

Update on Conflict and Diplomacy

16 AUGUST–15 NOVEMBER 2015



BEN WHITE

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 <http://www.palestine-studies.org>.

Highlights of the Quarter: Operation Protective Edge ends with a cease-fire agreement on 8/26, and there is no resumption of hostilities in Gaza; post-war, little progress is made toward the major reconstruction required or a lifting of the blockade; violence flares up in the West Bank and particularly in East Jerusalem, with low-level fatalities on both sides; with no indication that Israeli-Palestinian negotiations will resume, Palestinian Authority (PA) Pres. Mahmud Abbas moves toward seeking an alternative diplomatic track at the UN, while Israel continues intensified settlement construction.

THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE

Phase 3: Intermittent Cease-Fires (8/15–8/26)

The quarter opened in the middle of the 3d and final phase of Operation Protective Edge (OPE), the largest Israeli assault on Gaza since Operation Cast Lead in 2008–9. Comprising a period of intermittent cease-fires and temporary truces, the last 11 days of conflict (8/15–8/26) saw continued negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians mediated by Egypt and eventual agreement on an open-ended cease-fire. Despite

a decline in the severity of the conflict during this period, there were several dramatic instances of violence in the days leading up to the cease-fire.

As the quarter opened on 8/15, Israeli officials and reps. of all the Palestinian factions were in Cairo for the Egypt-mediated negotiations with neither side yet ready to compromise. Israel was still angling for what it termed the demilitarization of Gaza while the Palestinian delegation, anchored by Hamas, was pushing for an end to the blockade. After the 2 sides agreed to a 5-day extension of a truce already in effect on 8/13, Egypt again proposed (8/14) a set of principles for an open-ended cease-fire based on the 11/2012 agreement that ended Israel's

Operation Pillar of Defense [see Quarterly Update, *JPS* 167]. As they had done earlier with a similar Egyptian proposal made on 7/15, Hamas and the other armed Palestinian groups in Gaza rejected the Egyptian offer, with high-ranking Hamas official Usama Hamdan (8/16) saying, “Israel must accept the demands of the Palestinian people or face a long war.” Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu also rejected the Egyptian proposal, following consultations with DM Moshe Ya’alon. In a televised speech from Ramallah that same day, PA Pres. Mahmud Abbas called for an end to the fighting and for all parties to agree to the Egyptian proposal “and no other”—a reference to the alternative diplomatic track Hamas was concurrently pursuing with Qatar and Turkey. Meanwhile, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chief negotiator Saeb Erakat met with Hamas political office head Khalid Mishal to urge him to continue the talks with Israel on the basis of the Egyptian initiative.

On 8/17, the day before the truce was set to expire, there was still no sign of a breakthrough despite Israeli and Palestinian negotiators returning to Cairo and holding 9 hours of talks. Neither side was willing to compromise on core demands: Hamas spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri accused Israel of “stalling” and PM Netanyahu told his weekly cabinet meeting that any deal would be contingent on Israel’s security needs. While the 2 sides made no progress toward a long-term cease-fire, they did agree to extend the 5-day truce by another 24 hours.

Around midday on 8/19, hours before the 24-hour extension expired, 3 rockets launched from Gaza landed in s. Israel. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) quickly responded with air strikes on approximately 25 targets, including the home of Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades cmdr. Mohammed Deif in Gaza City. The unsuccessful assassination attempt led to the

death of Deif’s wife and infant son, as well as 3 other Palestinians. (Deif’s fate remained in question, however, and in an interview with *Vanity Fair* on 10/23, Mishal was quoted as saying, “We have proof [that he is alive]. It’s not important the others have it.”) In response to the air strikes, the al-Qassam Brigades launched some 50 rockets into Israel, causing no injuries. As both sides traded accusations about violating the truce and recalled their reps. from Cairo, Israel hit dozens of targets across Gaza on 8/20, killing at least 30 Palestinians, and Palestinian factions fired more than 150 rockets into Israel. Netanyahu characterized OPE as an “ongoing campaign” while 1 Hamas official told the media that “all options” were open now that the truce was over. Over the next few days, Israeli air attacks continued unabated, killing dozens of Palestinians—including 3 senior Hamas cmdrs. on 8/21.

In addition to resuming the aerial assault on Gaza and revisiting its longtime tactic of assassinating Hamas leaders, in the last days of the operation, the IDF targeted several commercial and residential high-rise buildings in Gaza City (8/23 and 8/24). Meanwhile, projectile fire from Gaza also continued, with a Palestinian mortar strike killing an Israeli child in a kibbutz nr. the Gaza border on 8/22.

On the diplomatic front, Pres. Abbas met with Qatar’s Shaykh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani in Doha on 8/21—others at the meeting included Palestinian negotiators Erakat and Azzam al-Ahmad, and, later, Hamas political office chief Mishal. The following day, Abbas and Mishal met with the Qatari emir once more, before Abbas headed to Cairo for talks with Pres. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of Egypt (8/23).

Cease-Fire Agreement

On 8/25, despite the continuing exchange of fire—with dozens of targets hit throughout the

Gaza Strip, and some 130 rockets and mortar shells fired into Israel—Egyptian sources informed the media that Cairo was waiting on Israel's response to a cease-fire proposal to which the Palestinian factions had already agreed. Israeli sources also confirmed to the media that a cease-fire agreement was in the offing. In a televised address on 8/26, Pres. Abbas formally announced the breakthrough, praising Egypt, Qatar, and U.S. Secy. of State John Kerry for their role in helping to reach a deal. The cease-fire went into effect at 7:00 P.M. local time, though not before Israeli attacks had killed 6 more Palestinians and mortar fire had killed 2 Israelis nr. the Gaza border. Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip urged residents to "celebrate victory" while an official of the organization described the Egyptian-mediated agreement as "acceptable" although he added that "serious negotiations" would be required to resolve longer-term issues. The immediate elements of the cease-fire included: a cessation of hostilities by the Israeli military and armed Palestinian factions; an easing of the blockade, with Gaza's border crossings opened to goods as well as reconstruction materials; an extension of Gaza's fishing zone from 3 to 6 naut. mi. off the coast, and a reduction of the Israeli-enforced buffer zone along the border fence inside Gaza from 300 to 100 m; and, lastly, the PA's takeover of responsibility for border control and for the reconstruction program. Other issues and demands that were relegated to subsequent discussions were said to include the release of Palestinians detained during Operation Brother's Keeper in the West Bank (see *JPS* 173), the handover of remains of Israeli soldiers killed in Gaza during OPE, a viable commercial seaport and airport for the territory, and the release of Israeli-held funds to pay the salaries of some 40,000 govt. employees hired by the Hamas authorities after 2007.

According to a United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) report published on 10/3, the total Palestinian death toll as a result of the 50-day war stood at 2,189 (including those who died of their injuries after the cease-fire went into effect). Of the total, 1,486 were civilians, more than 50% of whom were women and children. Almost 70% of the 513 child fatalities were under the age of 12. The UN agency confirmed 557 deaths among armed factions, with the status of 146 as still unverified; in addition, the agency's report indicated that at least 142 Palestinian families had lost 3 or more mbrs. in a single incident and that some 11,100 Palestinians, including 3,374 children, had been injured. The death toll on the Israeli side was 71, including 66 soldiers, 1 child, and a Thai national working as a migrant laborer. Dozens of Israelis were injured by rockets and mortar shells. Meanwhile, the scale of the damage in Gaza was unprecedented: 113,500 homes (13% of the housing stock) were affected in some way, with an estimated 22,000 housing units destroyed or severely damaged. By the approach of winter, some 100,000 Palestinians remained displaced and in need of assistance.

Gaza after the Cease-Fire

Although hostilities did not resume or break out in Gaza between the 8/26 cease-fire and the end of the quarter, the perimeter of the territory did not remain quiet. Some 9 Palestinians were injured in Israeli attacks at sea and nr. the border fence. According to briefings by the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR), throughout 9/2014, Israeli forces repeatedly attacked Palestinian civilians in so-called "Access Restricted Areas" including 1 on 9/17 in which a fisherman standing on the beach close to the border fence in the n. Gaza Strip was shot in the leg. PCHR reported 18 shooting incidents

by naval vessels against fishermen with the attacks taking place inside the 6-naut. mi. protected zone mandated by the cease-fire agreement. There were also 13 attacks on Palestinians close to the border fence that targeted gravel-collectors and farmers. (For more, see “Movement and Access.”)

Unidentified Palestinians fired a mortar shell into s. Israel on 9/16 and a single rocket was fired from Gaza into s. Israel on 10/31. The only such incidents during the quarter post-cease-fire, neither caused damage or injuries and both remained unclaimed. Media reports suggested that Hamas authorities had arrested those behind the incidents, an indication of the group’s seriousness about maintaining the cease-fire.

On 9/4, the PA published a report estimating the cost of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip at \$7.8 b.—including \$4.4 b. in “direct losses.” At an international donor conference in Cairo on 10/12, a total of \$5.4 b. was pledged in reconstruction aid (Qatar pledged \$1 b., while Kuwait and the UAE pledged \$200 m. each). However, rebuilding in the Gaza Strip proceeded at a very slow pace: it was crippled by the slow entry of building materials in light of Israel’s stated concerns about their use by armed factions to rebuild tunnels and for other military-related purposes; and hampered by the continued Hamas-Fatah tensions that have undermined the Palestinian consensus govt.’s ability to fully assume its responsibilities, especially with regard to border crossings. On 9/16, UN Middle East envoy Robert Serry unveiled the “Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism” (GRM), a UN-brokered agreement “to enable construction and reconstruction work at the large scale now required in the Gaza Strip.” According to this agreement, the GRM’s goals are to: enable the unity govt. to lead the

reconstruction effort; enable Gaza’s private sector; provide assurances to donors; and “address Israeli security concerns related to the use of construction and other ‘dual use’ material.” All these requirements are to be secured through a strict, UN-enforced monitoring system. On 10/14, the 1st shipment of some 2,000 tons of basic construction materials for use by the private sector entered Gaza at the Kerem Shalom crossing. While this can be viewed as a positive step, the authorities in Gaza have estimated that some 3,000–4,000 truckloads of materials need to enter *daily*. On 11/4, a statement from Serry’s office announced that 700 beneficiaries in Gaza had been able to purchase construction materials to start rehabilitating their homes.

