

PCHR

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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Weekly Report

On Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory



An apartment in al-Awda housing project hit by an artillery shell. 22-02-2006

16– 22 February 2006

N^o 07/2006

Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Continue Attacks on Palestinian Civilians and Property in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)

- **5 Palestinians, including two children, were killed by IOF in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.**
- **42 Palestinian civilians, including 25 children, two women, and an international solidarity activist were wounded by IOF in the West Bank.**
- **IOF continued to shell Palestinian areas in the Gaza Strip, an infant was seriously injured.**
- **IOF conducted 31 incursions into Palestinian communities in the West Bank and invaded Nablus and Balata refugee camp.**
- **Houses were raided and 79 Palestinian civilians, including 26 children, were arrested by IOF.**
- **6 houses were transformed by IOF into military sites.**
- **IOF have continued to impose a total siege on the OPT, especially in the West Bank; the eastern part of the West Bank has been isolated from the remainder of the West Bank; Palestinian civilians aged below 45 were prevented from entering the al-Aqsa Mosque for Friday Prayers; and IOF arrested 11 Palestinian civilians, including 5 children and a girl, at checkpoints in the West Bank.**
- **IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall in the West Bank; IOF plan to construct a section of the Wall to the east of Hebron; IOF used force against Palestinian civilians demonstrating against the construction of the Wall; IOF have continued to imposed severe restrictions on movement in Palestinian communities located near the Wall; and IOF demolished a house in Deir al-Ghosoun village near Tulkarm.**

Summary

On Sunday, 19 February 2006, the Israeli government adopted a series of collective punishment measures against Palestinian civilians in the OPT. The Israeli cabinet decided in its weekly meeting to stop the transfer of tax and customs revenues to the Palestinian National Authority, to impose severe restrictions on the access of Palestinian workers to workplaces in Israel and to intensify security checks at crossing points, especially Erez and Karni.

Israeli violations of international law continued in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) during the reporting period (16 – 22 February 2006):

Killing: During the reported period, IOF killed 5 Palestinians within the space of 24 hours. On Sunday morning, 19 February 2006, an IOF aircraft launched a missile at two members of the Palestinian Popular Resistance Committees in Khan Yunis, killing them. At noon, IOF willfully killed two Palestinian children in Balata refugee camp, east of Nablus. On Monday morning, 20 February 2006, IOF killed two Palestinian gunmen during an exchange of fire in Nablus. During the reported period, IOF shelled Palestinian communities in the Gaza Strip. An artillery shell hit an apartment building in the northern Gaza Strip. A two-year-old child was seriously injured by shrapnel. During the reported period, 42 Palestinian civilians, including 25 children, two women and an international solidarity activist, were wounded by the IOF gunfire.

Incursions: IOF conducted 31 military incursions into Palestinian communities in the West Bank. The widest of these incursions was in Nablus and the neighboring Balata refugee camp. During this incursion, IOF killed 3 Palestinians, including two children, wounded 36 civilians and arrested at least 13 others. They also transformed a number of houses into military sites. In other incursions, IOF raided houses and arrested 79 Palestinian civilians, including 26 children. IOF also transformed 6 houses into military sites. IOF used undercover units and trained dogs during these incursions.

Restrictions on Movement: IOF have continued to impose a comprehensive siege on the OPT, in violation of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinian civilians.

IOF have continued to impose a tightened siege on the Gaza Strip, transforming it into a large prison. Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian border, the sole outlet for the Gaza Strip to the outside world, has been partially reopened. The crossing point is operated for 8 hours a day only. IOF allowed less than 2,500 Palestinian workers to travel to their work places inside Israel through *Beit Hanoun* (Erez) crossing. Palestinian workers are also checked in a special room that is equipped with an as yet unidentified type of x-ray machine. Although IOF reopened *al-Mentar* (Karni) commercial crossing, east of Gaza City, they have so far allowed the entry of foodstuffs only.

IOF have continued to impose a tightened siege on Palestinian communities in the West Bank. They have imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians in the West Bank. IOF have continued to prevent Palestinians aged below 45 from entering the al-Aqsa Mosque for Friday Prayers. During the reported period, IOF arrested 11 Palestinian civilians, including 5 children and a girl, at various checkpoints in the West Bank.

Annexation Wall: IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall inside the West Bank. During the reported period, IOF continued to construct a separation barrier around "Shavi

Shomron" settlement, northwest of Nablus. IOF constructed cement sections of the wall at a distance of nearly 500 meters from the eastern border of the settlement near the Nablus–Jenin road. IOF declared their intention to construct new sections of the Wall near Hebron. According to Israeli sources, Israel plans at this stage to construct a section of the Wall near Hebron. This section will not reach the Dead Sea. The route of this section is still under discussion by the Israeli government and its construction comes in the context of a plan to cut off the Jordan Valley from the remainder of the West Bank. IOF plan to construct a separation fence to cut off agricultural areas in the Jordan Valley, which are estimated at half a million dunums.¹ In addition, IOF used force to disperse peaceful demonstrations organized by Palestinian civilians in protest to the construction of the Wall in Bal'ein, Beit Siera and 'Aaboud villages near Ramallah. They also imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians living in communities located near the Wall.

