

CHRONOLOGY

16 FEBRUARY–15 MAY 2011

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This section is part 110 of a chronology begun in JPS 13, no. 3 (Spring 1984). Chronology dates reflect Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). 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 opens, **Israel** maintains a tight siege of Gaza aimed at unseating the governing **Hamas** authority, in control since 6/2007. The **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** enforces a 300-m deep no-go zone inside the full length of the Gaza border and limits the Palestinian fishing zone off Gaza to 500–1,000 m off the immediate Bayt Lahiya and Rafah coasts, and 3 naut. mi. elsewhere—restrictions that place 17% of Gaza's total landmass, including 35% of its viable agricultural areas, and 85% of the maritime areas allocated to the Palestinians under the Oslo accords off limits to Palestinians. In the West Bank, governed by the **Fatah-led Palestinian Authority (PA)**, IDF operations and restrictions on movement and access continue but are relatively low. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm before dawn and in Birzeit late at night; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Nablus. (PCHR 2/17, 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

Regionwide antigovernment protests, which toppled the Egyptian and Tunisian regimes last quarter, continue (see Quarterly Update in this issue and in *JPS* 159). In **Bahrain**, demonstrators for the 1st time shift fr. calling for a transition to a constitutional monarchy to calling for the ouster of the monarchy altogether. **Syria** sees its 1st hint of unrest when more than 500 protesters in Damascus spontaneously rally to the defense of a motorist being beaten by a police officer and refuse to disperse, chanting "The Syrian people will not tolerate humiliation" for more than 3 hrs. until Interior M Saed Samour personally goes to the scene to punish

the policeman. Major clashes between govt. forces and protesters seeking regime change are reported in eastern **Libya**, while modest demonstrations in **Yemen** call for the president to step down. (NYT, WP, WT 2/17)

17 FEBRUARY

Overnight, **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fire on and shell a group of Palestinians nr. the n. Gaza border fence, killing **3 Palestinians**; Palestinians say the 3 were unarmed men attempting to sneak into Israel to find work, but the IDF claims they were armed men preparing to lay explosive devices along the border. In the West Bank, the **IDF** demolishes 3 wells and an agricultural storehouse nr. a settler-only bypass road nr. Hebron; seals and patrols in Jit nr. Qalqilya during the afternoon. In Ramallah, some **1,000 young Palestinians** hold a rally calling for national unity and reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas. (AFP, WP 2/18; PCHR 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

U.S. pres. Barack Obama phones **PA pres. Mahmud Abbas** to urge him to delay a 2/18 vote on a **UN Security Council (UNSC)** res. reaffirming that Israeli settlements are illegal and an obstacle to peace or agree to a compromise UNSC presidential statement (less than a res.) criticizing settlements and urging the sides to resume negotiations. Abbas agrees to convene an emergency meeting of the **PLO Exec. Comm. (PLOEC)** and **Fatah Central Comm. (FCC)** to consider the matter. (HA 2/17; HA, MNA, NYT 2/18) (see Quarterly Update for details)

After violence overnight (see 2/16), **Bahrain's** govt. declares martial law,

deploying the military to the streets and warning of a “sectarian abyss”; the main Shi’i political party withdraws fr. parliament, protesting the acts of the minority Sunni leadership; and opposition groups call for massive demonstrations after Friday prayers on 2/18. (NYT, WP, WT 2/18)

In **Libya**, protesters in 5 main cities observe a “Day of Rage” against Qaddafi, clashing with govt. forces, leaving at least 12 protesters dead and 10s wounded; the govt. cuts phone and Internet service and bars journalists to prevent coverage. Serious clashes in and around Benghazi continue on 2/18. (NYT, WP, WT 2/18; NYT, WP 2/19)

18 FEBRUARY

Gaza’s **Rafah crossing** opens for the 1st time since 1/29/11 to allow Palestinians trapped in Egypt to enter Gaza. In the West Bank, the **IDF** enters Bayt Umar village nr. Hebron in the afternoon, searching a house and arresting a 10-yr.-old Palestinian for stone-throwing; patrols in 4 villages nr. Qalqilya, 2 nr. Ramallah, and 1 nr. Tulkarm during the afternoon and evening. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil’in, Ni’lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam nr. Ramallah, and in Bayt Umar nr. Hebron. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 8 Palestinians (including 3 children); 15 Palestinians (including 9 children) and 2 international activists are arrested. (Oxfam International 2/20; PCHR 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

Before the **UNSC** vote reaffirming the illegality of Jewish settlements, **U.S. Secy. of State Hillary Clinton** phones **Abbas** to warn him that that U.S. aid could be cut if the vote goes ahead. In Ramallah, the **PLOEC** and **FCC** opt to go ahead with the vote saying, “The Palestinian leadership will reject American demands even if our decision leads to a diplomatic crisis with the Americans. We have nothing to lose.” The **U.S.** vetoes the res. (HA, REU 2/18; HA, WP 2/19; HA 2/20; WJW 2/24; JPI 3/4) (see Quarterly Update)

In **Bahrain**, security forces violently disperse a massive protest in Manama, wounding 10s. From this point,

large antigovernment protests (1,000s to 10,000s) become nr. daily events. (NYT, WP 2/19; NYT 2/21)

19 FEBRUARY

Israeli naval vessels intercept a Palestinian fishing boat off the n. Gaza coast, escort it to Ashdod, confiscate the boat, and release the fishermen. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 4 villages nr. Jericho, Qalqilya, Salfit, and Tulkarm in the afternoon, and 1 village nr. Tulkarm late at night. From Ramallah, **FCC mbr. Tawfik Tirawi** calls for a “day of rage” against the 2/18 U.S. veto; protests denouncing the U.S. are held in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, and Tulkarm. For safety, the **U.S. consulate in East Jerusalem** restricts staff movement for 3 days. (HA, Oxfam International, WP 2/20; PCHR 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

In **Libya**, security forces in Benghazi open fire on some 20,000 mourners leaving funerals of antigovernment protesters killed in recent clashes, leaving at least 84 dead and scores injured and bringing the death toll in 3 days of clashes to as many as 200 dead and nearly 850 wounded in Benghazi alone. British embassy officials say they have received reports of govt. forces using heavy weapons and snipers against protesters. From this point, antigovernment demonstrations and fierce military repression escalate sharply, and opposition groups take up arms. (NYT, WP 2/20; NYT, WP, WT 2/21)

20 FEBRUARY

Saying the Fatah-Hamas split has “gone on too long and should not continue,” **PA PM Salam Fayyad** offers to form an interim national unity govt. with Hamas and not to interfere with Hamas’s rule in Gaza in the run-up to elections, if it agrees to take part in presidential and legislative elections in 9/2011. Elements within **Fatah** denounce the move. **Hamas** responds with skepticism. (AP, HA 2/21) (see Quarterly Update for details)

In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts daytime patrols in and around Jenin and in villages nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm; conducts evening and late-night patrols nr. Qalqilya and Salfit. **Jewish settlers** uproot 270 olive trees fr. 2 Palestinian plots nr. Nablus.

In Ramallah, some **3,000 Palestinians** organized by **Fatah** protest the 2/18 U.S. veto, waving banners and shouting slogans against the Obama administration. (MNA, WP 2/21; PCHR 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

21 FEBRUARY

In the West Bank, the **IDF** tears down Palestinian's tents in Khirbat Tana, where the IDF demolished homes and other structures on 2/9/11 (see Quarterly Update and Settlement Monitor in *JPS* 159); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches, and patrols in 6 villages nr. Qalqilya, as well as nr. Bethlehem and Jenin. **More than 80 Palestinian nonprofit organizations** from the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip issued a statement calling on Fatah and Hamas to take practical steps toward ending their rift. (MNA 5/23; PCHR 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

The **Knesset** passes the **Foreign Govt. NGO Funding Transparency Law** tightening requirements on groups that accept foreign funding, widely seen as an effort to undermine left-wing Israeli organizations. (MNA 2/23; WJW 2/24) (see Quarterly Update)

After a week of violent clashes, the **Libyan** gov't. has lost control of most of the eastern part of the country to armed anti-government protesters. Qaddafi responds with overwhelming force, dispatching warplanes, helicopters, special forces, and heavily armed mercenaries (paid and flown in to Tripoli by the planeload in recent days to shore up the regime) to hunt down demonstrators. Fighting has also reached Tripoli, where there are reports of strafing fr. the air, combat in the streets, burning buildings, and looters ransacking police stations. Dozens of senior Libyan officials and diplomats resign in outrage, and widespread defections by the military nationwide are reported. (WP, WT 2/21; NYT, WP, WT 2/22)

22 FEBRUARY

In the morning, the **IDF** makes 2 brief incursions into Gaza to level land along the border fence in s. Gaza to clear lines of sight. **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at Palestinians scavenging for construction materials in the fmr. settlement sites, wounding 1. In the West

Bank, the **IDF** demolishes 8 tents (home to 40 Bedouin) and 2 wells nr. Suissa settlement outside Hebron; sends some 40 undercover troops into Salim nr. Nablus, where they raid an apartment building and arrest a wanted Palestinian; patrols in and around Tulkarm, in Qalqilya, and in villages nr. Jenin in the morning, summoning 4 Palestinians to appear for questioning; conducts late-night patrols in al-Bireh, Qalqilya, and 2 village nr. Ramallah and Tulkarm. **Jewish settlers** fr. Bat Ayin nr. Hebron uproot at least 250 olive trees in nearby Jab'a village. (WT 2/23; PCHR 2/24; OCHA 2/25)

After a televised speech in which **Libya's** Col. Qaddafi vows to hunt down and kill protesters "house by house," 1,000s of his supporters take to the streets of Tripoli brandishing machetes and join trucks heading to outlying areas to conduct neighborhood searches. With most residents bunkered in their homes and media outlets cut off, the extent of the violence in the Tripoli area is unclear. Rights groups estimate that 519 Libyans have been killed, 3,980 have been wounded, and at least 1,500 have gone missing since violence erupted a wk. ago. Hereafter, fighting quickly devolves into bitter civil war. (NYT, WP, WT 2/23; NYT, WP, WT 2/2; NYT, WP, WT 2/25; NYT, WP, WT 2/26-3/1)

In **Bahrain**, more than 100,000 protesters (a fifth of the population, mostly Shi'a) turn out for the largest prodemocracy rally to date in Pearl Square calling for the gov't. and the monarchy to step down. (NYT, WP, WT 2/23)

23 FEBRUARY

Fayyad reiterates his 2/20 national unity offer, saying the PA would forgo further U.S. aid for the sake of national unity if the U.S. went through with threats to suspend aid to the PA if Hamas joined the gov't. **Abbas** and **senior Hamas officials** agree to discuss the idea. (JPI 3/11) (see Quarterly Update)

At **Abbas's** request, **Israel** agrees to allow some 300 Palestinians fleeing Libya to enter the West Bank. In Gaza, **Islamic Jihad** and **Hamas mbrs.** detonate an explosive device by the border fence as an IDF patrol passes on the Israeli side, then fire 3 **mortars** at the troops, causing no injuries. IDF soldiers retaliate with tank

and gunfire, killing **1 armed Palestinian** and wounding 6 armed Palestinians and at least 3 bystanders (including 2 children). Late at night, the **IDF** makes **5 air strikes** on buildings in central and southern Gaza, causing no injuries; in the 1 instance in which a building is occupied, Israeli intelligence units phone to warn the occupants to leave. An **11-yr.-old Palestinian girl** is killed and 4 family mbrs. are wounded when explosives accidentally detonate in their Gaza home. The **IDF** makes a brief incursion into c. Gaza to level land along the border fence to clear lines of sight. **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at Palestinian scavenging for construction materials in the fmr. settlement sites, wounding 2 Palestinian. Late in the evening, **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 'Aqabat Jabir refugee camp (r.c.) in the morning, photographing historic sites; conducts late-night patrols in Birzeit and 1 village nr. Tulkarm; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches, and patrols in and around Jenin r.c. (DPA, HA, IsRN, JP, NYT, REU, WAFA 2/23; PCHR, WP 2/24; PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4)

