**CHRONOLOGY**

16 FEBRUARY–15 MAY 2008

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*This section is part ninety-eight of a chronology begun in *JPS* 13, no. 3 (Spring 1984).*

**Chronology dates reflect Eastern Standard Time (EST). For a more comprehensive overview of events related to the al-Aqsa intifada and of regional and international developments related to the peace process, see the Quarterly Update on Conflict and Diplomacy in this issue.**

16 FEBRUARY

As the quarter opened, **Israeli** and **Palestinian Authority (PA)** negotiating teams created at the 11/07 Annapolis summit were holding regular meetings to discuss final status (see Quarterly Update for details). **Israel**, meanwhile, maintained an extremely tight seal on Gaza following Hamas’s 1/23–2/3 breach of the Gaza-Egypt border (see Quarterly Update in *JPS* 147); no exports were permitted and only very limited humanitarian imports were allowed. During the day, the **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** makes a ground incursion into Rafah, clashing with local gunmen, killing 1 Hamas **mbr.**, wounding 7 Palestinians (including 1 bystander). In the West Bank, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in ‘Ayn al-Sultan refugee camp (r.c.) nr. Jericho, nr. Nablus. A **Palestinian resistance mbr.**, wounded during a 2/11 IDF raid on al-Shuka, dies. An **Islamic Jihad mbr.** dies of injuries sustained on 2/15 when a mortar he was preparing exploded prematurely. (WP 2/17; OCHA 2/20; PCHR 2/21)

17 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** sends armored vehicles, bulldozers into the Erez industrial zone to level land. **Palestinians** fire at least 15 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries. **Egypt** sends 334 Gazans it has rounded up since the border was reclosed on 2/3 back to the Strip through the Rafah crossing; another 150 Gazans are being held at a youth hostel in al-Arish. A **Palestinian** dies of injuries sustained during the 2/17 IDF raid on al-Shuka. (WT 2/19; OCHA 2/20; PCHR 2/21)

18 FEBRUARY

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19 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** sends troops to Dayr al-Balah and Wadi al-Silqa in central (c.) Gaza, exchanging fire with local Palestinians, killing an **11-yr.-old Palestinian boy**; fatally shoots a Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) **mbr.** planting a roadside bomb nr. the Gaza border fence. In n. Gaza, 3
Palestinians are injured when a rocket fired toward Israel lands inside the Strip. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Tulkarm and in Hebron, Jenin (raiding a Hamas-affiliated charity, confiscating computers and files). (NYT, OCHA, WP 2/20; PCHR 2/21)

20 FEBRUARY

In the West Bank, the IDF sends undercover units in a car with Palestinian license plates into Tulkarm to raid a café, detaining 13 Palestinians, releasing most (including a 14-yr-old boy) later in the day; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, nr. Nablus. Unidentified gunmen fire on the home of a senior Hamas mbr. in Gaza City, causing no injuries. (PCHR 2/21; OCHA 2/27; PCHR 2/28)

21 FEBRUARY

Gaza’s Health Min. and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Rafah report that most of their ambulances have stopped running for lack of fuel. The IDF makes a late-night air strike on a group of Palestinians nr. the Gaza border e. of al-Maghazi, killing 2 armed Palestinians. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in, fires on residential areas of Tulkarm, causing no injuries; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem. (PCHR 2/21; OCHA 2/27; PCHR 2/28)

22 FEBRUARY

IDF troops on the Gaza border e. of Gaza City fire a missile at a group of armed Palestinians nr. the border, wounding 1 armed Palestinian, 1 Palestinian teenager outside his home nearby. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in ‘Ayn Bayt al-Ma’ r.c. nr. Nablus (arresting senior Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] mbr. Majdi Mabruk) and nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Tulkarm; breaks the windows of several Palestinian cars parked nr. a Hebron building occupied by Jewish settlers for the past yr., stating the vehicles posed a threat to the settlers; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil’in nr. Ramallah (injuring 6). Hamas-affiliated imam Majid Barghouti (age 44), who was among 8 Palestinians arrested by the PA in a raid nr. Ramallah on 2/14, dies in PA General Intelligence custody in Ramallah of apparent torture; PA Pres. Mahmoud Abbas puts West Bank security forces on high alert, orders an investigation. (JP 2/23; WP 2/24; al-Akhbar [Cairo] 2/26; OCHA 2/27; PCHR 2/28)

23 FEBRUARY

The IDF shells a suspected rocket-launching site nr. Bayt Hanun in n. Gaza, killing 3 Palestinian civilians sitting outside a house. Palestinians fire 4 mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols, conducts random ID checks in Anabta nr. Tulkarm; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, and in Hebron, Qabatyia, nr. Jenin. (NYT, WP 2/24; OCHA 2/27; PCHR 2/28)

24 FEBRUARY

The IDF makes an incursion into al-Shuka in s. Gaza, raiding and searching homes, clashing with local gunmen, killing 1 armed Palestinian, detaining 50 Palestinians for questioning, arresting 3 and transporting them to Israel. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Bethlehem, Nablus, and nr. Jenin, Tulkarm. In Dayr al-Balah, Hamas-affiliated police raid the Prisoners’ Association building, confiscate documents and furniture. (NYT 2/25; OCHA 2/27; PCHR 2/28)

25 FEBRUARY

Overnight, the IDF makes air strikes on suspected rocket-launching sites in n. Gaza, killing 2 Hamas mbrs., 1 unidentified armed Palestinian, 2 bystanders. Across Gaza, several thousand Palestinians take part in a nonviolent march to the border with Israel to urge an end to the siege; Hamas-affiliated security forces block demonstrators fr. reaching the Erez crossing. After the rally, some Palestinian youths gather at Erez and throw stones toward IDF positions, burn tires; the IDF fires on them, wounding 2. Palestinians fire 11 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, seriously injuring a 10-yr-old Israeli boy in Sederot. In the West Bank, the IDF sends undercover units into Nablus in a truck with Palestinian license plates, raiding a shop, firing on those inside, wounding 2 Palestinians, arresting 6 (including a 16-yr-old boy); conducts rare arrest raids, house...
searches in Jericho. (IFM, JP, NYT 2/25; NYT, WT 2/26; OCHA 2/27; PCHR 2/28)

26 FEBRUARY

Overnight, the IDF sends troops into Hebron to search the offices of several schools, youth centers, orphanages (housing some 1,000 children) owned by the Islamic Charitable Association (ICA), issuing an order declaring the ICA an illegal organization affiliated with Hamas, demanding that the buildings be vacated and turned over to the IDF for a 3-yr. period by 4/8, and stating that anyone remaining in the buildings will be considered to be admitting membership in Hamas and thereby subject to 5-yr. imprisonment; soldiers immediately confiscate 2 buses, a car, computers, appliances, furniture, documents; the ICA, a major philanthropic group founded in 1962 that runs many schools, nurseries, bakeries, and other services for the poor across the West Bank, denies Hamas affiliation. During the day, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., Ramallah. In East Jerusalem, the IDF demolishes a Palestinian home. Meanwhile, in s. Gaza, the IDF sends troops into al-Qarara, firing on residential areas, killing 1 Palestinian civilian. (OCHA, WP 2/27; PCHR 2/28; al-Abram Weekly [Cairo] 4/18)

27 FEBRUARY

In the morning, the IDF makes an air strike on a minivan nr. Khan Yunis, assassinating 5 Hamas mbrs., and wounding 1 allegedly responsible for the Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades’ rocket program; makes air strikes on a 2d Hamas vehicle, missing it, allowing the targets to escape. Also in the morning, IDF troops on the Gaza border nr. al-Bureij r.c. fire on a group of Palestinian children who stray nr. the border fence, wounding 5 women. One of the air strikes targets a Hamas-affiliated police post nr. the home of Hamas’s Ismail Haniyeh in Shati’ r.c., killing 2 armed Palestinians, wounding 2; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, and nr. Jenin, Ramallah, Tulkarm. (BBC 2/27; NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 2/28; PCHR 3/6; WP 4/10)

28 FEBRUARY

The IDF launches Operation Hot Winter (also called Operation Warm Winter) targeting Gaza’s “terrorist infrastructure,” making more than 20 air strikes, mostly on n. and c. Gaza, killing 20 Palestinians (including at least 2 unarmed adults and 5 children, including 4 boys ages 8–14 playing soccer in Jabalia town), wounding more than 50 (including at least 14 children, 5 women). One of the air strikes targets a Hamas-affiliated police post nr. the home of Hamas’s Ismail Haniyeh in Shati’ r.c., killing 2 police officers. Another levels the labor syndicate headquarters in Gaza City. The IDF and Gaza militants also continue to trade heavy fire across the border, with Palestinians firing at least 31 rockets and 15 mortars, injuring 2 Israelis. Israel alleges that the rockets include 8 Grads fired by Hamas, 2 of which hit a house and cemetery in Ashqelon; none causes injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF fires on Palestinians in Salfit holding a nonviolent protest against the IDF attacks on Gaza, wounding 2; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr.
Bethlehem, Hebron. (BBC, al-Dustur [Amman], REU 2/28; NYT, WP, WT 2/29; PCHR 3/6)

29 FEBRUARY

The IDF continues Operation Hot Winter with air strikes on n. and c. Gaza (targeting alleged weapons stores and factories) and gunfire across the border into n. Gaza. Se-nior Hamas cmdr. Eyad al-Ashram (assas-sinated in Jabaliya) and 2 Palestinian civil-ians (including 1 child) are killed and around 45 Palestinians (including 10 children, 5 women) are wounded. Palestinians fire 13 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, hitting a house, lightly injuring 1 Israeli; 1 rocket lands inside Gaza, hitting a home, killing a 3-yr.-old Palestinian boy and wounding 2 other children. Five Palestinians are wounded when a rocket they are preparing to launch into Israel explodes prematurely. A Palestinian wounded in Israeli attacks on 2/28 dies. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonvio-lent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil’in (10s suffer from tear gas inhala-tion). Hamas-affiliated police break into a Fatah-affiliated youth club in Nussayrat r.c., confiscating documents and furniture. (BBC, WP, YA 2/29; NYT, WP 3/1; PCHR 3/6)