¹ 1 donum is equal to 1000 square meters.

Israeli Violations Documented during the Reporting Period (16 – 22 February 2006)

1. Incursions into Palestinian Areas and Attacks on Palestinian Civilians and Property

Israeli Offensive on Nablus

IOF invaded Nablus and the neighboring Balata refugee camp and carried out a series of military operations. Three Palestinians, including two children, were killed and at least 30 civilians were wounded.

On the first day of this offensive, Sunday, 19 February 2006, IOF killed two children in Balata refugee camp, and wounded 16 other civilians, including 11 children and a volunteer paramedic.

According to investigations conducted by PCHR, at approximately 01:00, IOF moved into Balata refugee camp, east of Nablus, and Ras al-Ein neighborhood in the southeast of the city. They raided a number of houses and transformed them into military sites. They then surrounded a 120-square-meter, two-storey house belonging to Husni Tawafiq Hamama in Balata refugee camp. They called through megaphones on all those who were inside the house to get out. The family and 3 young men got out of the house. IOF arrested one of the young men, 25-year-old Ahmed Rasmi al-Qaisi, and interrogated and then released the other two young men. IOF continued to surround Hamama's house. At approximately 07:00, they demolished its external walls. At approximately 08:00, dozens of Palestinian children gathered and threw stones at IOF vehicles. Immediately, IOF opened fire at the children. As a result, 16 civilians, including 11 children and a volunteer paramedic, were wounded:

1. Mohammed Waleed Habash, 16, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head;
2. Ramzi Mohammed Majd, 17, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head;
3. 'Anan Khalil al-Attira, 44, a volunteer paramedic, wounded by shrapnel to the head;
4. Saleh Mousa Abu 'Alafa, 31, wounded by a live bullet to the foot and was arrested by IOF from an ambulance;
5. Samer Mohammed Za'arin, 35, wounded by a tear gas canister to the left leg;
6. 'Abdul Fattah Nassar Abu 'Eisha, 16, wounded by a live bullet to the left foot;
7. Wa'el Khaled Mahmoud, 17, wounded by a tear gas canister to the left thigh;
8. Hassan Khalil Salama, 22, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right leg;
9. Ahmed Ghazi Abu Thiraa', 14, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left foot;
10. Ibrahim Mahmoud 'Aayed, 18, wounded by a live bullet to the right foot;
11. 'Othman Ahmed al-Sheikh 'Ali, 16, wounded by a live bullet to the right foot;
12. Mahmoud Ayman Abu Nadi, 13, wounded by shrapnel to the chest;
13. Mohammed 'Ata Musaimi, 15, wounded by a live bullet to the left foot;
14. Mohammed 'Aadel Kassab, 17, wounded by a live bullet to the right hand;
15. Ahmed Khaled 'Aamer, 11, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the abdomen; and
16. Muntaser Mohammed Hashash, 12, wounded by a rubber-coated metal to the head.

Also in the morning, IOF raided a house belonging to Haitham Mohammed al-'Affouri, 35, in Ras al-Ein neighborhood and arrested him.

At approximately 13:40, an Israeli soldier positioned inside a house belonging to Jameel al-Teerawi in the center of Balata refugee camp shot dead, without any apparent reason, two Palestinian children, who were standing near their homes:

1. Ibrahim Ahmed Mohammed al-Shiekh 'Eissa, 17, hit by a live bullet to the neck; and
2. Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed al-Natour, 17, hit by a live bullet to the neck.

According to eyewitnesses, the area was completely quiet when the two children were shot dead.

In the evening, IOF raided a house in Balata refugee camp and arrested two members of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, the military wing of the Fatah movement:

1. Ibrahim al-Teerawi, 22; and
2. Haitham al-Teerawi, 20.

At approximately 01:15 on Monday, 20 February 2006, IOF sent more reinforcements into Nablus. IOF opened fire indiscriminately. When IOF arrived at al-Sheikh Musallam quarter in the old town, a number of Palestinian gunmen exchanged fire with them. One of the gunmen, 29-year-old Ahmed Mohammed Nayef Abu Sharekh, was seriously wounded by two live bullets to the chest. He died on the way to the hospital. IOF also raided and searched a number of houses in the old town and arrested 6 Palestinian civilians:

1. Wa'el Shaker Mashi, 33;
2. Humaida Ibrahim Marshoud, 22;
3. Eyad Mohammed Musaimi, 25;
4. Ibrahim Abu Thiraa', 23;
5. Mohammed Abu 'Awad; and
6. Ahmed Husni al-Sheikh Khalil, 19.