NO NEGOTIATIONS, UNILATERAL MEASURES

While the beginning of the quarter was dominated by OPE, the cessation of hostilities in Gaza did not herald a new diplomatic push to restart Israeli-Palestinian negotiations that had collapsed in 4/2014. On the Israeli side, there was no sign of a desire for bold moves or a particular departure from the status quo, aside from a vague statement by Netanyahu toward the end of OPE (8/20) about events in the region ushering in a “new political horizon.” The Israeli PM came back to this in his United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) speech on 9/29, when he talked about a “fresh approach” to “advance peace despite the difficulties.” These phrases were widely understood to be references to Israel and so-called moderate Arab states such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan banding together against the threat of Islamic extremists (an analysis promoted by Israeli politicians and commentators, including *Haaretz*’s Barak

Ravid and Ben Caspit of Al-Monitor). Netanyahu's trial balloon was never fleshed out or developed.

Meanwhile, Israel proceeded with settlement construction and other related measures, prompting increasingly harsh condemnation by the country's traditional allies in Washington and Brussels. Unhappiness with Israeli behavior from Western govts. was shaped by the absence of a diplomatic track, continued settlement expansion, and unease over the scale and nature of Israel's assault on Gaza. The Israeli authorities' announcement on 8/31 of their intention to expropriate 988 acres of privately-owned Palestinian land nr. Bethlehem, just days after the end of OPE, was greeted with dismay by the international community: State Dept. spokesperson Jen Psaki remarked that the U.S. administration considered the move "deeply concerning" and urged Israel to "reverse the decision." Along with continued settlement construction, she added, these actions were "contrary to Israel's stated goal of a 2-state solution" (9/2); on behalf of the EU, Office of Foreign Affairs chief Catherine Ashton released a condemnatory statement, saying that "at this delicate moment," any action that undermines stability "should be avoided."

Further settlement announcements followed, most notably for 2,610 new settler homes in Givat Hamatos, East Jerusalem (10/1). Psaki again described the U.S. as "deeply concerned" with the news, while the EU's diplomatic service condemned (10/3) the plan as "highly detrimental" to efforts at reaching progress in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. On 10/27, Netanyahu gave the go-ahead for 1,060 new housing units in the East Jerusalem settlements of Ramat Shlomo and Har Homa. There was also confirmation of the publication of tenders for 283 new homes in Elkana settlement (9/5), the renewal

of 278 previous approved housing permits in the East Jerusalem settlements of Ramot and Har Homa, plus for Ramot, another 28 new ones on 11/5, and a further 200 on 11/12. In addition, in the largest such influx in 20 years, settlers under Israeli police guard moved into 25 previously Palestinian-owned homes in Silwan on 9/30. The purchase of these properties was made through a proxy organization (see "Silwan Takeover" in Settlement Monitor in *JPS* 174).

For its part, the Ramallah-based Palestinian leadership began moving closer to pursuing redress at the International Criminal Court (ICC), the UN, and other international bodies. In early 8/2014, all the major factions of the PLO signed a document approving a new application to accede to the Rome Statute, the ICC's founding treaty, and give the ICC jurisdiction over the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). As the 5-day truce in Gaza neared expiry, PLO chief negotiator Erakat met (8/16) with Hamas political office chief Mishal in Doha to discuss the matter. There were a flurry of meetings between Pres. Abbas and Mishal in the following days (8/18, 8/21, 8/22, and 8/23), which included Erakat, PA intelligence chief Majid Faraj, and Hamas's chief negotiator, Musa Abu Marzuq. Hamas, concerned with its own vulnerability to international criminal charges, had been a stumbling block in the way of Palestine's accession application. Following the Doha meetings, Mishal agreed to sign the internal document and to publicly support Abbas's plan to pursue accession to the Rome Statute. A senior Hamas official quoted by the *Guardian* said the organization was not worried about being subject to an international investigation and urged Abbas to act "as soon as possible" (8/23). Of all the major Palestinian factions, only Islamic Jihad did not sign the document.

These deliberations culminated with Abbas's announcement that the Palestinian leadership had officially decided to change course in terms of the diplomatic process with Israel. In the same televised speech confirming the cease-fire that brought OPE to an end, Abbas revealed that he intended to present a detailed plan to end the occupation and establish a Palestinian state on the basis of the 1967 borders. "We'll not enter vague negotiations again," he asserted.

Throughout 9/2014, the Palestinian leadership continued campaigning for public and international support as more details of their plans came to light. Several negotiators met with Secy. of State Kerry on 9/3 in the 1st face-to-face discussions between the U.S. and the Palestinians since 7/2014. Then, on 9/19, after Abbas met with the French head of state in Paris, Pres. François Hollande declared that a "solution to the conflict" between the Israelis and Palestinians would be put to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Abbas flew to New York ahead of the UNGA meeting there and addressed U.S. college students at Cooper Union, asking them in his 1st ever major speech in English (see Doc. B1) to "rethink Palestine." He met with Kerry on 9/24, and used his address at the UNGA (9/26) to condemn OPE as a "genocidal crime," also confirming that the Palestinians had been working with the Arab Group at the UN on a draft res. calling for a "firm timetable" to end Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories. According to a copy leaked to the Associated Press on 10/1 (see Doc. B3), the draft res. would: acknowledge all previous UNSC res., as well as the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 and the Quartet Road Map of 2003; call for a just solution to the status of Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees; demand an end to Israeli collective punishment; and call for full Israeli withdrawal from the oPt "within a specific time frame, not to exceed 11/2016."

Reflecting the ongoing discussions over the res., Abbas's spokesperson, Nabil Abu Rudayna, had earlier told Reuters that the desired timetable was not yet firm, but that it was "2 to 3 years" (9/26).

Following Abbas's UNGA speech and the leak of the draft UNSC res. to the Associated Press, Palestinian officials continued to clarify their thinking on the time line. Abbas indicated that were the draft res. not to pass in the UNSC, either by virtue of insufficient votes or a U.S. veto, the PA would ratify the Rome Statute to join the ICC (10/1). Erakat added that if the U.S. did use its veto, the Palestinian leadership would seek membership in scores of international organizations (10/21). The Palestinians were preparing to submit the res. as the quarter ended, with a senior PA official saying that they would do so by the end of 11/2014 (11/4).

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WEST BANK

The end of OPE saw a decline in the number and intensity of confrontations between Israeli forces and Palestinians on the West Bank this quarter, although the lethal use of live ammunition against unarmed Palestinians continued. The quarter also saw two fatal Palestinian attacks against Israeli individuals.

The most serious incident was arguably the capture and summary killing (9/23) of the 2 Palestinians suspected of perpetrating the abduction and murder of 3 teenage settlers, whose disappearance triggered the launch of Operation Brother's Keeper on June 12. Coupled with the extreme volatility in East Jerusalem (see below), the fatal stabbing of a Jewish settler and an IDF soldier (see Data and Trends below for more details) fuelled speculation about the outbreak of a 3d intifada. Such an assessment proved premature, however, as it became clear that these were isolated individual actions in the context of

long-standing but low-intensity violence across the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. Although UNOCHA reported that the week of 9/16–22 registered the lowest weekly number of Palestinian injured (15) in over a year, by the end of October the total number of Palestinians injured had reached 4,682—a 25% increase over the total for all of 2013 (3,736).

EAST JERUSALEM IGNITES

Palestinian street protests and clashes with Israeli security forces in East Jerusalem intensified this quarter. They had broken out after the burning death of Mohammed Abu Khdeir at the hands of settlers during the previous quarter (7/2) and continued in response to the rising tensions around al-Aqsa mosque compound and specifically, the activities of Jewish extremists and Israeli restrictions on access. Clashes in neighborhoods such as Silwan, Shu'fat and Shu'fat r.c., Ras al-Amud, Jabal Mukabir and Abu Tur were routine through large parts of this quarter. By 10/2014, some 1,600 Palestinians had been injured in East Jerusalem in 2014 (the majority of them in 7/2014) where throughout 2013, only 320 Palestinians were recorded as having been injured. One Palestinian teenager died on 9/4 after Israeli forces shot him in the head with a sponge-tipped bullet (8/31). This quarter also saw a number of high-profile attacks against Israelis, including 2 incidents when Palestinians drove their vehicles into Jerusalem Light Rail (JLR) stations, killing 3 (see "Overview of the Violence" below). In addition, the radical Jewish activist Yehuda Glick was shot and injured in an apparent assassination attempt on 10/29—the following morning, Israeli security forces shot and killed 1 of the suspected Palestinian assailants at his home in Abu Tor. Other attacks included frequent vandalism of the JLR, causing damage to stations and vehicles.

Meanwhile, there were repeated demonstrations in and around the Haram al-Sharif as confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli security forces became almost routine (9/12, 9/24, 10/8, and 11/5). The most serious day of clashes was probably 10/14, when hundreds of Israeli security forces raided the compound, deploying stun grenades and rubber-coated metal bullets as Palestinian worshippers threw rocks and fireworks in response. The upsurge in tension was caused by increasing restrictions on Muslim worshippers in parallel with an aggressive movement of right-wing Jewish activists conducting visits to the compound and lobbying for changes in the status quo—their demands ranging from the formal sanctioning of Jewish prayer in the compound to the physical destruction of Muslim places of worship. According to UNOCHA figures, these activists entered the compound on average once every 2 weeks in 2012, once every 4 days in 2013, and to date, once every 2–3 days in 2014. Restrictions imposed on Palestinians typically included age/gender restrictions, or the denial of entry for West Bank ID-holders. For example, on 9/26, Israel barred Palestinian men under 50 from entering the compound, doing so again for Friday prayers on 10/10 and 10/17. On 10/24, Israeli authorities denied entry to men below 40, and on 10/31, they raised the age limit back up to 50. On 10/30, and for the 1st time since 1967, Israel closed the compound to all worshippers for an entire day.