1 MARCH

The IDF intensifies Operation Hot Winter overnight, sending large numbers of ground troops into the Jabaliya area, Bayt Hanun, Gaza City, marking Israel’s largest ground incursion into n. Gaza since 2005. As Palest-inians across the Strip hunker down in their homes, IDF troops accompanied by tanks, helicopters, warplanes conduct house-to-house searches for weapons in the Jabaliya area, clashing with local gunmen, occupy-ing homes as staging areas, directing tank fire at residential and commercial buildings, rounding up 10s of Palestinians for question-ing, bulldozing electricity and telephone cables. The IDF also continues intensive air strikes across Gaza, destroying a mosque fre-quent by Hamas security forces and the Gaza City home of an Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades cmdr. (he survives, but 6 family mbrs. are killed), as well as alleged weapons stores and several police stations. At least 62 Palestinians (29 civilians, including at least 15 children, 7 women; 25 militants; 8 Hamas-affiliated police officers) are killed and at least 175 wounded (including 44 children, 6 women, 1 paramedic) during the day, marking the Palestinians’ highest 1-day toll since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada in 2000; 2 IDF soldiers are also killed and 7 injured in the heavy fighting, some of them by roadside bombs planted by the Palestinian factions in anticipation of an incursion. Palestinians fire around 24 rockets into Israel (the IDF claims 7 are Grad rockets fired by Hamas), lightly wounding 6 Israelis (including a woman, 2 children) nr. Ashqelon. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in Bayt Jala nr. Bethlehem, firing tear gas at the local PA police headquarters for no apparent reason; fires on Palestinians nr. Hebron demonstrating against Operation Hot Winter, wounding 1 with live ammunition; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. Also nr. Hebron, a Palestinian teenager is injured when an explosive de-vice he attempts to throw at an IDF observation tower explodes prematurely. (NYT, WP, WT 3/2; PCHR 3/6)

2 MARCH

Abbas suspends peace talks with Israel to protest Operation Hot Winter. Overnight, the IDF makes air strikes de-stroying Haniyeh’s vacant office in Gaza City and Change and Reform offices in Khan Yunis. During the day, IDF assaults kill at least 21 Palestinians (including at least 7 civilians, including 3 children; 5 militants; 2 Hamas-affiliated policemen); 4 IDF sol-diers are wounded. Palestinians fire about 33 rockets (3 of them Grads, according to the IDF) fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries. Egypt opens its border to allow transportation of wounded Palestinians to Egyptian hospitals, but Palestinian hospitals report that many patients are too badly injured to be moved. Late in the evening (9:00 p.m. EST; 4:00 a.m. on 3/3 local time), the IDF withdraws ground troops fr. the Jabaliya area, substantially reducing the scope of Operation Hot Winter. Mean-while, across the West Bank, 1,000s of Palesti-nians protest the Israeli strikes on Gaza (in Ramallah, 100s of Palestinians waving Hamas banners rally outside the Muqata’ a). The IDF fires on 3 protests nr. Hebron, killing a 14-yr.-old Palestinian and wounding a total of 16 Palestinians
(including 10 teenagers); patrols in, fires on residential areas of Hijja nr. Qalqilya, seriously wounding 1 Palestinian; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, in Nablus, nr. Jenin. (WP 3/3; HA, NYT, WP, WT 3/3; PCHR 3/6)

**3 MARCH**

Overnight, the IDF makes several air strikes on Gaza, killing 5 Hamas mbrs. before withdrawing ground troops fr. Gaza in the morning, stating that it is suspending **Operation Hot Winter** during U.S. Secy. of State Condoleezza Rice’s upcoming 3/4–5 visit. The toll for the 5-day operation is at least 110 Palestinians (half of them civilians, including at least 24 children; Hamas says it lost 57 mbrs.; Islamic Jihad and the PRCs say they lost 15) and 3 Israelis dead (1 civilian inside Israel, 2 IDF soldiers in Gaza), and nearly 400 Palestinians injured (most of them civilians). In addition, 21 Palestinian homes were destroyed (leaving 147 Gazans homeless) and 88 heavily damaged (affecting 616 Gazans), 90 dunams (d.; 4 d. = 1 acre) of agricultural land was bulldozed, and 80 Palestinians were detained for questioning (at least 5 were remanded to Israel). Palestinians fired more than 200 rockets (allegedly including 21 Grads). The IDF, however, makes more air strikes during the day, killing another 3 Palestinians (at least 2 of them civilians, including a child), destroying the Palestinian Council (PC) headquarters in Gaza City. Palestinians fire 18 rockets (allegedly including 1 Grad) into Israel, causing damage but no injuries; 1 rocket lands inside Gaza, hitting a home, wounding 2 Palestinians. In the West Bank, 1,000s of Palestinians demonstrate against Operation Hot Winter; a Jewish settler fr. Talmion B settlement nr. Ramallah fires on demonstrators in nearby al-Mazra’a, killing a Palestinian teenager; IDF soldiers fire on another protest nr. Hebron, wounding 2 Palestinians. The IDF also exchanges fire with Palestinian gunmen nr. Bethlehem, wounding 3; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Bethlehem, and nr. Hebron, Jenin, Nablus. (BBC, NYT, PCHR, REU, WP 3/3; MM, NYT, WP, WT 3/4; PCHR 3/6; OCHA 4/18)

**4 MARCH**

Overnight, the IDF makes an air strike on a suspected rocket-launching site in n. Gaza, killing 1 Palestinian. During the day, the IDF makes a 2d air strike, killing another Palestinian; briefly sends 25 armored vehicles into Wadi al-Silqa in c. Gaza to surround the home of senior Islamic Jihad mbr. Yusuf Samiri, who flees and is killed in an exchange of fire with troops; troops also fire on Samiri’s home, killing a Palestinian infant, wounding 4 Palestinians (including a woman and child). The IDF also sends tanks and bulldozers into s. Gaza to level land nr. the Rafah airport site, firing on surrounding areas, causing no reported injuries. Palestinians fire 8 rockets and mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF searches PA Education Min. offices in Nablus; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., in Qalqilya, nr. Hebron. Inside Israel, Israeli Palestinians in Umm al-Fahm protest Operation Hot Winter. (WT 3/4; NYT, WP, WT 3/5; PCHR 3/6)

**5 MARCH**

Israel sends troops to the unauthorized settlement outpost of Esh Kodesh e. of Ramallah to disconnect a water pipe, highlighting the move as evidence that it is taking steps against outposts as requested by the U.S., within hours, settlers reconnect the pipe and restore water service. Also in the West Bank, the IDF fires on Palestinians in Bil’in demonstrating against Operation Hot Winter, wounding 1; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Balata r.c. (a 72-yr.-old Palestinian woman dies of a heart attack when soldiers raid her home), nr. Jenin. Unidentified gunmen fire on a car with Israeli license plates nr. Hebron, killing a Palestinian man, wounding an Israeli civilian. In Gaza, Islamic Jihad and the PFLP fire 2 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. (NYT, PCHR 3/6; OCHA 3/12; PCHR 3/13)

**6 MARCH**

Egyptian intelligence chief Omar Sulayman secures a pledge by Hamas, Islamic Jihad to suspend rocket fire fr. Gaza unilaterally while he works to obtain a more formal bilateral cease-fire agmt. with Israel. In Jerusalem, an armed Palestinian enters the library of Mercaz Harav, Israel’s leading Zionist yeshiva and the ideological home of the far-right religious settler movement, and opens fire on students with an AK-47, killing 8 Israelis and wounding 9 before an IDF soldier and 2 undercover...
policemen enter the building and shoot him dead; Israeli security officials identify the attacker as a bus driver for the school and an East Jerusalem resident who apparently acted alone. Israeli police later raid Jabal Mukabir neighborhood, detaining 9 Palestinians for questioning. In Gaza, Islamic Jihad, Hamas mbrs. ambush an IDF patrol that enters Gaza through the Kissufim crossing, detonating a roadside bomb and firing on the vehicle, killing 1 IDF soldier, wounding at least 1. In response, the IDF shells an Islamic Jihad site nr. al-Qarara, killing 3 Islamic Jihad mbrs.; makes an air strike on an Islamic Jihad rocket-launching site nr. Dayr al-Balah, killing 1 Islamic Jihad mbr. A 5th Islamic Jihad mbr. is killed when a rocket he is preparing to fire into Israel explodes prematurely. The IDF also bulldozes land inside the Gaza border fence e. of al-Qarara. The Israeli navy fires on Palestinian fishermen off the Rafah coast, heavily damaging 1 boat, causing no injuries. Palestinians fire 7 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, damaging 2 houses, lightly injuring 1 Israeli. Egypt begins replacing some stretches of barbed wire along the Rafah border with a 10-ft.-high stone and concrete wall. In the West Bank, the IDF demolishes the Bethlehem home of a wanted Palestinian; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Tulkarm r.c., nr. Jenin (raiding and sealing al-Majd TV and al-Salam Press offices for allegedly aiding nr. Jenin (raiding and sealing al-Majd TV and al-Salam Press offices for allegedly aiding

The Israeli navy fires on Palestinian fishing boats off the s. Gaza coast, seriously wounding 1 fisherman. Egyptian border police discover, demolish 6 smuggling tunnels along the Rafah border. (OCHA 3/12; PCHR 3/13)

