



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION REPORT

# OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

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6 AUGUST 2009

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## Preface

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- i This Country of Origin Information Report (COI Report) has been produced by COI Service, United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA), for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. The Report provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. The main body of the report includes information available 15 June 2009. The 'Latest News' section contains further brief information on events and reports accessed 16 June 2009. The report was issued 6 August 2009.
- ii The Report is compiled wholly from material produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources and does not contain any UKBA opinion or policy. All information in the Report is attributed, throughout the text, to the original source material, which is made available to those working in the asylum/human rights determination process.
- iii The Report aims to provide a brief summary of the source material identified, focusing on the main issues raised in asylum and human rights applications. It is not intended to be a detailed or comprehensive survey. For a more detailed account, the relevant source documents should be examined directly.
- iv The structure and format of the COI Report reflects the way it is used by UKBA decision makers and appeals presenting officers, who require quick electronic access to information on specific issues and use the contents page to go directly to the subject required. Key issues are usually covered in some depth within a dedicated section, but may also be referred to briefly in several other sections. Some repetition is therefore inherent in the structure of the Report.
- v The information included in this COI Report is limited to that which can be identified from source documents. While every effort is made to cover all relevant aspects of a particular topic, it is not always possible to obtain the information concerned. For this reason, it is important to note that information included in the Report should not be taken to imply anything beyond what is actually stated. For example, if it is stated that a particular law has been passed, this should not be taken to imply that it has been effectively implemented unless stated.
- vi As noted above, the Report is a collation of material produced by a number of reliable information sources. In compiling the Report, no attempt has been made to resolve discrepancies between information provided in different source documents. For example, different source documents often contain different versions of names and spellings of individuals, places and political parties, etc. COI Reports do not aim to bring consistency of spelling, but to reflect faithfully the spellings used in the original source documents. Similarly, figures given in different source documents sometimes vary and these are simply quoted as per the original text. The term 'sic' has been used in this document only to denote incorrect spellings or typographical errors in quoted text; its use is not intended to imply any comment on the content of the material.

- vii The Report is based substantially upon source documents issued during the previous two years. However, some older source documents may have been included because they contain relevant information not available in more recent documents. All sources contain information considered relevant at the time this Report was issued.
- viii This COI Report and the accompanying source material are public documents. All COI Reports are published on the RDS section of the Home Office website and the great majority of the source material for the Report is readily available in the public domain. Where the source documents identified in the Report are available in electronic form, the relevant web link has been included, together with the date that the link was accessed. Copies of less accessible source documents, such as those provided by government offices or subscription services, are available from the COI Service upon request.
- ix COI Reports are published regularly on the top 20 asylum intake countries. COI Key Documents are produced on lower asylum intake countries according to operational need. UKBA officials also have constant access to an information request service for specific enquiries.
- x In producing this COI Report, COI Service has sought to provide an accurate, balanced summary of the available source material. Any comments regarding this Report or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to UKBA as below.

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#### **INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP ON COUNTRY INFORMATION**

- xi The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency to make recommendations to him about the content of the UKBA's country of origin information material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on UKBA's COI Reports, COI Key Documents and other country of origin information material. Information about the IAGCI's work can be found on the Chief Inspector's website at <http://www.ociukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- xii In the course of its work, the IAGCI reviews the content of selected UKBA COI documents and makes recommendations specific to those documents and of a more general nature. A list of the COI Reports and other documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI or the Advisory Panel on Country Information (the independent organisation which monitored UKBA's COI material from September 2003 to October 2008) is available at <http://www.ociukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

- xiii Please note: it is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any UKBA material or procedures. Some of the material examined by the Group relates to countries designated or proposed for designation to the Non-Suspensive Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Group's work should not be taken to imply any endorsement of the decision or proposal to designate a particular country for NSA, nor of the NSA process itself.

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## Latest News

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### EVENTS IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES FROM 16 JUNE TO 5 AUGUST 2009

- 5 August      A Palestinian man was killed and seven others injured in a tunnel under the border between Egypt and the southern Gaza Strip. This follows a death of another man also in a tunnel on 3 August. The death toll from tunnel-related accidents since Israel imposed a siege on the Gaza Strip in 2007 is now 112.  
 Ma'an News Agency (MNA), Gaza man electrocuted to death in smuggling tunnel, 5 August 2009  
<http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=217012>  
 Date accessed 5 August 2009
- 3 August      Fatah will endorse a two-state solution but keep the option of "armed struggle" with Israel, when the movement holds a congress on Tuesday. More than 2,000 delegates convening for the first time in 20 years will seek in three days of talks to adopt a programme that distinguishes Fatah from Islamist Hamas which has rejected Western demands to renounce violence and recognise Israel  
 Reuters, Fatah congress to keep "armed struggle" option, 3 Aug 2009  
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L379839.htm>  
 Date accessed 3 August 2009
- 2 August      Israel eased travel restrictions on Palestinians in Hebron, opening a road to Palestinian traffic for the first time in nine years. The route -- known to Palestinians as Jaber Road and to Israelis as Tsir Hebron -- - would be open only to Palestinian motorists who live in the Hebron area.  
 Reuters, Israel opens West Bank road to Palestinian traffic, 2 August 2009,  
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L2471894.htm>  
 Date accessed 3 August 2009
- Israeli police evicted two Palestinian families from homes in Arab East Jerusalem and Jews moved in, despite pressure from Israel's main ally, the United States, to freeze settlements.  
 Reuters, Israel evicts two Arab families in East Jerusalem, 2 August 2009  
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L2430020.htm>  
 Date accessed 3 August 2009
- Hamas officials warned that members of Fatah who fled the Gaza Strip to attend a key Fatah conference, to be held in Bethlehem in the West Bank this week, will be arrested and tried upon their return.  
 MidEast Daily News, Hamas: Fatah Members who Fled Gaza Will be Arrested, 2 August 2009  
[http://www.themedialine.org/news/news\\_mideast\\_daily.asp?Date=08/02/2009&category\\_id=8](http://www.themedialine.org/news/news_mideast_daily.asp?Date=08/02/2009&category_id=8)  
 Date accessed 3 August 2009
- 1 August      Fatah said it would hold a long-awaited conference, which is seen as a chance to reform the party, on 4 August. This will be despite the absence of Fatah delegates from the Gaza Strip, who will be only be permitted to travel by Hamas on condition that hundreds of Hamas activists in the West Bank are released.