24 FEBRUARY

In response to the cross-border exchange on 2/23, **Palestinians** fire 3 manufactured **Grad rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, striking Beersheba for the 1st time since Operation Cast Lead (OCL; 12/27/08–1/18/09), damaging a house but causing no injuries. The **IDF** retaliates with multiple **air strikes** on Hamas and Islamic Jihad targets, killing **2 Hamas mbrs.** in Rafah and wounding 3 Islamic Jihad mbrs. elsewhere. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Qalqilya and 4 nearby villages, in Jericho and 1 nearby village, as well as in 2 villages nr. Salfit and Tulkarm. In Ramallah, up to **1,500 Palestinians** rally in support of national unity and an end to the Hamas-Fatah divide, which they say “opens the door for the occupiers to do whatever they want”; though representing Fatah, Hamas, and leftist factions, they show only the Palestinian flag—a rare gesture in recent years. **Hamas authorities** in Gaza ban a similar planned rally. (HA, JP, MNA 2/24; WP 2/25; PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4)

25 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** makes a major air strike on Bureij r.c. in Gaza, destroying 1 building and damaging 8 nearby houses and a poultry farm, injuring 1 child. The **IDF** also makes 4 air strikes on an Islamic Jihad training site nr. Khan Yunis, causing no injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in a village nr. Tulkarm. In the West Bank, **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam nr. Ramallah, and nr. Beit Romano settlement in Hebron. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 7 Palestinians (including 1 child); 3 international activists and 1 Israeli journalist are arrested. **Fatah** cancels its call for a “day of rage” against the 2/18 U.S. veto, fearing that turnout would reflect support for Hamas (see 2/19). (PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4)

26 FEBRUARY

Palestinians fire a **mortar** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** retaliates with at least **5 air strikes** on Hamas and Islamic Jihad targets in Khan Yunis and Rafah, wounding 4 Palestinian civilians (including a baby); in 1 instance, Israeli intelligence units phone the targeted site to warn residents to evacuate, calling a 2d time before the strike to make sure the house is clear (no one is injured in that strike). **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at Palestinians scavenging for construction materials in the fmr. settlement sites, wounding 1 Palestinian. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Qalqilya and 4 surrounding villages; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Nabi Salih. (JP 2/26; AFP, IsRN 2/27; WP 2/28; PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4)

With daily antigovernment protests continuing, the head of **Bahrain's** banned al-Haq party, seen as the hard-line leader of Bahrain's oppressed Shi'i majority, returns fr. exile and is greeted by throngs of supporters, in what is seen as an escalation against the regime. (WP 2/28)

27 FEBRUARY

Palestinians fire 1 homemade **Qasam rocket** and 1 **mortar** fr. Gaza into

Israel, causing no damage or injuries. A mysterious explosion s. of Gaza City kills **1 Islamic Jihad mbr.**, wounds 2. Islamic Jihad accuses Israel of staging an air strike, but the IDF denies an attack. A smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border collapses, injuring 3 Palestinians. In the West Bank, the **IDF** levels 5 dunams (d.; 4 d. = 1 acre) of agricultural land nr. Salfit; sets up a checkpoint at the entrance to Araqa village nr. Jenin, searching vehicles and summoning 4 Palestinians for questioning; patrols in 4 villages nr. Tulkarm and 1 nr. Ramallah. (AFP, IsRN 2/27; WP 2/28; PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4)

A govt.-appointed **Israeli panel** charged in 2008 with investigating the 7/22/02 assassination of **Hamas military leader Salih Shihada** in a massive air strike on a residential area of Gaza City that killed 19 bystanders and wounded some 140 (mostly women and children) concludes that the operation was flawed by putting too much emphasis on killing Shihada and not enough on the "risk of harm to uninvolved civilians," but "did not stem from disregard or indifference to human lives." (NYT 2/28)

28 FEBRUARY

Israeli officials announce that **PM Benjamin Netanyahu**, in consultation with **DM Ehud Barak** and **Israel's atty. gen. Yehuda Weinstein**, have asked **Israel's High Court** to respond to 15 petitions filed by Peace Now demanding the immediate removal of Israel's unauthorized settlement outposts by ordering the dismantling of outposts built on privately owned Palestinian land before the end of 2011 (with the exception of a house owned by a fallen IDF officer) but authorizing the legalization of those built on state land. This would mean that 6 outposts would be removed, of which 5 are inhabited (47 homes), while more than 100 others would be legalized. In the West Bank, the **IDF** demolishes 3 structures at the Havat Gilad unauthorized settlement outpost; **Jewish settlers** stone Israeli border police overseeing the demolition, who respond with tear gas and rubber bullets, leaving 15 persons lightly injured and 17 settlers under arrest. Afterward, **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar settlement nr. Nablus exact their "price-tag doctrine" attack in nearby Hawara village, fire-bombing a house, injuring

2 children, and damaging other property. Separately, **Jewish settlers** fr. Halmish nr. Ramallah block a road leading to Nabi Salih and stone passing Palestinian vehicles; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. Later, **Jewish settlers** fr. Gilad occupy a plot of Palestinian land nr. Qalqilya, setting up tents and mobile homes, but are evacuated by the IDF later in the day. The **IDF** also patrols in 4 villages nr. Hebron, Jenin, and Qalqilya; enters Kafr Laqif village nr. Qalqilya and fires stun grenades, claiming local youths stoned passing Jewish settler vehicles; no injuries are reported. In Gaza, the **IDF** shells the abandoned Dahaniyya airport site in s. Gaza, wounding 1 Hamas mbr. and destroying a nearby vacant home. **IDF troops** on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at Palestinians scavenging for construction materials in the fmr. settlement sites, killing **1 Palestinian**. **IDF** troops on the c. Gaza border shell open areas e. of Jabaliya, forcing farmers in the area to leave their plots but causing no injuries. **Hamas authorities** arrest 4 of 20 Palestinians responding to an online call by Palestinian student groups to rally in Gaza City for national unity. (MNA 2/28; HA 3/1; JP, WT 3/2; PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4; AFP 3/7; JTA 3/8; UNIS 3/22)

1 MARCH

IDF troops on the c. Gaza border fire on armed Palestinians operating e. of Dayr al-Balah, wounding 1. The **IDF** makes a day-long incursion into Khuza'a village in s. Gaza to level lands and clear lines of sight. **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the s. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts morning arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin; raids Hebron in the evening to arrest local human rights activists Issa 'Amru on charges of incitement and affiliation with an illegal organization (the Youth Commission against Settlement in Hebron); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron and late-night patrols in villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah. In reaction to the IDF's removal of 3 structures at Havat Gilad outpost on 2/28, **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar implement their "price-tag doctrine" of retaliating against Palestinians for any action to curb settlers, throwing a Molotov cocktail at a Palestinian home and smashing the windows of 7 Palestinian cars nr.

Nablus. (WT 3/2; PCHR 3/3; OCHA 3/4; JWJW 3/10)

By this date, rebel forces in **Libya** have set up a provisional govt. in Benghazi and today call for international intervention (imposition of a no-fly zone, air strikes, supply of weapons but not ground forces) to topple Qaddafi. Analysts say the country looks poised for a "long and bloody stalemate." Fierce fighting continues nationwide and more than 100,000 Libyans and foreigners have fled the country. The international community is meeting intensively to discuss options. (NYT, WP, WT 3/2; WP 3/3; NYT, WP, WT 3/4-8; NYT 3/9; WP, WT 3/11; NYT, WP 3/12)

2 MARCH

An anonymous **Israeli** official says that Israel has been discussing with the **U.S.** a unilateral "phased approach to reaching a final status accord" in absence of negotiations with the Palestinians. **PLOEC mbr. Saleh Rifaat** warns that the PLO will refuse any interim or partial solution and any call for creating a Palestinian state with temporary or undefined borders. (REU 3/2; NYT 3/3)

Israel's Jerusalem municipal authority approves construction of 14 Jewish settlement housing units in Ras al-Amud in East Jerusalem. In Gaza, **Israel permanently closes the Qarni crossing**, shifting all import and export of goods to Kerem Shalom. It also allows Gazans to export tomatoes for the 1st time since 6/2007. Meanwhile, **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border twice fire on Palestinian farmers who stray nr. the border fence, forcing them to leave. In the West Bank, the **IDF** demolishes 20 structures in Khirbat Tana, marking the 6th major demolition of the village (see Quarterly Update for details); patrols and sets up checkpoints in Tulkarm town and r.c. in the morning; bulldozes a well nr. a settler-only bypass road outside Hebron; conducts late-night patrols in al-Til village nr. Tulkarm and late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron. (AFP, AP, MNA 3/2; NYT, PCHR, WP 3/3; JP 3/9; PCHR 3/10; OCHA 3/18)

In **Yemen**, antigovernment protests have steadily picked up since 2/16, particularly in Sana'a and Taiz. Some scuffles between protesters and govt. supporters (thought to be plain-clothed security

forces) have been reported, but protests are still largely nonviolent. (Amnesty International reports at least 27 protesters killed to date.) By this time, 10 MPs fr. **Pres. Ali Abdullah Saleh's** ruling party have resigned in solidarity with protesters, and medical unions, entire tribes and villages, and lawyers' and labor groups have joined demonstrations. Today, **opposition figures, tribal leaders, and influential clerics** present Saleh with a plan for his peaceful transition fr. power and meet with him late into the night to discuss it, but there is no immediate deal. Meanwhile, protests grow in size to 10,000s of participants. (NYT, WP 3/3; see also NYT, WP, WT 2/23-24 NYT 2/28; WP 3/1; NYT, WP, WT, 3/2)

3 MARCH

Overnight, the **Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)** fires a **manufactured C5K (S-5) rocket** fr. Gaza toward an IDF base inside Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** rearrests **Hamas-affiliated Palestinian Council (PC) mbr. Azzam Salhab**; conducts an unusually high number of patrols in and around Tulkarm, in al-Bireh, and in villages nr. Jenin, Qalqilya, Ramallah, and Salfit in the morning; conducts more patrols in villages nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm in the evening and inside Jericho late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Halamish settlement nr. Ramallah block the road leading to nearby Nabi Salih village, stone passing Palestinian vehicles. **Hamas-affiliated police** force a bank to cash some \$500,000 in stolen checks drawn against the **Palestine Investment Fund (PIF)** account, even though the account does not have enough money in it. **Hamas's Interior Min.** confirms the incident, saying police were ordered to seize the money after PIF governors transferred funds out of Gaza to accounts in the West Bank (see Quarterly Update for details). The **Palestine Monetary Authority**, which regulates Palestinian banks, closes all Gaza branches until 3/6 in protest. (AP, MNA 3/3; PCHR 3/10; OCHA 3/18)

In **Bahrain**, Shi'i and Sunni groups clash in the town of Hamad in the 1st serious display of sectarian violence. Frequent antigovernment protests continue thereafter, taking on an increasingly sectarian tone. (NYT 3/4, 3/5; WP 3/6; NYT, WP,

WT 3/7; WP 3/10; NYT, WP 3/12; NYT, WP 3/13; NYT, WP, WT 3/14)

4 MARCH

Palestinians fire 2 Qassam rockets fr. Gaza toward Israel (1 lands inside Gaza), causing no damage or injuries. Late at night, an **IDF** drone fires 2 missiles into the market area of Nussayrat r.c., destroying a parked car and damaging 4 businesses and 12 apartments, causing no serious injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in al-Bireh, 2 villages nr. Jericho, 2 nr. Ramallah, and 1 nr. Tulkarm. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 5 Palestinians (including 2 children). **Jewish settlers** fr. Gush Etzion nr. Bethlehem dump raw sewage and construction waste onto more than 20 d. of Palestinian agricultural land in nearby Artas village that the **IDF** has declared a closed military zone; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. Nr. Jenin, 5 **Jewish settlers** on motor-cycles enter 2 Palestinian villages and race around the streets to intimidate residents. **Jewish settlers** fr. Emanuel settlement nr. Qalqilya stone passing Palestinian vehicles. (IsRN 3/6; PCHR 3/10; OCHA 3/18)

5 MARCH

Palestinians fire a rocket fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Israel** responds with at least 3 **air strikes** on Hamas training sites in Dayr al-Balah, Gaza City, and Khan Yunis, causing collateral damage to 6 homes but no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts patrols in Jericho and 3 villages nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Nabi Salih, arresting an organizer of the weekly demonstrations against the separation wall. **Palestinians and international activists** demonstrate against construction of settlements and the separation wall at the Qalandia crossing and in Bayt Umar. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters,

injuring 4 Palestinians (including 2 journalists) and 1 international activist. **Jewish settlers** fr. Taffuh settlement s. of Nablus attempt to seize Palestinian agricultural lands e. of Salfit but are removed by the **IDF**. **Jewish settlers** fr. Karnei Shomron settlement nr. Qalqilya stone Palestinian vehicles. (AFP 3/5; IsRN 3/6; PCHR 3/10; OCHA 3/18)