9 MARCH

Israel announces plans to build 750 new houses in East Jerusalem’s Pisgat Ze’ev settlement and 350 homes in Givat Ze’ev settlement just n. of Jerusalem, stating that the construction “is consistent with our long-standing position that building within the large settlement blocs, which will stay part of Israel in any final status agreement.” Israel’s Jerusalem Municipality approves construction of a new settlement neighborhood of 400 housing units in the Nabi Yaqub neighborhood n. of East Jerusalem. The Israeli DMin. reaches a deal with Jewish settler leaders for the removal of several unauthorized settlement outposts in exchange for approval of new construction in approved settlements. Jewish settlers fr. Hebron rally in East Jerusalem, calling for revenge against Palestinians for the 3/6 Mercaz Harav attack and threatening to raid Jabal Mukabir, where the gunman lived; Israeli police intervene to prevent a rampage. Meanwhile, the IDF raids a Palestinian elementary school in Hawara, nr. Nablus, while classes are in session, claiming that students threw stones at an IDF patrol; raids the PA civil defense headquarters in Ramallah, arresting an AMB mbr. staying there; conducts late-night arrest raids in and around Bethlehem, in Nablus town and r.c., nr. Tulkarm. An IDF soldier dies of injuries sustained in a 3/6 roadside bombing inside Gaza. (NYT, WT 3/10; OCHA 3/12; PCHR 3/13)

10 MARCH

As a unilateral Palestinian cease-fire seems to hold in Gaza (see 3/6), Israeli PM Olmert publicly states that if Palestinian rocket fire resumes “we will shoot. If it will not, we will have no reason to shoot.” IDF troops on the Gaza border fire on agricultural areas nr. Abasan nr. Khan Yunis, wounding a Palestinian farmer tending his field. In the West Bank, the IDF occupies a Palestinian home in Marda nr. Nablus as an observation post; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus.
A Palestinian civilian wounded in a 3/1 IDF air strike on Gaza City during Operation Hot Winter dies. (NYT, WP 3/11; OCHA 3/12; NYT, PCHR 3/13)

11 MARCH

The PFLP fires a rocket (the IDF alleges a Grad) fr. Gaza into Israel, hitting nr. Ashqelon, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF bulldozes 4 Palestinian homes (displacing 31 Palestinians) nr. Tubas, another 4 homes in Bayt Dajan in the Jordan Valley (also displacing 31 Palestinians), 2 bedouin tents nr. Hebron, and 2 shops in Qalqilya; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Abu Dis and Jabal Mukabir nr. Jerusalem, Jalazun r.c. nr. Ramallah, Qalqilya (firing on residential areas, wounding 7 Palestinians, including a woman and 5 children), and Qabatya, as well as nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus. (IFM, NYT, OCHA 3/12; PCHR 3/13)

12 MARCH

Hamas's Haniyeh publicly offers Israel a comprehensive cease-fire deal covering the West Bank and Gaza in exchange for a lifting of the siege of Gaza and a halt to all Israeli "assassinations, killings, and raids." The Israeli government does not officially reply, but hrs. later in the West Bank, IDF undercover units in Bethlehem ambush, assassinate Islamic Jihad's Bethlehem cmdr. Muhammad Shihada, senior AMB mbr. Ahmad Balbul, and 2 Islamic Jihad mbrs. driving with them. The IDF also sends troops into Sa'ida village nr. Tulkarm in search of Islamic Jihad's Tulkarm cmdr. Salih Karouir, wounding him in an exchange of fire and then shooting him in the head execution style. In an “initial response,” Islamic Jihad mbrs. in Gaza resume rocket fire into Israel, damaging 1 building. The IDF also conducts house searches nr. Hebron, firing on stone-throwing Palestinian youths who confront them, wounding 2; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, Nablus, Tulkarm, as well as in Qabatya, Qalqilya, and nr. Bethlehem, Jenin. In Gaza, 1 Palestinian is killed, 5 are injured when a smuggling tunnel they are renovating collapses; 1 Palestinian is killed when explosives he is handling detonate prematurely. (BBC, IFM 3/12; NYT, PCHR, WT 3/13; OCHA, PCHR 3/19)

13 MARCH

The IDF resumes air strikes on rocket-launching sites in Gaza, citing the need to respond to 15 rockets, 10 mortars fired by Islamic Jihad fr. Gaza into Israel (causing light damage but no injuries) since the IDF assassinations on 3/12. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts daytime arrest raids, house searches in and around Qalqilya and in Tulkarm and neighboring Nur al-Shams r.c.; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin. In Bethlehem, 1,000s of Palestinians from all factions observe a general strike and attend the funeral for 4 Islamic Jihad and AMB mbrs. assassinated on 3/12 in a massive show of unity and protest against Israel's ongoing attacks since the 11/07 Annapolis conference. A Palestinian shepherd is critically injured when he accidentally triggers IDF UXO nr. Jericho. Jewish settlers fr. Beit Hadasah in Hebron attack a Palestinian elementary school, demolishing a wall and several structures for the ongoing expansion of the school, attempt to occupy the school, beat a Palestinian security guard; the IDF removes the settlers. Israel's Jerusalem Planning Comm. gives preliminary approval for construction of 2,200 Jewish settler housing units in Givat Hamatos in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Bayt Safa. In al-Bureij r.c., unidentified assailants kidnap an Islamic Jihad mbr. (BBC 3/13; NYT 3/14; OCHA, PCHR 3/19)

14 MARCH

In n. Gaza, Palestinian machine-gun fire hits an IDF helicopter, causing damage but no injuries, marking the 1st time an Israeli aircraft has been hit by Palestinian fire. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in, fires on residential areas of Tubas, wounding 1 Palestinian; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Qabatya, nr. Jenin; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil’in (injuring 2). (ITV, YA 3/14; NYT 3/15; OCHA, PCHR 3/19)

15 MARCH

The IDF shells a rocket-launching site in Gaza City and makes an air strike on a 2d rocket-launching site nr. Bayt Lahiya, killing
3 Islamic Jihad mbrs., wounding at least 2 Islamic Jihad mbrs. and 2 civilians; bulldozes land along the border fence e. of al-Maghazi r.c. Palestinians fire 3 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, nr. Qalqilya. Overnight, in Jerusalem, Israeli authorities hand the body of the 3/6 Mercaz Harav attacker over to his family in Jabal Mukabir for a predawn burial, hoping to prevent clashes surrounding his burial. When news breaks, however, 10s of right-wing Jewish settlers storm Jabal Mukabir, evading police barricades, clashing with riot police, throwing stones at Palestinian homes on the rim of the neighborhood. Nearby, 100s of right-wing Jewish settlers hold a protest rally demanding the expulsion of Palestinian citizens of Israel, scuffle with police. In total, 20 protesters are arrested; 1 protester, 1 policeman are injured. (WT 3/16; OCHA, PCHR 3/19)

16 MARCH

In Gaza, the IDF bulldozes land on the Palestinian side of the Qarni industrial zone. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c., and nr. Hebron, Nablus. An Islamic Jihad mbr. wounded in an air strike on a rocket-launching site nr. Bayt Lahiya on 3/15 dies. (OCHA, PCHR 3/19)

17 MARCH

In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jericho; in and around Jenin, Nablus, Qalqilya; nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Tulkarm. The IDF also raids a clinic and 2 community centers in al-Fara’a r.c. nr. Tubas, confiscating computers. Jewish settlers fr. Shilo nr. Ramallah uproot, burn 200 Palestinian olive trees. (OCHA, PCHR 3/19)

18 MARCH

The IDF makes an air strike on Bayt Lahiya in a failed attempt to assassinate Islamic Jihad mbrs. Ihab Abu Jarad, Nidal Shaqqura, and Muhammad al-Za’nim as they walk in a crowded residential area, wounding the 3, as well as 6 bystanders, including 2 children and a mentally disabled person; bulldozes land on the Palestinian side of the Qarni industrial zone (for a 2d day), nr. the border fence e. of Dayr al-Balah. Late at night, the IDF sends troops into Bayt Hanun, raiding a home and arresting 7 mbrs. of a Palestinian family. An IDF special forces unit attempts an incursion into al-Bureij r.c. but is forced to retreat by Palestinian gunmen firing machine guns and mortars; no injuries are reported. Egyptian border police find separate caches of 40 landmines, 500 kg of explosives nr. the Rafah border. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Bethlehem and Jenin town and r.c., and nr. Hebron, Tubas, Tulkarm. (OCHA, PCHR 3/19; PCHR 3/27)

19 MARCH

In the West Bank, the IDF bulldozes a large area of Palestinian land southwest of Hebron for construction of a settlers-only bypass road; bulldozes 7 Palestinian homes nr. Hebron, 5 nr. Jerusalem (built without permits), 1 nr. Jenin (located nr. the separation wall); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Jenin r.c. and Qabatya, and nr. Bethlehem, Hebron. Jewish settlers vandalize a Palestinian home nr. Nablus; the IDF intervenes to remove them. A Palestinian dies of injuries received in an earlier IDF air strike on Gaza. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

20 MARCH

IDF troops on the Gaza border fire on agricultural areas along the border nr. al-Qarara, killing a Palestinian farmer; bulldoze land on the Palestinian side of the Qarni crossing. On the Rafah border, 2 smuggling tunnels collapse, killing 1 Palestinian, injuring 3. In the West Bank, the IDF demolishes 5 Palestinian homes in 3 villages s. of Hebron to build a settlers-only bypass road and possibly to expand Susia settlement; patrols in al-Bireh and Ramallah, spot-checking Palestinian IDs; enters Beita nr. Nablus, imposes a curfew, fires on stone-throwing Palestinians who confront them, wounding and arresting 1 Palestinian, arresting a 2d; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, Jenin town and r.c., Nablus. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

21 MARCH

In Gaza, IDF bulldozes land on the Palestinian side of the Qarni crossing, along the border fence e. of al-Maghazi r.c. A smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border collapses, killing
2 Palestinians. In the West Bank, the IDF fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil'in (injuring 1). Jewish settlers celebrating Purim in Hebron vandalize a Palestinian school, other property and attack local Palestinians; the IDF observes but does not intervene. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

22 MARCH

In the West Bank, the IDF enters Azun nr. Qalqilya, imposes a curfew, fires on residential areas (wounding 1 Palestinian), searching several homes but making no arrests; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c. (breaking into the offices of an Islamic charity, confiscating a computer, documents), nr. Nablus. For a 2d day, Jewish settlers in Hebron vandalize Palestinian property and attack local Palestinians; the IDF observes but does not intervene. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