Reuters, Fatah to hold congress despite Hamas ban, 1 August 2009  
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L1340182.htm>  
 Date accessed 1 August 2009

31 July The leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, threatened to boycott reconciliation talks with Fatah unless his supporters detained in the West Bank are released.

Reuters, Hamas threatens to boycott unity talks with Fatah, 31 July 2009  
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LV162873.htm>  
 Date accessed 31 July 2009

27 July Jewish right wing demonstrators plan to launch a large-scale operation in which they will erect 11 new illegal outposts in the Palestinian territories, to commemorate a similar operation in 1946 when 11 settlements were established overnight in the Negev during the British Mandate on Palestine.

Palestine Monitor, Israeli religious rightists make a swift plan to erect 11 new illegal outposts in the West Bank, 27 July 2009  
<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/spip/spip.php?article1021>  
 Date accessed 31 July 2009

With the number of settlers in the West Bank hitting 300,000 for the first time, the population is growing faster than what the Israelis describe as "natural growth." The population is expected to rise even faster in the second half of this year, including 11 new outposts to be set up today. A new Israeli report has shown that the population of settlements has increased by 2.3 percent in the past six months, which is more than twice the rate of population growth within Israel's boundaries.

Palestine News Network, Settler numbers mount to 300,000 while claims of "natural growth" are proven false, 11 new outposts, 27 July 09  
[http://english.pnn.ps/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=6330&Itemid=55](http://english.pnn.ps/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=6330&Itemid=55)  
 Date accessed 3 August 2009

20 July Israeli settlers carried repeated attacks against Palestinian civilians, their farms and vehicles as a retaliation for the evacuation of an illegal settlement outpost in the northern part of the West Bank, which was removed earlier by the Israeli military.

IMEMC & Agencies, Settlers escalate attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank, 20 July 2009  
<http://www.imemc.org/article/61162>  
 Date accessed 21 July 2009

13 July Israeli Foreign Minister, Avigdor Lieberman, has questioned the authority of Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, in an escalating Israeli-Palestinian war of words. Mr Abbas has refused to meet with the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and reiterated his stance that for negotiations on the key issues to resume there must be "a complete halt" to Israeli settlement activity in the occupied West Bank. Mr Netanyahu repeated demands for Palestinians to explicitly recognise Israel as a Jewish state, calling this "the key to peace."

BBC News, Israel FM queries Abbas authority, 13 July 2009  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/8147477.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/8147477.stm)  
 Date accessed 17 July 2009



- 3 July            The Rafah crossing on the Gaza-Egypt border opened briefly on 25, 26 and 27 June allowing Gaza patients in need of emergency care, students, and foreign visa holders to exit.  
IRIN, OPT: Gaza-Egypt crossing to open three days a month, 2 July 2009  
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85098>  
Date accessed 6 July 2009
- 30 June            A new report by the International Committee of the Red Cross paints a grim picture of life in the Gaza Strip: insufficient housing, damaged infrastructure, limited access to clean water and the discharge of raw sewage into the sea.  
IRIN, ISRAEL-OPT: By the numbers, 30 June 2009  
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85052>  
Date accessed 6 July 2009
- 17 June            Former US President Jimmy Carter has said he had to "hold back tears" while viewing destruction on a visit to Gaza.  
BBC News, Carter 'distressed' by Gaza visit, 17 June 2009  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/8102631.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/8102631.stm)  
Date accessed 17 June 2009

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## REPORTS ON THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES PUBLISHED OR ACCESSED BETWEEN 16 JUNE TO 5 AUGUST 2009

**Minority Rights Group International (MRG)** <http://www.minorityrights.org/>

**State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2009, 16 July 2009**

<http://www.minorityrights.org/7948/state-of-the-worlds-minorities/state-of-the-worlds-minorities-and-indigenous-peoples-2009.html>

Date accessed 17 July 2009

**International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** <http://www.icrc.org/eng>

**Gaza: 1.5 million people trapped in despair, 29 June 2009**

Six months after the end of Israel's military operation in Gaza, the people living there find themselves unable to rebuild their lives and are sliding ever deeper into despair, [http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/palestine-report-260609/\\$File/gaza-report-ICRC-eng.pdf](http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/palestine-report-260609/$File/gaza-report-ICRC-eng.pdf)

Date accessed 12 June 2009

**Human Rights Watch** <http://www.hrw.org/en/home>

**Israel: Stop Demolishing Palestinian Homes, 12 June 2009**

The Israeli government should immediately stop demolishing Palestinian homes and property in the West Bank and compensate the people it has displaced.

