

1. Headlines

- **Mortars/rockets/casualties/incursions:** There were reports this week of 4 homemade rockets (HMR) and 1 Qassam rocket fired by Palestinian armed groups towards Israel or Israeli forces this week, as compared to 5 HMR, 2 mortars, and 2 rocket-propelled grenades (RPG) reportedly fired the week before.

There was a report of 1 incursion by Israeli forces this week. Last week, 7 airstrikes, 6 incursions, and 1 shelling were reportedly carried out by Israeli forces. No Palestinian militants or civilians were reported injured this week as a result of Israeli operations. The week prior, there were reports of 1 civilian killed, 1 civilian injured, and 1 Palestinian militant killed as a result of Israeli military operations.

There was an additional report last week in a security update issued by UN Department of Safety and Security of a dispute over an explosion Islamic Jihad alleges was an Israeli airstrike. The explosion reportedly resulted in the death of 1 Palestinian militant and injury to 2 other militants. Israeli forces, however, have denied they carried out any airstrike or military activity in the area of the explosion.

- **Fishermen:** There was 1 report of an Israeli naval vessel firing at Palestinian fishermen this week. Last week, there were 3 reports of Israeli naval vessels firing at Palestinian fisherman. No injuries were reported as a result of Israeli naval fire this week or last week. Since January 2009, Israeli naval forces have restricted the access of Palestinian fishing boats to three nautical miles from the coast; in practice, access is sometimes restricted to as little as one nautical mile, banning access to around 85% of Gaza's fishing water.
- **Tunnel related fatalities:** There was 1 report of a tunnel beneath the border between Gaza and Egypt collapsing this week, resulting in the death of 1 Palestinian worker. There were also reports that 2 additional workers died in tunnel related accidents this week, 1 as the result of a heart attack and the other resulting from a fall. Last week, 2 tunnels beneath the border between Gaza and Egypt partially collapsed, resulting in the death of 1 tunnel worker and injury to 3 other workers.
- **Palestinians in the access restricted area (the so-called "buffer zone"):** There was 1 report of Israeli troops firing at Palestinians in the access restricted area inside Gaza's perimeter this week, as compared to 3 incidents reported last week. No injuries or deaths were reported as a result of Israeli troops firing in the access restricted area this week, while there were reports of 1 Palestinian killed and 1 injured as a result of Israeli fire reported in the access restricted area last week.

In 2010, 52 Palestinians were reported killed and 189 others were reported injured by Israeli troops while in the so-called "buffer zone." Israel first imposed a 150 metre-wide security 'buffer' within Gaza's perimeter in 2000. In certain areas along the northern and eastern perimeters, this official buffer extends up to 500 metres into Gaza. In practice, Israel restricts access to agricultural land up to 1,000-1,500 metres from the fence, which accounts for more than 30% of Gaza's agricultural land and a significant number of water wells. Most of the Gaza Strip's animal production is also concentrated in this area.

Oxfam partner Defence for Children International- Palestine (DCI) has reported this week that between March 2010 and February 2011 there have been 27 cases of children shot while collecting rubble and scrap metal in the so-called "buffer zone." DCI- Palestine has since launched an urgent appeal to stop targeting unarmed children working in the access restricted area.

- **Rafah border crossing:** Rafah border crossing was officially open this week. During this week, there were reports of 375 Palestinians entering Gaza from Egypt, 1,013 leaving Gaza for Egypt, and 146 who were denied entry into Egypt. Last week, there were reports of 416 Palestinians entering Gaza from Egypt, 997 leaving Gaza for Egypt, and 92 who were denied entry into Egypt.

Rafah border crossing remains the primary gateway to the outside world for the majority of Palestinians in Gaza, most of whom are not allowed to use Erez border crossing. While Erez border crossing remains open, very few Palestinians from Gaza are permitted to cross from Erez into Israel for medical treatment or emergencies. While Rafah was closed last month during the situation in Egypt, an estimated 500 people who use the crossing every month to reach scheduled or ongoing medical treatment abroad were unable to travel to reach the treatment they needed.

The closure of Rafah border crossing last month also left thousands of Palestinians from Gaza trapped abroad, unable to use their only possible crossing point (Rafah) to travel back home to Gaza. Despite Rafah's official opening, there are reports of many Palestinians still trapped abroad due to restrictions put in place on allowing Palestinians from Gaza to access Cairo airport while Rafah remained closed.

- **Power plant and electricity supply:** Since January 5th, Gaza's power plant has not placed an order for industrial fuel to be transferred from Israel. The fuel for Gaza's power plant is now being supplied through the tunnels underneath the Gaza-Egypt border in the form of Egyptian diesel, which has a much lower price than the industrial fuel supplied from Israel.

OCHA estimates that the power plant is buying between 300,000 and 400,000 litres of diesel from the tunnels every day. In addition to what is procured daily from the tunnels, the power plant in Gaza reportedly has a two-week back up supply of fuel, capable of running the plant at an output of 60 Mw.