23 MARCH

In the West Bank, the IDF conducts daytime arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin and late-night raids, searches in and around Tubas, in 'Aqbat Jabir r.c. and 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c. nr. Jericho. For a 3d day, Jewish settlers in Hebron vandalize Palestinian property and attack local Palestinians; the IDF observes but does not intervene; 3 Palestinians have been injured since 3/21. Jewish settlers fr. Eli nr. Nablus kidnap 2 Palestinian boys herding sheep nr. the settlement, release them hrs. later after PA security forces request IDF intervention. Jewish settlers in Efrat nr. Bethlehem begin construction of 3 apartment buildings (54 units). In Khan Yunis, Hamas officials dismiss the Fatah-affiliated admin. officer at the College of Science and Technology and name a pro-Hamas officer to replace him, sparking a fight with local Fatah supporters; police intervene to disperse the crowd, with no injuries reported; classes are suspended until the issue can be resolved btwn. Hamas and Fatah. Islamic Jihad mbr. Nidal Shaqqura, wounded in an IDF assassination attempt on 3/18, dies of his injuries. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

24 MARCH

IDF troops enter Gaza to level lands nr. the border fence nr. al-Qarara, fire on nearby residential areas, killing a 60-yr.-old Palestinian outside his home. IDF troops on the c. Gaza border fire on residential areas nr. Wadi al-Silqa, wounding a 4-yr.-old Palestinian boy playing outside his home. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Qabatya and in and around Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

25 MARCH

In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in Hebron; conducts daytime arrest raids, house searches, ID spot-checks in Qiffin nr. Tulkarm; fires on 2 Palestinian teenagers attempting to bypass the Hawara checkpoint nr. Nablus, seriously wounding 1, arresting both; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, Jenin, Qalqilya and nr. Hebron, Ramallah, Tulkarm. (OCHA 3/26; PCHR 3/27)

26 MARCH

In Gaza, IDF troops enter al-Qarara, bulldoze 4 Palestinian homes, animal pens, 93 d. of agricultural land; also bulldoze areas along the separation wall e. of al-Bureij, al-Maghazi. Palestinians fire at least 1 rocket fr. Gaza toward Israel that lands inside Gaza, hitting a home, seriously injuring 1 Palestinian. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Ramallah, nr. Bethlehem and Tulkarm, in Hebron, Jenin town and r.c., Nablus. Unidentified gunmen shoot, wound a Hamas-affiliated police officer in Dayr al-Balah. In Gaza City, 5,000 NGO reps. and citizens rally to call on the factions to implement a national unity government. (PCHR 3/27; OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

27 MARCH

In Gaza, the IDF sends troops into al-Qarara, where they exchange fire with local gunmen, killing 1 armed Palestinian, wounding 2. In the West Bank, the IDF sends an undercover unit into Tulkarm r.c., to raid a café in search of a wanted Palestinian but withdraws without finding him; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Azariyya e. of Jerusalem.
A Jewish settler woman fr. Taffuh settlement nr. Qalqilya beats a Palestinian woman waiting at a bus stop nr. the settlement. Jewish settlers fr. Havat Ma'on nr. Hebron fire on a Palestinian shepherd and sheep nearby, injuring 2 sheep. In Hebron, Palestinian Polytechnic University suspends classes after a dispute on the student council sparks unarmed clashes btwn. Fatah and PFLP student groups. (OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

28 MARCH

IDF troops inside Israel fatally shoot an armed Palestinian who approaches the s. Gaza border. The IDF also bulldozes 5 d. of Palestinian land inside the border fence nr. Wadi al-Silqa; later conducts arrest raids, house searches in Wadi al-Silqa, detaining 3 Palestinians. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night house searches in and around Nablus but makes no arrests; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil‘in (injuring 8, including 3 children). Jewish settlers fr. Efrat uproot 100 Palestinian olive trees to make way for new construction begun on 3/23. Palestinians stone Jewish settler vehicles nr. Ramallah, causing no injuries. In n. Gaza, 50,000 Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Fatah al-Yasir (an AMB offshoot) supporters hold a peaceful demonstration calling on the Arab League summit assembling in Damascus to find a way to break Israel’s siege of Gaza (see Quarterly Update). In Jabaliya r.c., 2,000 Palestinians attend a rally organized by Islamic Jihad to call on Fatah and Hamas to form a unity government. (OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

29 MARCH

In Gaza, the IDF makes an air strike on a group of armed Palestinians nr. Jabaliya r.c., killing 2 Palestinian resistance mbrs., wounding 2; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches (using dogs) in Wadi al-Silqa. IDF troops on the s. Gaza border fire on agricultural areas nr. Khuza e. of Khan Yunis, wounding a Palestinian farmer working his field. In the West Bank, the IDF surrounds a girls’ orphanage in Hebron for 40 mins., withdraws without making arrests (see 2/26); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in al-Amari r.c. nr. Ramallah. Jewish settlers fr. Elkana nr. Salfit vandalize a Palestinian home nr. the settlement (the family has been attacked 10s of times by Elkana settlers trying to force them to leave the area). (OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

30 MARCH

In Gaza, a smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border collapses, injuring 1 Palestinian. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., Nablus and nr. Hebron, Ramallah; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas at Palestinians conducting a nonviolent march fr. Dayr Qaddas nr. Ramallah to the separation wall to mark Land Day (wounding 1). Palestinians throw stones at Jewish settler vehicles nr. Jerusalem and Ramallah, causing no injuries. (OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

31 MARCH

In Gaza, IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in Dayr al-Balah, exchanging fire with local gunmen, killing 2 armed Palestinians, wounding a 3d, arresting 14 Palestinians; helicopter gunships fire on agricultural areas nr. Khuza; later, the IDF sends bulldozers into the area to level 193 d. of cropland, also destroying an irrigation network, 200 beehives. The UN reports that in 3/08, at least 4 ailing Palestinians died as a direct result of Israel’s closure on Gaza barring access to adequate medical treatment. In the West Bank, the IDF arrests 4 Palestinian teenagers (ages 13–17) who stray nr. the separation wall nr. Tulkarm; raids a construction site in Marda nr. Salfit, checking workers’ IDs but making no arrests; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c. (including raiding an Islamic charity, confiscating a computer and documents). Israel’s Jerusalem Planning Comm., gives preliminary approval for construction of 600 new Jewish settler housing units in Pisgat Ze’ev settlement. Jewish settlers fr. Rachel settlement nr. Nablus beat an 80-yr.-old Palestinian farmer working his nearby land. A 15-yr.-old Jewish settler fr. Shiloh settlement nr. Hebron fatally shoots a Palestinian who approaches him at a bus stop outside the settlement; says the Palestinian was acting suspiciously, carrying a knife. At Gaza’s al-Azhar University, pro-Fatah students beat a group of pro-Hamas students rallying to mark the 4th anniversary of Israel’s assassination of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin; Hamas-affiliated
police intervene, using clubs to break up the fights, injuring several students. (NYT 4/1; OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3; OCHA 4/18)

1 APRIL

The **IDF** sends troops into c. Gaza, where they clash with local gunmen, killing 2 Hamas **mbrs.**; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bayt Hanun. **Palestinians** fire **mortars** fr. Gaza into Israel, wounding 2 Israelis. In Dayr al-Balah, a Palestinian is injured when explosives he is handling detonate prematurely. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids in Jenin town and r.c. (firing on stone-throwing youths who confront them, wounding 1) and Ramallah, in and around Nablus and Tulkarm, and nr. Bethlehem. Lawyers secure a 7-day freeze on **IDF** closure orders issued on 2/26 against ICA properties in Hebron. (NYT, OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

2 APRIL

In Gaza, the **IDF** bulldozes 24 d. of olive groves and a small Gaza police outpost nr. al-Maghazi r.c. **Egyptian border police** discover, demolish a smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids in Jenin town and r.c. (firing on stone-throwing youths who confront them, wounding 1) and Ramallah, in and around Nablus and Tulkarm, and nr. Bethlehem. Lawyers secure a 7-day freeze on **IDF** closure orders issued on 2/26 against ICA properties in Hebron. (NYT, OCHA 4/2; PCHR 4/3)

3 APRIL

Israel says it has completed removal of 50 West Bank roadblocks, as pledged to Secy. Rice on 3/30 during her visit; the PA says it has seen no changes and asks the **State Dept.** to verify (see Quarterly Update). Meanwhile, in Gaza, the **IDF** sends troops into al-Qarara, where they clash with **Islamic Jihad** gunmen, wounding 4 Islamic Jihad mbrs., 2 civilians, reportedly using several Palestinians as human shields, bulldozing 58 d. of crop land and olive trees. In the West Bank, the **IDF** fires on residential areas, demolishes a monument to Yasir Arafat in Kafr Qaddum nr. Qalqilya; patrols in Hebron (shooting, wounding 1 Palestinian who allegedly tried to seize a gun fr. a soldier); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. A **Jewish settler** driving nr. Nablus injures a Palestinian in a deliberate hit and run. Jewish **settlers** nr. Nablus break into a Palestinian nursery, steal irrigation pipes, vandalize a car. (WT 4/4; OCHA, PCHR 4/9)

4 APRIL

**Palestinian gunmen** in n. Gaza shoot across the border at an Israeli government delegation leading a Canadian group on a tour of Sederot, seriously wounding an aide to Israel’s Public Security M Avi Dichter; the **IDF** returns fire, causing no reported injuries; several Palestinian groups claim responsibility including the AMB, Hamas, and 2 little-known Islamist groups: the Army of the Nation, and Protectors of the Homeland (which claims to be inspired by al-Qa’ida). Separately, the **IDF** sends troops into al-Bureij r.c., where they clash with local gunmen (wounding a Palestinian girl inside her home), shell a Palestinian home nr. Arafat in Kafr Qaddum nr. Qalqilya; patrols in Hebron (shooting, wounding 1 Palestinian who allegedly tried to seize a gun fr. a soldier); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. A **Jewish settler** driving nr. Nablus injures a Palestinian in a deliberate hit and run. Jewish **settlers** nr. Nablus break into a Palestinian nursery, steal irrigation pipes, vandalize a car. (WT 4/4; OCHA, PCHR 4/9)
at a similar demonstration in al-Masa'ra nr. Bethlehem (injuring 2 children, ages 6 and 7). In Nablus, 12 AMB mbrs., who had agreed to remain in PA custody overnight as part of a 7/07 amnesty deal with Israel flee Jnaid prison, claiming they were severely beaten by PA security forces; they refuse to return to the jail but pledge to respect the cease-fire. (HA 4/4; NYT, WP 4/5; OCHA, PCHR 4/9)

5 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF fires on a mortar-launching site e. of Jabaliya, causing no injuries; later directs tank and machine-gun fire on farmers who arrive to work fields in the same area, killing 1 Palestinian farmer, wounding a 2d. Nr. al-Qarara, 2 Palestinian children (ages 14, 17) are seriously injured when they accidentally trigger IDF UXO. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem. (OCHA, PCHR 4/9)

6 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF sends troops into al-Bureij r.c., fires 6 tank shells at a Palestinian home, destroying the 2d floor but causing no reported injuries (cf. 4/4). In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Qalqilya, nr. Bethlehem. (OCHA, PCHR 4/9)

7 APRIL

Under U.S. pressure, Abbas meets with Olmert for the 1st time since he suspended final status talks on 3/2 to protest Operation Hot Winter; pledges to continue negotiations “without interruption.” The last Abbas-Olmert mtg. was on 2/19. (NYT 4/8) (See Quarterly Update.)