A few hours later, dozens of Palestinian civilians gathered and threw stones at IOF vehicles. Immediately, IOF fired at the stone throwers wounding 12 Palestinian civilians, including 9 children:

1. Mohammed Subhi Hamada, 22, seriously wounded by a live bullet to the chest;
2. Ussama Ghazi al-Banna, 16, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the chest;
3. Ahmed Taher Jouda, 16, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right shoulder;
4. 'Essam Abu Salah, 16, wounded by two rubber-coated metal bullets to the left shoulder;
5. Mohammed Khattab Mustafa, 16, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the chest;
6. Mohammed Ghassan Subeh, 5, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the chest;
7. Yousef Yahia Badrasawi, 13, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the eye;
8. 'Alaa' Mohammed Badrasawi, 21, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head;
9. Wa'el Khaled Abu Taya, 18, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left leg;
10. 'Aayed Ghassan Ka'ba, 18, wounded by a 3 rubber-coated metal bullets to the body;
11. Mahdi 'Aatef Shourti, 14, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left leg; and
12. Mahdi Salah Khwaira, 15, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head.

On Tuesday morning, 21 February 2006, IOF continued to raid houses. Dozens of Palestinian children gathered and threw stones at IOF vehicles. IOF fired at the children, wounding 8 civilians, including 3 children:

1. 'Alaa' Ziad Abu Zant, 17, wounded by a two live bullets to the chest and the left hand;
2. Isma'il Ayman al-Masri, 14, wounded by a two live bullets to the right shoulder and thigh;
3. 'Omar Jamal 'Alloush, 18, wounded by a live bullet to the left thigh;
4. 'Emad Ibrahim al-Deb'ei, 15, wounded by a live bullet to the left leg;
5. Mohammed Furajj Dwaikat, 18, wounded by a live bullet to the left leg;
6. Majdi Mohammed Eshtayeh, 24, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the chest;
7. Hassan Ahmed 'Aamer, 20, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left foot; and
8. Mohammed Zaid Marshoud, 24, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head.

Thursday, 16 February 2006

- At approximately 02:00, IOF moved into Qabatya village, southeast of Jenin. They raided and searched a house belonging to 'Abbas D'ib Kumayel and transformed it into a military site.
- At approximately 02:30, IOF moved into agricultural areas in the north of Qalqilya. They raided a number of houses and farms and arrested a Palestinian farmer, 25-year-old Mohammed Ibrahim Hilal.
- At approximately 13:30, IOF moved into Ya'bad village, southwest of Jenin. They took position on the Schools road. They stopped and arrested 3 students:
 1. Jihad Muneer Abu Baker, 16;
 2. Tayseer Husni Qanneeri, 16; and
 3. Yousef 'Aqab Abu Baker, 22.

Friday, 17 February 2006

- At approximately 02:00, IOF moved into Abrash village near Hebron. They raided and searched a house belonging to Nayef al-Sha'rawi and transformed it into a military site.
- At approximately 02:40, IOF moved into Nablus and the neighboring Balata refugee camp and Zawata village. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 5 Palestinian civilians:
 1. Saleh Fakhri Dwaikat, 19;
 2. Rami Murshed al-Teerawi, 23;
 3. Mohammed Kamal al-Teerawi, 22;
 4. 'Aqab Rajeh 'Edwan, 22; and
 5. Lu'ai Abu Za'rour, 18.
- At approximately 03:30, IOF moved into Kufor Ra'ei village, southwest of Jenin. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 10 Palestinian civilians, including 3 children:
 1. Daa' Mohammed Melhem, 18;
 2. Mustafa 'Aatef Melehm, 19;
 3. Ahmed Mustafa Shalash, 17;
 4. Mo'men Jihad Melhem, 17;
 5. Ahmed 'Aayed Jaber, 18;

6. Mohammed Ahmed Hassan, 24;
 7. Jihad Shaher Subeh, 22;
 8. Mos'ab Mohammed D'iab, 19;
 9. Muhannad Ahmed Subeh, 17; and
 10. 'Essam Nabeel D'iab, 22.
- At approximately 04:25, IOF moved into Zabbouba village, northwest of Bethlehem. They raided and searched a house belonging to 'Abdullah Fathi 'Aamarna and arrested him.
 - At approximately 13:00, dozens of Palestinian civilians organized a peaceful demonstration in protests to the insults against Islam and the Prophet Mohammed. IOF fired tear gas canisters at the demonstrators. Dozens of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation. IOF also arrested 3 demonstrators, including two children:
 1. Khaled Hassan Hijju, 18;
 2. Ashraf 'Abdul Salam Radwan, 17; and
 3. Mohammed Ma'ath Salama, 17.
 - At approximately 15:30, IOF moved into al-Khader village, southwest of Bethlehem, chased a number of children and arrested 6 of them, claiming that they had thrown stones at Israeli vehicles traveling on road (60) near the village:
 1. 'Esmat Mohammed Salah, 16;
 2. Sami 'Ali Subaih, 17;
 3. 'Emad al-Masri, 17;
 4. Mohammed Ibrahim Ghunaim, 15;
 5. Murad 'Abdul Hadi Shamroukh, 14; and
 6. Suhaib D'ib Shamroukh, 16.