6 MARCH

In Jerusalem, 2 Israeli municipal workers are injured (1 seriously, 1 lightly) when they accidentally trigger a **pipe bomb** hidden in a trash can; Palestinians are suspected, but no one takes responsibility. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 4 villages nr. Salfit and Tulkarm. For a 2d day, **Jewish settlers** fr. Karnei Shomron settlement nr. Qalqilya stone Palestinian vehicles. (JP 3/7; PCHR 3/10; OCHA 3/18)

7 MARCH

Britain upgrades the status of Palestinian representation in London to a mission. (AP 3/7; JTA 3/8)

Israeli naval vessels fire on fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them back to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts daytime patrols in 4 villages nr. Jenin and 1 nr. Tulkarm; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Tulkarm and nr. Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. Yish Ad settlement outpost nr. Nablus attempt to uproot Palestinian olive trees in nearby Qusra village, sparking a clash in which at least 7 stone-throwing Palestinians (including 2 children) are wounded by settler and **IDF** gunfire and 3 are beaten. Israel's *Yedi'ot Abaronot* reports that the 3 structures at Havat Gilad outpost demolished on 2/28 have been rebuilt, along with 4 new structures. (REU, YA 3/7; NYT 3/8; PCHR 3/10; OCHA 3/18)

8 MARCH

Israeli border police say they arrested a Palestinian trying to cross the Tapuach Junction checkpoint s. of Nablus carrying 5 pipe bombs, 3 Molotov cocktails, and a knife. The **IDF** patrols in Ti'nnik village late in the evening, stopping and searching cars but making no arrests. (PCHR 3/10; JPI, OCHA 3/18)

9 MARCH

Denmark upgrades the status of the Palestinian delegation in Copenhagen to a mission. (AFP 3/9)

Palestinians in Gaza fire a Qassam rocket fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** reenters Ti'nnik village (see 3/8) in the morning, stopping and searching cars but making no arrests; demolishes an agricultural storehouse in Bayt Umar, saying it was too nr. a Jewish settlement; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Silwan in East Jerusalem. (JP 3/9; PCHR 3/10, 3/17; OCHA 3/18)

10 MARCH

The family of a **Palestinian engineer fr. Gaza, Dirar Abu Sisi**, who disappeared on 2/19/2011 in the Ukraine claim that **Mossad** agents kidnapped him and brought him back to Israel where he is being detained. Israel confirms only that Abu Sisi has been jailed in Ashkelon since 2/19 (see Quarterly Update for details). In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in al-Bireh, Birzeit, and Jericho, and in 4 villages nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah; raids and searches a construction company nr. Qalqilya, arresting 2 teenagers for stone throwing. (NYT 3/11; WP 3/12; PCHR 3/17; OCHA 3/18)

11 MARCH

In the West Bank, **5 Jewish settlers** (2 parents and 3 children) are found stabbed to death in their home in the unauthorized settlement outpost of Itamar nr. Nablus; the **IDF** sweeps nearby Palestinian villages for the assailants. The **IDF** patrols in Kafr Sur nr. Tulkarm; searches open areas southeast of Jenin, firing flares and stun grenades but making no arrests. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, causing no serious injuries; 2 international activists are arrested. (HA, MA, NYT, WP, WT, YA 3/12; IFM, JTA 3/13; HA, YA 3/14; PCHR 3/17; OCHA 3/18)

12 MARCH

In the West Bank, the **IDF** raids and searches Palestinian villages around Itamar settlement, particularly in Awarta village, in search for the killers of 5 settlers found murdered on 3/11, detaining at least 20 young men for questioning. At least 27 attacks on Palestinians and their property by **armed Jewish settlers** retaliating for the Itamar murders are reported in Nablus (10), Hebron (9), Qalqilya (6), and Ramallah (2). Incidents involved: rampaging through Palestinian areas (6 cases, including an attempt to kidnap 2 children); vandalizing homes, businesses, and community buildings (11, including an attempt to set fire to a mosque); stoning and vandalizing cars (10); and cutting down olive trees (1). Meanwhile, a statement released to the press claims responsibility in the name of the **al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade of Imad Mughniyah**; **AMB officials** deny any connection to the purported offshoot group. Netanyahu makes a televised address calling on settlers not to take matters into their own hands and to allow the IDF to search for the assailants, also calling on the PA to halt the incitement that encourages such attacks. **Abbas** issues a statement denouncing the killings. The **IDF** also conducts late-night patrols in Qalqilya and 3 nearby villages. (HA, JP 3/12; *al-Hayat*, JP, JTA, NYT, WP 3/13; PCHR 3/17; OCHA 3/18)

The **Arab League** calls on the UN to impose a no-fly zone over **Libya** and recognizes the rebels' provisional govt., steps that **NATO** had requested as a precondition for Western intervention in Libya, where extremely heavy fighting continues. (NYT, WP, WT 3/13)

After **Yemen's** opposition rejected (3/10) as insufficient a proposal by Pres. **Saleh** to discuss constitutional reform and again demanded he immediately step down, Saleh deploys troops to crush growing antigovernment protests, authorizing them to use water cannons, tear gas, live ammunition, and sniper fire. Over the next few days, injuries quickly rise into the 100s but demonstrations only grow, now involving 10,000s of protesters. (NYT, WP 3/13; WT 3/14; NYT 3/15, 3/16; NYT, WP, WT 3/17; WP 3/18; see also NYT, WP, WT 3/11)

13 MARCH

The **Israeli** govt. approves construction of up to **500 West Bank settlement housing units** in Ariel, Gush Etzion, Kiryat Sefer, Ma'ale Adumim, Mod'in Ilit (large settlements Israel expects to keep under final status) in retaliation for the killing of 5 settlers on 3/11 by suspected Palestinians, with PM **Netanyahu** telling relatives of the victims: "They murder and we build." The U.S. expresses "deep concern," saying "continued Israeli settlements are illegitimate and run counter to efforts to resume direct negotiations." Meanwhile, the **IDF** continues searches in Awarta, raiding and searching several homes and turning a few into observation posts. At least 16 attacks on Palestinians and their property by **armed Jewish settlers** exacting revenge for the Itamar murders are reported in Qalqilya (10), Salfit (3), Nablus (2), and Ramallah (1). Incidents involved: setting up a new outpost on Palestinian land (1); rampaging through Palestinian areas (9); attacking Palestinian homes (4, including firing on Palestinian homes, shooting fireworks at Palestinian homes, and attempting to break into houses); and stoning and vandalizing cars (8). The **IDF** also patrols in Dayr Istya nr. Salfit, photographing several old buildings; raids 'Anin village nr. Jenin, searching several stores and rounding up patrons for questioning, but making no arrests; patrols in Tulkarm and 3 villages nr. Qalqilya in the afternoon; conducts late-night patrols, arrest raids, house searches in 3 villages nr. Salfit and 1 nr. Ramallah. (WP, WT 3/14; PCHR, WJW 3/17; OCHA 3/18; JPI 3/24)

14 MARCH

The **Palestinian and Israeli media** report rumors fr. anonymous Awarta residents that a Thai worker for the settler family murdered in Itamar on 3/11 had complained that the family owed him NIS 10,000 in wages and had threatened to kill the family; some sources (e.g., MNA 3/14) say the IDF rounded up all foreign workers in the settlement for questioning immediately after discovering the murders. Israeli authorities do not comment. Meanwhile, after Netanyahu criticizes the PA's "weak" denunciation of the attack, **Abbas** makes another statement calling the killing

"inhuman and immoral" and "a despicable act." The **IDF** imposes a curfew on Awarta and orders all men age 15–40 to turn themselves in for questioning; of 300 who surrender, 32 are arrested. **Jewish settlers** mass at the entrance to Nabi Salih village and throw stones at Palestinian cars; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. The **IDF** also conducts synchronized morning patrols in 5 villages n. and e. of Jenin; conducts evening and late-night patrols Jalazun r.c. and 2 villages nr. Ramallah, in al-Bireh, and 1 village nr. Tulkarm; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in another village nr. Ramallah. A day ahead of national unity demonstrations called for online, at least **3,000 young Palestinians** rally in Gaza City calling for an end to divisions between Hamas and Fatah. (AFP, JP, MNA 3/14; NYT, WP 3/15; PCHR 3/17; OCHA 3/18)

After secretly securing approval of the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** on 3/13, **Saudi Arabia** and the **UAE** send some 2,000 troops, supported by a medical contingent fr. **Kuwait**, into **Bahrain** to shore up the govt. there. Saudi Arabia sought to intervene, fearing that Shi'i protests in Bahrain could encourage Saudi Arabia's own Shi'i population in the oil-rich Eastern Province to rebel. The move marks the 1st time that the GCC council has mobilized a military force in response to domestic unrest and only the 2d time that it has mobilized a joint force (the 1st time was in defense of Kuwait when Iraq invaded in the 1990s). (AP, REU 3/14; NYT, WP, WT 3/15)

15 MARCH

Uruguay recognizes an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 lines. (XIN 3/16)

Egypt completes repairs to its natural gas pipeline damaged during the 2/2011 Egyptian unrest (see Quarterly Update in *JPS* 159) and resumes sending natural gas to **Israel**. The **Israeli navy** detains a ship, the **German-owned and Libe-rian flagged** *Victoria*, en route fr. Syria to Egypt, 200 mi. off the Israeli coast that Israel claims was attempting to deliver arms to Gaza fr. Iran, taking it to Ashdod for further inspection; Israeli authorities said the ship carried 4 crates holding some 70,000 rounds of ammunition for Kalashnikov rifles, 1,000s of mortars, 6 Chinese C-704

antiship missiles, and 2 radar systems. **Iran** denies smuggling arms. The **IDF** makes a brief incursion into c. Gaza to level lands e. of al-Bureij r.c. to clear lines of sight. On the Rafah border, **2 Palestinians** are killed, **4** are injured in an explosion in a smuggling tunnel. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports that another **4 Palestinians** have been killed in tunnel accidents since 3/2. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in Jenin and surrounding villages; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron. **Jewish settlers** attempt to enter Kafr Laqif village nr. Qalqilya but are prevented by the **IDF** and stone nearby Palestinian homes instead. In separate instances, **Jewish settlers** fr. Karnei Shomron and Keddumim settlements, both nr. Nablus, stone passing Palestinian vehicles. Across the West Bank and Gaza, **1,000s of Palestinians** turn out for candlelight vigils calling for national reconciliation. **Hamas security forces** violently break up the biggest rally (as many as 100,000) in Gaza City, injuring 5 protesters. In the West Bank, **PA security forces (PASF)** fire tear gas at some 8,000 protesters in Ramallah, briefly dispersing them and injuring 20; some protesters return, vowing to stay in Ramallah's Manara Square until the West Bank and Gaza are reunited (they stay until 4/17). Meanwhile, **Hamas's acting PM in Gaza Ismail Haniyeh** invites **Abbas** to Gaza for reconciliation talks; **Abbas** responds favorably (see Quarterly Update). Inside Israel, 2 cars owned by Israeli Palestinian students at **Safad Academic College** were torched during a campus event to promote Arab-Jewish dialogue. Anti-Arab graffiti also was sprayed on the wall of the college, saying: "Arabs get out," "Death to Arabs," and "Kahane was right." (General Delegation of the PLO to the United States letter, IFM, National Public Radio 3/15; JAZ, JP, JTA, MNA, NYT, WP, WT 3/16; PCHR 3/17; OCHA 3/18; JPI 4/1)

In **Bahrain**, protesters ramp up demonstrations in response to Saudi Arabia's incursion, while the king imposes a 3-mo. state of emergency, deploys the military, and closes schools and govt. offices. (NYT 3/16)

16 MARCH

Palestinians fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Israel** retaliates with **3 air strikes** on a

Hamas security compound in Gaza, killing **2 Hamas mbrs.** guarding the site, wounding 2 bystanders. **Israeli naval forces** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, wounding 1 fisherman. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm in the morning, randomly stopping Palestinians to check their IDs; storms an al-Wataniya cell phone transmission tower nr. Jenin, searching the site and surrounding area for 2 hrs.; uproots 400 d. of Palestinian olive trees nr. Nablus, hauling them away; patrols in Jiftlik village nr. Jenin and nearby Aqabat Jabir and 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c. in the evening; conducts late-night patrols and arrest raids in Birzeit and nr. Salfit. **Hamas authorities** violently disperse a demonstration by students at al-Quds Open University calling for national reconciliation, killing **1 Palestinian student**. (AFP, JP, MNA, WAFA 3/16; NYT, PCHR, WP 3/17; PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