In Gaza, the IDF bulldozes 17 d. of Palestinian agricultural land inside the Gaza border e. of Bayt Hanun. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Jenin town and r.c., and nr. Hebron. A Jewish settler fr. Elon Moreh driving a bus nr. Nablus deliberately runs down a 15-yr.-old Palestinian shepherd, killing the boy, his donkey, 8 sheep. Citing Abbas’s failure to achieve any gains to date for the Palestinians, AMB Jenin cmdr. Zakariya Zubaydi and several other AMB mbrs. say they will no longer agree to stay in PA custody overnight as they agreed in 7/07 to receive amnesty from Israel; Zubaydi does not threaten to resume resistance operations. (HA, WT 4/8; OCHA, PCHR 4/9)

8 APRIL

Overnight, the IDF sends troops into Gaza City, arresting 3 Palestinians; expands the incursion in the morning, firing artillery shells at a car carrying resistance mbrs. (killing 1 armed Palestinian, wounding 1), and bulldozing a mosque, 3 stores, a transmission tower, 10 d. of olive groves, a bird farm (killing 1,500 birds), several smaller animal pens, 85 beehives before withdrawing in the evening. The IDF also fires on, arrests a Palestinian farmer working his land nr. the border fence e. of Khan Yunis; makes a late-night incursion into Khan Yunis, where troops clash with local gunmen, leaving 1 IDF soldier, 1 Hamas mbr. dead and arresting 5 Palestinians (including a child). Palestinians fire 3 rockets, 32 mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Jenin town and r.c. and Qalqilya (also raiding, sealing an Islamic charity, library, supermarket, and press; searching al-Quds Open University), and nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Tulkarm. (IFM 4/8; OCHA, PCHR 4/9; NYT, WP 4/10)

9 APRIL

Four Palestinian gunmen representing Islamic Jihad, the PRCs, and the Mujahedin Brigades (an AMB offshoot) raid the Nahal Oz fuel depot on the Gaza-Israel border under cover of mortar fire, killing 2 Israeli civilian workers; IDF soldiers on site return fire, killing 2 gunmen; 2 escape back into Gaza. The IDF retaliates with air strikes and artillery fire, killing a 3d Palestinian gunman, 4 Palestinian civilians, wounding 2 armed Palestinians, 6 civilians (including 2 children); demolishing a Palestinian home. Israel also closes Nahal Oz until it reviews security procedures (Gaza’s electricity plant has enough fuel to last until 4/13). In the West Bank, the IDF demolishes a Palestinian home in Bayt Hanina in East Jerusalem, displacing 7 Palestinians (including 5 children); patrols in Bayt Rima nr. Ramallah, firing on stone-throwing youths who confront them, wounding 1; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and Nablus, in Qalqilya and Tubas, and nr. Ramallah and Tulkarm, nr.

10 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF makes 2 air strikes on Khuza, killing 2 armed Palestinians. An Islamic Jihad mbr. is injured when explosives he is handling detonate prematurely. In the West Bank, the IDF seals a sewing factory in Hebron associated with the ICA (see 2/26); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c., and nr. Hebron (firing on stone-throwing youths in Taffuh, wounding 4 ages 13–16), Ramallah, Hebron (firing on stone-throwing youths in Jenin town and r.c., and nr. 2/26); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., and nr. Nablus, withdrawing in the evening but not lifting the curfew. During the curfew, local Jewish settlers enter the village and vandalize Palestinian homes. The IDF also raids, searches the Hebron home of PC mbr. Nayif al-Rajub (among those Hamas-affiliated PC mbrs. detained by Israel as well as the religious affairs minister in Haniyeh’s original cabinet); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., and in Tulkarm. Jewish settlers fr. Gilad nr. Qalqilya stone Palestinian cars driving past the settlement, causing damage to several but no injuries. (OCHA 3/16; PCHR 4/17)

11 APRIL

Overnight, the IDF sends troops and tanks into Gaza’s al-Burej r.c. for a daylong operation, firing on residential areas, searching homes (reportedly using Palestinians as human shields), and clashing with local resistance mbrs. (making at least 1 air strike), killing 7 Palestinians (6 of them civilians, including boys ages 12, 15), wounding 27 (including at least 18 civilians, 2 gunmen), detaining 20, and bulldozing 3 Palestinian homes, 30 d. of agricultural land. The IDF also conducts air strikes on Khan Yunis, killing 3 Hamas mbrs. In refugee camps across Gaza, 1,000s of Palestinians take part in peaceful rallies organized by Hamas, calling on Israel to end the siege. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Qabata and nr. Hebron, Jenin; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil’in (10s suffer tear gas inhalation) and beat Palestinian demonstrators at a similar demonstration in al-Masa’ra nr. Bethlehem (injuring 3). (NYT, WT 3/12; OCHA 3/16; PCHR 4/17)

12 APRIL

IDF troops on the c. Gaza border fire a shell into Gaza City, injuring a Palestinian teenager; bulldoze land e. of Gaza City, firing on surrounding residential areas, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c. and Nablus, in Bethlehem and Jalazun r.c. nr. Ramallah, and nr. Hebron. Hebron University suspends classes following unarmed clashes btwn. Fatah, Hamas student groups that leave 12 students injured; PA security forces surround the campus. (OCHA 3/16; PCHR 4/17)

13 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF makes an air strike on the Gaza City home of AMB cmndr. Muhammad Hijazi in what may be a failed assassination attempt, missing the building and hitting a neighboring home, injuring a Palestinian woman; bulldozes land along the border fence e. of Dayr al-Balah, Jabaliya r.c. Also in Jabaliya r.c., 2 Hamas mbrs. are seriously injured, 1 Palestinian teenager is killed when explosives they are handling detonate prematurely. In the West Bank, the IDF imposes a curfew on, patrols in Hawara nr. Nablus, withdrawing in the evening but not lifting the curfew. During the curfew, local Jewish settlers enter the village and vandalize Palestinian homes. The IDF also raids, searches the Hebron home of PC mbr. Nayif al-Rajub (among those Hamas-affiliated PC mbrs. detained by Israel as well as the religious affairs minister in Haniyeh’s original cabinet); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., and in Tulkarm. Jewish settlers fr. Gilad nr. Qalqilya stone Palestinian cars driving past the settlement, causing damage to several but no injuries. (OCHA 3/16; PCHR 4/17)

14 APRIL

The IDF makes an air strike assassinating DFLP military cmndr. Ibrahim Abu Olba as he walks in Bayt Lahiya, wounding 2 bystanders, including a child; bulldozes land on the Palestinian side of the Nahal Oz crossing. In the West Bank, the IDF blocks 4 buses transporting Palestinian children home from a school outing deep in the West Bank to Azun Atma village (located between the separation wall and the Green Line), firing on angry parents gathered on the village side of the wall awaiting their children’s return, wounding 4, arresting 2, and imposing a curfew on the village until the morning of 4/15, when the buses are allowed to pass. The IDF also demolishes a Palestinian home in Anata in East Jerusalem, displacing...
10 Palestinians (including 4 children); conducts arrest raids, house searches during the day nr. Salif and late at night in Hebron, nr. Jenin. Jewish settlers gather nr. the Hawara checkpoint s. of Nablus, stone Palestinian vehicles, causing no injuries; the IDF does not intervene. Jewish settlers fr. Gilad uproot 30 Palestinian almond trees in nearby al-Til. (OCHA 3/16; PCHR 4/17)

15 APRIL

Overnight in Gaza the IDF makes an incursion into Wadi al-Silqa, raiding and searching homes, bulldozing 4 Palestinian homes, exchanging fire with local gunmen, wounding 2 armed Palestinians. During the day, the IDF raids al-Qarara, ordering all males aged 16 and older to surrender for interrogation, arresting 5 Palestinians (including the primary target: Abu Rish Brigades cmdr. Ala’ Abu Madif, whom Israel claims received military training in Iran), firing on residential areas (wounding a Palestinian father and infant), bulldozing 115 d. of agricultural land, and damaging water, electricity, and phone networks before withdrawing late at night. Late at night, the IDF makes an air strike assassinating Islamic Jihad’s Nussayrat cmdr. Abdallah al-Ghussayn as he drives through Jabaliya r.c., wounding another Islamic Jihad mbr. with him; for no known reason makes a helicopter air strike targeting a 4th-floor apartment in a Bayt Lahiya apartment building, causing heavy damage and lightly injuring a 3-mo.-old girl. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem and in and around Jenin town and r.c., Nablus. A fmr. PA intelligence officer in c. Gaza is killed; a previously unknown group called Country’s Honor claims responsibility. (OCHA 3/16; PCHR 4/17; IFM 5/19)