Saturday, 18 February 2006

- At approximately 02:00, IOF moved into 'Azzoun 'Atma village, which is located behind the Annexation Wall, near Qalqilya. They raided and searched a house belonging to 'Emad al-Din Khalil al-Zer'ei, 18, and arrested him.
- At approximately 17:30, IOF moved into al-Khader village, southwest of Bethlehem. They erected a number of checkpoints in the streets. They stopped and checked Palestinian civilians. They arrested two children, claiming that they had thrown stones at Israeli vehicles traveling on road (60) near the village:
 1. Amjad Mahmoud Salah, 17; and
 2. Mohammed 'Ali Salah, 17.
- At approximately 22:00, IOF raided and searched a house belonging to Mohammed Suleiman al-Rujbi, 55, to the south of "Kiryat Arba" settlement, southeast of Hebron. They violently beat the owner's son, 22-year-old Raja'ei and damaged the contents of the house.

Sunday, 19 February 2006

- At approximately 01:10, IOF moved into 'Aaida refugee camp, north of Bethlehem. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested two children:
 1. 'Abdul 'Aziz Hussein Abu Sorour, 15; and
 2. Mahmoud Fathi Radi, 15.

- At approximately 07:50, an IOF aircraft launched two missiles at two Palestinians who were near the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel, east of Khan Yunis. The two Palestinians were instantly killed. IOF informed the Palestinian liaison that there were two bodies in the area. Immediately, Palestinian medical crews moved towards the area. They found the two bodies nearly 100 meters away from the border. They evacuated the bodies to Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis. The two victims, who were members of the Popular Resistance Committees were identified as:
 1. Bilal Mohammed Rida al-Najjar, 19, from Khuza'a village to the east of Khan Yunis; and
 2. Ussama Fawzi Burais, 21, from Rafah.

- At approximately 12:30, an IOF undercover unit moved into 'Allar village, north of Tulkarm, using a civilian car with a Palestinian registration plate. Israeli soldiers raided a restaurant in the center of the village and arrested 3 Palestinian civilians:
 1. Eyad Nafez Kharouf, 22;
 2. Muthanna Mohammed Qe'dan, 21; and
 3. Mohammed Mo'een Jeeban, 23.

- At approximately 16:00, IOF moved into Tulkarm. They patrolled near al-Zakat Hospital in the west of Tulkarm. They withdrew 40 minutes later and no arrests were reported.

- At approximately 18:00, IOF positioned at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel, east of Khan Yunis, opened fire at Palestinian agricultural land in al-Farraheen area in 'Abasan village. No casualties were reported, but Palestinian civilians were extremely frightened. It is worth noting that Palestinian farmers do not have access to their agricultural land near the border as IOF frequently often open fire on the area.

- At approximately 22:30, IOF moved into Bethlehem. They raided and searched a house belonging to the family of Muntasser 'Abdul Karim al-Darhani, 17, and arrested him.

- At approximately 22:30, IOF moved into Beit Ummar village, north of Hebron, and imposed a curfew. They raided and searched at least 60 houses and arrested 11 Palestinian civilians:
 1. Lu'ai Shida 'Alqam, 28;
 2. Hakam Shida 'Alqam, 26;
 3. 'Alaa' Shihda 'Alqam, 24;
 4. Tha'er Mohammed Sabarna, 23;
 5. Khalil Ibrahim Buraigheth, 24;
 6. 'Aasef 'Ali Abu 'Ayash, 32;
 7. Mohammed Fu'ad 'Alqam, 26;
 8. Nabeel Hammad Abu Maria, 23;