In **Syria**, where there have been a handful of small antigovernment actions since 2/16, 200 protesters (students, activists, families of prisoners) gather outside the Interior Min. to demand the release of political prisoners. Security forces storm the gathering, arresting 36, including a 10-yr.-old boy. Meanwhile, Syrian activists have organized a Facebook fan page online (with more than 47,000 fans) called "The Syrian Revolution 2011," calling for massive protests after Friday prayers on 3/18. (NYT 3/17)

In **Bahrain**, govt. soldiers firing tear gas and rubber bullets and backed by tanks and helicopters clear Manama's Pearl Square of protesters and remove a tent city that has been in place for weeks; 3 protesters and 2 security officers are killed. (NYT, WP, WT 3/17)

17 MARCH

Israeli warplanes overfly s. Gaza, dropping leaflets warning Palestinians not to enter the 300-m no-go zone along the border fence. **Israel** seals the West Bank until 3/21 for the Purim holiday. During the day, the **IDF** patrols in al-Bireh, Ramallah, Tulkarm (randomly stopping and searching vehicles), 4 villages nr. Qalqilya (searching several shops in 1 village but making no arrests), and 3 others nr. Jenin (ordering 4 Palestinians to appear for questioning). Late at night, the **IDF** patrols in Jericho and conducts arrest raids, house

searches nr. Jenin. **Jewish settlers** beat a Palestinian laborer working inside Shilo settlement; a settlement security guard intervenes, calling Israel border police who transport the Palestinian to a Ramallah hospital. **Jewish settlers** burn the cars of 2 Palestinian laborers working in Keddumim settlement nr. Qalqilya. Later, Keddumim settlers stone Palestinian cars on a nearby road; the **IDF** intervenes to disperse them. **Jewish settlers** fr. Karnei Shomron settlement nr. Qalqilya stone passing Palestinian vehicles. In Gaza, **Hamis-affiliated police** break up 40 protesters rallying in Gaza City calling for national reconciliation, arresting 1 protester and 2 Palestinian cameramen covering the event. (AFP, NYT 3/18; PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

The UNSC authorizes (10-0, with Brazil, China, Germany, India, and Russia abstaining) “all necessary measures” short of foreign occupation to protect civilians in **Libya**, including calling for an immediate halt to the heavy fighting ongoing nationwide, imposition of a no-fly zone, and interdiction of ships heading to support Qaddafi’s forces. (NYT, WP, WT 3/18)

18 MARCH

Palestinians in Gaza fire an **antitank missile** at an **IDF** patrol inside Israel, causing no damage or injuries. During the day, **Palestinians** also fire 10 **mortars** toward Israel in 2 barrages, causing no damage or injuries; some of the mortars land inside Gaza. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized morning patrols in Tulkarm and several nearby villages; patrols in al-Bireh and neighboring al-Am’ari r.c., and in 3 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil’in, Ni’lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 4 Palestinians, including 2 children. A **Jewish settler** deliberately attempts to run down a Palestinian nr. the Hawara checkpoint nr. Nablus, moderately injuring him; the **IDF** does not intervene. **Jewish settlers** fr. Taffuh settlement attempt to seize a plot of nearby Palestinian agricultural land but are sent away by the **IDF**. **Jewish settlers** close Jit intersection nr. Qalqilya

with burning tires, blocking the main Qalqilya-Nablus road. In separate incidents, **Jewish settlers** fr. Keddumim and Karnei Shomron settlements stone Palestinian vehicles nr. Qalqilya. In East Jerusalem, **Palestinians** clash with Israeli border police in Silwan, leaving at least 1 Israeli officer injured. (IsRN, JP 3/18; WP 3/19; PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

After 2 days of clashes with protesters, arrest raids targeting opposition figures, and imposition of a nighttime curfew in Manama, **Bahrain**’s troops demolish the giant pearl monument in Pearl Square in a symbolic crushing of antigovernment protesters. No further demonstrations are reported this quarter. By 3/20 observers describe daily life returning to normal (schools and stores reopen, traffic moving) but note “a sense of political paralysis.” Saudi, UAE, and Kuwaiti forces remain in the country through the end of the quarter. (WP 3/19; NYT 3/21)

In **Syria**, govt. forces violently disperse protests (ranging in size fr. the 100s to the 1,000s) held after Friday prayers in Baniyas, Dara’a, Damascus, and Homs, fatally shooting 6 protesters and wounding 10s. Though protests are small, the govt. response is harsh and tensions are high. (NYT, WP 3/19)

In **Yemen**, govt. troops and supporters open fire for more than 20 minutes on protesters demonstrating after Friday prayers in Sana’a, leaving at least 47 dead and 100s injured but failing to disperse the crowd. Afterward, the govt. declares a state of emergency, allowing authorities to curtail civil rights and monitor communications. Over the next 5 days, Yemen’s ambassador to the UN, several other ambassadors, the country’s most influential military commander Maj. Gen. Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar (a relative and very close ally of Pres. Saleh), and 4 other generals resigned in protest, and Saleh’s own tribe and another key tribal leader called on him to step down. Saleh also fires his cabinet in an apparent attempt to preempt a mass resignation to protest recent deadly clashes. Popular protests also continued. (NYT, WP 3/19; NYT, WP 3/20–21; NYT, WP, WT 3/22–23; NYT, WP 3/24)

19 MARCH

Palestinians fire 2 **rockets** (including 1 Grad) and 54 **mortars** fr. Gaza into

Israel within 15 mins., lightly injuring 2 Israelis, damaging an empty kindergarten, and marking the largest barrage since OCL in 1/2009. **Hamas** acknowledges it fired 33 of the mortars, targeting IDF bases along the border in retaliation for a 3/16 Israeli air strike that killed 2 Hamas mbrs. **Israel** retaliates with heavy air strikes and tank fire on Hamas facility e. of Gaza City, killing a **Hamas official** and wounding at least 5 Palestinians (including at least 2 civilians); artillery fire throughout the morning directed at villages on the s. Gaza border with Israel, damaging a mosque in Abassan but causing no injuries; 4 air strikes on rocket-launching sites in s. Gaza, causing no reported injuries; and, late at night, artillery fire directed at suspicious movement nr. the s. Gaza border, killing 2 **16-yr.-old Palestinians**, allegedly armed. Meanwhile, a group of **10 armed, plain-clothed Palestinians** claiming to be **Hamas**-affiliated security forces raid the Gaza City bureaus of CNN, NHK news channel, and Reuters, attacking journalists, destroying cameras, and confiscating tapes to punish them for filming Hamas police dispersing a 3/17 Palestinian rally. **Hamas's interior M Fathi Hamad** denies the men were connected to Hamas, and Reuters confirms that the men did not show identification. In the West Bank, **Jewish settlers** fr. Dolev settlement nr. Ramallah set up a tent and hold Purim services on a nearby plot of Palestinian land; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene, and the settlers leave on their own the next morning (3/20). **Jewish settlers** attack Palestinians and international activists working an olive grove nr. Hebron; the **IDF** intervenes to remove the settlers. **Jewish settlers** fr. Suissa settlement nr. Hebron raid a nearby Palestinian farm, releasing 100s of sheep into crop fields; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. **Jewish settlers** stone Palestinian cars driving nr. Hebron and Qalqilya. (AP, JP 3/19; JP, NYT, WP 3/20; PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

U.S., British, and French forces begin strikes (fr. planes and warships) on **Libya**. The forces target radar and anti-missile batteries to enforce a no-fly zone against Qaddafi's forces. (NYT, WP 3/20)

When protests in Dara'a resume today, **Syrian security forces** seal off the city and clash with the demonstrators. Violence in Dara'a continues through 3/22. (NYT, WP 3/20; NYT, WP 3/21)

20 MARCH

Palestinians fire 3 **rockets** (including 1 Grad), 1 **mortar** into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Israeli naval vessels** intercept a Palestinian fishing boat off the c. Gaza coast, releasing the fishermen but seizing the boat. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 village nr. Ramallah in the morning and 4 villages nr. Qalqilya late in the day. In Gaza, **1,000s of Palestinian students** at al-Azhar University hold a sit-in on campus in support of national reconciliation. (IsRN, XIN 3/20; IsRN, JP, WP 3/21; PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

21 MARCH

In response to recent rocket and mortar strikes, **Israel** makes at least 10 **air strikes** (war planes and drones) on Hamas targets across Gaza (including a training camp, several factories, a mechanic's garage, and a home), injuring at least 7 Palestinians (including 1 Hamas-affiliated police officer and 6 civilians, including 2 children) and collaterally damaging 10s of homes, 7 shops, and 2 cars; in at least 1 instance, Israeli intelligence officers phone a targeted house before a drone missile strike. Late in the evening, **Palestinians** fire 1 **Qassam rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** for a 2d time (see 3/16) storms an al-Wataniya cell phone tower nr. Jenin, searching the area but making no arrests; patrols in al-Bireh, Jericho, Qalqilya and 3 nearby villages, 3 villages nr. Salfit (summoning 1 Palestinian for questioning). **Jewish settlers** stab 1 Palestinian and shoot 2 others in 2 separate, nonfatal incidents nr. Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. Harsina settlement nr. Hebron stone nearby Palestinian homes and cars, lightly injuring 1 Palestinian girl. **Palestinians** in the West Bank and Gaza hold their 7th straight day of demonstrations calling for national reconciliation. (IsRN, WP 3/22; PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

22 MARCH

Israel makes 2 **air strikes** on Gaza targeting the launch site of 4 mortars fired into Israel minutes earlier (causing no damage or injuries), hitting a nearby residential area, killing 4 **Palestinian civilians**

(including 3 children) and wounding 11 (4 critically); **Netanyahu** expresses regret for accidentally harming civilians but accuses Palestinian militants of using civilians as human shields to carry out rocket and mortar attacks (even while there was no rocket fire at the time of the strikes). In the evening, **Palestinians** fire a manufactured **Grad rocket** and several **mortars** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. Later, the **IDF** carries out a 3d **air strike**, killing 4 **Islamic Jihad mbrs.** preparing to launch a rocket into Israel. The **IDF** also makes a brief incursion into Gaza northeast of Gaza City to level lands and clear lines of sight. **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishermen off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** makes a predawn raid on Awarta, imposing a curfew and arresting 9 Palestinians, possibly in connection to the 3/11 Itamar murders; patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and Salfit. (IRM 3/22; NYT, REU, WP, WT 3/23; NYT, PCHR 3/24; OCHA 4/1)

The **Knesset** passes (37-25, with 58 abstaining or not voting) the “**Nakba Law**,” which allows state funding to be reduced to communities or groups that commemorate the Nakba, deny Israel is a Jewish state, question whether Israel is a democracy, or harm Israeli national symbols. It also passes (35-20, with 65 abstaining or not voting) the “**Admissions Committee Law**” allowing Negev and Galilee Jewish communities with fewer than 400 families to reject potential residents (i.e., Palestinians) who are “socially unacceptable.” (IsRN 3/23; JTA 3/24)

The **IDF** detains 2 **Lebanese shepherds** who accidentally crossed the Blue Line into Israeli territory and turns them over to the **UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)**. (DS 3/23)

23 MARCH

Overnight, **Israel** makes an **air strike** on Gaza, killing 1 **Palestinian** preparing to fire a rocket into Israel. Between dawn and mid-morning, **Islamic Jihad** fires 3 manufactured **Grad rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing light damage and slightly injuring 1 Israeli. Later, unidentified **Palestinians** fire 7 **mortars** fr. Gaza into Israel, some of which allegedly contain white phosphorous, causing no damage or injuries. Late in the evening, the **IDF** carries out several **air**

strikes on training sites, rocket launching sites, and smuggling tunnels on the Rafah border, causing no reported injuries. In the afternoon, **suspected Palestinian assailants** leave a bomb nr. Jerusalem’s central bus station and convention center that detonates, killing 1 **British woman**, injuring 38 Israelis; the **PA** immediately condemns the incident; no group claims responsibility. In the West Bank, the **IDF** blocks a funeral procession fr. using a main road in Bayt Umar village nr. Hebron, sparking a clash in which 2 Palestinian mourners are wounded by live ammunition and 4 are arrested. Hours later, the **IDF** sends undercover units into Bayt Umar to raid and search a gas station, beating the owners and confiscating a computer. Several hours after that, the **IDF** returns to block the main entrance of the village with cement blocks and sand barriers. The **IDF** also patrols in Jericho (photographing the Intercontinental Hotel) and 3 villages nr. Ramallah; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and in Tulkarm. (AFP, HA, IFM, IsRN, JTA, MNA, REU, YA 3/23; IsRN, JP, NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 3/24; NYT, WT 3/25; PCHR 3/31; JPI, OCHA 4/1)