OCCUPATION DATA AND TRENDS

The death count this quarter was as follows: 231 Palestinians killed as a result of Israeli actions—13 in the West Bank, and 218 in the Gaza Strip (of whom 17 were killed after 8/26,

when OPE ended), and 9 Israelis killed as a result of Palestinian actions. At the quarter's close on 11/15, this count brought the comprehensive death toll since the beginning of the 2d intifada in 9/2000 to 10,509 Palestinians (including 51 Palestinian citizens of Israel and 19 unidentified Arab cross-border infiltrators), 1,208 Israelis (426 IDF soldiers and security personnel, 229 settlers, and 549 civilians), and 67 foreign nationals (including 2 British suicide bombers). These numbers include individuals who died in noncombat-related incidents if their death was a direct result of 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**, during the 10 days between the start of the quarter (8/16) and the end of OPE (8/26) Israeli attacks killed an estimated 214 Palestinians, including persons who succumbed to their injuries after the cease-fire went into effect. Palestinian attacks killed 5 Israelis during this period, including 2 soldiers. Total OPE fatalities stood at 2,189 Palestinians, 1,486 of them civilians. On the Israeli side, 71 people were killed, including 66 soldiers, 1 foreign national, and 1 child (see UNOCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, 10/3 at http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2014_10_03_english.pdf). From the cease-fire (8/26) to the end of the quarter (11/15), there were no Israeli air strikes on Gaza, and only 1 mortar shell and a single rocket were fired from Gaza into s. Israel (neither caused damage or injuries). Israeli forces did, however, repeatedly open fire on fishermen working off the Gaza shore as well as Palestinians who approached the border fence (mostly to collect gravel and scrap metal, or farm their land). No

fatalities resulted from these incidents, but 9 Palestinians sustained injuries. However, 4 Palestinians were killed (3 on 9/19 and 1 on 11/12) by unexploded Israeli ordnance.

In the **West Bank**, Israeli forces killed 4 Palestinian civilians during raids and protests. On 9/10, the IDF shot and killed a resident of al-Am'ari r.c. in al-Bireh in clashes with residents prompted by an arrest raid. During a patrol on 10/16, the IDF shot and killed a 13-year-old Palestinian in Bayt Liqya nr. Ramallah. On 10/24, the IDF shot and killed a 14-year-old Palestinian they claimed had a Molotov cocktail (something denied by locals) during a weekly protest in Silwad nr. Ramallah. On 11/11, the IDF shot and killed a Palestinian nr. Hebron targeting passing settler cars with rocks and Molotov cocktails. In addition, a Palestinian died of wounds (8/25) sustained when Israeli soldiers shot him during clashes on 8/15 in Bayt Furik, while on 9/9, Palestinian prisoner Raed al-Jabari died in an Israeli hospital after being tortured during a prison transfer. In a gun battle on 9/23, Israeli forces shot and killed the 2 Palestinians suspected of responsibility for the kidnapping and killing of 3 Israeli teenagers in 6/2014. Palestinian attacks on Israeli settlers increased this quarter, though continued to mainly consist of stone-throwing, especially at passing vehicles. However, on 11/10, a Palestinian stabbed to death a Jewish settler and injured 2 others nr. Alon Shvut settlement (the attacker was shot and wounded). On the same day in Tel Aviv, a Palestinian stabbed and killed an Israeli soldier at a train station. The assailant was arrested.

In **East Jerusalem**, there were several violent incidents, numerous large protests against OPE, and continued tensions at Haram al-Sharif. With regard to fatalities, on 8/28, a Palestinian baby died after inhaling tear gas fired by Israeli forces at her family home on 8/26. On 9/4, a Palestinian teenager shot by Israeli police in the

head on 8/31 with what is alleged to be a nonlethal sponge-tipped bullet died of his wounds in hospital. On 10/22, a Palestinian drove his car into a JLR station, killing a baby and injuring another 8 people. One of those injured, an Ecuadorian citizen, later died of her injuries (10/26). The driver was immediately shot dead. On 10/30, Israeli security forces shot and killed a Palestinian at home in Abu Tor suspected of the attempted assassination of Yehuda Glick the night before. On 11/5, a Palestinian drove his car into a JLR station, killing 1 border policeman and injuring 13. The driver was shot dead at the scene. Clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces occurred throughout the quarter, and Palestinians also frequently vandalized the JLR, throwing stones or otherwise damaging both stations and trains. An additional and significant source of tension and violence was al-Aqsa mosque compound, where there were recurring confrontations between Palestinian worshippers and Israeli security forces, as the latter sought to facilitate the entry to the compound of religious Jewish activists. The running battles took place both within the compound itself, as well as in the neighboring streets of the Old City.

Movement and Access

In the Gaza Strip, restrictions at both Israeli- and Egyptian-controlled crossings were exacerbated by escalating violence in Sinai and by the fallout from the 50-day Israeli attack on the territory. A total of 13,350 truckloads of goods entered the Gaza Strip during the quarter, a monthly average of 4,450, slightly higher than the 4,130 average for the 1st 5 mos. of 2014. In the 1st shipment of exports since 6/2014, a truckload of sweet potatoes left the territory in mid-9/2014. Although the total number of trucks carrying goods for export fell short of 100

since the beginning of the year, on 11/6, Israel temporarily eased its blockade, allowing 1 truck with 10 tons of cucumbers to leave Gaza for the West Bank; this was followed by a shipment of 600 kg of fish on 11/10. These were the 1st commercial goods exported from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank since Israel banned such exports in 2007. The Rafah crossing, meanwhile, remained partially open from the end of OPE until late 10/2014. In mid-9/2014, UNOCHA reported that an average of 250 “prioritized and authorized” people were exiting and more than 350 entering every day. However, following an attack on Egypt’s military in the n. Sinai that killed some 30 people, the Egyptian authorities announced the closure of Rafah until further notice (10/24).

Israeli forces continued their frequent attacks against Palestinians in the unilaterally-defined “Access Restricted Areas” close to the border fence and fired on fishermen working off the Gaza coast. Israeli naval vessels opened fire on Palestinian fishermen on 9/1, 9/2, 9/3, 9/7 (twice), 9/9, 9/10, 9/12, 9/13, 9/14, 9/16, 9/17 (twice), 9/20, 9/22 (twice), 10/7, 10/10, 10/13, 10/15, 10/16, 10/22, 10/23, 10/25, 11/9 (twice), 11/10, 11/11, 11/12, and 11/15, often damaging boats, temporarily detaining fishermen, and causing a total of 3 injuries. Meanwhile, in the period from the end of OPE to the end of the quarter, Israeli forces stationed at the Gaza border fence opened fire on civilians who strayed too close on 9/19, 9/20, 9/28, 10/2, 10/11, and 10/29, injuring a total of 7 Palestinians. In addition, Israeli forces also conducted incursions close to the border fence on 9/11, 9/19, 10/1, and 11/10. (See Chronology for details.)

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, and Ni'lin), Bethlehem (al-Ma'sara), and Qalqilya (Kafr 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 (8/29, 10/17, 11/7, and 11/14), and Nabi Salih (10/10 and 10/31).

Settler-Related Violence

The number of settler attacks causing injury to Palestinians and damage to Palestinian-owned property and agricultural assets fell to 58 this quarter, down from 100 last quarter and from 97 in the quarter before that. Some 23 Palestinians were injured in these attacks, which included: the destruction of trees (100 nr. Nablus on 10/6; 30 nr. Bethlehem on 10/8; 100 nr. Salfit on 10/10; 100 nr. Nablus on 10/22); physical assaults (1 Palestinian injured nr. Nablus on 10/7; 1 farmer injured nr. Salfit on 10/11); arson attacks on mosques (10/14 in Aqraba village nr. Nablus; 11/12 nr. Ramallah); attacks on villages (11/10 in Huwwara village nr. Nablus; 11/11 nr. Hebron and nr. Nablus; 11/13 nr. Ramallah).

There were also 117 reported attacks by Palestinians on settlers, a significant increase from 54 the previous quarter. The vast majority of these consisted of Palestinians throwing stones at settler-driven vehicles on West Bank roads. The most serious incident took place on 11/10, when a Palestinian stabbed a Jewish settler to death, and injured 2 others, nr. the Alon Shvut settlement. In the vicinity of Nablus, Palestinians targeted settler vehicles with 2 improvised pipe bombs on 8/3 and Molotov cocktails on 9/1 (injuring 1), 10/21, and on 11/2.

Demolitions and Confiscations

Some 168 structures, including 33 in East Jerusalem, were demolished this quarter, displacing 493 Palestinians. This is a substantial increase over last quarter's figures, which saw the demolition of 124 structures and the displacement of 214 Palestinians.

On 8/20, Israeli forces destroyed 11 residential structures and displaced 54 people, including 33 children, in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, and Tubas governorates. In the week of 8/26–9/1, demolitions in Jerusalem and Hebron governorates displaced 76 people, including 48 children, and on 9/10, Israeli forces demolished 11 structures in the Hebron governorate, displacing 14. This quarter also witnessed a major land expropriation on 8/31, when Israeli authorities announced that 988 acres of privately-owned Palestinian land within the Gush Etzion settlement bloc nr. Bethlehem would be designated state land. On 9/6, Israeli soldiers delivered land confiscation orders to Palestinians nr. Yatta, s. of Hebron. The order was for the seizure of 2,000 dunams (about 500 acres) of privately-owned land for military purposes.

This quarter, Israeli authorities continued the practice of punitive home demolitions, with senior leaders confirming the return of the policy that had resumed in the previous quarter (see *JPS* 173). On 8/17, Israeli forces destroyed the Hebron homes of 3 Palestinians named as suspects in the fatal abduction of 3 Israeli settler youths in 6/2014. Two of the houses were demolished and 1 was sealed. On 11/13, Israeli DM Ya'alon confirmed that the govt. had reinstated punitive home demolitions, after PM Netanyahu had ordered officials on 11/7 to demolish the homes of Palestinians who hit Israelis with their cars, following a recent spate of such incidents in Jerusalem.

Approximately 22,000 homes were either destroyed or severely damaged in the Gaza Strip as a result of Israel's summer assault. A total of 113,500 homes, some 13% of the housing stock, were reported to have been affected by the attacks. As the quarter ended, approximately 100,000 Palestinians remained internally displaced, with people staying at govt. shelters, schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), or with host families.