9. Mohammed Ameen Sulaibi, 25;
10. Samer 'Ali Abu Maria, 27; and
11. Nabeel Falah Abu Maria, 20.

Monday, 20 February 2006

- At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into al'Azza refugee camp, north of Bethlehem. They raided and searched a house belonging to Malek Harb al'Azza, 19, and arrested him.
- Also at approximately 01:30, IOF moved into Bethlehem. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested two Palestinian civilians:
 1. 'Odai 'Abdul Rahim Hammash, 16; and
 2. Bayan Fadel al-Najajra, 20.
- At approximately 01:45, IOF moved into Qabatya village, southeast of Jenin. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 3 Palestinian civilians:
 1. 'Essam Mohammed Nazzal, 24;
 2. Ahmed Ja'far Abu al-Rub, 24; and
 3. Fawaz Nasri Ekmayel, 23.
- At approximately 03:00, IOF moved into al-Zahirya village, southwest of Hebron. They raided and searched a number of houses and fired sound bombs and tear gas canisters. Most residents of a house belonging to 'Emad 'Abdul Hamid al-Hawareen, including two infants, suffered from tear gas inhalation. Five residents were evacuated to a medical center in the village. IOF also arrested two Palestinian civilians:
 1. Bassem Hussein Samamra, 37; and
 2. 'Aadel 'Abdul Hamid al-Hawareen, 35.
- At approximately 23:00, IOF moved into Nahaleen village, southwest of Bethlehem. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 3 Palestinian civilians:
 1. Mohammed Lutfi Najajra, 17;
 2. 'Abdul Salam 'Ali Shakarna, 18; and
 3. Ibrahim 'Abed Yassin, 17.
- At night, IOF positioned at the eastern border between the Gaza Strip and Israel fired a number of artillery shells at uninhabited areas in Jabalya, Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun. Shrapnel hit some houses in Um al-Nasser village, north of Beit Lahia. A number of houses were damaged and Palestinian civilians were terrified.

Tuesday, 14 February 2006

- At approximately 01:00, IOF moved into Tulkarm. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested two Palestinian civilians:

1. 'Ameed Mohammed Abu Zaina, 19; and
 2. Munther Mansour 'Aashour, 18.
- Also at approximately 01:00, IOF moved into al'Eizariya village, east of Jerusalem. They raided and searched a house belonging to the family of Sayaf Munadel Abu Rumi, 17, and arrested him.
 - At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into Kufor Ra'ei village, southwest of Jenin. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 4 Palestinian civilians:
 1. Nidal Wajeeh Tab'ouni, 19;
 2. Tariq Zaki Melhem, 18;
 3. 'Abdullah Hussam Melhem, 17; and
 4. Mohammed Khairi Yahia, 21.
 - Also at approximately 01:30, IOF moved into Housan village, west of Bethlehem. They raided and searched a house belonging to the family of Mohammed Bassem Hamamra, 17, and arrested him.

Wednesday, 21 February 2006

- At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into the Namera neighborhood in Hebron. They raided and searched a house belonging to the family of Marwan Mohammed al-Sarsour, 29, and arrested him.
- At approximately 02:30, IOF moved into Qabatya village, southwest of Jenin. They raided and searched a house belonging to the family of 'Omar al-Adeeb, 24, and arrested him.
- At approximately 07:10, IOF positioned at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel, east of Jabalya, fired a number of artillery shells at Palestinian areas located to the west of the border. A shell hit an apartment building in al-'Awda housing project, west of Beit Hanoun. Shrapnel from the shell hit a bedroom in one of the flats. Debris from the ceiling and pieces of shrapnel hit two-year-old Isma'il Jihad Abu Snaida, who was seriously injured as a result.
- At approximately 14:30, an IOF undercover unit moved into Kufor Qallil village, south of Nablus. Israeli soldiers surrounded a house belonging to the family of Shadi Hassan 'Aamer, 22, and called on him through megaphones to surrender. IOF sent more enforcements into the village. At approximately 18:00, he surrendered.
- At approximately 21:00, IOF moved into Bani Na'im village, east of Hebron. They opened fire indiscriminately. Judai 'Aatef Abu Judai, 15, was wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head.

2. Continued Siege on the OPT

IOF have continued to impose a tightened siege on the OPT and imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Occupied East Jerusalem.

Gaza Strip

Although IOF have been redeployed around the Gaza Strip, they have maintained the occupation of the Gaza Strip through controlling all outlets and crossings.

- Rafah International Crossing Point: Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian border is the sole outlet for the Gaza Strip to the outside world. Working hours at the crossing have been limited to 8 hours a day. It is noted that, contrary to media reports, the commercial crossing in Rafah has not been opened. The commercial crossing still requires some technical preparations parallel to those being conducted at the Kerem Shalom crossing to the southeast of Rafah, which is designated for imports under joint Israeli-Palestinian control. For more information on the border crossings agreement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, please refer to previous PCHR's reports.
- Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing: This is the only crossing point for Gaza Strip workers, medical cases, traders and ordinary citizens into Israel and to the West Bank. During the reported period, less than 2,500 out of 5,000 Palestinian workers who have work permits were allowed to reach their work places inside Israel through the crossing. Only one route has been operated for the passage of workers, which causes severe congestion and delays. Palestinian workers are also checked in a special room that is equipped with an unknown type of x-ray machine. There are concerns that this could be similar to the scanning machines that were previously used at Rafah International Crossing Point, while it was under IOF's direct control. A few medical cases and traders have been allowed to travel to hospitals in Israel and the West Bank, but only under strict conditions. On 21 February 2006, IOF cancelled family visitation to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- Al-Mentar (Karni) Commercial Crossing: Since the evacuation of Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, IOF have repeatedly closed the crossing. IOF have continued to prevent the exportation of many goods from the Gaza Strip and the importation of some kinds of pipes under the pretext that they are used in manufacturing locally made rockets. Only 360 trucks loaded with imports are allowed to enter the Gaza Strip daily, while only 75 trucks loaded with exports are allowed to depart from the Gaza Strip. IOF conduct prolonged searches of the goods. It is worth noting that the Israeli Defence Minister, Shaul Mofaz, has threatened to tighten the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, following the formation of a Palestinian government by Hamas.
- Sofa crossing: IOF also control Sofa crossing, northeast of Rafah, which is designated for the transportation of construction raw materials. They close the crossing from time to time for no apparent reason. IOF have continued to close the crossing since 14 February 2006.