In **Syria**, security forces make a predawn assault on the main mosque in Dara’a, where antigovernment protesters have taken refuge, killing 15. Clashes last throughout the day and spread to 4 nearby villages. Over the succeeding days, clashes spread to towns and villages across the nation, becoming nr. daily events but remaining relatively small (in the 1,000s) and uncoordinated. Hot spots include Baniyas, Hama, Homs, Idlib, Latakia (which was reported to be “near anarchy”), and the Kurdish zone. (Only a few protests are reported in Damascus.) Govt. forces routinely dispersed the rallies, violently killing around 100 nationwide by 4/4. Meanwhile, Syrian activists mobilize through online social networking sites to call for mass protests every Friday until the regime falls. (NYT, SANA 3/23; NYT, WP, WT 3/24; NYT, WP 3/26-28; NYT, WP, WT 3/29; NYT, WP 3/30; NYT, WP 3/31, 4/1; NYT 4/2, 4/3; NYT, WP 4/4; WT 4/5; NYT, WP 4/6; NYT 4/7; NYT, WP 4/8; WP 4/9; NYT, WP 4/9, 4/10)

24 MARCH

Palestinians fire at least 7 **mortars**, 6 homemade **Qassam rockets**, and 2

manufactured **Grad rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel during the day, causing no injuries. **Israel** retaliates with several **air strikes** and tank fire on Hamas buildings and a launching site, lightly injuring 3 Palestinians. The largest strike (4 missiles) targets the fmr. PA General Intelligence building outside of Jabaliya in the evening, heavily damaging the building and collaterally damaging 30 homes, 4 businesses, and 2 schools. Sources say that **Hamas** seems to have stepped back fr. rocket and mortar fire since its large barrage on 3/19, with most fire now coming fr. Islamic Jihad and other groups. In the West Bank, the **IDF** demolishes 3 wells nr. Bethlehem (all more than 100 yrs. old); bulldozes a Palestinian road nr. Salfit for the 2d time in 3 mos. (Jewish settlers seek to annex the water-rich area to the Yakir and Revava settlements; Palestinian residents paved the road to claim ownership and repaved it after the IDF bulldozed the 1st time); patrols in 4 village nr. Qalqilya, 4 nr. Ramallah, and 2 each nr. Jenin (where troops fire tear gas at stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no injuries) and Jericho, as well as searching 2 open areas nr. Tulkarm. (HA, IsRN, JP, JTA 3/24; NYT, WP, WT 3/25; PCHR 3/31; OCHA 4/1)

By this date, allied air strikes on **Libya** have reportedly "all but destroyed" the Libyan air force and air defenses and the focus has shifted to targeting Qaddafi's ground forces. At this stage, NATO takes the lead fr. the U.S. in enforcing the no-fly zone. The intervention is not enough to give Libyan rebels the upper hand, however; fierce fighting continues nationwide through the end of the quarter. (NYT 3/24, 3/25)

In **Yemen**, Pres. Saleh, responding to growing pressure (see 3/18), reins in the military and states that he would step down if he could arrange "an honorable transfer of power" that would keep the govt. in "safe hands." Over next 2 wks., Saleh and the opposition hold talks but cannot reach an agreement. Meanwhile, protests continue (mostly nonviolent, ranging in size fr. the 1,000s to around 100,000). (NYT, WP, WT 3/25; NYT, WP 3/26-27; WP 3/28, 3/29; NYT 3/29; NYT, WP 3/31-4/1; NYT 4/3)

25 MARCH

Amid broad speculation that Israel is planning another major offensive against

Gaza in response to recent rocket fire, **Israel** deploys its **Iron Dome missile defense system** for the 1st time to protect communities nr. the Gaza border, saying the \$200-m. system will be fully operational within days. In the West Bank, the **IDF** shoots and wounds a mentally disabled Palestinian who disobeys an order to halt; patrols in and around Qalqilya in the evening. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 4 Palestinians, including 1 child; 14 Israeli activists and 2 Palestinians are arrested. (WP 3/26; NYT, WP 3/28; PCHR 3/31; OCHA 4/1; see also WP 5/13)

26 MARCH

Early in the morning **Palestinians** fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. Later in the day, **Hamas** announces it has secured the agreement of other factions to renew observance of a cease-fire against Israel except in cases in which Israeli forces initiate aggression or cross into Gaza. In the evening, however, **unidentified Palestinians** fire a 3d **rocket** that lands harmlessly in Israel, but raises questions over whether the cease-fire is secure. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Qalqilya and 1 nr. Ramallah. **Palestinians**, with Israeli and international activists, conduct a nonviolent march through Bayt Umar to protest recent IDF raids on the town; the **IDF** fires tear gas and stun grenades at them, causing no serious injuries; 1 Palestinian, 1 Israeli, and 1 international activist are arrested. (AFP, IsRN, JP 3/26; NYT 3/27; PCHR 3/31; OCHA 4/1)

Abbas holds talks with 7 **West Bank Hamas officials** in Ramallah, proposing creation of a temporary unity govt. with the sole mandate of organizing legislative and presidential elections within 6 mos., after which the 1st priority would be to rebuild Gaza. The meeting marks the 1st of a series of Fatah-Hamas reconciliation talks that take place over the next month in the West Bank, Gaza, Egypt, and Syria. (MNA, NYT, WP 3/27) (see Quarterly Update)

27 MARCH

Overnight, an **IDF** drone makes an **air strike** on a car in n. Gaza allegedly heading to launch a missile fr. Gaza into Israel, killing **2 Islamic Jihad mbrs.**, wounding a 3d. A 2d **air strike** targets a smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border; no injuries are reported. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in and around Jericho, in al-Bireh, and in 5 villages nr. Jenin, Qalqilya, and Ramallah; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bayt Umar and nr. Jericho. PLO officials note that at least 200 Bayt Umar residents, mostly teenagers, have been arrested since the beginning of 2011. (HA 3/27; JAZ, NYT, WP, WT, YA 3/28; PCHR 3/31; OCHA 4/1)

28 MARCH

Netanyahu warns **Hamis** that Israel will retaliate if rocket and mortar fire fr. Gaza resumes. Though no rocket or mortar fire is reported during the day, the **IDF** makes a late-night **air strike** on a smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border, causing no injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 4 villages nr. Jenin, Ramallah, and Tulkarm during the day and 1 nr. Jericho late at night; raids 2 villages nr. Qalqilya late in the evening, searching homes for Palestinian youths who allegedly threw stones at troops earlier in the day, arresting 1 teenager. (WT 3/29; PCHR 3/31; OCHA 4/1)

The **Knesset** passes (37-11, with 72 abstaining or not voting) into law the “**Citizenship Loyalty Law**” which allows the court to revoke the citizenship status of anyone found guilty of treason, espionage, terrorism, or assisting a terrorist organization. The law is widely seen as being aimed at Israeli Palestinians. **Knesset** also votes to strip **former Israeli Arab MK Azmi Bishara** of his parliamentary benefits, including his pension. (Israel National News 3/29; JTA 3/30; JPI 4/8) (see Quarterly Update for details and background)

29 MARCH

Palestinians fire several Qassam **rockets** toward Israel, but all land harmlessly in Gaza. The **IDF** makes a brief incursion into c. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border e. of al-Musaddar. In the West Bank, the **IDF** arrests more than

40 Palestinians in the village of Awarta and subjects them to DNA testing and fingerprinting in connection with the 3/11 Itamar murders. The **IDF** also makes a pre-dawn incursion into Jericho, patrolling streets and photographing PA Presidential Guard and PASF training sites and buildings; patrols in al-Bireh, Birzeit, Tulkarm, Nur al-Shams r.c. and 2 nearby village, and 4 villages nr. Jenin; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya. A **Gaza court** sentences 1 Palestinian to death and another to 15 yrs. in prison for collaborating with Israel. (HA, MNA 3/29; JP 3/30; JTA, NYT, PCHR 3/31; OCHA 4/1)

30 MARCH

An **IDF** drone makes an air strike on a motorcycle in Rafah, assassinating **Islamic Jihad mbr. Muhammad Abu Mu'ammir** and seriously wounding Islamic Jihad's 'Abdullah al-Ghalban; Israel alleges the men were responsible for the 3/29 rocket fire toward Israel. The **IDF** also makes a brief incursion into n. Gaza nr. Bayt Lahiya, firing warning shots at farmers to force them to leave the area, then leveling land to clear lines of sight. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bayt Umar (first blocking off all entrances to the village), Dahaysha r.c., and Hebron. **Hamis authorities** in Gaza break up a small national unity rally. (JP 3/30; NYT, PCHR 3/31; PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

31 MARCH

Palestinians fire a Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in and around Tulkarm and in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya in the morning; enters the PA-controlled area of Hebron to search the home of and arrest **Hamis-affiliated PC mbr. Muhammad Mahir Badr. Jewish settlers** fr. Kiryat Arba settlement in Hebron vandalize several Palestinian stores and moderately beat 1 Palestinian. (IsRN 3/31; PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

1 APRIL

Israel makes an **air strike** on a car in Gaza City, assassinating **3 senior Hamis mbrs.** (Muhammad Mahdi al-Dayah, Abdullah Lobbad, and Isma'il Lobbad) and injuring

1 bystander. Israel claims the Hamas mbrs. were plotting to kidnap Israelis in Israel and Egypt during Passover later in 4/2011; Hamas denies that it operates outside the borders of historic Palestine but says the 3 were senior weapons developers. The **DFLP** says it will no longer observe a cease-fire toward Israel. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night searches in Qalqilya, summoning 1 Palestinian for questioning. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, causing no serious injuries; 3 Palestinians (including 2 children) are arrested. **Jewish settlers** fr. Beit Hadassah settlement in Hebron set fire to the awnings of several Palestinian stores. (NYT 4/2, 4/3; JTA 4/4; PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

In a *Washington Post* op-ed online (in print on 4/3), **South African judge Richard Goldstone**, head of the UN committee that investigated possible war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during OCL, says that "if I had known then what I know now," he would have concluded that Gaza "civilians were not intentionally targeted as a matter of [Israeli] policy" and would have given more weight to crimes perpetrated by Hamas. (WP 4/1; IFM, NYT, WP 4/3; NYT 4/6; JTA, NYT, YA 4/7; NYT, 4/20) (see Quarterly Update for details)

2 APRIL

In Gaza City, 1,000s of Palestinians turn out for the funerals of the 3 senior Hamas mbrs. killed on 4/1. The **Popular Resistance Comms. (PRCs)** announce they will no longer observe the cease-fire toward Israel. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in al-Bireh and in 4 villages nr. Salfit (raiding 1 home and ordering a resident to appear for questioning), 2 nr. Tulkarm (randomly stopping 1 Palestinian on the street and detaining him briefly for questioning), 1 nr. Qalqilya. (NYT 4/3; PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

3 APRIL

IDF troops on the n. Gaza border w. of the Erez crossing fire warning shots at farmers and shepherds working their farms

some 600 m fr. the border fence, forcing them to leave. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized patrols in 4 villages n. of Tulkarm and 2 villages w. of Ramallah in the morning; later patrols in Birzeit, Jericho, Salfit (summoning 1 Palestinian to appear for questioning), Tulkarm, and 4 villages nr. Jenin; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in al-'Arub r.c., Bil'in (searching for international solidarity activists), and Hebron. (PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

4 APRIL

Israeli pres. Shimon Peres arrives in Washington for a 3-day visit. He meets today with Secy. of State **Clinton**; no details are released. (WJW 4/7)