<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/06/12/israel-stop-demolishing-palestinian-homes>

Date accessed 12 June 2009

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## Background information

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### GEOGRAPHY

- 1.01 For the purpose of this report the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) are formed of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. (*The United Kingdom (UK) Government does not recognise the OPTs as an independent state and their permanent status has yet to be agreed. It is also the view of UK Government that the status of the whole of Jerusalem remains to be determined.* (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Geographical Names & Information, April 2009) [5b] (p27) Europaonline, undated, accessed on 20 May 2009, stated that:

“The West Bank lies to the west of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, with the Israel to the north, west and south. The Gaza Strip lies on the easternmost coast of the Mediterranean Sea, with Israel to the north and east, and Egypt to the south [see [map](#) at 1.08]. The Interim Agreement of September 1995 provides for the creation of a corridor, or safe passage, linking the Gaza Strip with the West Bank. A ‘southern’ safe passage between Hebron and Gaza was opened in October 1999 (although it has been closed since October 2000). Including East Jerusalem, the West Bank covers an area of 5,655 sq km. The Gaza Strip covers an area of 365 sq km.” [1a] (Country Profile-Location)

- 1.02 The same source observed:

“... the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip concluded in September 1995... divided the West Bank into three zones: Areas A, B and C.... By October 2000 approximately 17.2% of the West Bank (Area A) was under sole Palestinian jurisdiction and security control, although Israel retained authority over access to and from the zone; about 23.8% (Area B) was under Israeli military control, with the [Palestinian Authority] PA responsible for civil administration and public order; the remaining 59% (Area C) remained under Israeli military occupation. Israel implemented its unilateral Disengagement Plan, according to which it dismantled Israeli military installations and settlements in the Gaza Strip, and withdrew from four settlements in the West Bank, in August–September 2005. The total area of the territory over which the PA will eventually assume control, and the extent of its jurisdiction there, remain subject to ‘final status’ talks.” [1b] (Country Profile-Government)

See [map](#) at paragraph 1.08 for depiction of A, B and C (H1/H2) zones within the West Bank and [An Introduction to the City of Hebron.htm](#) for the distinction between "H1" and "H2". See also [Political system](#).

- 1.03 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza speak Arabic (Europa World accessed 20 May 2009) [1a] (Country Profile-Location, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital) although English is widely spoken (Foreign and Commonwealth Office profile, 17 October 2007) [5a] In Ethnologue.com Languages of the World, dated 2005, there are listed six languages for the West Bank and Gaza strip, of these four (three dialects of Arabic and Domari) are living languages and two are extinct. [40a]

1.04 The population of the West Bank is approximately 2.35 million and Gaza Strip 1.3 million. There were 210,000 Palestinians and 190,000 Israelis in East Jerusalem. (US State Department Report 2008) [15b] There are around 1.7 million UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) registered Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza. [39a] (p105) The Palestinian Media Center (PMC) in a report "Palestinian Refugees: Past and Present", 17 September 2008, stated that "The majority of Palestinian refugees are displaced within their own homeland or in neighboring countries. Nearly 42% of the refugee population (UNRWA registered) lives in Jordan. Approximately 39% live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, comprising nearly 50% of the population in those areas, and about 18% live in Syria and Lebanon. UNRWA today has 61 refugee camps operating throughout the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, and unfortunately more than a third of registered Palestinian refugees still live in those camps today. The remaining refugee population is scattered throughout the world, including other Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Kuwait, and European countries such as Germany." [52a]

1.05 The majority of Palestinians in the OPTs are Muslim, with a Christian minority representing about 2% of the population. This minority, in turn, represents about 45% of all Palestinian Christians (Europa World accessed 26 January 2009) [1a] (Country Profile-Location, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital)

(See Survey of Palestinian Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons 2006-2007 [Survey2006-2007-Ch2.pdf](#) for further information on size and distribution of the population)

1.06 Europaonline, accessed on 20 May 2009, also stated that:

"Apart from the urban centres of Beit Lahm (Bethlehem) and Al-Khalil (Hebron) to the south, the majority of the Palestinian population is concentrated in the northern localities around Ram Allah (Ramallah), Nablus (Nablus), Jenin (Jenin) and Tulkarm... Gaza City is the main population centre and the centre of administration for the Palestinian (National) Authority (PA), appointed in May 1994. Ramallah is the PA's administrative centre in the West Bank. In November 1988 the Palestine National Council (PNC) proclaimed Jerusalem as the capital of the newly declared independent State of Palestine. Israel also declares Jerusalem as its capital (in 1967 East Jerusalem was formally annexed by the Israeli authorities, although the annexation has never been recognized by the UN). The permanent status of Jerusalem remains subject to negotiation on so-called 'final status' issues under the Oslo accords." [1a] (Country Profile-Location, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital)