INTRA-PALESTINIAN DYNAMICS

Prior to OPE, the PA's unity govt. had encountered major challenges, including the question of wages for civil servants in Gaza. These preexisting issues were largely overshadowed during the conflict, but they reemerged following the 8/26 cease-fire, especially in the context of reconstruction efforts.

During OPE, diplomatic tensions between the PA and Hamas were especially apparent in efforts to secure a cease-fire. On 8/16, Hamas rejected offers made during talks in Cairo as insufficient, while Pres. Abbas, speaking in Ramallah, emphasized that the Egyptian initiative was the only game in town. Meanwhile, according to Israeli media sources, PLO chief negotiator Erakat reportedly relayed a message from Abbas to Hamas political office chief Mishal urging Hamas to accept the Egyptian proposal. On 8/20, Abbas traveled to Doha for talks with Mishal and Qatari emir Shaykh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani on 8/21–22. According to Agence France-Presse (AFP), Qatari state media reported (8/22) that Abbas and Mishal were in agreement about urging the UN to draw up a "timetable" for ending the Israeli occupation. Besides the 2 officials' insistence that the unity govt.

"represents all the Palestinian people and looks after their interests," little else filtered out from the meetings. However, according to reports that later emerged (9/1) in Lebanon's *Al-Akhbar*, Abbas used the Doha meeting to reproach Mishal for Hamas's apparent breach of the reconciliation agreement—while the Hamas leader reportedly criticized Abbas for his unquestioning acceptance of information he received from Israel.

On 9/3, a Gaza-based Fatah official told the media that his organization had invited Hamas to meet and discuss unresolved issues arising from the 4/23 reconciliation agreement and was still waiting for a response. On a visit to Cairo soon afterward, Abbas warned (9/7) that Hamas's behavior was endangering the unity govt. He pointed to the "27 ministerial undersecretaries running the Gaza Strip," who he described as a "shadow govt." that was preventing the national unity govt. from doing anything on the ground. Mishal responded to Abbas on 9/12. Talk of a parallel govt. was completely fanciful, Mishal stated from Tunis. On the contrary, he added, "We welcome the govt. of national unity to work in Gaza, to take charge of crossing points and assume all its responsibilities in line with what we agreed upon." Meanwhile, PM Rami Hamdallah, addressing the issue of unpaid salaries to Hamas-hired civil servants, told AFP on 9/7 that "the govt. and the banks operating in the Palestinian territories were warned that if they make these payments to former Hamas govt. employees in Gaza, then the govt. and the people will be boycotted." Three days later, the Gaza-based Finance Ministry declared that it would be making partial payments ranging from 1,000–4,500 shekels (\$250–\$1,000) to more than 40,000 govt. employees (9/10).

On 9/24–25, Fatah and Hamas officials met in Cairo for a round of talks designed to advance

further implementation of the reconciliation agreement. According to a senior Fatah official, the talks, mediated by Egyptian intelligence officials, focused on the unity govt.'s "return" to the Gaza Strip and the "implementation of its authority without obstacles." By the end of the 2d day, the 2 sides had reached agreement on the unity govt. taking control of the Gaza Strip and assuming responsibility for reconstruction. News of the deal came as janitorial staff in Gaza hospitals held a demonstration in front of al-Shifa Hospital, to protest not being paid for 5 mos.—a sign of the ongoing challenges facing the Palestinian govt.

On 10/9, PM Hamdallah was in the Gaza Strip for the 1st meeting of the Palestinian unity govt. there. Hamdallah also met with senior Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, and toured some of the areas hardest hit by OPE. "The years of conflict between us and the rift between the Palestinian factions are behind us," Hamdallah stated, and "the govt. is immediately beginning to work toward its objective of restoring normal life in Gaza." By the end of the mo., the PA had transferred (10/28) enough money to the Gaza Strip for the partial payment of salaries to civil servants hired under the Hamas govt. Minister of Social Affairs Shawqi al-Ayasa told the media that each civil servant would receive an initial payment of \$1,200.

Besides the pending issue of salaries, bad blood between Fatah and Hamas continued to threaten the fragile unity govt. On 8/18, as OPE was still under way, unnamed Fatah officials alleged that Hamas had placed "scores" of its mbrs. under house arrest during the hostilities, and had even shot some of them in the legs to make them stay home. A Hamas official denied that there was any such policy. In a separate development, reports emerged on 8/21 and 8/22 that Hamas fighters had executed 21 suspected collaborators in the Gaza Strip. The Fatah claims

of mistreatment during the war resurfaced post-peace-fire when the party's central comm. issued a strong condemnation of Hamas (8/30), claiming that more than 300 Fatah mbrs. had been kept under house arrest during the fighting. Days later, in the West Banks, shots were fired (9/4) at the car of Hassan Khreisheh, an independent mbr. of the Palestinian Legislative Council critical of the PA.

The most serious incident this quarter, however, took place on 11/7, when small explosive devices were detonated at the entrances to 15 Fatah mbrs.' homes and under their cars, causing damage but no injuries. There was also a blast on a stage set up to mark the 10-year anniversary of former pres. Yasir Arafat's death—an event for which the Hamas authorities had officially given (10/30) Fatah activists permission. PM Hamdallah and other senior Fatah officials canceled their planned visit on 11/8. The next day, Fatah announced that the commemoration event was canceled. Condemning the attacks, Hamas's Abu Marzuq urged Hamdallah and the others not to cancel their visit, but a spokesperson from Gaza's Interior Ministry said the ceremony was being pulled "due to serious tension amid the public, and the exchange of accusations after the suspicious explosions in Gaza, as well as other logistical difficulties." Nonetheless, on the day of Arafat's passing, 11/11, hundreds of Fatah supporters gathered in Gaza City despite the cancellation of a formal rally.

PALESTINIAN OPINION

The following data was excerpted from 2 polls conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR). The 1st poll (questions 1–3) was a Special Gaza War Poll, conducted on 8/26–30, with results based on a

survey of 1,270 men and women from the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. The 2d (questions 4–8) was conducted between 9/25 and 9/27/2014, with results based on a survey of 1,200 men and women from the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. The poll, the 53d in a series, was taken from PSR’s website at <http://www.pcpsr.org>.

In the 1st poll, conducted as the war ended, a clear majority—78.7%—judged Hamas and the other resistance factions to have come out as “the winner(s),” while 17% felt neither the Palestinian groups nor Israel had come out on top. Assessing the terms of the cease-fire, 59.2% of Palestinians felt satisfied with the war’s accomplishments, but Egypt’s role in efforts to secure a cease-fire was viewed as negative—that is to say, serving Israel’s interests—by 51.7% of respondents. The Egyptian role was seen as positive by only 24.7%.

In the 2d poll, conducted a mo. after the end of OPE, Palestinians polled this quarter expressed strong support for rocket fire into Israel, with a total of 79.5% respondents in favor—this overall total broke down by geographical location to 72.2% in Gaza and 83.3% in the West Bank. On the work of the national unity govt., only 35.9% of respondent said they were satisfied with the govt.’s performance, compared with 54.3% who expressed dissatisfaction, an indication the lack of confidence in the govt.’s ability to adequately perform its functions. Among the dissatisfied, 35.8% laid the blame on the PA and Abbas, 24.5% on Hamas, and 18.0% held the head of the new govt. (PM Hamdallah) responsible for the lack of progress. On the recurrent question of preferences in a possible presidential election, Hamas’s Ismail Haniyeh enjoyed a post-war boost in popularity, with 43% of Palestinians

choosing him compared with 33.7% the previous quarter. Marwan Barghouti polled at 30%, while Pres. Abbas only managed 22%, down from 27.9% the previous quarter. Finally, when it came to the bigger picture, optimism about the likelihood of establishing an independent Palestinian state remained low, with only 26.6% of those polled seeing this as likely within the next 5 years.

1. In the last war in the Gaza Strip, who, in your view, came out the winner: Hamas and the resistance factions or Israel?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Hamas and the resistance factions	78.7%	83.9%	70.0%
b. Israel	2.6%	1.0%	5.3%
c. No one	17.0%	13.5%	22.8%
d. Both sides	1.2%	0.8%	1.9%
e. Don’t know/No answer	0.5%	0.8%	0.0%

2. When comparing human and material losses in the Gaza Strip with the potential benefits of the Egyptian proposal mentioned above, do you feel satisfied or dissatisfied with the accomplishments of the war?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly satisfied	10.4%	9.6%	11.7%
b. Satisfied	48.8%	51.6%	44.3%
c. Dissatisfied	31.5%	32.7%	29.5%
d. Certainly dissatisfied	7.8%	4.3%	13.6%
e. Don’t know/No answer	1.4%	1.8%	0.9%

3. Egypt played a role in the efforts to reach a cease-fire in the Gaza war. How do you evaluate this role? Do you see it as positive, serving Palestinian interests, or negative, serving Israel’s interests?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly positive	4.7%	3.0%	7.4%
b. Positive	20.0%	19.0%	21.8%
c. Neutral	21.6%	15.9%	30.9%
d. Negative	31.4%	35.8%	24.2%
e. Certainly negative	20.3%	23.5%	15.0%
f. Don't know/No answer	2.0%	2.8%	0.7%

4. Do you support or oppose the continuation of launching of rockets from the Gaza Strip on Israeli cities and towns until Israel agree[s] to end the siege and closure on [sic] Gaza?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly support	24.8%	24.8%	24.9%
b. Support	54.7%	58.5%	47.3%
c. Oppose	12.5%	10.7%	16.0%
d. Certainly oppose	5.2%	2.3%	11.1%
e. Don't know/No answer	2.7%	3.7%	0.8%

5. Now, about 5 months after the formation of the reconciliation government, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with its performance?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Certainly satisfied	3.8%	2.5%	6.4%
b. Satisfied	32.1%	32.6%	31.2%
c. Dissatisfied	44.1%	43.0%	46.1%
d. Certainly dissatisfied	10.2%	7.6%	15.3%
e. Don't know/No answer	9.7%	14.2%	0.9%

6. If you think the reconciliation government is not doing its job as you would want it to do, who in your view is responsible for that?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. The PA and Abbas	35.8%	35.3%	36.6%
b. Hamas	24.5%	18.3%	36.6%
c. The head of the reconciliation government	18.0%	16.6%	20.8%
d. Don't know/No answer	21.7%	29.8%	6.0%

7. 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	30.0%	31.1%	28.1%
b. Ismail Haniyeh	43.0%	43.1%	42.9%
c. Mahmud Abbas	22.0%	18.6%	27.7%
d. Don't know/No answer	5.0%	7.2%	1.2%

8. Now more than 45 years after the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, what in your view are the chances for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state next to the state of Israel in the next 5 years? Are they high, medium, low, or non-existent?