- **Cooking gas:** No cooking gas entered Gaza this week. In fact, there were no transfers of any goods from Israel via Kerem Shalom crossing due to a one-week strike by Palestinian truckers on the Gaza side. The truckers reportedly called for a strike to protest the permanent closure of Karni crossing by the Israeli authorities last week. 729 tons of cooking gas reportedly entered Gaza last week, representing 41 percent of the 1,750 tons of cooking gas needed weekly. The overall cooking gas shortage has been a main concern for humanitarian agencies since November 2009. Shortages of cooking gas are hardest felt in the winter, when families rely on canisters of cooking gas to fuel space heaters during nightly electricity cuts. Cooking gas cannot safely be transported through the tunnels beneath the Gaza-Egypt border as it is highly combustible and requires a special pipeline to transport in bulk. The one tunnel equipped with a cooking gas pipeline was reportedly destroyed in an Israeli airstrike in December 2010.
- **Diesel/petrol:** No diesel or benzine was reported to have been delivered to the private sector this week or last week. A near total ban on fuel imports for public sale was put in place by the Government of Israel in October 2008. Around 600,000 litres of diesel and 200,000 litres of

petrol for public sale are reported to enter Gaza every day through tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border (OCHA, January 2011).

- **Exports:** No exports left Gaza this week, as Kerem Shalom remained closed for the import and export of all goods due to a strike held by Palestinian truckers on the Gaza side. Last week, there were 5 truckloads of flowers reported to have left Gaza, representing .01 percent of the pre-blockade weekly average of all exports leaving Gaza.* The limited exports are allowed as a result of an agreement between Israel and the Netherlands allowing limited exports of flowers and strawberries. The agreement resumed on 28 November 2010.

**Pre-blockade weekly average (490 truckloads) is calculated on the daily average of all truckloads that exited Gaza between January 2005 and mid June 2007, before Israel's imposition of the blockade.*

- **Truckloads of supplies:** No truckloads of supplies were reported to have entered Gaza through Kerem Shalom crossing this week due to a strike from Palestinian truckers protesting the permanent closure last week of Karni crossing by the Israeli authorities. Citing security concerns, Israeli authorities have ceased all export and import operations at Karni crossing, forcing the transfer of all goods through Kerem Shalom, Gaza's sole remaining open crossing point. While Karni crossing was equipped to handle 1,000 trucks per day, the Kerem Shalom crossing can only accommodate up to 250 trucks per day. UNRWA has referred to the Kerem Shalom crossing, located in the deep south of Gaza, as an inefficient bottleneck that adds 20 percent in transport and labor costs to the price of humanitarian goods. Kerem Shalom crossing is also not equipped to handle the bulk transfer of large quantities of wheat and animal feed, while Karni is.

Due to Kerem Shalom's closure this week, the Israeli authorities did allow a single opening of Sufa crossing point in order to transfer 4,000 MT of aggregates (gravel) needed for an UNRWA project. The single opening of Sufa marks the first time since 2008 that the Sufa crossing point was opened.

Last week, 1,063 truckloads of supplies were reportedly allowed entry into Gaza.

While imports remain limited, and raw materials severely restricted, exports remain banned almost entirely except for limited truckloads of strawberries and carnations exported to the Netherlands. As a result, the scale of economic activity remains heavily dependent on local demand in Gaza, which in turn is constrained by the low purchasing power of the population and the relatively small size of the local market. Until crossings are fully opened for export, the impact of the easing of the blockade on unemployment, poverty and food insecurity rates remains limited.

2. Humanitarian trucks (week):

Truck originator	Total for week 6 March – 12 March
UNRWA	4,000 MT of aggregates via Sufa crossing
Total trucks for the week	0
Percentage of pre-blockade average (first five months of 2007)	0 %

3. Fuel deliveries (week)

		Diesel	Petrol	Cooking Gas
6 March – 12 March		0	0	0
	Percentage of need *	0		0
Previous week		0	0	729 tons

* Fuel association 2006 estimates - ** Imports of diesel and petrol for the general public and public sector in Gaza were exceptionally authorized on 6 occasions since October 2008

Request* of Industrial Fuel to the Power Plant via Israel (week):

Industrial diesel from Israel	Previous week	6 March- 12 March
0	0	0
Percentage of amount required to operate at maximum supply capacity of 80 MW		0%

Estimates of fuel supplied to the power plant from the tunnels

Diesel from the tunnels beneath the Gaza-Egypt border	Previous week	6 March- 12 March
	2.1- 2.8 million litres**	2.1- 2.8 million litres**
Percentage of amount required to operate at maximum supply of 80 MW	60-80%	60-80%

*The power plant has not requested any industrial fuel to be transferred from Israel since January 5, 2010

**based on OCHA estimates of 300,000- 400,000 litres of diesel per day

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