, Lockheed Martin, Caterpillar, and Elbit Systems.

The BDS campaign made significant progress with regard to 1 of its major targets this quarter, the British security company G4S. On 5/28, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation revealed that it had sold down its shares in G4S to less than 3.2% of the business (holdings originally valued at approximately \$175 m.). The foundation subsequently clarified (6/8) that it had no interest at all left in G4S. BDS activists had been urging the Gates Foundation to divest from the company due to G4S's links to the Israeli military and prison services. Around the same time, the *Financial Times* reported (6/6) that

G4S would withdraw from Israeli prisons entirely within the next 3 years, after the expiration of existing contracts. Separately, and after purchasing \$24.3 m. worth of shares in early 2014, Soros Fund Management LLC announced (8/4) that it had sold its stake in SodaStream, another high-profile target of the BDS campaign. The Soros Fund's spokesperson declined to offer a reason for the sale. By the close of the quarter, SodaStream's shares had declined by 32% in 2014, although prices surged briefly near the end of 7/2014 when rumors of a buyout appeared in the international media.

Among religious institutions, the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA, the largest protestant denomination in the U.S., passed a divestment measure on 6/20 by a vote of 310–303. In so doing, the church divested its holdings from Hewlett-Packard, Motorola Solutions, and Caterpillar, 3 companies with significant roles in Israel's continued occupation infrastructure in the oPt. Although the text of the res. explicitly endorsed the 2-state solution and distanced itself from the BDS campaign, its passage heightened the movement's visibility and contributed to its spread. The vote came 2 years after a similar measure failed by a vote of 333–331. Since then, activists on both sides of the BDS divide lobbied the church energetically. (See document D1 for the full text of the measure as passed.) Earlier, on 6/12, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church in the U.S. instructed managers of its \$20 b. fund to sell all shares in G4S.

SANCTIONS

There were a number of sanctions-related developments this quarter, primarily in response to Israel's assault on Gaza.

In Europe and the U.S., there were several petitions and open letters circulated by

prominent public figures as well as faith groups and local governments in 7/2014 and 8/2014 demanding an arms embargo on Israel. On 7/11, Amnesty International called for a UN-mandated end to weapons shipments to Israel, and the UK and U.S. branches of the organization hosted petitions calling for their respective governments to observe such an embargo.

Furthermore, on 7/18, the Dublin City Council passed a motion calling for the Irish govt. to institute an arms embargo and trade sanctions on Israel. On 7/31, Spain implemented a temporary arms exports

suspension, set to expire in 9/2014. Spanish arms exports to Israel totaled approximately \$6.3 m. in 2013. On 8/5, UK Dep. PM and leader of the Liberal Democrats Nick Clegg expressed support for an arms embargo in light of the attack on Gaza. The following week, Clegg's criticism of PM David Cameron's policy on maintaining exports gained credence when a UK govt. review of export licenses to Israel concluded (8/12) that 12 of 130 total licenses were for articles that could potentially be used by the IDF in Gaza, and that, due to the assault, those licenses would be suspended.