The closure of border crossings deprives the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip of their right to freedom of movement, education and health.

IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on fishing in the Gaza Strip. Approximately 35,000 people in and around Gaza's coastal communities rely on the fishing industry, including 2,500 fishermen, 2,500 support staff and their families. Fishermen have been subjected to intensive monitoring by the Israeli military, who use helicopter gunships and gunboats to monitor the fishermen. On a number of occasions the Israeli military has opened fire against the civilian

fishermen in order to enforce the 9 nautical mile limit imposed on them. The Oslo Accords make provision for Gaza's sea to be fished to 20 nautical miles.

The West Bank

IOF have continued to impose a strict siege on Palestinian communities in the West Bank. They have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and imposed curfews on a number of Palestinian communities.

- Occupied East Jerusalem: IOF have maintained the isolation of East Jerusalem from the rest of the OPT. They have imposed severe restrictions of the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the city. According to eyewitnesses, IOF positioned at various checkpoints around the city conduct prolonged checks on Palestinian civilians. On Friday, 17 February 2006, IOF prevented Palestinian civilians aged under 45 from praying at the al-Aqsa Mosque. They erected a number of checkpoints at the entrances of the old town and the gates of the al-Aqsa Mosque, and checked Palestinian civilians aged below 50. On Saturday, 18 February 2006, IOF erected more checkpoints to the north and northeast of Jerusalem. They stopped and searched Palestinian civilian vehicles. On Sunday evening, 19 February 2006, IOF positioned at Ramoud checkpoint, northwest of Jerusalem, stopped the Palestinian Minister of Culture and Media, Yahia Yakhluuf, for more than 45 minutes, and then forced him to travel back. He had been on his way to the Gaza Strip.
- Ramallah: IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. Shortly before convening the first session of the newly elected Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), IOF imposed unprecedented restrictions on movement to and from Ramallah, in order to prevent PLC members from entering the town. According to eyewitnesses, on Saturday morning, 18 February 2006, IOF closed 'Attara checkpoint, north of Ramallah. They held hundreds of Palestinian civilians until 11:00, when the PLC's session started. IOF positioned at Qalandya checkpoint, south of Ramallah, imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. They stopped and checked Palestinian civilians. IOF also closed 'Ein 'Arik – Bitounia road, west of the town.
- Hebron: IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. On Friday and Saturday, 17 and 18 February 2006, IOF closed the main roads between Hebron and Bethlehem and erected a number of checkpoints at the entrances of villages. IOF stopped and searched Palestinian civilian vehicles. At approximately 07:00 on Saturday, 18 February 2006, IOF erected a checkpoint at al-Quds Square in the north of Hebron, another opposite the Hebron University in the north of the town, and a third in the Wad al-Hariya neighborhood in the south of the town. They stopped and checked Palestinian civilians, including university students, and held a number of them for several hours.

On Sunday morning, 19 February 2006, IOF positioned at a checkpoint on the al-Zahiriya–al-Ramadin road, southwest of Hebron, opened fire on the tires of a civilian vehicle, in which 14 Palestinian workers were traveling. They claimed that the driver had not obeyed their orders to stop. When the vehicle stopped, IOF held the workers and beat them violently for more than 5 hours. Six workers sustained bruises throughout the body:

1. 'Aadel Salman al-Amaira, 33;
2. Sami Yousef al-Shawamra, 52;

3. Ahmed Mohammed al-Shawamra, 40;
4. Mohammed Badawi al-Shawamra, 45;
5. Ghaleb Suleiman al-Shawamra, 35; and
6. Nayef Hussein Abu 'Aker, 28.

At approximately 16:20 on Monday, 20 February 2006, IOF positioned at a military checkpoint at the northern entrance of al-Fawar refugee camp, southwest of Hebron, opened fire at houses located near the checkpoint. Two Palestinian civilians were wounded, while they were inside their houses, nearly 300 meters away from the checkpoint:

1. Muna Zaher Abu Naqdam, 28, seriously wounded by two live bullets to the side; and
2. Ashraf Mohammed al-Najjar, 14, wounded by two live bullets to the right shoulder and leg.

On Monday evening, 20 February 2006, IOF positioned in al-Shallala Street in the center of Hebron violently beat Ahmed Ibrahim al-Ja'bari, 21. He sustained bruises throughout the body.