Israel's Jerusalem planning comm. gives preliminary approval for **942 new settlement housing units** in Gilo and the **Israeli DMin.** announces that it has finished new zoning plans for several West Bank Jewish settlements, retroactively legalizing construction already underway. The **State Dept.** expresses "deep concern," stating that the "Israeli settlements [are] illegitimate" and "Israel's actions run counter to efforts to resume direct negotiations." **Israel** charges Gaza engineer **Abu Sisi** (see 3/10) with developing rockets for Hamas and establishing a "military academy" in Gaza to train Hamas commanders. Hamas and Abu Sisi deny the charges. In Jenin r.c., unidentified assailants fatally shoot **Israeli actor Juliano Mer-Khamis** (half Jewish and half Palestinian) who runs a theater troop for Palestinian children in the camp (see Quarterly Update for details). Meanwhile, the **IDF** patrols in 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c. nr. Jericho in the morning and in 4 villages nr. Jenin and Qalqilya in the afternoon; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Awarta (possibly in connection with the 3/11 Itamar murders). **Jewish settlers** fr. Taffuh settlement attempt to fence off a nearby plot of Palestinian land; the PA district liaison intervenes with the IDF, which removes the settlers but leaves the fencing marking off the land in place. (AFP, HA, MNA, YA 4/4; NYT, WP, WT 4/5; WP 4/6; NYT, PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

5 APRIL

In the morning, **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fatally shoot **1 Palestinian**

who approaches the border fence for unclear reasons; there are no reports he was armed and no faction claims him as a mbr. During the day, **Hamas** convenes **Gaza factions** to urge them to reimpose a cease-fire. Late in the evening, **unidentified Palestinians** fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** responds with **air strikes** on 2 "infiltration tunnels" on the n. Gaza border, lightly to moderately injuring 4 Palestinian bystanders and damaging a recycling center, a construction company, and 11 homes. In the West Bank, the **IDF** enters Jenin in the afternoon to search the theater run by Mer-Khamis (killed on 4/4) and question locals about his murder. The **IDF** also patrols in 4 villages nr. Jenin, 3 villages nr. Qalqilya, 1 nr. Ramallah (firing tear gas at stone-throwing youths who confront them), and 1 nr. Tulkarm. The **PASF** says it has arrested a fmr. al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (AMB) mbr. for suspected involvement in the Mer-Khamis killing. (AFP, JP, XIN 4/5; IsRN 4/6; PCHR 4/7; OCHA 4/15)

6 APRIL

U.S. special envoy George Mitchell sends a letter to Pres. **Obama** stating his intention to resign. The letter is not reported publicly until 5/13 (see below). (WP 5/14)

Israel closes the Kerem Shalom crossing, citing specific security threats; carries out 4 air strikes on 1 "infiltration tunnel" on the n. Gaza border and 3 smuggling tunnels on the Rafah border, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** makes a late-night incursion into Awarta, raiding and searching homes, and detaining at least 70 men and women who are taken to Hawara military post to have DNA samples taken in connection with the 3/11 Itamar murders. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Dahaysha r.c., nr. Bethlehem and Hebron. (IsRN, PCHR 4/7; NYT 4/13; PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

7 APRIL

In retaliation for a 4/1 air strike that killed 3 senior Hamas mbrs., **Hamas militants** fire an advanced Russian-made laser-guided **Kornet antitank missile** fr. Gaza into Israel, hitting a school bus and wounding the bus driver and 1 student

and marking a serious escalation of cross-border violence. During the rest of the day, **Palestinians** fire around **45 rockets and mortars** into Israel, damaging 1 house but causing no injuries; the barrage includes 2 Grad rockets that were intercepted by Israel's new Iron Dome missile defense system. The **IDF** retaliates with heavy artillery fire (10s of rounds fired) and more than 20 **air strikes** (including missiles dropped fr. war planes and fired fr. helicopters and drones) against at least 16 targets across the Gaza Strip, killing **5 Palestinians** (1 Hamas mbr. and 4 civilians) and wounding 20 (at least 19 civilians), and collaterally damaging 10s of homes. In the West Bank, the **IDF** bulldozes 3 roads, 10 electricity poles, 2 walls surrounding a home, and part of a room of a house nr. Tubas; patrols in and around Tulkarm town and r.c., in al-Bireh, and in 3 villages nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah (firing rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no serious injuries); conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya in the afternoon. (IsRN, JP 4/7; NYT, WP 4/8; IFM 4/9, 4/10; HA 4/11; PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

After 4 days of violent protests in **Yemen** (at least 12 dead, more than 270 injured), the **GCC** begins efforts to broker a deal for Saleh's rapid transition fr. power. (NYT 4/8; see also NYT, WP 4/4; NYT, WP, WT 4/5-6)

8 APRIL

The **IDF** continues heavy **air strikes** (including 1 missile dropped fr. a war plane and 13 missiles fired fr. helicopters and drones) and **artillery attacks** (more than a dozen) hitting at least 19 targets across Gaza, killing another **11 Palestinians** (5 civilians and 6 militants), wounding 20 (19 civilians and 1 militant), and damaging a commercial building and several homes. Israeli DM **Barak** stresses that the assaults are in response to the bus attack on 4/7 and not the start of a major offensive. **Palestinians** fire another 24 **mortars** and 6 **rockets**, causing damage in 2 incidents but no injuries. Various factions claim responsibility for firing, including the AMB, DFLP, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the PRCs. Israel's new Iron Dome system intercepts 3 of the

rockets. In addition, **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fired warning shots at Palestinian farmers nr. the border fence, forcing them to flee. **Israeli naval vessels** fired toward the Gaza City beach and at Palestinian fishermen off the coast w. of Nussayrat r.c., causing no injuries. With the past 24 hrs. marking the worst flare-up in cross-border violence since OCL, UN Secy.-Gen. **Ban** calls on both sides to observe a cease-fire immediately. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Jericho and 2 villages nr. Ramallah (firing rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no serious injuries); conducts morning arrest raids, house searches nr. Jericho. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih/Dayr Nizam. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, causing no serious injuries; 5 Palestinians are arrested. (IsRN, JP, MNA 4/8; JP, MNA, NYT, WP 4/9; IFM 4/10; PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

9 APRIL

Overnight and during the day, **Palestinians** fire another 65 projectiles fr. Gaza into Israel, including at least 15 **Grads** (5 of which are intercepted by the Iron Dome system), damaging 1 house and a water main, but causing no injuries. The **IDF** carries out 4 more **air strikes** (3 dropped fr. warplanes, 1 drone strike), killing at least 1 **senior Hamas mbr.** and 1 **PRC mbr.**, and wounding 3 militants (1 Hamas, 2 PRC). In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm during the day and 1 nr. Ramallah late at night; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem. In 2 separate incidents **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar nr. Nablus vandalize Palestinian homes and stone a Palestinian woman in nearby Asira village, and stone laborers and vandalize cars in nearby 'Urif village. (JP 4/9; HA, IFM, IsRN, NYT 4/10; PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

10 APRIL

Through UN and **Egyptian** emissaries, **Israel** and **Gaza's factions** agree to

a new cease-fire ending 4 days of heavy violence. Before the agreement is announced in the evening, **Palestinians** fire around 20 **rockets and mortars** (including 1 **Grad**) fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; Israel does not immediately respond; 1 **rocket** is fired after the announcement. In the West Bank, the **IDF** declares Awarta a closed military zone, then raids 10s of homes arresting 20 Palestinian youths and 3 women. The **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 2 neighboring villages, 3 villages nr. Qalqilya, and 3 nr. Ramallah. During a morning patrol in Zabbuba village nr. Jenin, **IDF** troops raid an Internet café in search of stone-throwing youths who confronted them, arresting 4 children age 11-17. **Israeli interior M Eli Yishai**, under pressure fr. Netanyahu, postpones a meeting of Jerusalem's planning committee (set for later this wk.) until 5/5 (after Passover) to discuss building 980 settlement housing units in Jabal Abu-Ghunaym and 600 units in Pisgat Ze'ev. (AP, HA, IsRN, JP, REU, XIN 4/10; JTA, NYT, WP 4/11; PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

In **Syria**, after heavy clashes with protesters after Friday prayers on 4/8 and with mourners after funerals on 4/9, Pres. Bashar al-Asad deploys soldiers and tanks for the 1st time to surround and cut off towns where protests are being held. Instead of quelling protests, clashes continue and casualties slowly but steadily mount through the end of the quarter. Nationwide Friday protests (4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6, and 5/12) steadily grow more massive (into the 10,000s) and the regime's response more extreme. Shelling, sniper fire, and arrest raids became routine. In between Friday protests, Syrian forces raid areas where protests or funerals are the largest; Baniyas, Dara'a, Homs, Latakia, and the Kurdish region remain frequent targets. Still, the various protests seem isolated, with little overarching organization. As of this date, human rights groups in Syria believe that at least 170 Syrians have died and some 800 have been detained since clashes began. The govt. has also expelled many media organizations and cut Internet and phone access to keep news of the clashes sparse. (NYT, WP, WT 4/11; NYT, WP 4/12; NYT, WP, WT 4/12-13; NYT, WP 4/14; NYT, WP 4/15-16; WP 4/18; NYT, WP 4/19; NYT, WP, WT 4/19-20; NYT, WP 4/21; NYT 4/22)

11 APRIL

In the West Bank, the **IDF** for unclear reasons detains 2 Palestinian farmers working their land nr. Tulkarm, questioning and releasing them but confiscating their farming equipment; patrols in 3 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jenin in the afternoon and in Jenin, Tulkarm, and 2 villages nr. Salfit late at night; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in al-Bireh, Hebron, and nr. Qalqilya. (PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

12 APRIL

In Gaza, 4 **Palestinians** die, 5 are injured in a smuggling tunnel collapse. The small Salafist group **Tawhid and Jihad** claims to fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, but the **IDF** says it has no record of any incidents. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c. nr. Jericho in the morning; conducts late-night patrols in Jericho, Salfit, 2 villages nr. Qalqilya, and 1 nr. Ramallah. (AFP 4/12; MNA, NYT 4/13; PCHR 4/14; OCHA 4/15)

13 APRIL

The donor's **Ad Hoc Liaison Comm.** meets in Brussels to receive the **PA's** 3-yr. policy and economic agenda for 2011–13. (World Bank press release 4/7; JTA 4/3) (see Quarterly Update for details)

Israel reopens the Kerem Shalom commercial crossing into Gaza (closed since 4/6). In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Dayr Istya nr. Salfit. (PCHR 4/14, 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

An **Israeli** tank briefly enters a disputed border area with **Lebanon** nr. Adayssa village after Lebanese picking herbs and flowers in the zone triggered an alert. (AFP 4/14)

14 APRIL

In Gaza, the radical Salafist group **Tawhid and Jihad** issues a statement saying it has kidnapped an Italian national in Gaza and will kill him by 5:00 P.M. local time on 4/15 if **Hamas authorities** do not release its imprisoned leaders (Hisham Saidani and Shaykh Abu Wali al-Makdisi, arrested in 3/2011), other supporters, and "global jihadists." A **Palestinian** wounded by IDF shelling in Gaza on 4/8 dies of his

injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the morning and 4 villages nr. Qalqilya, 1 nr. Nablus, and 1 nr. Tulkarm late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Brakha settlement nr. Nablus attack Palestinian farmers working their land nearby; when the Palestinians throw stones at the settlers, the **IDF** intervenes, firing tear gas at the Palestinians to disperse them. (NYT 4/15; PCHR 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

15 APRIL

Early in the morning, **Hamas authorities** in Gaza storm a house in Gaza City where they believe **Italian peace activist Vittorio Arrigoni** is being held by **Tawhid and Jihad**, only to find that he had already been hung; 5 suspects are arrested in the raid. During the day, **Palestinians** fire 2 **Grad rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Hamas** sends a message to **Israel** stating that it is doing everything possible to prevent rocket fire. The **IDF** makes 2 late-night **air strikes** on empty Hamas training sites in Gaza City and Shati' r.c., causing no injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Ramallah; makes a late-night raid into Bayt Umar, harassing and beating the family of an organizer of the weekly demonstrations against the **separation wall** for 2 hrs. before leaving; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and nr. Qalqilya. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 2 Palestinians (including a child). (IsRN, NYT 4/15; JP, NYT, WP 4/16; PCHR 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

16 APRIL

Israeli naval vessels fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza shore, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts separate synchronized patrols in 3 villages s. of Jenin, 2 nr. Salfit, and 2 nr. Tulkarm in the morning; raids a home in Hebron in the afternoon, arresting a Palestinian teenager for stoning

an IDF patrol earlier in the day; conducts evening patrols in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm. **Hamas authorities** in Gaza arrest another 5 Palestinians in connection with the 4/15 Arrigoni murder. (PCHR 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