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. Non-existent	28.6%	26.9%	32.1%
b. Low	43.2%	44.6%	40.4%
c. Medium	22.9%	23.2%	22.4%
d. High	3.7%	3.3%	4.3%
e. Don't know/No answer	2.7%	3.7%	0.8%

FRONTLINE STATES

EGYPT

As it had done in the previous quarter, Egypt played a significant role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this quarter: as a mediator in the cease-fire talks that ultimately ended OPE and as host and cosponsor of the major donor conference for Gaza's reconstruction on 10/12 (see below). As well as hosting and facilitating talks during the hostilities themselves, Cairo was the intended address for further indirect talks about longer-term issues (e.g., a possible Gaza seaport and airport). However, serious discussions of this nature between Israel and the Palestinian delegation did not materialize.

At the start of the quarter, the Egyptian-mediated cease-fire was the only serious diplomatic initiative under way, as confirmed by PA Pres. Abbas who said there was "no other" proposal on the table besides the Egyptian one (8/16). In a bid to reach a more long-term agreement after the expiry of a series of intermittent truces, Egyptian officials continued to facilitate high-level talks between the 2 sides, including Abbas's meeting with Pres. al-Sisi on 8/23. On 8/25, it was clear that Cairo's efforts were bearing fruit and Egyptian sources revealed that an Israeli response was pending on a cease-fire proposal to which Palestinian factions had already agreed. The Egyptian-mediated document was duly published on 8/26 officially bringing about the cessation of hostilities. Abbas was back in Cairo some days later on a 3-day visit (9/6-8) to hold talks with the Egyptian head of state and other senior officials. Discussions centered on the Gaza Strip, reconstruction efforts, and Palestinian plans for going to the UN rather than pursuing the bilateral track to end the Israeli occupation.

The Sinai insurgency continued this quarter, with violence between Egyptian security forces

and Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis reaching its peak since the onset of the rebellion in the wake of Pres. Mohamed Morsi's ousting from power in 7/2013. During 9-10/2014, there were a number of violent incidents and clashes, the most significant of which was a 2-wave attack on Egyptian security forces by Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis on 10/24, killing more than 30 people: 28 in a car bomb detonated nr. Shaykh Zuwayd and 3 in an attack with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire in al-Arish. The Egyptian military killed 7 suspected fighters on 9/14, at least 10 on 9/27 (Shaykh Zuwayd and Rafah), and a senior mbr. of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis on 10/10. Insurgents also carried out a number of attacks, including the alleged beheading of 4 civilians suspected of ties to the security services whose corpses were discovered in Shaykh Zuwayd on 8/20, the killing of 11 police officers on 9/2 nr. al-Wifaq close to the Gaza border, and a roadside bomb on 10/19 that killed 7 Egyptian soldiers and wounded 4 others.

Within 48 hours of the deadly 10/24 attack, senior Egyptian officials claimed the assault had a Gaza connection. In a statement to the media, Maj. Gen. Sameeh Beshadi said (10/26) there was "no doubt that Palestinian elements had taken part in the attacks." On 10/28, Egyptian military sources announced they would be creating a 500-m buffer zone along the border with the Gaza Strip, excluding Rafah and Shaykh Zuwayd, and that displaced residents would receive compensation. The idea of a buffer zone between Egypt and Gaza goes back to the Mubarak era, after Hamas took control of the territory in 2007. Smaller-scale demolitions of tunnels and homes have been ongoing in the context of fighting the Sinai insurgency. By the next day, hundreds of Egyptians living along the border with the Gaza Strip evacuated their homes following army orders. In addition to

beginning work on the buffer zone after the 10/24 attack, the Egyptian authorities again closed the Rafah crossing and kept it closed until the quarter ended. Al-Sisi also issued a decree (10/27) designating state infrastructure as military sites, a measure enabling the authorities to try civilians suspected of attacking or obstructing such locations in military courts.

In unrelated incidents on the border this quarter, Egyptian soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian man on 8/27 close to a smuggling tunnel nr. Rafah, while on 10/22, 2 Israeli soldiers were injured by small arms fire and an anti-tank missile fired from across the Egyptian border. The army's return fire killed 3 smugglers, according to a statement by the Israeli military.

JORDAN

The Jordanian-Israeli relationship came under considerable strain this quarter. On 10/20, FM Nasser Judeh accused Israel of playing with fire over reports that Jewish prayer would be allowed in al-Aqsa mosque compound (note that a wooden footbridge between the Western Wall plaza and Haram al-Sharif had already been dismantled on 9/3 following Jordanian pressure). The next day, UN amb. Dina Kavar told the UNSC that Amman would fight Israeli "violations," "provocative actions," and "systematic attempts to create a new reality in Jerusalem." A key focus of concern was a draft bill submitted by hard-right Likud MK Miri Regev stipulating that Jews had a right to pray in Haram al-Sharif, which they regard as the Temple Mount. The same day (10/21), Netanyahu informed Jordan that Israel in fact had no intention of changing the long-standing status quo. Coincidentally, the anniversary of Jordan's peace treaty with Israel fell just days later, and Jordan's amb. to

Israel, Walid Obeidat, used the opportunity to warn (10/26) that the treaty was under threat by settlement construction and any change to the status of al-Aqsa. In parallel with tensions on the ground, Jordan continued to express displeasure with Israeli behavior in Jerusalem, requesting a UNSC emergency discussion on 10/29, and describing the closure of the compound to Muslim worshippers on 10/30 as "a dangerous escalation" and "state terrorism," in the words of Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Hayel Abd Alhafeez Dawood.

The most significant development in the Jordanian-Israeli relationship took place on 11/5, when Jordan recalled its amb. to Israel in protest at an increase in Israeli "violations," notably in East Jerusalem and at the al-Aqsa mosque compound—the 1st time it has ever done so since the 1994 treaty was signed. FM Judeh told the media that the withdrawal had come after "repeated messages to Israel directly and indirectly that Jerusalem is a red line," and he described Israeli actions restricting worshippers' access and allowing Jewish extremists to enter the compound as "infuriating violations." Jordan lodged a complaint with the UNSC on the same day. In response, Netanyahu spoke by phone (11/6) with King Abdullah to reassure him there would be no changes to the status quo, including "Jordan's traditional role." Nevertheless, after Friday prayers on 11/7, the streets of Jordanian cities were filled with demonstrators calling on the govt. to scrap the peace treaty and close the Israeli Embassy. In light of the brewing crisis, Secy. of State Kerry flew to Amman and met with Abdullah and Netanyahu, and then separately with Pres. Abbas on 11/13. Afterward, the U.S. diplomat said all parties had agreed to "specific and practical actions that both sides

can take to restore calm,” but he did not go into details.

In stark contrast with these tensions, Jordanian-Israeli cooperation proceeded on the economic front, with Jordan moving to receive imported natural gas from Israel's offshore Leviathan field. On 9/3, the U.S. company, Noble Energy, signed a letter of intent to supply about 45 b. cu. m of natural gas to Jordan's National Electric Power Company over a 15-year period, a deal reportedly worth \$15 b. Jordanian Energy Minister Mohammad Hamed said (10/24) the deal would be finalized some time by mid-11/2014.

LEBANON

Tensions on the Israeli-Lebanon border persisted with low-level but significant incidents. Just as OPE was winding down in the Gaza Strip, 1 rocket from Lebanon hit the Upper Galilee (8/24) and another landed nr. Kiryat Shmona in n. Israel (8/25), close to the Lebanese border. Neither caused any damage or casualties. The IDF responded with an artillery attack on the “source of the rocket fire” and Lebanese media reported 18 shells had landed without causing casualties or damage. On 9/5, Israel killed Hizballah operative Hassan Ali Haidar by remotely detonating a spying device disguised to look like a rock planted in the s. village of Adloun. On 10/5, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded a Lebanese soldier across the so-called Blue Line nr. Shaba' Farms, a disputed border area. The Israeli army said its troops targeted suspects crossing the border, while the Lebanese army said an army outpost came under fire. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) condemned the incident and urged restraint. Two days later, an explosion injured 2 Israeli soldiers along the cease-fire line with Lebanon, nr. Shaba' Farms (10/7). Hizballah, which claimed the attack, said

it was the work of the Martyr Hassan Ali Haidar Unit, a reference to the operative killed on 9/5. In response, the Israeli army fired at Hizballah positions, with no reports of damage or casualties. Later the same day, senior Hizballah official Shaykh Naim Qassem told local media that the attack was “a message” that “our resistance is ready to confront the Israeli enemy.”

Internally, the Lebanese Parliament voted (11/5) to postpone parliamentary elections to 2017, because of instability linked to overspill from the Syrian crisis. The poll was scheduled for 2013, and its postponement means that the current parliament will have served 2 consecutive 4-year terms. Meanwhile, unrest continued in sections of the country, most notably Tripoli, which was once again rocked by sectarian violence linked to the civil war across the border. On 10/24, the Lebanese army clashed with Sunni Islamist gunmen, the day after soldiers had killed 3 in a raid on an apartment in Asoun. As fighting continued, 6 soldiers, as well as at least 4 gunmen and 2 civilians, were killed on 10/25. The next day, 4 more soldiers were killed, as well as 2 civilians. Parts of Lebanon nr. the Syria border saw other attacks and clashes this quarter such as the targeting of an army patrol nr. Aarsal on 11/14, when a roadside bomb caused 3 injuries.