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## MAPS

## 1.07 United Nations Cartographic Section (UNCS) reference map of January 2004:



[2a] <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/israel.pdf>

- 1.08 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)  
West Bank: Oslo agreement (Jul 2005): (Also see [paragraph 1.02](#) et seq and [paragraph 6.01](#))



[3a] [Reliefweb](#) : West Bank: Oslo agreement (Jul 2005)



[3g] OCHA : Access and Movement to and from The Gaza Strip, (June 2009)

1.09 The following maps provide further information and background.

**Map 1** - South Eastern Mediterranean - General Area.

<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/mideastr.pdf>

**Map 2** - Israel - As it is now.

<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/israel.pdf>

**Map 3** - Palestine - Palestinian perspectives.

<http://www.palestine-net.com/tourism/pics/pmap1.gif>

**Map 4** - UNRWA Area of Operations - The Whole Area.

<http://mondediplo.com/maps/palestinianrefugees200002>

**Map 5** - West Bank & Gaza - Oslo II. - As Proposed.

[http://www.iris.org.il/oslo\\_2000.htm](http://www.iris.org.il/oslo_2000.htm)

**Map 6** - General - Foundation for Middle East Peace

<http://www.fmep.org/maps/all-maps>

**Map 7 – OCHA – General OPtS**

[http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section\\_id=96&format=html](http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section_id=96&format=html)

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## ECONOMY

- 2.01 The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in its undated 2008 overview of the economic situation in the OPT stated that:

“Palestinians have experienced a dramatic decline in their living standards and a regression of the economy due to internal and external movement restrictions, limited control over natural resources, restricted access to local and international markets, limited access of Palestinian labourers to their former work in Israel and low rates of economic production.

“The West Bank barrier construction is isolating thousands of people from their land, dividing communities and restricting access to essential services. The restriction on internal movements within the West Bank is contributing to the collapse of an already fragile economy and is threatening the population's food security.

“In the Gaza Strip, the situation is the most critical. The food security of its 1.5 million people has been steadily deteriorating since Israeli sanctions in June 2007 including a suspension of all exports, a decrease of imports and tight restrictions on the type of goods permitted to enter through crossings -- frequently closed by Israel on security grounds, citing Gaza-based militant attacks. [7a]

- 2.02 In general agreement with the WFP the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) July 2008 reported that:

“The economy of the occupied Palestinian territory stagnated in 2007 and failed to recover from the 2006 contraction. As a result, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita continued its downward trend and poverty deepened. If it were not for the resumption of foreign aid in the second half of 2007, GDP would have contracted for the second year in a row. The construction of the separation barrier, the Israeli closure policy and the erosion of productive capacity continued to prevent recovery and entrenched 'redevelopment'. The economic gap between the West Bank and Gaza has widened as a result of recent political developments and the tight closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.” [8a] (p1)

- 2.03 The UNCTAD report also noted:

“The trend in employment broadly mirrors that in GDP. The unemployment rate in 2007 was 29 per cent, as compared with 21 per cent in 1999. Unemployment is much higher in the isolated Gaza Strip and is likely to deteriorate further... Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) data show that the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip in 2007 was 35.2 per cent, as compared with 24.5 per cent in the West Bank. Declining employment opportunities in the private sector put pressure on the Palestinian Authority to expand public employment and subsidies as safety valves to ensure social stability despite the high fiscal cost. Public employment expanded by 59 per cent between 1999 and 2006, although it declined slightly in 2007.” [8a] (p4)

- 2.04 The Department for International Development (DFID) profile of the OPTs, updated in January 2009, observed that average per capita income was US\$1,200 based on 2007 figures. [42a] (Key facts) While the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, in the latest figures available to 2007, gave the average

daily wage in the Palestinian territories as 74.4 New Israeli Shekels (ILS) [6a]  
around £11.50 as of June 2009. ([XE.com](http://XE.com)) [46]

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## HISTORY

See also [Annex A: Chronology](#)

### THE PALESTINE MANDATE: 1917 - 1947

- 3.01 The United Nations, Division for Palestinian Rights in its report '[The Question of Palestine](#)' updated 2008 (UNDP Report 2008) stated that:

"The Palestine problem became an international issue towards the end of the First World War with the disintegration of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. Palestine was among the several former Ottoman Arab territories which were placed under the administration of Great Britain under the Mandates System adopted by the League of Nations pursuant to the League's Covenant. All but one of these Mandated Territories became fully independent States, as anticipated. The exception was Palestine where, instead of being limited to 'the rendering of administrative assistance and advice' the Mandate had as a primary objective the implementation of the 'Balfour Declaration' issued by the British Government in 1917, expressing support for 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'. [4a]

- 3.02 The same source continued:

"During the years of the Palestine Mandate, from 1922 to 1947, large-scale Jewish immigration from abroad, mainly from Eastern Europe took place, the numbers swelling in the 1930s with the notorious Nazi persecution of Jewish populations. Palestinian demands for independence and resistance to Jewish immigration led to a rebellion in 1937, followed by continuing terrorism and violence from both sides during and immediately after World War II. Great Britain tried to implement various formulas to bring independence to a land ravaged by violence. In 1947, Great Britain in frustration turned the problem over to the United Nations". [4a]