17 APRIL

Israel imposes a closure on the West Bank through 4/26 for the Passover holiday. **Israeli police** announced that after nearly 2 wks. in detention, 2 Palestinian teenagers fr. Awarta village have confessed to the 3/11 Itamar murders, adding that the teens had connections to the **PFLP** but it was unclear if the PFLP was involved in the attack. **IDF** troops on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at farmers working their land nr. the border fence, forcing them to leave; no injuries are reported. The **Israeli teenager** injured in the 4/7 missile strike on an Israeli school bus dies. In the West Bank, the **IDF** fires rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at 10s of Palestinians demonstrating nr. Ramallah to mark Prisoners Day, injuring 1 Palestinian and arresting 1; patrols in 3 villages nr. Tulkarm, 2 nr. Qalqilya, and 1 nr. Jenin during the day; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Nablus. **Palestinian youths** who have stayed in Ramallah's Manara Square since 3/15 end their hunger strike for Palestinian reconciliation after being informed that the PA has released 11 Hamas political prisoners and issued an official order to "end media incitement" against Hamas. (NYT, WP 4/18; PCHR 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

18 APRIL

Palestinians fire a Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, **Jewish settlers** fr. Yatta in Hebron raid a nearby Palestinian farm and let the cattle loose into the crop fields; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. (IsRN 4/18; PCHR 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

19 APRIL

In Gaza, **Hamas authorities** surround a house in Nussayrat r.c. and trade gunfire with suspects in the 4/15 Arrigoni murder inside the house, leaving 3 Hamas policemen wounded; 1 suspect (a Jordanian)

then detonates a grenade inside the house to prevent his partners (both Gazans) fr. being taken alive, killing 1 **Palestinian** and wounding 1, before fatally shooting himself. Another **Palestinian** detained by Hamas authorities on 4/15 as a suspect in the Arrigoni murder dies in police custody. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized evening patrols in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya. **Jewish settlers** fr. Givat Arousa outpost nr. Nablus vandalize nearby Palestinian homes; then stone-throwing Palestinians confront them, 1 settler opens fire, wounding 1 Palestinian; the **IDF** then intervenes, firing rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades and beating Palestinians, lightly injuring 2 Palestinians and seriously beating 2 Palestinian journalists who arrive to cover the clash. (NYT, WT 4/20; PCHR 4/21; OCHA 4/29)

20 APRIL

The **IDF** conducts synchronized evening patrols in 2 village nr. Tulkarm, then returns late at night to conduct arrest raids, house search in and around Tulkarm. The **IDF** also makes a late-night incursion into al-Bireh, searching the home of and arresting **senior PFLP mbr. Ahmad Sulayman Qatamesh**. (PCHR 4/21, 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

21 APRIL

The **IDF** enters Gaza through the Qarni crossing and bulldozes 8 storehouses containing construction material belonging to the Palestine Development and Investment Company (PADICO). **IDF troops** on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at Palestinian farmers working their land nr. the border, moderately wounding 1. In the West Bank, the **IDF** raids a secondary school in Hebron in the morning, pointing guns at students and firing percussion grenades, looking for students who stoned a passing IDF patrol earlier in the morning and arresting 1 student; patrols in al-Bireh. (PCHR 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

The **GCC** offers **Yemen's** Pres. Saleh a deal under which he could hand over power to a successor of his choice and he and his family would be immune fr. prosecution provided he steps down within 30 days. Saleh and the opposition both eventually agree to the offer on 4/26, but Saleh backs out on 4/30, leaving the issue

unresolved. Protests, now regularly as large as 100,000, continue through the end of the quarter and are occasionally violent. (WP 4/22; NYT 4/23; NYT, WP 4/24–4/28; NYT 4/29; NYT, WP 4/30–5/1; NYT, WT 5/4; NYT, WP, WT 5/10; NYT, WP 5/12, 5/14)

22 APRIL

The **IDF** enters al-Funduq village nr. Qalqilya in the morning, patrolling streets and ordering shop owners to close until early afternoon, saying **Jewish settlers** plan a demonstration in the area (though none is reported); also patrols in 1 village nr. Tulkarm. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 5 Palestinians (including a child) and 1 international activist; another 5 Palestinians (including a child) and 3 international activists are arrested. (PCHR 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

In **Syria**, security forces use extreme violence to disperse massive (10,000s) demonstrations after Friday prayers in at least 20 towns nationwide (fr. the northern Kurdish region, to the coast area, to the capital and southern suburbs), killing at least 109 in the worst violence since protests began. (NYT, WP 4/23)

23 APRIL

Israeli naval vessels direct shells, intensive machine gun fire, and illumination rounds at Palestinian fishing boats heading out fr. the n. Gaza coast before dawn, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Jericho, 2 villages nr. Jenin, 1 nr. Ramallah, 1 nr. Salfit, and 1 nr. Tulkarm. Late in the evening, the **IDF** enters Bayt Liqia village nr. Ramallah, patrolling streets and sounding sirens to harass residents, then firing rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them. (PCHR 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

24 APRIL

In the West Bank, **PA police** fire on a group of Jewish settlers attempting to

sneak into Nablus to pray at Joseph's Tomb before dawn, killing **1 Jewish settler** and wounding 4; the **PASF** says forces fired when the settlers removed a physical road barrier and then sped down a road to the tomb, refusing orders to halt; the **IDF**, which regularly escorts settlers to the tomb to pray, confirms that it did not authorize the settlers' visit. Later in the day, **10s of masked Jewish settlers** following the funeral procession for the dead man fr. a settlement outside Nablus to Jerusalem for burial attack Palestinian homes en route, vandalize cars, and injure 1 Palestinian boy. In addition, **Jewish settlers** in Shaykh Jarrah in East Jerusalem attack a woman and 6 children with pepper spray and vandalize 2 Palestinian vehicles. Meanwhile, the **IDF** conducts synchronized patrols in 4 villages e. of Qalqilya. At the same time, troops raid Jayyus village n. of Qalqilya fr. 3 directions, arresting 2 teenage boys (ages 15 and 16) for cutting an opening in a fence that the **IDF** set up to cut off access to village farmlands and raiding a coffee shop to warn patrons that more arrests will follow if the fence is damaged again; when confronted by stone-throwing youths, the troops fire tear gas and stun grenades to disperse them. (NYT, WP 4/25; PCHR 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

25 APRIL

The **IDF** conducts searches and patrols in 3 villages e. of Qalqilya (cf. 4/24). (PCHR 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

Syria launches a major raid into Dara'a, sending in tanks and possibly 1,000s soldiers; cutting water, phone, and electricity. The raid lasts until 5/5, with reports sketchy and hard to corroborate. By this date, human rights groups in Syria say the number of protesters killed since the start of the unrest has jumped to at least 401 and the number arrested to around 1,000. By 5/5, those figures reach at least 607 killed and 8,000 arrested or reported missing. (NYT, WP, WT 4/26, 4/28; NYT, WP 4/30, 5/1; NYT, WT, 5/3; WP 5/5; NYT, WP 5/6)

26 APRIL

In the West Bank, the **IDF** sends troops into 'Azun village nr. Qalqilya in the afternoon in pursuit of stone-throwing

Palestinian youths, patrolling streets, randomly stopping residents for questioning, and searching an Internet café but making no arrests. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Tubas and Awarta (including ransacking the home of one of the suspects in the 3/11 Itamar murders). (PCHR 4/28; OCHA 4/29)

27 APRIL

Fatah and **Hamas** officials announce an (unsigned) reconciliation agreement, pledging to form a transitional **national unity govt.** made up of independent technocrats chosen by consensus that would prioritize planning for legislative and presidential elections within a year (including agreeing on new mbrs. for the Central Elections Commission), rebuilding Gaza, and reunifying West Bank and Gaza institutions. **Netanyahu** denounces the agreement, saying the PA “must choose between peace with Israel or peace with Hamas.” The **PA** replies that “Netanyahu must choose between a just peace with the united Palestinian people . . . and settlements.” (IFM, REU 4/27; NYT, WP, WT 4/28; NYT 4/29) (see Quarterly Update for details)

The **IDF** makes a brief incursion into s. Gaza to level lands and clear lines of sight e. of Dayr al-Balah. In **Egypt**'s Sinai, a new explosion damages the recently repaired natural gas pipeline to **Israel** and **Jordan**, cutting supplies once again. (NYT, PCHR 4/28; OCHA 5/6)

28 APRIL

IDF troops on the c. Gaza border e. of Gaza Valley village for unknown reasons fire 6 **artillery shells** at a house nr. the border, injuring 4 family mbrs. (including 1 woman and 2 children, ages 5 and 10). In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized patrols in 3 villages nr. Jenin in the morning; also patrols in Bil'in, firing live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them, wounding 2 teenagers (1 seriously with live ammunition); patrols without incident in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the afternoon and in Jericho in the evening. (PCHR 5/5; OCHA 5/6)

29 APRIL

Egypt announces that it plans to reopen the Rafah crossing to Gaza (closed since 1/29/11, except to Gazans returning fr. abroad) within the next 2 wks. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya and 1 nr. Ramallah during the day and 2 villages nr. Jenin late at night; searches an open area nr. Qalqilya in the evening, arresting a Palestinian farmer tilling a field; makes an incursion into Bayt Liqia in the evening in a large show of force (cf. 4/23), firing live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no serious injuries. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring an 8-yr.-old Palestinian; 3 international activists are arrested. (WP 4/30; PCHR 5/5; OCHA 5/6)

30 APRIL

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Jenin, 2 nr. Qalqilya, and 2 nr. Ramallah; conducts evening arrest raids, house searches in 'Azun nr. Qalqilya. (PCHR 5/5; OCHA 5/6)

1 MAY

Israel delays the monthly transfer of VAT taxes it collects on behalf of the **PA** (\$90 m.), saying it fears the money will go to **Hamas** now that Abbas has agreed to form a temporary unity govt. (see Quarterly Update for details). The **IDF** makes an incursion into Izbat al-Tabib village nr. Qalqilya to bulldoze and fence off a plot of land; beats and disperses residents and international activists who confront them, moderately injuring 1 Palestinian woman and arresting 5 international activists. The **IDF** also patrols in 5 villages nr. Qalqilya, 2 nr. Jenin (firing stun grenades in 1 village), and 1 nr. Tulkarm; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Jericho, Qalqilya. (NYT, WP 5/1; PCHR 5/5; OCHA 5/6)

2 MAY

In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols 4 villages nr. Jenin, Qalqilya, and Tulkarm during the day; conducts late-night patrols in Qalqilya, temporarily detaining a PASF officer doing his own patrol; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Aida r.c. nr. Bethlehem. (PCHR 5/5; OCHA 5/6)

3 MAY

In Cairo, reps. of **15 small Palestinian factions** initial the national unity deal agreed by Fatah and Hamas on 4/27. Fatah and Hamas plan to sign the text on 5/4. (WP, WT 5/4)

In the West Bank, **Jewish settlers** illegally enter Nablus to pray at Joseph's Tomb and refuse to leave, barricading themselves inside the tomb and sparking stone-throwing clashes with Palestinians. The **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron, arresting **Hamas-affiliated fmr. PC mbr. Issa al-Jabari**. Palestinians report the arson of a mosque in Hawara nr. Nablus, blaming **Jewish settlers**. OCHA reports that since 4/27, 3 Gazan children have been injured when they accidentally triggered **unexploded IDF ordnance (UXO)**. (WP 5/4; PCHR, WJW 5/5; OCHA 5/6)

4 MAY

Fatah/PA head Abbas and Hamas leader Khalid Mishal formally sign their national unity deal in Cairo. (MNA, YA 5/4; NYT, WP 5/5; MNA 5/11; OCHA, PCHR 5/12) (see Quarterly Update for details)

In the West Bank, the **IDF** sends undercover units into 'Araba village nr. Jenin, surrounding a home and arresting a wanted Palestinian; makes a late-night incursion into Siris village nr. Jenin, surrounding a home, firing percussion grenades, ordering all men to leave the house, checking their IDs, and arresting 1; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in 'Azun, Bayt Liqya, and Tubas. A **Hamas mbr.** dies in a Cairo hospital of injuries received during IDF shelling of Rafah on 4/8. **Hamas authorities** in Gaza execute a **Palestinian** convicted of collaborating with Israel and sentenced to death in 10/2009 (see Quarterly Update for details). (PCHR 5/5)