SYRIA

The Syrian-Israeli border, and specifically, the Golan Heights, saw an increase in tension this quarter, as fighting between Syrian govt. forces and opposition groups took place in the area. Early on in the quarter, 5 rockets from Syria landed (8/2) inside the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, with no reports of casualties. An Israeli army spokesperson said that there was no return of fire, and the identity of those responsible was unknown. On 8/27, opposition

forces took control of the Qunaytra border crossing between Syria and the Israeli-occupied section of the Golan Heights, prompting Israel to close off the surrounding area. In separate incidents caused by the intense fighting in Syria, 2 Israelis were injured by stray fire: an officer, who was wounded by gunshot, and a civilian injured by a tank shell. Earlier, 2 mortar shells had landed in the Golan Heights, causing damage but no injuries. The IDF responded by targeting 2 Syrian army positions, with no casualties reported. It was in this context that, on 8/28, some 44 Fijian mbrs. of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) were kidnapped by rebel fighters. As the fighting continued to rage close to the armistice line with Israel, the peacekeepers were assumed to be unharmed, but their whereabouts remained unknown (9/1). Their release, mediated by Qatar, was eventually secured on 9/11, when the Fijians were handed over nr. a border crossing with the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. A few days later, the UN withdrew its peacekeepers from their posts on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights (9/15).

There were further incidents of cross-border fire this quarter. On 9/4, a projectile attributed to “errant fire” hit the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights from inside Syria, causing no injuries. In response, the IDF hit an unspecified target in Syria, which opposition sources claimed was a Syrian army base. There were no reports of casualties. On 9/8, 1 Israeli soldier in the Golan Heights was slightly injured by a stray bullet from inside Syria during clashes between govt. forces and rebels. Again, on 9/12, a stray mortar shell fired from inside Syria landed in the Israeli-occupied Golan, likely a misfire during battles between Syrian govt. forces and rebels. In late 9/2014, the Israeli military shot down a Syrian fighter jet after it entered Israeli airspace, in the 1st incident of its kind since the Israeli

invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Since the Patriot missile hit the plane after it had turned back, the wreckage landed in Syrian territory, and the crew ejected safely (9/23).

Internationally, U.S. Pres. Barack Obama announced on 9/10 that he was authorizing air strikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) for the 1st time in Syria and further attacks on the group in Iraq.

According to the White House, the new target list would include the group’s “leadership, logistical and operational capability,” and the attacks would seek to “deny it sanctuary and resources to plan, prepare and execute attacks.” Obama received congressional backing (9/18) for the training and arming of “moderate” Syrian rebels, following 78–22 passage of legislation in the Senate, a day after its approval by the House of Representatives. Meanwhile, on 8/19, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons declared that the most crucial part of its operation to destroy Syria’s chemical weapons had been completed. On 8/16, a U.S. ship finished neutralizing 600 metric tons of a precursor for sarin nerve gas and mustard gas. The chemicals’ toxicity was reduced by 99.9% aboard, and the liquid was to be sent to Finland and Germany for disposal.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

The Arab League held a ministerial-level meeting in Cairo on 9/7 to discuss topics including the threat posed by ISIS and other developments in the region. The League also issued a statement calling for the UN secy.-gen. to push the idea of a UNSC res. on Palestinian independence, as per the stated plan of PA Pres. Abbas who was also in attendance. The Palestinian amb. to Egypt, Jamal al-Shobaki,

confirmed on 9/8 that the Arab FM's were discussing the draft res.

The League responded to events in Jerusalem, with its dep. sec.-gen., Ahmed Ben Hilli, denouncing Israeli "violations" (11/2), as the council held an emergency meeting at Kuwait's request, to focus on the situation in the city and at al-Aqsa mosque compound specifically.

TURKEY

There was no sign of a thaw in Turkish-Israeli relations this quarter. Turkey's new PM Ahmet Davutoğlu marked his entry into office by declaring that he saw no hope of "normalizing" ties with Israel unless it ended its blockade of the Gaza Strip (9/1). Days later, the energy minister, Taner Yildiz, said (9/9) that, post-OPE, Ankara was unlikely to sign any energy deals with Israel for the construction of a gas pipeline to Turkey. On 9/22, in an appearance before the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, Pres. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan fiercely criticized Israel's assault on the Gaza Strip, prompting an angry response from Israeli officials. On 10/22, Israeli DM Ya'alon described Turkey, along with Qatar, as forming a "Muslim Brotherhood Axis," and claimed that Hamas had set up "terror headquarters" in Istanbul. He made the remarks in an interview broadcast on U.S. network PBS. Ya'alon repeated his accusations to his American counterpart Chuck Hagel during the same visit, telling the senior U.S. official that Turkey is "playing a cynical game." Turkey also responded to the tensions in Jerusalem by announcing on 11/2 that it was working to establish an international Quds foundation to "protect" al-Aqsa mosque from "Israeli aggression."

Meanwhile, lawyers for the ICC decided that the case brought through the Comoros Islands against Israel for its attack on the *Mavi Marmara* in 2010 was beyond their remit. The

paper, published by Reuters (11/5), notes that while there is "a reasonable basis to believe that war crimes under the Court's jurisdiction" were committed by Israeli soldiers on 5/31/2010, the crimes in question were not of sufficient gravity for the court to adjudicate. The decision is likely to be appealed.

IRAN

P5+1 and the IAEA

Following the 4-mo. extension announced on 7/18, talks continued between Iran and the P5+1 group leading up to the new 11/24 deadline. Remaining issues at the start of the quarter included the scope of Iran's nuclear fuel production capacity, and, in particular, the question of either dismantling or limiting the number of centrifuges (and if so, how many), as well as the length of time that restrictions should last. On 9/1, Iranian FM Mohammad Zarif held talks with EU foreign affairs chief Ashton in Brussels, after which he declared himself "quite optimistic" that it would be possible to "resolve this issue in time" (9/2). Two days later, anonymous EU officials told the media that Iran and the P5+1 group would hold new talks in New York on 9/18. Meanwhile, U.S. and Iranian officials began bilateral talks in Geneva (9/4), which continued for a 2d day between Dep. Secy. of State William Burns, Undersecy. Wendy Sherman, and Iran's dep. FM Abbas Araghchi. In a separate development on the same day, a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) leaked to the press said that Iran had failed to address concerns about suspected atomic bomb research. Tehran had reportedly only implemented 3 out of 5 agreed transparency steps. On 9/19, Iran and the P5+1 group recommenced official talks on the sidelines of the UNGA. Meanwhile, a monthly IAEA update reported that Iran was continuing to

take action in compliance with the interim agreement. On 9/21, Secy. of State Kerry met FM Zarif for brief one-on-one discussions on the nuclear talks, as well as the threat posed by ISIS. The next round of discussions took place in Vienna (10/16–17), which also included Kerry's participation, before further talks between Kerry and Zarif in Oman on 11/9–10. This was followed by a 1-day gathering of the P5+1 and Iran, attended by Kerry, Zarif, and Ashton, among others. The delegations conducted hours-long sessions in Muscat, but with no apparent sign of a breakthrough. State Dept. spokesperson Psaki described the talks as "tough, direct and serious," and said that all parties were "continuing to chip away at a very challenging issue." AFP quoted (11/11) chief Russian negotiator Sergei Ryabkov who pointed to the "inability of parties to build bridges over still deep gaps on issues like enrichment, like sanctions." Further talks in Vienna were scheduled for the following week, with the remaining issues looking much the same as they did at the start of the quarter.

unilateral measures, specifically dissuading the Palestinians from joining international organizations and brokering an agreement between Jordan and Israel to defuse the escalating violence in Jerusalem and end incitement. Meanwhile, announcements of Israeli settlement growth continued to strain the relationship between the Israeli and U.S. govts.

Throughout the quarter, U.S. officials consulted with their Palestinian counterparts on the PA leadership's developing plan to submit a res. to the UNSC, via Jordan, setting a timetable on ending the Israeli occupation and, in the event of failure at the UNSC, moving to sign the Rome Statute to give the ICC jurisdiction over the oPt. In New York, 2 days prior to addressing the UNGA, Pres. Abbas met with Secy. of State Kerry to discuss the plan that he formally unveiled before the assembly on 9/26 (see Doc. B2). On 11/3, Kerry met with PLO chief negotiator Erakat in Washington to express the administration's concern about the move and discouraged the Palestinian submission of a UNSC res. The administration was reportedly concerned about the plan because it felt that the U.S. would be in the position of having to consider vetoing the res. if it was submitted to the UNSC. As the quarter came to a close, however, the Obama administration had still not made public its position on using the veto and the Palestinians were delaying submission of the draft res.

By quarter's end, Kerry was in Amman for talks on the escalating violence in Jerusalem connected with the issue of Haram al-Sharif (see East Jerusalem, above). After meeting with Abbas, Kerry mediated between Jordan's King Abdullah and Israeli PM Netanyahu on practical measures that could be taken to stem the violence (11/3). Jordan's Hashemite dynasty has retained custody of Muslim holy places in Jerusalem, including Haram al-Sharif, since

INTERNATIONAL

UNITED STATES

Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process

In light of the formation of the PA unity govt. on 6/2, and the 50-day Israeli assault on Gaza in the summer, this quarter saw few serious efforts to revive the peace talks that had broken down in 4/2014. The Obama administration, however, was an active participant in international efforts to obtain an open-ended cease-fire that would end OPE and to facilitate the reconstruction process (see International/United States and Donors below). Furthermore, this quarter saw the U.S. advocating for all parties to avoid

1924, with the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty reaffirming Jordan's responsibility for the sites (see Doc. A2 in *JPS* 94).

Announcements of new Israeli settlement construction throughout the quarter placed renewed pressure on the relationship between the Obama administration and Netanyahu's govt. On 8/31, Israel announced the expropriation of almost 1,000 acres of private Palestinian land nr. Bethlehem. The U.S. harshly criticized the move, with State Dept. spokesperson Psaki urging Israel to "reverse the decision," which she described as "deeply concerning" (9/2) to the U.S. administration. A month later, hours before Netanyahu was set to meet with Pres. Obama at the White House (10/1), the Israeli NGO Peace Now publicized the news that Israel had advanced plans for 2,610 new homes in Givat Hamatos, a settlement in East Jerusalem. After the State Dept. called the move "deeply concerning," Netanyahu responded by saying the Obama administration "should be acquainted with the facts." According to Psaki on 10/2, the U.S. had its "information clear" and had "responded to facts on the ground." In an interview with Israel's Channel 2 on the same day, Netanyahu for his part accused Peace Now of "deliberately" sabotaging his meeting with Obama through the timing of its publication. The tension and language escalated in the following weeks after Netanyahu's approval of 1,060 new residences in East Jerusalem settlements. The State Dept. castigated the move, saying, "if Israel wants to live in a peaceful society, they need to take steps that will reduce tensions," while Netanyahu described international condemnation as "disconnected from reality" (10/28).