### ARAB/ISRAELI WARS AND PALESTINIAN REFUGEES: 1948 - 1987

- 3.03 The UNDP Report 2008 stated that in 1948 "After looking at various alternatives, the UN proposed the partitioning of Palestine into two independent States, one Palestinian Arab and the other Jewish, with Jerusalem internationalised". [4a] The website MidEastWeb for Coexistence recorded that "The Arabs did not accept the partition and war broke out... The Arab states refused to recognize Israel or make peace with it." [10a] The UNDP Report 2008 added "Over half the indigenous Palestinian population fled or were expelled. Jordan and Egypt occupied the other parts of the territory assigned by the partition resolution to the Palestinian Arab State which did not come into being". [4a]

- 3.04 The United Nations, in its 2008 booklet [The Question of Palestine and the United Nations – Ch10](#) stated that:

"The hostilities that accompanied the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 led to the flight of some 750,000 refugees from Palestine. Most of these refugees fled to the West Bank, then held by Jordan, to the Gaza Strip, held by Egypt, and to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and even further afield. The Arab-Israeli war of 1967 led to yet another displacement, this time of more than

500,000 Palestinians, nearly half of whom were refugees uprooted for a second time.

“The General Assembly adopted, in November 1948, its first resolution on providing assistance to Palestine refugees. In response to a report by acting mediator Ralph Bunche that ‘the situation of the refugees is now critical’, it established United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRPR). During its brief existence, UNRPR channelled emergency assistance to refugees from Palestine through international voluntary agencies.

“On 11 December 1948, the General Assembly declared in resolution 194 (III) that refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date and that those choosing not to return should be compensated for their property. The resolution established the Conciliation Commission for Palestine, which was requested, among other things, to facilitate the refugees’ repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation. Efforts by the Commission to secure the return of the Palestinians have been unsuccessful.” [39a]

- 3.05 B'TSELEM - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories - stated, in an undated entry, on its website:

“Between 1948 and June of 1967, Jerusalem was divided in two: West Jerusalem, which covered an area of about 38 square kilometres, was under Israeli control, and East Jerusalem, which contained an area of some 6 sq. km, was ruled by Jordan. In June 1967, following the 1967 War, Israel annexed some 70 sq. km [adjacent] to the municipal boundaries of West Jerusalem, and imposed Israeli law there ....” [25a]

- 3.06 The UNDP 2008 noted “In the 1967 war, Israel occupied the remaining territory of Palestine, until then under Jordanian and Egyptian control the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The war brought about a second exodus of Palestinians, estimated at half a million”. [4a]

- 3.07 B'TSELEM continued:

“Prior to 1967, therefore, most of the area comprising present-day Jerusalem was not part of the city (West or East), but rather part of the West Bank... In setting the borders, the committee's objective was to strengthen Israeli sovereignty over the city by creating a Jewish majority. Thus, demographic considerations were decisive, and planning considerations were only of secondary importance. In order to ensure a significant Jewish majority, the primary consideration was to prevent the inclusion of heavily-populated Palestinian areas within Jerusalem.” [25a]

- 3.08 The website MidEastWeb for Coexistence, in an undated entry, noted that further wars between Israel and neighbouring Arab states occurred “... in 1956, 1967, 1973 and 1982, and there were many terror raids and Israeli reprisals. Each side believes different versions of the same history. Each side views the conflict as wholly the fault of the other and expects an apology”. [10a]

- 3.09 The UNDP 2008 report stated “In December 1987, a mass uprising against the Israeli occupation began in the occupied Palestinian territory (the (1st) intifada). Methods used by the Israeli forces during the uprising resulted in mass injuries and heavy loss of life among the civilian Palestinian population”. [4a]

For more information please refer to the United Nations Study ‘*The Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem*’ dated 30 June 1990 [39b]

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## THE PEACE PROCESS: 1991 TO PRESENT

- 3.10 The United Nations, Division for Palestinian Rights in its report ‘*The Question of Palestine*’ updated 2008 (UNDP 2008) stated that:

“A Peace Conference on the Middle East was convened in Madrid on 30 October 1991, with the aim of achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement through direct negotiations along 2 tracks: between Israel and the Arab States, and between Israel and the Palestinians, based on the ‘land for peace’ formula. A series of subsequent negotiations culminated in the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the representative of the Palestinian People and subsequent implementation agreements, led to several other positive developments, such as the partial withdrawal of Israeli forces, the elections to the Palestinian Council and the presidency of the Palestinian Authority, the partial release of prisoners and the establishment of a functioning administration in the areas under Palestinian self-rule”. [4a]

- 3.11 The UNDP 2008 report noted:

“During the past years, there has been increasing concern at the stalemate in the peace negotiations and the United Nations was called upon to deal with the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. There has been increasing alarm at acts of violence against civilians, the position and actions of the Government of Israel with regard to Jerusalem, the expansion of settlements, land confiscation and punitive collective measures which were seriously undermining the peace efforts”. [4a]

Please refer to the UN leaflet ‘*The Question of Palestine and the United Nations*’ of March 2003 [39c] for more information on the subject.