16 APRIL

Israel resumes shipments (suspended 4/9) of industrial gasoline for Gaza’s power plant but continues to suspend gasoline and diesel for cars and generators. The UNOCHA calls the fuel supplies for the power plant “insufficient” and urges Israel to resume shipment of all forms of fuel, saying that schools and clinics are unable to function normally without regular transportation. Overnight, the IDF sends troops into areas e. of Gaza City, sparking clashes that leave 4 armed Palestinians dead and 1 IDF soldier, 4 armed Palestinians wounded. In the morning, Hamas and Islamic Jihad mbrs. stage a diversion nr. the Nahal Oz crossing to lure IDF soldiers into Gaza, ambushing the unit once it enters the Strip, killing 3 IDF soldiers; the IDF responds with tank fire and air strikes, killing 4 Hamas and Islamic Jihad mbrs. The IDF increases tank fire, air strikes on Palestinian targets throughout the day, killing 14 Palestinian civilians, including 11 in a helicopter air strike on a mosque in Juahir al-Dik in c. Gaza, and Reuters cameraman Fadel Shana’a (his clearly marked Reuters press vehicle is hit directly by a flechette tank shell), wounding 34 (including 17 children, 1 woman); 2 IDF soldiers are also wounded. The IDF also bulldozes 6 Palestinian homes, 200 d. of agricultural land in Juahir al-Dik. An IDF infantry unit crosses into Gaza nr. Bayt Lahiya to engage armed Palestinians in the area, fires on a car of Palestinian farmers trying to flee the area, killing 1 Palestinian farmer, wounding 2. Palestinians fire 10 rockets, 2 mortars fr. Gaza into Israel during the day, causing no damage or injuries; 1 rocket fired toward Israel lands nr. Jabaliya r.c., wounding 2 Palestinians. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in Jenin r.c. (firing on residential areas, arresting an AMB mbr. granted amnesty by Israel in 7/07) during the day, and late at night in and around Jenin and Tulkarm, in Nablus, and nr. Hebron. In the evening (8:30 E.M. EST; 2:30 A.M. on 4/17 local time), IDF undercover units ambush a car in Qabatyia, assassinating local Islamic Jihad cmdr. Bilal Zaalah (also reported as Bilal Kmayel) and a 2d Islamic Jihad mbr. (BBC, IFM, OCHA, REU 4/16; HA, NYT, PCHR, WP 4/17; OCHA 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

17 APRIL

The IDF fires on PRC mbrs. nr. the Gaza border nr. Jabaliya r.c., killing 1 PRC mbr. Later, the IDF closes the Kerem Shalom crossing after fatally shooting an armed Palestinian who approached the area; closes the Nahal Oz crossing after Palestinian snipers fire on IDF troops there, causing no injuries. In Gaza City, 1,000s of Palestinians attend the funeral for Reuters cameraman Shana’a, killed on 4/16. In Rafah, 1 Islamic Jihad mbr. accidentally triggers explosives kept in his home, injuring himself, 2 bystanders. Two Hamas mbrs., die of injuries sustained on 4/13 when explosives they were handling detonated prematurely.
In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c., and nr. Bethlehem, Nablus. (OCHA 4/17; NYT, WP 4/18; OCHA 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

18 APRIL

IDF troops make a late-night incursion into Gaza City, clashing with local armed Palestinians, killing 1, wounding 3. Palestinians fire 4 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries; 1 rocket fired toward Israel lands nr. a home outside Bayt Lahiya, injuring 2 Palestinians, including a 5-yr.-old girl. In the West Bank, the IDF raids Balata r.c., surrounds a home where AMB mbr. Hani al-Kabi is staying, fatally shoots him when he resists arrest; until recently, Kabi voluntarily stayed in a PA jail overnight as part of the 7/07 AMB amnesty deal with Israel. The IDF also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall in Bil’in (wounding a journalist covering the protest) and al-Masa’ra (injuring 3, including a 9-yr.-old girl). (CSM 4/18; AP, NYT 4/19; NYT 4/20; OCHA 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

19 APRIL

Under cover of morning fog and mortar fire, 3 Hamas suicide bombers driving explosive-laden vehicles (an old PA armored vehicle, 2 trucks painted to resemble IDF jeeps) break through the perimeter fence at the Kerem Shalom crossing, detonating the cars as IDF soldiers approach, wounding 13 soldiers (3 moderately, 10 lightly); the IDF makes a helicopter air strike on a civilian car it claims is connected to the attack, killing 1 Palestinian civilian, wounding 4. Half an hour later, IDF tanks reportedly fire on another vehicle that approaches another Gaza crossing, causing no injuries. During the day, the IDF also conducts air strikes on Jabaliya, killing 4 armed Palestinians and a Hamas-affiliated police officer, wounding 2 armed Palestinians; shells, destroys an empty armored vehicle in Abasan previously belonging to the PA police but seized by Hamas in the 7/07 fighting, wounding 3 bystanders, including a child. In Rafah, an Islamic Jihad mbr. is injured when explosives he is handling detonate prematurely. An Islamic Jihad mbr. injured in a similar incident on 4/17 dies. In the West Bank, the IDF raids a mall in Hebron, giving store owners notice that their properties will be confiscated in 2 days (a children’s library and clinic associated with the ICA are located in the mall). In Hebron, an 8-yr.-old Palestinian boy being chased by a group of Jewish settlers falls and breaks his arm. (NYT, WP 4/20; OCHA 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

20 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF makes an air strike on a Palestinian civilian leaving a Bayt Hanun house, killing him instantly and wounding 3 bystanders; Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades mbr. Sami al-Dibari, the dead man’s brother, apparently was the intended assassination target. The IDF also bulldozes 33 d. of agricultural land, a water network, 4 greenhouses in Khuza, also damaging a home; bulldozes additional land nr. al-Maghazi r.c.; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bayt Hanun. In Gaza City, 2 Hamas mbrs. are injured when explosives they are handling detonate prematurely. Also in Gaza, 2 Palestinian teenagers die of injuries received during IDF attacks on 4/16.

In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in Azun nr. Qalqilya, firing on stone-throwing youths who confront them, wounding 1; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and Nablus, nr. Tulkarm, and in al-Bireh, Jenin town and r.c., Qabatya. (OCHA 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

21 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF makes an air strike on a group of armed Palestinians approaching the border nr. Bayt Lahiya, killing 3 armed Palestinians. Palestinians fire at least 1 rocket toward Israel; it lands inside Gaza, injuring a Palestinian civilian. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and Nablus, nr. Tulkarm, and in al-Bireh, Jenin town and r.c., Qabatya. (OCHA 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

22 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF makes an air strike on a car carrying 2 Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades mbrs. nr. Khan Yunis, missing it, wounding 6 bystanders. Gazan PC mbrs., erect a tent in front of the PC headquarters in Gaza City, begin a hunger strike to protest Israel’s ongoing siege. In the West Bank, the IDF fires on stone-throwing Palestinian
youths outside Dahaysha r.c. nr. Bethlehem, wounded 5 with live ammunition; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Qabatya, and nr. Hebron, Jenin, Qalqilya, Tulkarm. Israel bars access to the Jordan River to 15,000 Christians making a pilgrimage to Jesus’s baptismal cite to mark Orthodox Christian Holy Week, keeping them behind a fence 30 ft. fr. the river. Birzeit University student council elections allot 25 seats to Fatah, 19 to Hamas, 5 each to the PFLP and a joint Islamic Jihad/People’s Party list. Students clash over the results, prompting the university to close the campus until tensions cool. (OCHA, WT 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

23 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF makes a late-night air strike on a group of Hamas mbns. in Khan Yunis, missing them, hitting an apartment building, causing no injuries; makes a late-night incursion into Bayt Hanun, under cover of aircraft that fire on several groups of Palestinians and buildings, killing a 55-yr.-old Palestinian in his home, seriously wounding another Palestinian, demolishing several greenhouses, damaging 5 homes. A Palestinian shepherd is injured when he accidentally triggers a landmine e. of Jabaliya r.c. In the West Bank, the IDF shoots, wounds an unarmed Palestinian who strays nr. the PFLP office in Jenin, Qalqilya, Tulkarm. Israel bars access to the Jordan River to 15,000 Christians making a pilgrimage to Jesus’s baptismal cite to mark Orthodox Christian Holy Week, keeping them behind a fence 30 ft. fr. the river. Birzeit University student council elections allot 25 seats to Fatah, 19 to Hamas, 5 each to the PFLP and a joint Islamic Jihad/People’s Party list. Students clash over the results, prompting the university to close the campus until tensions cool. (OCHA, WT 4/23; PCHR 4/24)

24 APRIL

UNRWA suspends operations in Gaza citing lack of fuel because of Israel’s blockade, stating that more than 700,000 Palestinians will not receive food aid as a result. Operation of UNRWA schools, clinics are also affected; because of fuel cuts, 12 municipalities and solid waste management councils have stopped all operations, affecting at least 500,000 Gazans. Early in the morning, the IDF send troops under cover of aircraft into Aabsan to level land, making an air strike on a group of armed Palestinians, wounding 2 gunmen, 2 bystanders. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night house searches

25 APRIL

At the Rafah and Erez crossings, 1,000s of Palestinians take part in nonviolent rallies calling on Israel to lift the siege. Late at night, the IDF makes an incursion into Bayt Hanun, surrounding and then making an air strike on the home of a wanted Hamas mbr., causing a fire and then shooting at occupants as they flee, seriously wounding a mother and teenage daughter, barring ambulances fr. reaching the area for 4 hrs. (during which time the girl dies); the IDF trades fire with Palestinian resistance mbns. during the incursion, wounding 2 gunmen, 3 bystanders; the wanted Palestinian is not captured. In the West Bank, a Palestinian sniper fatally shoots 2 Israeli security guards at a factory in the Nitzani Shalom industrial zone nr. the separation wall, escapes; several groups including Hamas claim responsibility. The IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, al-Bireh; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil’in (10s suffer tear gas inhalation) and beat demonstrators at a similar protest al-Masa’ra (lightly injuring 3). Jewish settlers fr. Taffuh settlement nr. Safit enter the nearby village of Yasuf and fire on Palestinians, wounding 1. (WP 4/26; NYT 4/27; OCHA, PCHR 4/30)

26 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF continues the incursion into Bayt Hanun begun on 4/25, demolishing the home of the Hamas mbr. targeted on 4/25, leveling surrounding land before withdrawing in the early morning. The IDF also sends troops into Bayt Lahiya, to seize and take to Israel local Hamas leader Hasan Marouf, trading heavy gunfire with local Palestinians and firing on Marouf’s home, killing his 14-yr.-old daughter. In the West Bank, the IDF raids an orphanage for girls, a
27 APRIL

Overnight, in Gaza, the IDF launches an incursion into Dayr al-Balah, occupying and searching homes, detaining 40 Palestinians (releasing them all on 4/28), and bulldozing 6 Palestinian homes, 200 d. of olive groves, 30 beehives, and an animal pen (killing 60 sheep), also heavily damaging 3 homes before withdrawing late at night. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Ramallah, in Bethlehem, nr. Jerusalem, and nr. Hebron.