Two salient incidents this quarter were illustrative of the increasingly acrimonious relationship between the Netanyahu govt. and the Obama administration. During his 5-day

trip to Washington on 10/19–24, Israeli DM Ya'alon was denied several requests to meet with top administration officials, including VP Joe Biden, Secy. of State Kerry, and National Security Adviser Susan Rice. Ya'alon did, however, meet with his counterpart, Chuck Hagel, at the Pentagon on 10/21. Following the visit, a senior U.S. official told (10/24) the *Jerusalem Post*, "We were shocked by some of the comments that he [Ya'alon] has made in the past." This was a reference to Ya'alon's description of Kerry as "obsessive and messianic" (1/14) during the intense diplomatic shuttling that the U.S. official undertook in the course of the failed 2013–14 negotiations, and to his portrayal of the Obama administration's foreign policy as "weak" in a speech he gave at Tel Aviv University on 3/17 (see *JPS* 172). "It should come as no surprise that he wasn't able to get some of the meetings he requested," the unnamed official told the paper. Ya'alon later denied that he had been snubbed, explaining that most officials had been busy preparing for the 11/4 midterm elections. A few days later, the crisis deepened when the *Atlantic* quoted another senior official as describing Netanyahu as a "chickenshit prime minister" who only cared about his political survival (10/29). Netanyahu's office released a statement in response, saying the PM would "continue to uphold the security interests of Israel and the historical rights of the Jewish people in Jerusalem," and adding that no amount of pressure would change that. The White House quickly distanced itself from the quoted profanity, but White House spokesperson Josh Earnest clarified that the administration didn't "paper over our differences," particularly on settlement activity. Kerry subsequently condemned the remarks, calling such statements "disgraceful, unacceptable, and

damaging” (10/30) and he also called Netanyahu to express regret over the remarks.

Israel and the U.S. Congress

During the quarter, the U.S. Congress spent very few days in session deliberating on legislation, with the summer recess (8/1–9/5) and campaigning for the midterm elections (9/4) occupying much more time. However, mbrs. did take action on 1 important piece of legislation concerning the U.S.-Israel relationship, and many spoke out on relevant foreign policy issues, particularly Palestinian reconciliation and the aftermath of OPE.

As in years past, many congressional reps. used the recess to take trips to Israel, meeting govt. officials and touring the country. At the end of 8/2014, 8 mbrs. of the House Armed Services Comm. visited the country and met with PM Netanyahu and Intelligence Minister Yuval Steinitz (8/28). The following week, House Foreign Affairs Comm. chair Ed Royce (R-CA) and ranking mbr. Eliot Engel (D-NY) traveled to Israel “to show bipartisan support at a critical time,” in the words of Royce (9/4). The pair met with Netanyahu, FM Avigdor Lieberman, and DM Ya’alon, as well as with several PA officials.

At the end of the previous quarter, movement had begun on a bill that had, in some form, been gestating in Congress for over a year: the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act (see S. 2673 on <http://Congressionalmonitor.org>), which would reaffirm and strengthen the U.S.-Israel alliance through a variety of measures. It was originally authored by Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO), and 1st introduced on 3/5/13, but that 1st version was scuppered after supporters of the bill could not agree on language relating to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). The program had come in for harsh criticism by the Arab-American and intelligence

communities throughout 2013 and early 2014 (see *JPS* 171–73 for details). Boxer and Blunt reintroduced the bill on 7/28 with language closer to a similar bill on the VWP that had recently passed in the House (see H.R. 938 of 3/4/13). Rather than mandating Israel’s inclusion in the VWP, the new bill expressed the desirability for Israel to be admitted into the program after it satisfied the requirements. Although the new bill had 80 cosponsors and the support of the American Israel Public Affairs Comm. (AIPAC), as well as several other pro-Israel groups, it failed to pass both times Boxer called for voice votes on the Senate floor (7/31 and 8/2). Following the summer recess, Boxer amended (9/19) the bill to remove the visa waiver language altogether, leaving only a short, unqualified statement encouraging Israel’s inclusion in the program once it satisfied the requirements. When she called another voice vote on the Senate floor that same day, the bill passed by unanimous consent and was sent to the House for consideration.

A week after the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act passed, 88 sen. signed onto a letter (9/23) calling on Secy. of State Kerry to encourage the PA to “exercise real power” in Gaza, and to discourage Hamas’s rearmament and any unilateral actions at the UN. Seeking the demilitarization of Gaza, the measure was backed by AIPAC and initiated by Robert Casey (D-PA) and Kelly Ayotte (R-NH). Consistent with the organization’s goals as well as those of Israeli PM Netanyahu’s govt., the letter reflected the traditionally critical stance of AIPAC and its allies toward the PA.

Syria

After ISIS released 2 dramatic videos featuring its fighters beheading U.S. journalists (8/19 and 9/2), Pres. Obama authorized (9/10) air strikes on Syria for the 1st time and

further attacks targeting the group in Iraq. In a televised speech from the White House, Obama said the strikes were meant to degrade ISIS's "leadership, logistical, and operational capability," as well as "deny [the group] sanctuary and resources to plan, prepare and execute attacks." At the time of the announcement, the U.S. had already launched around 150 air strikes on ISIS targets inside Iraq and was also in the midst of assembling a regional coalition of support for its fight against ISIS. Kerry was in Jeddah on 9/11 to enlist the support of 9 other Arab countries besides Saudi Arabia, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Qatar. In connection with the president's announcement, U.S. officials revealed that the Saudis had agreed to allow their bases to be used for training "moderate" Syrian opposition forces.

Congress generally approved of Obama's plan although some mbrs. expressed doubts about the administration's long-term plans and goals, and others raised the issue of congressional authorization. For instance, Senate Foreign Relations Comm. chair Robert Menendez (D-NJ) said on his website (9/10) that while short-term air strikes were within existing presidential authority, "a prolonged military campaign" would "require a congressionally approved Authorization for Use of Military Force." In an official press release on the same day, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) emphasized the need for additional support for "the moderate, vetted Syrian opposition," while Sens. John McCain (R-AZ) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) released a statement saying that Obama was not going far enough, and that "additional U.S. special forces and advisers are needed to direct precision air strikes, advise foreign partners on the ground, and possibly conduct targeted operations against ISIS leadership." After ISIS released (9/13) another video of a Western journalist's

beheading, the House of Representatives attached an amendment to a must-pass spending res., by a vote of 273–156, authorizing the training and arming of "moderate" Syrian rebels. The amended res. passed in the House on 9/17 and in the Senate the next day, before being signed into law by the pres. on 9/19. This was only a stopgap measure, however, designed to delay discussions on major budget decisions. Thus, along with the rest of the measure's provisions, the authorization for arming Syrian rebels was set to expire on 12/11.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Dept. of the Treasury announced (10/16) more than a dozen new sanctions on individuals and entities for their assistance to the Syrian govt.

Iran

While nuclear talks remained the focus of U.S.-Iran relations this quarter (see above) there was speculation that the fight against ISIS might become an issue overlapping interests between the U.S. and Iran. Just 2 days after Pres. Obama authorized air strikes on ISIS targets in Syria and Iraq, Kerry pointed out it would not be appropriate for Iran to be involved in the anti-ISIS coalition, given its support for Syrian Pres. Bashar al-Asad (9/12). He reaffirmed a few days later that military coordination with Iran was out of the question but added that the U.S. was not "opposed to the idea of communicating to find out if they will come on board, or under what circumstances, or whether there is the possibility of a change." Speaking to the state news agency (9/16), Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, for his part, revealed that he had personally vetoed contacts to discuss the fight against ISIS that Washington had tried to establish through the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad. These fledgling gestures culminated in a direct meeting between Kerry and Iranian FM Zarif in New York, on the sidelines of the

UNGA, when the 2 discussed ISIS as well as the P5+1 negotiations, according to a State Dept. press briefing (9/26). In 10/2014, the Obama administration reached out again, this time in a personal letter from the pres. to Khamenei. While the letter's contents were not made public, senior Iranian officials confirmed (11/9) that it had a "positive impact on Iran's leadership" and that Khamenei had responded to his U.S. counterpart in writing (11/12). Meanwhile, the Obama administration remained under pressure from Capitol Hill regarding the nuclear talks with Iran, both before and after the midterm elections on 11/4. In early 10/2014, 354 reps. signed on to a letter, initiated by Royce (R-CA) and Engel (D-NY), which urged (10/2) Kerry to "carefully monitor Iran's cooperation with the IAEA's inquiry," and to ensure full transparency in Iran's nuclear research and development efforts. On 10/20, the *New York Times* reported that Obama would avoid bringing a possible deal with Iran before Congress for approval, despite consistent calls to do so from Republicans in Congress. Kerry later (10/24) clarified the administration's intentions, saying that the plan was for "deep congressional engagement" over any potential agreement.

Congressional pressure on the administration was kept up after the midterm elections that won Republicans control of the Senate and maintained their control of the House. On 11/13, Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Bob Corker (R-TN) brought to the floor for a voice vote the AIPAC-supported Iran Nuclear Negotiations Act (see S. 2650 on <http://Congressionalmonitor.org>), which Corker introduced on 7/23. The bill, in the form of a joint res., would condition the funding of any agreement between the P5+1 nations and Iran on congressional approval. Senate Democrats objected to the vote, holding to the president's

calls for no legislative interference with the negotiations. Corker was due to become the chair of the Senate's Foreign Relations Comm. in the 114th Congress and was widely expected to pursue similar legislation in 2015. Of note this quarter, the Treasury Dept. designated 25 individuals and entities as being in violation of U.S. sanctions on Iran (8/29).

RUSSIA

Russia declared its intention to back a Palestinian bid for a UNSC res. setting a deadline for Palestinian statehood and an end to Israeli occupation. The decision was announced by Dep. FM Mikhail Bogdanov, speaking at the Gaza donor conference in Cairo (10/12). On 10/25, Pres. Vladimir Putin told a gathering in Moscow that "the humiliation and the oppression that the Palestinian people are going through are a source of danger and destabilization," and that Israel's West Bank settlements are "a cause of increasing tension in the Middle East."