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## Oslo Accords – September 1993

- 3.12 Palestine Facts website accessed 2 February 2009 stated that:

“On September 13, 1993 representatives of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed the ‘Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements’, a document also known as the ‘Oslo Accords’. They were signed at a Washington ceremony hosted by US President Bill Clinton on September 13, 1993, during which Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ended decades as

sworn enemies with an uneasy handshake. This agreement was the fruit of secret negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, represented by the PLO, following the Madrid Conference in 1991. [11a]

3.13 The same source continued:

“The Oslo Accords contain a set of mutually agreed-upon general principles regarding a five year interim period of Palestinian self-rule. So-called ‘permanent status issues’ are deferred to later negotiations, to begin no later than the third year of the interim period. The permanent status negotiations were intended to lead to an agreement that would be implemented to take effect at the end of the interim period”. [11a]

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### Camp David Summit – July 2000

3.14 Peace with Realism, in its 2005 report ‘Camp David 2000’ reported that the Camp David Summit took place on July 11-25, 2000. In attendance were U.S. President Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, Yasser Arafat, and their negotiating teams. The summit failed to bring the two sides to agreement.

“It is important to clarify at the outset that the Camp David process did not end at Camp David. More than just a place, ‘Camp David 2000’ refers to the ‘final status negotiations’ that were supposed to have concluded the Oslo peace process. These negotiations began at Camp David and produced a number of concessions that the Palestinians rejected. The negotiations continued, however, and culminated in Washington, December 2000, in a set of recommendations the Clinton team put together that was felt best to meet the needs of both sides. Israel accepted the plan in principle, the Palestinians did not. In January 2001 there was a final meeting in Taba, Egypt, but it failed to produce any breakthroughs”. [12a]

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### AL-AQSA INTIFADA (SECOND UPRISING) AND ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE GAZA STRIP: 2000 TO 2005

3.15 The Journal of Conflict Studies, in a 2003 report *The Second Intifada: Background and Causes of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* stated that:

“The reasons for the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada (2nd Intifada) remain complex.

“Conventional wisdom places the blame on one of two central figures, Ariel Sharon or Yasser Arafat. In one version, Sharon, then the leader of the Israeli opposition, started the intifada by going on an intentionally provocative visit to the Temple Mount on 28 September 2000. Alternatively, Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority (PA), decided that the new State of Palestine should be launched in blood and fire; he unleashed Palestinian militants rather than accept a negotiated resolution of the conflict”. [13a]

- 3.16 The website, [GlobalSecurity.org](http://GlobalSecurity.org), on a page last updated in August 2006 noted:

“The Al-Aqsa Intifada began (or was triggered) in September 2000; in response to Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem on September 28th...The violence in September 2000 was preceded by the breakdown in peace talks at Camp David in July 2000. Israelis and American President Bill Clinton blamed PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat for disrupting the negotiations and refusing to allow them to proceed. Arafat claimed that the peace proposal at Camp David would have divided the West Bank into 'Bantustans,' ... Negotiations at Sharm-el-Sheikh in October to end the violence produced the Mitchell Report, considered an authoritative report on the Al-Aqsa Intifada. The report blamed both the Israelis and the Palestinians for the violence.... Attempts to negotiate cease fires in August 2002 and September 2002 failed, as extremist groups were unwilling to participate and Israeli security forces incited Palestinians by killing Salah Shehadeh, head of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (the military wing of Hamas) along with 13 civilians in a targeted assassination. Throughout 2002 and 2003, Israel used such targeted assassinations to respond to suicide bombings and the violence continued”. [14a]

See US State Statement Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee Report ([Mitchell Report](#)), 30 April 2001 [15a]

- 3.17 The same source continued:

“The Israeli government during 2003 began construction of a security barrier (or fence) to cut off the West Bank from Israel proper. The barrier was originally planned to run along the Green Line (Israel's pre-1967 border) but under Sharon's plan, the barrier would encompass some major Israeli settlements within the West Bank. In addition to the security fence plan, Sharon began to advocate for unilateral Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip settlements and from some settlements in the West Bank... In November 2004, Yasir Arafat died and many thought that new opportunities for peace would come from his death. In January 2005, Mahmoud Abbas was elected President of the PNA and met with Sharon at Sharm-el-Sheikh in February 2005. Both sides announced an end to the violence. The Israeli parliament approved the disengagement plan during the same month. In March 2005, militant groups agreed to a tahideyah (lull in the fighting). While not a full truce, this was considered major progress and some have argued that it marked the end of the Al-Aqsa Intifada”. [14a]

See [the Separation Wall](#) below

- 3.18 GlobalSecurity.org reported in August 2006 that in July 2005 the truce was broken by a suicide bombing in Netanya, which led to raids by the Israeli Defence Force into the West Bank. Hamas responded with rocket fire from the Gaza Strip. [14a]
- 3.19 B'TSELEM observed in an undated entry with regard to Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip:

“In September 2005, Israel completed the 'Gaza disengagement plan' that had been approved by the government and the Knesset. The two primary components of the plan were dismantling of the Gaza settlements and moving

the settlers to Israeli territory and removal of all IDF forces from the area. After the plan was completed, Israel issued an order declaring the end of the military government in the Gaza Strip, and claimed that it was no longer responsible for ensuring the proper functioning of life there.” [25b]

3.20 Globalsecurity.org, noted in an entry dated August 2006:

“... Hamas was victorious in Palestinian elections held in January 2006 and Olmert's Kadima Party retained power in Israeli elections in March 2006.