5 MAY

In the West Bank, **IDF troops** supported by **Israeli border police** uproot 600 olive saplings and demolish 4 houses and 10 tents in Khirbet Um Nir s. of Hebron, displacing 8 Bedouin families (50 individuals). The **IDF** also patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the morning and 4 villages nr. Jenin, 1 nr. Jericho, and 1 nr. Ramallah late in the evening; makes a late-night incursion into Jenin r.c., surrounding and raiding a home, arresting 1 Palestinian. (OCHA, PCHR 5/12)

6 MAY

In the West Bank, the **IDF** makes a major incursion into Silat al-Harithiyya nr. Jenin in the afternoon, storming 4 houses, arresting several Palestinians, and ordering all residents to surrender their cell phones; patrols in al-Bireh, 2 villages nr. Ramallah, and 1 nr. Tulkarm (firing on stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no serious injuries); conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in 'Azun, Tubas. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 3 Palestinians; 1 Palestinian child is arrested. (OCHA, PCHR 5/12)

In **Syria**, troops use heavy machine guns and artillery against Syrians demonstrating after Friday prayers in Homs; at least 11 protesters and 10 soldiers are killed. Other protests continue nationwide. (NYT, WP 5/7)

7 MAY

In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and several nearby villages repeatedly during the day; patrols in a major show of force in Nabi Salih late at night, firing live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades in the streets to harass residents and temporarily occupying the local council headquarters as an observation post. **Palestinians** and international activists demonstrate in Bayt

Umar against settlement expansion; the **IDF** fires stun grenades and beats several demonstrators, injuring 4 Palestinians (including 1 child). In Gaza City, **Hamas authorities** break up a demonstration by 10s of Salafists protesting the U.S. assassination of Osama Bin Laden. (WP 5/8; OCHA, PCHR 5/12)

In **Syria**, troops and tanks surround, cut off, and raid Baniyas and Zabadani village outside Damascus. (NYT, WP 5/8)

8 MAY

Israel seals the West Bank through 5/10 for independence day celebrations (by the Hebrew calendar); **Israeli Palestinians** hold marches to commemorate the Nakba (the expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 when Israel was formed; most other Palestinians observe Nakba Day ca. 5/15, Israel's independence day by the Gregorian calendar). The **IDF** patrols in Qalqilya, nearby 'Azun, and Ya'abad village nr. Jenin. In Gaza, students at al-Azhar University celebrate the reconciliation agreement. (MNA 5/8; NYT 5/9; OCHA, PCHR 5/12)

9 MAY

The **IDF** patrols in Bayt Liqya, al-Bireh, Jericho, 5 villages nr. Tulkarm (randomly stopping vehicles and checking IDs in 1 instance), and 1 nr. Ramallah. During another late-night patrol in Kafr Qaddum nr. Qalqilya, the **IDF** temporarily detains 2 PASF officers conducting their own patrol but releases them after intervention fr. the local District Coordination Office. (OCHA, PCHR 5/12)

In **Syria**, troops escalate the crackdown nationwide: massive arrest sweeps rounding up men age 18–50 are reported in Baniyas, Homs, the suburbs of Damascus, and elsewhere, with govt. forces reportedly using soccer stadiums, schools, and govt. buildings as makeshift detention centers. As of this date more than 700 Syrians are believed to have been killed and 10,000 arrested since clashes began. (NYT, WP, WT 5/10; NYT 5/13)

10 MAY

IDF troops on the Israeli side of the Erez crossing into Gaza fire warning shots at some 80 Palestinian and international

activists staging a nonviolent march to the border to protest Israel's imposition of a buffer zone; no injuries are reported. **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Birzeit and 2 nearby villages and in Tulkarm and 1 nearby village. **Jewish settlers** block Palestinian traffic on the Tulkarm-Nablus road nr. Bayt Lid, marking the 2d anniversary of the shooting death of a settler there. **Jewish settlers** guarded by the **IDF** hold religious services at the fmr. Homesh settlement site (removed by the **IDF** in 2005 as part of the Gaza disengagement). (OCHA, PCHR 5/12)

11 MAY

Israeli naval vessels fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In Rafah, 1 **Palestinian** is killed in a tunnel-related accident. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Salfit; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Qalqilya. (PCHR 5/12, 5/19; OCHA 5/20)

12 MAY

Grass-roots Palestinian activists send 10,000s of text messages to cell phones in the West Bank and Gaza, urging Palestinians to march to the borders of Israel on 5/15 for a "March to Palestine Day" marking the anniversary of the Nakba (see Quarterly Update for details). The **IDF** conducts daytime patrols in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya. A **Palestinian teenager** is fatally electrocuted in a smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border, marking the 2d tunnel accident in 2 days. (*al-Abram, al-Masri al-Youm* 5/13; PCHR 5/19; OCHA 5/20)

13 MAY

The White House announces that **U.S. special envoy George Mitchell** has submitted his resignation, effective 5/20 (the day Obama is to meet with Netanyahu at the White House). Secy. of State **Clinton** appoints Mitchell aide David Hale as interim special envoy. (NYT, WP 5/14)

In Jerusalem, **Israeli police** and **settlement security guards** outside Beit Yonatan in Silwan fire on stone-throwing

Palestinian youths, seriously wounding a Palestinian teenager walking some distance away. Numerous clashes are also reported, particularly around East Jerusalem, as Palestinians demonstrate in commemoration of the Nakba. In the Jordan Valley, a Palestinian boy is injured when he accidentally triggers **IDF UXO**. **Palestinians** (sometimes accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Ni'lin, and Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters, injuring 2 Palestinians (including 1 child) and 1 international activist; 2 Palestinians and 2 Israeli activists are arrested. (WP 5/15; PCHR 5/19; OCHA 5/20)

Heeding calls fr. Palestinian organizers on Facebook, **100s of Jordanians** in Amman and **1,000s of Egyptians** in Cairo rally after Friday prayers in support of Palestinian rights. (AP, DPA, Huffington Post 5/13)

14 MAY

A **Palestinian teenager** shot in Silwan on 5/13 dies of his wounds. Clashes erupt after the boy's funeral later in the day, with Israeli police firing rubber-coated steel bullets at angry mourners, injuring 2. For a 2d day, numerous clashes are reported, particularly around East Jerusalem, as Palestinians demonstrate in commemoration of the Nakba, but no serious injuries are reported. **Jewish settlers** fr. Gilad settlement nr. Qalqilya beat and stone 3 Palestinian farmers working their land nearby. (WP 5/15; PCHR 5/19; OCHA 5/20)

In **Syria**, troops raid Tal Kalakh village nr. the border with Lebanon before dawn, sending 100s of Syrians fleeing into Lebanon for safety. Clashes continue through 5/15. Lebanese officials estimate that some 5,000 Syrian families have sought refuge in Lebanon since the clashes began. As the quarter comes to a close, Syrian forces continue to violently suppress protests scattered nationwide. Human rights groups say as many as 900 protesters have been killed since the beginning of the uprising, while the govt. says that 98 soldiers and 22 police officers have been killed; around 9,000 Syrians are still in custody or unaccounted for. (NYT, WP 5/15; WP 5/16, 5/19)

A **GCC** envoy arrives in **Yemen** to try to resurrect a deal with Saleh to step down, but no agreement is immediately reached. Rights groups estimate that more than 154 Yemenis have been killed since protests began. (NYT, WP 5/15)

15 MAY

On the anniversary of the Nakba, **1,000s of Palestinians fr. the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria** stage marches (mostly nonviolent, though some stone throwing) toward the Israeli border. In Lebanon, though troops, riot police, and UNIFIL soldiers deploy to prevent marchers fr. reaching the border, a large group succeeds in reaching the border fence nr. Hizballah-controlled Maroun al-Ras village, where they throw stones at IDF troops. IDF troops open fire into Lebanon, leaving **10 Palestinians** dead and at least 112 wounded. Palestinians refugees marching fr. Syria knock down the border fence into the Golan Heights, enter the Druze village of Majdal Shams, and rally in the village square, erecting Palestinian flags. IDF troops open fire to drive them back across the border, killing **4 Palestinians** and wounding around 200. On the border with Jordan, Jordanian troops fired tear gas and scuffle with some 800 Palestinians, preventing them fr. reaching the border, leaving 14 demonstrators and 3 police officers lightly injured. In Egypt, govt. forces reinforce their border, preventing some 250 Palestinians fr. marching to the Rafah crossing. In Cairo, riot police fire tear gas, disperse protesters converging on the Israeli embassy, injuring around 120. On the Gaza border, IDF troops fire live ammunition and artillery at Gazans marching toward the border, wounding at least 125. In the West Bank, IDF troops fire tear gas, rubber-coated steel bullets to disperse around 1,000 stone-throwing Palestinians marching toward the Qalandia crossing (injuring 10s) and violently beat scores of Palestinians marching fr. Palestinian-controlled area A toward Israeli security-controlled area B in Hebron (injuring 10s). A large peaceful rally commemorating the Nakba is held in Ramallah. Numerous smaller and protests clashes are also reported in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; rights groups say some 185 Palestinians have been injured in these clashes over the past 3 days, 153 of them

in Jerusalem. **Netanyahu** accuses the demonstrators of “incitement” and challenging “the very existence of Israel.” Other Israeli officials accuse **Iran** and **Syria** of instigating the Palestinians, noting that Syrian security did nothing to prevent Palestinians fr. approaching the border. (DS, IFM, IsRN, JAZ, JP, MA, YA 5/15; *Christian Science Monitor*, NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 5/16)

Unrelated to the “March to Palestine,” **IDF** troops fired across the border into Gaza, killing a **Palestinian** who allegedly was planting an explosive device. Inside Israel, an **Israeli Palestinian** drives his truck into several cars, a bus, and pedestrians in Tel Aviv, killing **1 Israeli** and injuring 17 in what Israeli police say was a deliberate terrorist attack; the driver, who is arrested, strongly denies deliberately harming anyone, saying he lost control of his vehicle when a tire blew. The **IDF** also patrols in 2 village nr. Qalqilya (arresting 1 Palestinian teenager for throwing stones) and 2 nr. Tulkarm; sends undercover units into Nur al-Shams r.c. nr. Tulkarm late at night,

surrounding and raiding a house and arresting 1 Palestinian; conducts other late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around al-Arubb r.c. and Hebron, and nr. Salfit. **Jewish settlers** fr. Kiryat Arba settlement in Hebron throw 4 Molotov cocktails at a nearby Palestinian home, causing minor damage. **Israel** resumes transferring **VAT taxes** to the PA (see 5/1), having received PA assurances that none of the money would be accessible to Hamas under the new Fatah-Hamas unity deal, but warning that it would reconsider suspending transfers if Hamas was allowed to join a PA govt. (NYT 5/16; PCHR 5/19; OCHA 5/20)

At quarter’s end, fierce fighting is ongoing in **Libya** and NATO intervention continues. Rebel-held areas increasingly report shortages of food and medical supplies. No reliable figures on casualties are available since independent media access and communications are extremely difficult. Deaths are thought to be well into the 1,000s and perhaps as high as 10,000. (WP 5/16; REU 6/9)

CHRONOLOGY SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	(Agence France-Presse, Paris)
AP	(Associated Press [Internet])
DPA	(Deutsche-Press Agentur, [Internet])
DS	(<i>Daily Star</i> , Beirut)
HA	(<i>Ha’Aretz</i> [Internet], Tel Aviv)
IFM	(Israeli Foreign Ministry, Jerusalem)
IsRN	(Israel Radio News [Internet])
JAZ	(al-Jazeera Satellite Channel Television, Doha)
JP	(<i>Jerusalem Post</i> [Internet], Jerusalem)
JPI	(<i>Jerusalem Post International Edition</i> , Jerusalem)
JTA	(Jewish Telegraphic Agency [Internet])
MA	(<i>Ma’ariv</i> , Tel Aviv)
MNA	(Ma’an News Agency, Bethlehem)
NYT	(<i>New York Times</i> , New York)
OCHA	(United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Weekly Briefing Notes, Jerusalem)
PCHR	(Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Gaza)
REU	(Reuters [Internet])
SANA	(Syrian Arab News Agency, Damascus)
UNIS	(United Nations Information Service, Geneva)
Wafa	(Palestine News Agency)
WJW	(<i>Washington Jewish Week</i> , Rockville, MD)
WP	(<i>Washington Post</i> , Washington)
WT	(<i>Washington Times</i> , Washington)
XIN	(Xinhua–New China News Agency, Beijing)
YA	(<i>Yedi’ot Abaronot</i> , Tel Aviv)