28 APRIL

In Gaza, the IDF sends tanks, armored vehicles, bulldozers, and helicopters into Bayt Hanun, exchanging fire with local armed men and making air strikes on residential areas, leaving a total of 8 Palestinians dead, 17 Palestinians and 1 IDF soldier wounded; most casualties are the result of a missile that hits a home, killing a Palestinian woman, 4 of her children (ages 18 mos. to 5 yrs.), an unrelated teenager, and wounding 10 bystanders (including 2 more of the woman's children). Palestinians fire 7 rockets, 9 mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing light damage but no injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF raids and searches a car repair shop in Hebron, confiscating 3 cars; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus and Tulkarm, in Qalqilya, and nr. Hebron. As Israel begins preparations to move its Jerusalem police headquarters from the predominantly Arab neighborhood of Ras al-Amud to the controversial new E-1 site in occupied East Jerusalem, police officials sign an agmt. giving a right-wing Jewish settler group the right to occupy the vacant Ras al-Amud building, which will serve as the nucleus of a new Jewish settlement; the settlers have already filed with the Jerusalem Planning Comm. to construct 110 housing units on the site. In addition, the Israeli High Court rejects a petition by Palestinians in al-'Aqaba village nr. Tubas seeking repeal of an IDF order for the demolition of 60% of the village's homes and confiscation of all but 100 d. of the village 3,000 d. of land, supporting the IDF's position that the land is "strategically important" to the military. Jewish settlers fr. Kiryat Arba vandalize Palestinian homes and cars in Hebron. (HA, IFM, PCHR 4/28; NYT, WP, WT 4/29; OCHA, PCHR 4/30)

29 APRIL

UNRWA resumes food aid in Gaza after Israel allows a special delivery to UNRWA of a 5-day supply of fuel. Palestinians fire several rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries. Egyptian border guards discover, demolish 5 smuggling tunnels along the Rafah border. In the West Bank, the IDF raids and seals for 3 yrs. a sewing factory in Hebron owned by the ICA (see 4/26); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c. and Nablus, in Abu Dis and Azariyya nr. Jerusalem, and nr. Hebron. Jewish settlers fr. Kiryat Arba vandalize 11 Palestinian cars nr. the settlement. (IFM 4/29; AP, OCHA, PCHR 4/30; OCHA, PCHR 5/8)

30 APRIL

The IDF makes an air strike on a workshop in Rafah, assassinating Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigade leader *Awad al-Qiq (whom the IDF attempted to assassinate on 10/5/07), injuring 2 Islamic Jihad mbrs., 2 children; sends tanks, bulldozers into Juhur al-Dik to level land. The Israeli navy fires on Palestinian fishing boats off the Rafah coast, forcing them to return to shore, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in, fires on residential areas in Fahama and Yabad nr. Jenin; imposes a curfew on Kafir Haris nr. Salfit to allow Jewish settlers to conduct ceremonies at a religious site in the village; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in al-Aza r.c. nr. Bethlehem, Jenin town and r.c. In East Jerusalem, scores of Israeli Jewish teenagers gather...
at the Pisgat Ze'ev mall, summoned by an instant message to their cell phones urging those “with Jewish blood” to meet up to form a mob to attack local Israeli Arabs who allegedly “hang in our area” and “whistle at the girls, curse, threaten little kids”; the mob beats and stabs 2 Palestinian teenagers, seriously injuring them; around 20 teenagers take part in the beating, while 80–100 others watch; police arrest and charge 11. (AP 4/30; OCHA 5/7; PCHR 5/8; HA 5/29)

1 MAY

Overnight, the IDF sends tanks and troops into Abasan to search homes (reportedly using some Palestinians as human shields), exchanging fire (including tank shells) with local gunmen (killing 1 Palestinian, wounding 1), detaining 21 (releasing them in the evening), and bulldozing 225 d. of agricultural land, a greenhouse, an irrigation system before withdrawing late at night. The IDF also makes an air strike on Rafah, assassinating Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades cmdr. Nafiz Mansur, who allegedly had a role in the capture of IDF Cpl. Gilad Shalit, as IDF soldiers at the Kerem Shalom crossing fire on Palestinian farmers who stray nr. the border fence, causing no reported injuries. Palestinians fire 30 rockets, mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c., Tulkarm and nr. Hebron. In Gaza City, mbrs. of a PRC faction raid and steal office equipment fr. the offices of a rival PRC faction. (NYT 5/2; OCHA 5/7; PCHR 5/8)

2 MAY

IDF soldiers manning the Sufa crossing fire on nearby Palestinian residential areas, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in, fires on residential areas of Nablus, causing no injuries; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c. and Nablus, and nr. Hebron and Ramallah; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil'in (10s suffer tear gas inhalation) and beat demonstrators at a similar protest in al-Masa'ra (lightly injuring 3). In Hebron, a Jewish settler rams his car into the convoy of the U.S. envoy overseeing road map compliance, Gen. William Fraser, causing damage but no injuries, while other settlers demonstrate against his visit; Fraser's delegation cuts its visit short. Outside Ramallah, 15 Jewish settlers fr. Yad Ta'ir attack, beat, threaten to shoot 2 Palestinian families picnicking; they flee when 1 of the Palestinians warns him that he is a UN employee, pointing to his car, which has a UN emblem. Nr. Hebron, 3 Jewish settlers attack several Palestinians; international peace activists intervene to protect the Palestinians, prompting more settlers to join the attack; the IDF intervenes, ordering the Palestinians to leave the area. In n. Gaza, Hamas-affiliated police attempt to break up a dispute btwn. rival PFLP factions, sparking an exchange of fire that leaves 1 policeman, 1 PFLP mbr. wounded. In Rafah, DFLP, Hamas mbres. exchange fire, killing 1 Palestinian bystander, wounding a 2d. Islamic Jihad mbr. Ussama al-Houbi dies of injuries sustained in the 4/30 IDF assassination of Islamic Jihad's Qiq. (HA 5/2; OCHA 5/7; PCHR 5/8)

3 MAY

In Gaza, the IDF sends tanks, bulldozers into Juhur al-Dik, areas nr. of Rafah to bulldoze land. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, in Tulkarm, and nr. Jenin. Israel announces plans to construct several new housing units in Har Brakha settlement nr. Nablus on 229 d. of Palestinian land fr. neighboring Burin village. Jewish settlers fr. Yitzhar nr. Nablus vandalize a nearby Palestinian home, set fire to Palestinian crops, beat Palestinians who come to put out the fire. A new contingent of 500 PA security officers trained in Jordan takes up patrols in Jenin, adding to the 150 police officers already there in what the PA has dubbed “Operation Smile and Hope” (see Quarterly Update). In Jabaliya r.c., a Fatah mbr. is injured by an explosive device left outside his door; no group claims responsibility. (NYT, WT 5/4; OCHA 5/7; PCHR 5/8)

4 MAY

Overnight, the IDF sends troops into Khuzaa, imposing a curfew, firing on residential areas (killing 1 Palestinian, wounding 2 inside their homes), exchanging gunfire with armed Palestinians (wounding 3),
arresting 2 Palestinians, and bulldozing 106 d. of agricultural land, 1 Palestinian home, 4 greenhouses, 2 poultry farms before withdrawing late in the morning. The Israeli navy fires on Palestinian fishing boats off the Rafah coast, forcing them to return to shore but causing no reported damage or injuries. Palestinians fire at least 3 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries; fire 1 mortar at Nahal Oz crossing while an emergency fuel shipment to UNRWA is been transferred into Gaza, prompting the Israelis to close the terminal. In the West Bank, the IDF removes the tiny unauthorized settlement outpost of Hazon David nr. Kiryat Arba; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus. Jewish settlers fr. Gil’ad Farm outpost nr. Qalqilya attack a Palestinian shepherd, steal a sheep. (NYT 5/5; OCHA 5/7; PCHR 5/8)

5 MAY

Israel delivers fuel to UNRWA in Gaza to keep UN operations going (see 5/4). The IDF sends troops, bulldozers into Abasan, imposing a curfew, firing on residential areas (causing damage but no injuries), bulldozing 3 d. of land before withdrawing in the afternoon; makes a late-night incursion into Bayt Lahiya to raid and search several homes, arresting 3 Palestinians and remanding them to Israel. Also late at night, IDF troops on the Gaza border e. of Bayt Lahiya fire on a group of armed Palestinians nr. the border, killing 1 Hamas mbr., wounding 1. A smuggling tunnel under the Rafah border collapses, killing 1 Palestinian, injuring 4. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, nr. Hebron. (WP 5/6; OCHA 5/7; PCHR 5/8)

6 MAY

In the West Bank, the IDF sends an undercover unit into Nablus in cars with Palestinian license plates to arrest 2 Palestinians drinking tea outside a home; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, in Jenin town and r.c. Jewish settlers fr. Kiryat Arba beat a local Palestinian. Meanwhile, the PA’s new Jenin security force makes a predawn incursion into Qabatya, an Islamic Jihad stronghold, clashing with local gunmen, critically wounding a Palestinian student with a gunshot to the head and shooting 2 Islamic Jihad mbrs. in the legs (see Quarterly Update). (OCHA, WP, WT 5/7; PCHR 5/8)