“Hamas continued to launch rockets from the Gaza Strip and on June 25th, 2006 captured an Israeli corporal after killing two other Israeli soldiers in a raid attacking an Israeli border post near Gaza. Hamas's incursion into Israel led to Operation Summer Rains a major thrust into Gaza.” [14a]

3.21 The same source also noted “The Al-Aqsa Intifada never officially ended and it is debatable whether the events after February 2005 should be considered part of the uprising or as independent events. From September 2000 until February 2005, approximately 3,000-3,300 Palestinians were killed and approximately 950-1010 Israelis were killed”. [14a]

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### PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY (PNA) – 1996 TO 2007

3.22 The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia, undated, accessed on 7 May 2009, stated that:

“The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the self-rule government of the Palestinians, was first elected on Jan. 20, 1996. Palestinians over the age of 18 who were not citizens of Israel residing in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem were eligible to vote. The elections were held under terms of an accord signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on Sept. 28, 1995. PLO chief Yasir Arafat won the presidency with 87.1% of the vote. Members of his Fatah wing of the PLO captured about 75% of the seats in the new 88-member Palestinian Legislative Council. The new government took office on Feb. 11, 1996.” [43a]

3.23 The same source also noted:

“In March 2003 the Palestinian legislature approved Arafat's selection of his deputy, Mahmoud Abbas, as the first prime minister of the PNA. The prime minister would head the cabinet and have responsibility for the day-to-day running of the government. The PNA's responsibilities were spelled out in a series of accords on Palestinian self-rule signed by Israel and the PLO since 1993. PNA ministries controlled the Palestinian school system, banks, a television station, courts, taxation, and the postal service. They also performed various services, such as issuing passports and automobile license plates. The PNA commanded a Palestinian police force as well; that authority was charged with keeping the peace in the parts of the formerly Israeli-occupied territories that gradually came under Palestinian self-rule.” [43a]

3.24 The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia also stated that:



“In September 2004 a drive was launched to register voters for three-stage, yearlong elections for municipal councils (the first since 1976) that were to begin in December 2004. This plan was postponed due to Arafat's death on Nov. 11, 2004. It did, however, lead to a voter-registration campaign under which 71% of eligible Palestinian citizens had joined the rolls by early December 2004. It also paved the way for a new presidential election to replace Arafat as head of the PNA. In the Jan. 9, 2005, presidential election, Abbas captured 62.3% of the vote As president, Abbas pledged to reform the PNA.” [43a]

3.25 The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia further stated that:

“Abbas had sought to co-opt Palestinian extremists by including them in the government. As a result, Hamas had drawn a significant share of the vote in the 2005 municipal elections. Most observers had expected Fatah to win the Jan. 25, 2006, legislative elections by a narrow majority. But voters had grown disgusted with Fatah's incompetence and corruption. Hamas scored a sweeping victory, garnering 76 of 132 seats in an expanded legislature. Fatah refused an invitation to join the new government, although Abbas remained president. The new Hamas-dominated PNA government indicated that it would be willing to extend the nearly yearlong informal truce with Israel. It pointedly refused, however, to acknowledge Israel's right to exist.” [43a]

3.26 The same source noted that Ismail Haniya, a Hamas leader in Gaza, became the PNA's new prime minister with the new Hamas cabinet sworn in on 29 March 2006. [43a]

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### Disintegration of the PNA in 2006

3.27 MidEastWeb for Coexistence, accessed 18 September 2008 in its *Modern Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Arab-Israeli Conflict) - A brief history* recounts that following Hamas election victory in January 2006

“The international community suspended aid to the Hamas-led PNA (Palestinian National Authority) government, causing an acute financial crisis... International donors eventually agreed on a mechanism for disbursing funds through Palestinian NGOs and for paying salaries directly to employees, and on June 24, EU donors announced a 105 million Euro aid package that would be distributed by this method. By the end of June however, Palestinians had apparently received only some partial salary payments from the cash smuggled by the Hamas.

“Hamas formed a new security militia headed by Jamil Abu Samhadana, leader of the Palestinian Popular Resistance Committees. This security force was declared illegal by President Mahmoud Abbas, who organized yet another Fatah-based militia. Fighting between Hamas and Fatah broke out, including killings and kidnappings of officials on both sides. Life in Gaza became increasingly chaotic, as Palestinian rights organizations documented a steady stream of internecine political violence, criminal violence and random killings”.

“Palestinians continued an almost daily rain of Qassam rockets on Israeli towns within the green line, (This line demarcated the borders between Israel and the West Bank and Gaza Strip as recognized by the international community in 1949) in particular, the little town of Sderot. At the same time, Israel continued arrests and targeted killings of terrorist leaders whom it claimed were planning attacks, and in return the Islamic Jihad and Hamas vowed revenge”. [10b]

3.28 The same source noted:

“On November 26 [2006], the Palestinians and Israelis announced a surprise truce that was to apply only to the Gaza strip. Despite continuation of Qassam fire by the Palestinians for several days thereafter, Israel held to the truce. On the day following the truce announcement, November 27, Israeli PM Ehud Olmert announced a new Israeli diplomatic initiative offering peace to the Palestinians and other neighbors ... Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas welcomed the speech, while Hamas leaders and Israeli extremists condemned it.... The truce was violated repeatedly in Gaza by barrages of Qassam rockets fired at Israeli towns. [10b]