On Tuesday, 21 February 2006, IOF positioned at the entrances of the Ibrahim Mosque in the old town of Hebron arrested Hamza Naji al-Fakhouri, 14, claiming that he had attempted to stab an Israeli soldier.

- Bethlehem: On Saturday morning, 18 February 2006, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the town. According to eyewitnesses, IOF erected a number of checkpoints around the town. They stopped and searched Palestinian civilian vehicles and held a number of civilians for several hours. IOF also conducted prolonged checks on Palestinian civilians at various checkpoints around the town.

On Thursday afternoon, 16 February 2006, IOF positioned at the northern entrance of Bethlehem arrested 3 Palestinian children, claiming that they were carrying knives:

1. Mohammed 'Eissa al-Mahseeri, 17;
2. Firas Hatem al-Zaghari, 17; and
3. 'Arafa 'Eid Au Sorour, 14.

- Nablus: IOF have continued to impose strict closure measures in Nablus. IOF have continued to prevent Palestinian civilians living in Jenin and Tulkarm from crossing Za'tra checkpoint, south of the city. On Thursday morning, 16 February 2006, IOF closed the Nablus–al-Bathan road. They forced Palestinian civilians to get out of their cars and checked them. On Saturday morning, 18 February 2006, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the city. IOF also erected a checkpoint at the northeastern entrance of the city. They stopped and searched Palestinian civilian vehicles. In the evening, IOF closed the checkpoint. On Sunday evening, 19 February 2006, IOF closed al-Quds Street with sand barriers. Palestinian civilians were forced to use an alternative road near Roujib village, east of the city.

On Thursday evening, 16 February 2006, IOF positioned at Hawara checkpoint, south of Nablus, arrested an unidentified girl.

On Friday morning, 17 February 2006, IOF positioned at Hawara checkpoint, south of Nablus, arrested Saber Ibrahim Bani Shamsa, 22.

At approximately 13:30 on Saturday, 18 February 2006, IOF positioned at Beit Eiba checkpoint, west of Nablus, arrested two unidentified Palestinian civilians.

- **Tulkarm:** IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. On Saturday morning, 18 February 2006, IOF closed 'Ennab gate, east of Tulkarm. They stopped Palestinian civilian vehicles and conducted prolonged checks on Palestinian civilians. Also on Saturday, IOF positioned at Wad al-Teen checkpoint, south of Tulkarm, prevented Palestinian civilians from traveling to and from the town. On Sunday, 19 February 2006, IOF erected more checkpoints around Tulkarm, including a checkpoint at Bala'a intersection on the Tulkarm–Nablus road. They stopped and searched dozens of Palestinian civilian vehicles. On Monday, 20 February 2006, IOF closed Wad al-Teen road, south of the town, for 3 hours. Palestinian civilians were forced to cross the checkpoint on foot. On Tuesday, 21 February 2006, IOF established an observation room at Wad al-Teen checkpoint, which indicates that IOF plan to maintain the checkpoint as a permanent one.

On Sunday morning, 19 February 2006, IOF positioned at a checkpoint in the Ras Rummana area, north of Tulkarm, arrested Rateb Ahmed Hirsha, 26.

- **Jenin:** On Thursday morning, 16 February 2006, IOF erected a checkpoint on the Jenin–Haifa road, west of Jenin. They stopped and searched Palestinian civilian vehicles. At the same time, IOF positioned at Tayaseer checkpoint, southeast of Jenin, held a number of Palestinian civilians in the rain for more than two hours. On Saturday morning, 18 February 2006, IOF closed al-Hamra checkpoint in the central Jordan Valley. On Tuesday morning, 21 February 2006, IOF closed Tayaseer checkpoint, southeast of Jenin, and prohibited the movement of Palestinian civilians. At noon, IOF erected a checkpoint to the south of Tubas village, southwest of Jenin. They stopped and checked Palestinian civilians and held a number of them for several hours.

On Sunday morning, 19 February 2006, IOF positioned at Salem checkpoint, west of Jenin, arrested Mahmoud al-Qadi, 15.

- **Jericho:** IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. According to eyewitnesses, IOF erected a number of checkpoints around the town. They reestablished their presence at al-Dyook checkpoint at the northern entrance of the town. On 16 February 2006, the Israeli government and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) signed an agreement handing over the security responsibility in the town to the PNA, and removing checkpoints at the northern and southern entrances of the town.
- **Qalqilya:** On Thursday morning, 16 February 2006, IOF positioned at the entrance of the Israeli civil liaison to the east of Qalqilya arrested Jihad Hatem 'Abdul Rahim, 19, from Kufor Jammal village to the south of Tulkarm.

3. Construction of the Annexation Wall

IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall inside West Bank territory.