EUROPEAN UNION

Having offered Israel arguably critical support during OPE, there was frustration in Brussels as Israeli settlement construction announcements unfolded thick and fast on the heels of the 50-day war. On 9/2, EU foreign policy chief Ashton released a statement, condemning the expropriation of land nr. Bethlehem furthering settlement expansion, saying that "at this delicate moment," any action that undermines stability "should be avoided." UK Foreign Secy. Philip Hammond said his country deplored the step, which he described as "a particularly ill-judged decision" that would "do serious damage to Israel's standing in the international community" (1/9). With no prospects for a reactivation of the peace process, Israeli announcements such as those provoked

increasingly harsh rhetoric in Brussels. After plans were advanced for 1,060 new housing units in the East Jerusalem settlements of Ramat Shlomo and Har Homa, Ashton said the decision once again called “into serious question Israel’s commitment to a negotiated solution with the Palestinians” (10/27).

While the EU and its mbr. states remained fully committed to a negotiated 2-state solution, impatience at the lack of a breakthrough—coupled with the open rejection of Palestinian statehood by several mbrs. of the Israeli govt.—meant that there were signs of support for Palestinian unilateral measures. On 9/19, French Pres. Hollande declared that a “solution to the conflict” between the Israelis and Palestinians would be put to the UNSC. In remarks at a press conference alongside Pres. Abbas in Paris, Hollande said that even though the outlines of a possible deal were known, negotiations had gone on “too long.” Meanwhile, the Swedish govt. officially recognized the state of Palestine (10/30), with FM Margot Wallström declaring that other EU states might well follow its lead. On 10/13, MPs in the British Parliament urged the govt. to “recognize the state of Palestine alongside the state of Israel” as part of a “contribution to securing a negotiated 2-state solution.” The vote, while symbolic, passed 274–12.

UNITED NATIONS

As the quarter opened, UN Secy.-Gen. Ban Ki-moon condemned the breakdown of the temporary cease-fire on 8/19 “in the strongest terms.” Ban said that “the hopes of the people in Gaza for a better future and the hopes of the people in Israel for sustainable security rest on the talks in Cairo.” In the days that followed, Ban made a round of phone calls (8/22) to key leaders: Pres. Abbas, PM Netanyahu, Egyptian

FM Sameh Hassan Shokry Selim, Secy. of State Kerry, Qatari emir Al-Thani, and Turkish pres. Erdoğan. When the final, full cease-fire went into effect on 8/26, Ban welcomed the announcement but stated that “any peace effort that does not tackle the root causes of the crisis will do little more than set the stage for the next cycle of violence.” He also urged that Gaza “be brought back under 1 legitimate Palestinian govt. adhering to the Palestine Liberation Organization commitments.” He also called for an end to “the blockade of Gaza” and for “Israel’s legitimate security concerns” to be addressed. The UN subsequently assumed a significant role in the post-war arrangements, brokering a deal to enable reconstruction work in the Gaza Strip to proceed while satisfying Israeli concerns about reconstruction materials being diverted to Hamas. On 9/16, UN Middle East envoy Serry announced the agreement that entailed a strict, UN-enforced monitoring system, and gave the PA and the private sector a lead role in rebuilding.

An inquiry into attacks on UN facilities in the Gaza Strip during OPE became a contentious issue between Israel and the UN this quarter. Netanyahu and Ban met on the sidelines of the UNGA and clashed over the setting up of such an inquiry (10/2), with the Israeli premier asking for it to be postponed and claiming that Israel was being discriminated against, and the UN chief saying Israel had acted disproportionately. Soon after, the UN secy.-gen. was in the region, where he met separately with Netanyahu and PM Hamdallah in Jerusalem (10/13). The next day, he went to the Gaza Strip, met mbrs. of the unity govt., and toured some of the most devastated areas. Ban told reporters that the destruction he had seen was “beyond description” and that the shelling of UN schools “must be fully and independently

investigated.” On 10/21, Ban told the UNSC that he would press ahead with “an independent board of inquiry” to investigate “the most serious” cases when “UN facilities sustained hits and many innocent people were killed.” Ban also told the council that while he understood “the security threat to Israel from rockets above and tunnels below . . . the scale of the destruction in Gaza has left deep questions about proportionality and the need for accountability.” Ban’s spokesperson later told reporters that the inquiry was a standard procedure implemented whenever there was damage to UN property or premises. On 11/10, Ban named retired Dutch gen. Patrick Cammaert to head the 5-mbr. inquiry board whose mandate was to cover “a number of specific incidents in which death or injuries occurred at, and/or damage was done to United Nations premises,” along with “incidents in which weapons were found to be present on United Nations premises.”

Also this quarter, Israel’s compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights came under scrutiny at a session of the UN’s Human Rights Comm. in Geneva (10/30). Israel sent senior officials to submit evidence to the comm., an arena they view as less “biased” than the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The comm. urged Israel to investigate all alleged violations committed in Gaza during OPE, and told Israel to halt settlement construction and land confiscation.

Meanwhile, on 11/12, Israeli authorities denied entry to the panel mbrs. of the UNHRC inquiry, headed by Canadian international human rights and criminal law expert William Schabas. Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson Emmanuel Nahshon described the panel as having provided “its conclusions in advance.”

DONORS

On 10/12, international donors met in Cairo to raise money for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. The meeting, co-chaired by Egypt and Norway, saw \$5.4 b. pledged by delegates representing around 50 nations and 20 regional and international organizations. The final amount was announced by Norwegian FM Børge Brende, who said that half of the funds would be “dedicated” to rebuilding work. Of the total raised, Qatar pledged \$1 b., the U.S. \$211 m., and the UAE and Turkey \$200 m. each. EU mbr. states’ donations amounted to \$568 m. in total.

The Ad Hoc Liaison Comm. (AHLC), which serves as the principal policy-level coordination mechanism for development assistance to the Palestinian people, convened in New York on 9/22. The meeting was hosted by UN Secy.-Gen. Ban and attended by Secy. of State Kerry, Palestinian PM Hamdallah, Israel’s dep. Minister of Foreign Affairs Tzachi Hanegbi, EU foreign policy chief Ashton, Quartet Representative Tony Blair, as well as officials from the World Bank and the IMF. The meeting was chaired by Brende. The concluding statement declared that “a political horizon for ending the occupation and the conflict is needed now more than ever.” The AHLC noted that reports from the UN, World Bank, and IMF described a situation of a deteriorating “economic outlook,” with “1 in 6 people in the West Bank and nearly every 2d person in Gaza unemployed.” The AHLC laid out 3 steps required to “facilitate the Palestinian economy’s return to sustainable growth”: access for imports and exports between the Gaza Strip and West Bank; the unification of both areas under “a single legitimate authority”; and additional funding for “continued reforms and the reconstruction of Gaza.” The AHLC pointed to

what it called “signs of donor fatigue,” yet emphasized the PA’s need for “high levels of budget assistance in the short and medium terms, even in the most positive scenario of rapid economic recovery.” Without a “resumption of the political process to end the occupation,” the AHLC warned, “the PA’s financial situation will become unmanageable.” The comm. agreed to reconvene in Brussels in the spring of 2015.

In other donor news this quarter, the EU contributed €15.5 m. to the payment of 8/2014 salaries and pensions for around 69,000 Palestinian civil servants and pensioners (9/6), and a further €17.5 m. for the payment of 10/2014 salaries and pensions (11/10). Both donations were channeled through the EU’s PEGASE mechanism (Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l’Aide Socio-Economique) to support the PA. The World Bank contributed \$23 m. in extra budget support (10/2), and Japan provided another \$9.3 m. in PA budget support aid (10/26).

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

This quarter saw 2 significant victories in the BDS campaign, with long-standing targets finally responding to pressure. French multinational Veolia confirmed (9/1) reports that had originally surfaced in 7/2014,

indicating it intended to sell its interests in Israel. The company had been a key BDS target around the world, on account of its complicity in Israeli settlements through waste-disposal services and transportation networks—including, the JLR. After years of lost contracts, confirmed by a company official in 2010, Veolia will now “be stepping back from Israel as a marketplace,” according to a company spokesperson. In addition, SodaStream, another international campaign target, announced (10/29) that it will close its flagship factory in the West Bank settlement of Mishor Adumim and relocate production to a facility in the Negev by the end of 2015. The company denied that the decision was connected to the boycott campaign, but it has long been subject to negative publicity generated by BDS activism.

In other boycott developments, on 10/10, Irish solidarity campaigners welcomed the Irish govt.’s decision not to award a JobPath state contract to Anglo-Danish security firm G4S, a long-standing BDS target. Meanwhile, California-based activists operating under the campaign name Block the Boat repeatedly delayed the docking of Israeli Zim cargo ships in California ports to protest the attack on Gaza. The original San Francisco coalition prevented the ships from unloading in Oakland for several days in 8/2014 and again on 9/27 and 10/19.

There were also 2 significant developments at a governmental level. On 9/22, African National Congress secy.-gen. Gwede Mantashe declared that ANC mbrs. and leaders should not travel to Israel, as part of the ANC’s support for the “cultural, academic and education boycott of Israel.” Mantashe was speaking following a meeting of the ANC’s national executive comm. Then on 10/27, the govt. of Kuwait announced it would not deal with 50 companies due to their role in illegal Israeli settlement. Blacklisted companies included Volvo, Heidelberg Cement,

Dexia, Pizzarotti, Alstom, and Veolia. In other Middle East-related BDS news, the Jordan BDS movement published a statement on 10/27—the anniversary of the peace treaty with Israel—signed by more than 60 civil society institutions affirming boycott and anti-normalization.

Further support for the academic boycott came this quarter from more than 500 anthropologists around the world who signed on to a call (10/1) for a boycott of

Israeli academic institutions. Also on campus, the Ontario branch of the Canadian Federation of Students, representing more than 300,000 university students, unanimously passed a motion to endorse the BDS movement (8/17).

Also this quarter, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Junot Díaz endorsed the U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (10/21).