7 MAY

Israel begins wk.-long celebrations leading up to its 60th anniversary on 5/14, while Palestinians solemnly prepare to mark the Nakba; more than a dozen foreign heads of state, including U.S. Pres. George W. Bush, plan to make official visits to Israel in the next wk. Overnight, in Gaza, IDF tanks and troops raid Abasan under cover of air support, cutting electricity to the area, exchanging heavy fire with Palestinian gunmen, making numerous air strikes and firing tank shells in the densely populated residential area, killing 1 armed Palestinian and 1 Palestinian civilian (a woman killed when soldiers detonate explosives outside her door and storm her home, detaining her children, ages 2–12, in a room for 6 hrs. before releasing them), wounding 19 armed men and 4 civilians (including 1 woman, 2 children), arresting 60 Palestinians (55 are released on 5/8), demolishing 2 Palestinian homes, and bulldozing large areas of agricultural land before withdrawing late in the evening. The IDF also makes an air strike on a group of armed Palestinians in Jabaliya r.c., killing 1 Palestinian resistance mbr., seriously wounding a 2d. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. (PCHR, WP 5/8; PCHR 5/15)

Hizbollah mbrs. and their supporters in Amal and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) set up roadblocks leading to Beirut International Airport, other major roads in an effort to press the government to reverse its 5/6 decisions. They clash with gunmen affiliated with Saad Hariri’s Future Movement, leaving 5 civilians, 2 soldiers wounded. (NYT, WP 5/8) (see Quarterly Update)
8 MAY

In Gaza, a Palestinian teenager shot by the IDF during its 5/7 Abasan raid dies. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron. As has occurred on numerous occasions since Israel’s 2005 disengagement, 100s of Jewish settlers temporarily set up tents at the site of the evacuated Homesh settlement in the c. West Bank, vowing to rebuild the settlement and challenge any government efforts to remove additional settlements; the IDF closes off Palestinian traffic to the area and observes but does not intervene. (PCHR 5/15)

Hizballah leader Hasan Nasrallah makes a speech accusing Lebanese PM Fuad Siniora’s government of launching a war against Hizballah, warning of increased conflict if the 5/6 decisions are not reversed. Soon after, Hizballah sends more gunmen into Beirut’s streets and clashes intensify, especially in the mixed Sunni-Shi’i neighborhoods of Mazzra’a and Ras El-Naba’a, and include machine gun and RPG fire, leaving 6 Lebanese dead, 8 wounded. (BBC 5/8; NYT, WP, WT 5/9; Asia Times 5/13) (see Quarterly Update)

9 MAY

Hamas mbrs. fire 4 mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, killing 1 Israeli civilian, wounding 3, in what may be the 1st fatal Palestinian mortar strike. The IDF retaliates with air strikes on Gaza Interior Min. security offices in Rafah (killing 2 Hamas-affiliated security officers, wounding 5 civilians) and a naval police post on the s. Gaza shore (killing 3 policemen). In a mysterious incident northeast of Jerusalem, Ofra settlement guards fire on 2 Palestinians whom they claim approached the settlement fence carrying a hunting rifle, killing 1 Palestinian and detaining the other, turning him over to the IDF, which quickly seals the area; later, the AMB claims responsibility for an attack on Ofra but says the man killed was an innocent bystander and that its mbrs. escaped unharmed. Also in the West Bank, the IDF fires rubber-coated steel bullets, percussion grenades, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, international activists taking part in the weekly nonviolent demonstration against the separation wall in Bil’in (10s suffer tear gas inhalation) and beat demonstrators at a similar protest al-Masa’ra (lightly injuring 3). (WP 5/10; NYT 5/11; PCHR 5/15)

Hizballah and its allies take control of streets in west Beirut, attacking and shutting down media outlets owned by Saad Hariri’s Future Movement, as the army steps aside, saying soldiers will keep peace but not take sides. Hizballah also takes over several government offices, but immediately turns them over to army. Clashes abate somewhat after Hariri orders his forces not to fight. (BBC 5/9; NYT, WP, WT 5/10; Los Angeles Times 5/12; NYT 5/18) (see Quarterly Update)

10 MAY

Overnight, the IDF sends troops, bulldozers into Khuza, exchanging fire with local gunmen (wounding 1) and bulldozing 62 d. of agricultural land, 20 greenhouses before withdrawing in the early morning. Palestinians shut down 2 of 3 turbines at Gaza’s power plant for lack of fuel. Hamas mbrs. fire 15 rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing damage but no injuries. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in, fires on residential areas of Jaba’ nr. Jenin, firing on stone-throwing youths who then confront the troops, wounding 6; fires rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas at Palestinian, Israeli, and international peace activists holding a nonviolent demonstration nr. Tulkarm against Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement, injuring 2 demonstrators and 2 journalists covering the event; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. (NYT, WT 5/11; PCHR 5/15)

Hizballah begins to pull back from areas captured on 5/9. Army commander Gen. Michel Suleiman orders all gunmen to leave the street, but some Future Movement supporters angry over their perceived loss in Beirut attack Hizballah and SSNP offices in n. Lebanon and the Biqa’ Valley, leaving 12 Lebanese dead (at least 11 of them SSNP mbrs.), 20 wounded; heavy clashes are also reported in Tripoli (btwn. supporters of Future Movement and Alawi mbrs. of the Arab Democratic Party seeking to settle Sunni-Alawi scores fr. the 1980s). (WT 5/10; NYT, WP 5/11; see also REU 5/8) (see Quarterly Update)

11 MAY

Gaza’s power plant shuts down completely for lack of fuel. A Palestinian teenager (brother of the teenager who died on 5/8) succumbs to injuries sustained during the IDF’s 5/7 raid on Abasan. In the West
Bank, the IDF makes a 1-day curfew on Azun nr. Qalqilya; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c., nr. Hebron. (WP 5/12; PCHR 5/15)

In Beirut, calm prevails but many roads remain closed and some Hizballah mbrs. continue to patrol streets. Hizballah and Jumblatt supporters exchange fire in the villages of Aley, Kayfun, and Shuwayfat s. of Beirut. Hizballah sends fighters convoys toward Druze leader Walid Jumblatt’s stronghold in the Chouf mountains, but they are ambushed en route by Druze militias fighters (some of whom had supported the opposition and stood with Hizballah until it moved deep into the Chouf, then switched sides to defend the Druze heartland), withdrawing with heavy casualties. (NYT, WP, WT 5/12; NYT 5/16; NYT, WP 5/18) (see Quarterly Update)

12 MAY

Islamic Jihad mbrs. fire a rocket fr. Gaza into Israel, killing an Israeli. In the West Bank, the IDF sends undercover units in cars with Palestinian license plates into Bayt Eiba nr. Nablus, where they surround a Palestinian home, order all occupants to surrender (which they do), arrest 2 wanted AMB mbrs. (1 of whom was among the AMB mbrs. granted amnesty by Israel in 7/07); patrols in al’Arub r.c., firing on stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no injuries but arresting 1; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin, Jenin town and r.c., nr. Hebron to erect a military post; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Abu Dis and Nablus, and nr. Hebron (targeting the home of a journalist, arresting him). (PCHR 5/15)

14 MAY

Overnight, the IDF makes an incursion into Abasan, raiding and searching homes, occupying several as operational bases, making air strikes on local gunmen who confront them (killing 1 Hamas mbr., seriously wounding 2 Islamic Jihad mbrs. and 1 Hamas mbr.), demolishing a Palestinian home, bulldozing 110 d. of agricultural land and 4 poultry farms, arresting 4 Palestinians before withdrawing late in the evening. The IDF also makes an early-morning incursion into Jabaliya town, fatally shooting a Palestinian civilian riding a bicycle for no apparent reason, exchanging fire with local gunmen (killing 1 armed Palestinian, 1 bystander), hitting 3 Palestinian homes with tank fire (injuring 3 Palestinian civilians). Later, Palestinians fire a Grad-type rocket fr. Gaza into Israel, striking a shopping mall in Ashqelon, wounding 16 Israelis, 3 of them seriously; several groups, excluding Hamas, claim responsibility. Late in the evening, the IDF makes an air strike on Gaza City, killing 2 Palestinian resistance mbrs. Meanwhile, in the West Bank, the IDF conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Bethlehem and Nablus, and in Qalqilya. (NYT, PCHR, WP 5/15; PCHR 5/22)

15 MAY

Palestinians in Israel and the occupied territories commemorate the Nakba by visiting the sites of Palestinian villages destroyed in 1948, holding somber rallies and moments of silence, and, in Qalandia r.c., releasing 1,000s of black balloons (1 for each day since the State of Israel was declared). In Gaza, the IDF begins digging a trench (around 300 ft. long, 10 ft. wide, 15 ft. deep) fr. an IDF post e. of Abasan to Khuza, firing on nearby residential areas, causing no reported injuries. IDF troops at the Erez crossing fire bullets, tear gas at 100s of Palestinians staging a nonviolent protest against the Israeli siege. IDF troops on the c. Gaza border e. of Juhur al-Dik fire on 5 Palestinian girls who stray nr. the border fence, wounding 1. In the West Bank, the IDF patrols in Taqou’ nr. Bethlehem; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Nablus. A
Palestinian civilian wounded during the 5/4 IDF incursion into Khuzaa dies. (CNN 5/15; PCHR 5/22)

Under a deal brokered by the Arab League, the Hizballah-led opposition and Lebanon’s ruling coalition agree to open talks in Qatar on 5/16 to negotiate an agmt. on a cabinet and new electoral law, to be followed by election of consensus pres. candidate Gen. Michel Suleiman. Hizballah removes roadblocks leading to Beirut airport, allowing some flights to resume in the evening. (BBC 5/15; NYT, WP, WT 5/16; WP 5/18) (see Quarterly Update)