- IOF declared their intention to construct new sections of the Wall near Hebron. According to Israeli sources, Israel plans at this stage to construct a section of the Wall near Hebron. This section will not reach the Dead Sea. The route of this section is still under discussion by the Israeli government and its construction comes in the context of a plan cut off the Jordan Valley

from the remainder of the West Bank. IOF plan to construct a separation fence to cut off agricultural areas in the Jordan Valley, which are estimated at half a million dunums. The construction of this fence will impact the natural life and the environment in the area. In addition, a land and settlement expert in Hebron, 'Abdul Hadi Hantash, stated that the construction of new sections of the Wall near Hebron would isolate at least 10,000 dunums of agricultural land to the east and south of Hebron. This area would be isolated between the Dead Sea and the Wall. The construction of all sections of the Wall around Hebron will isolate at least 28,000 dunums of agricultural land planted with olives.

- At approximately 13:00 on Friday, 17 February 2006, Palestinian civilians organized a peaceful demonstration in Bal'ein village, west of Ramallah, in protest to the construction of the Wall. IOF fired rubber-coated metal bullets, tear gas canisters and sound bombs at the demonstrators. They also beat a number of demonstrators. Three demonstrators were wounded:
 1. 'Amru Hashem Nasser, 20, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right foot;
 2. Yassin Mohammed Yassin, 18, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left hand; and
 3. Ja'far Mohammed Barnat, 27, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right hand.

A number of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation.

- Also at approximately 13:00 on Friday, 17 February 2006, about 300 Palestinian civilians and a number of international solidarity activists organized a peaceful march in 'Aaboud village, north of Ramallah, in protest to the construction of the Wall. IOF fired rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at the demonstrators. An international solidarity activist was wounded by a rubber bullet to the chest and a number of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation.
- Also at approximately 13:00 on Friday, 17 February 2006, about 500 Palestinian civilians and a number of international solidarity activists organized a peaceful march in Beit Siera village, west of Ramallah, in protest to the construction of the Wall. IOF fired tear gas canisters at the demonstrators. A number of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation.
- On Saturday morning, 18 February 2006, IOF closed the gate at the entrance to Qiffin village, north of Tulkarm. They prevented dozens of Palestinian farmers and international solidarity activists from reaching agricultural land located behind the Wall. These farmers and solidarity activists intended to plant the land with olive trees.
- On Sunday, 19 February 2006, IOF placed an iron gate at the entrance to Kufol Hares village, southwest of Hebron. This gate will restrict the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the village.
- At approximately 12:00 on Monday, 20 February 2006, IOF demolished an 80-square-meter, two-storey house belonging to Yousef Khamis Safeerain Deir al-Ghosoun village, north of Tulkarm, without prior warning. The house was located nearly 100 meters away from the Wall.

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Recommendations to the International Community

1. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal and moral obligations under Article 1 of the Convention to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. PCHR believes that the conspiracy of silence practiced by the international community has encouraged Israel to act as if it is above the law and encourages Israel continue to violate international human rights and humanitarian law.
2. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to convene a conference to take effective steps to ensure Israel's respect of the Convention in the OPT and to provide immediate protection for Palestinian civilians.
3. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to comply with its legal obligations detailed in Article 146 of the Convention to search for and prosecute those responsible for grave breaches, namely war crimes.
4. PCHR recommends international civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, bar associations and NGOs to participate in the process of exposing those accused of grave breaches of international law and to urge their governments to bring these people to justice.
5. PCHR calls upon the European Union to activate Article 2 of the Euro-Israel Association Agreement, which provides that Israel must respect human rights as a precondition for economic cooperation between the EU states and Israel. PCHR further calls upon the EU states to prohibit import of goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the OPT.
6. PCHR calls upon the member States of the EU, and all other states, to adopt a voting pattern at the UN bodies, particularly the General Assembly, Security Council and Commission on Human Rights which is keeping with international law.
7. PCHR demands that the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion be immediately implemented by the international community.
8. PCHR calls on the international community to recognize the proposed Gaza disengagement plan for what it is - not an end to occupation but a compounding of the occupation and the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.
9. In recognition of ICRC as the guardian of the Fourth Geneva Convention, PCHR calls upon the ICRC to increase its staff and activities in the OPT, including the facilitation of family visitations to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
10. PCHR appreciates the efforts of international civil society, including human rights organizations, bar associations, unions and NGOs, and urges them to continue their role in pressuring their governments to secure Israel's respect for human rights in the OPT and to end its attacks on Palestinian civilians.
11. In light of the severe restrictions imposed by the Israeli government and its occupying forces on access for international organizations to the OPT, PCHR calls upon European countries to deal with Israeli citizens in a similar manner.
12. PCHR reiterates that any political settlement not based on international human rights law and humanitarian law cannot lead to a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian question. Rather, such an arrangement can only lead to further suffering and instability in the region. Any peace agreement or process must be based on respect for international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.

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For further information please visit our website (<http://www.pchrgaza.org>) or contact PCHR's office in Gaza City, Gaza Strip by email (pchr@pchrgaza.org) or telephone (+972 (0)8 2824776 – 2825893).