3.29 In the same document, MidEastWeb further noted that despite their differences

“... negotiations continued to form a Palestinian unity government that could, it was hoped, recognize the existence of Israel, cease violent activity, get recognition from the West and allow Western governments to resume funding of the Palestinian authority ... but the negotiations failed. On December 16, Mahmoud Abbas announced that he was dissolving the government and calling for new elections, unless Hamas agreed to a unity government ... This proposal led to renewed violence between Palestinian factions ... An attempted truce failed. However, on February 8, 2007, under the aegis of the Saudi monarchy, the sides concluded an agreement to form a unity government... Isolated incidents of mayhem against civilians and fights between Hamas and Fatah supporters continued and escalated in Gaza in 2006 and the first part of 2007, accompanied by daily firing of Qassam rockets on Sderot...In June of 2007, serious fighting erupted after a Fatah activist supposedly launched a rocket-propelled grenade into the house of Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of the Hamas in Gaza. Hamas forces retaliated by attacking the much more numerous Fatah activists and Fatah-affiliated Palestinian police and auxiliary forces in Gaza. Though Hamas forces were estimated at less than 3,000, and the Fatah forces supposedly numbered about 40,000, Hamas systematically pushed Fatah from virtually every one of their strongholds ... Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas, headquartered in the West Bank, hesitated, but faced with a revolt by Fatah personnel in the West Bank, he gave the order to counter attack. Nonetheless the collapse of the Fatah in Gaza continued. On June 14, Mahmoud Abbas dismissed the Gaza-based unity government and announced that would be forming a new government of independent technocrats. The Hamas officials in Gaza continued to claim that they are the legitimate government ...In the West Bank, Fatah militants and police began arresting Hamas officials and Hamas militants and terrorists. The United States and the European Union expressed support for Mahmoud Abbas. The foreign ministers of the Arab states expressed support for Abbas, but at the

same time called for reconstitution of the unity government ... Hamas' popularity in Gaza declined sharply as living conditions worsened due to the Israeli and international blockade..." [10b]

3.30 On the 26-28 November 2007 the same source noted:

"...the United States organized a peace summit in Annapolis which many forecasted would be a failure. Nonetheless, Arab states including Syria attended as well as UN, GCC and EU representatives, Russians, South Africans and others ... The conference provided recognition of Mahmoud Abbas as acknowledged leader of the Palestinians. Israel and the Palestinians agreed to renew negotiations for a permanent status agreement, with the hope of completing them before the end of 2008, and both sides vowed to implement the roadmap in parallel, with the US to monitor progress. No mention was made of the problem posed by Hamas control of Gaza". [10b]

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## ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

3.31 One of the fundamental blocks to a lasting peace within the OPTs remains Israeli settlements in Palestinian designated land. In a report, *Under Attack: Settler Violence against Palestinian Children in the Occupied Territory*, November 2008 by the Defence for Children International - Palestine Section (DCI/PS report) it is recorded that:

"Since the occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip in 1967, successive Israeli governments have supported a policy of settlement building in the Occupied Territory in violation of international law. Today, more than 462,000 settlers live on occupied Palestinian land, of which 41 per cent live in East Jerusalem alone. This figure represents about 20 per cent of the total Palestinian population living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Despite Israel's dismantling of settlements in the Gaza Strip and the evacuation of several settlements in the West Bank in 2005, 121 official settlements and 102 unauthorised outposts remained in the West Bank in 2006, with an additional 10 settlements in East Jerusalem. Many of the families who were evacuated from Gaza in 2005 relocated to the Jordan Valley where the Israeli government recently approved plans to create a new settlement called Maskiot, ending a nine-year moratorium on the building of new settlements." [26a] (p6)

3.32 The DCS/PI report continued:

"During the 1990s, inclusive of the Oslo peace years, the annual growth rate of the settlement population peaked at seven to nine per cent, effectively doubling the settler population over the course of the decade. Israel has failed to respect its own commitments under the U.S.-sponsored Road Map of 2003 to halt settlement building and evacuate outposts set up since March 2001.

"Despite the Israeli government's renewed pledge to freeze settlement-building activity in advance of the recent Annapolis peace summit, in the first six months of 2008 alone Israel oversaw the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem at a faster rate than in the previous seven years and revived previously shelved plans for the Maskiot settlement in the

Jordan Valley. This fact is highlighted in Peace Now's latest report which finds that between January–May 2008 the number of tenders for new housing construction in the West Bank settlements increased by 550 per cent whereas in East Jerusalem alone, there was a 38-fold increase in tenders for new housing construction over the same period in the previous year." [26a] (p7)

3.33 The same source also stated:

"Israel's illegal settlement-building activity, whether motivated by religious ideology or strict political aims, violates the Palestinians' inalienable right to self-determination and stands as one of the biggest obstacles to peace. The expansion of settlements and growth of the settler population has brought a concurrent increase in settler violence against surrounding Palestinian communities. Most recently, the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem reported an escalation in settler violence which peaked in early August 2008..." [26a] (p7)

3.34 And further stated "With the completion of Israel's dismantling and evacuation of 21 settlements in Gaza in 2005, there no longer remains an Israeli settler population in the Gaza Strip." [26a] (p8)

3.35 Jane's its Sentinel country risk assessment, Gaza and the West Bank, last updated 22 May 2009, stated that "Israel is expected to evacuate a number of smaller settlements due to end up on the Palestinian side of the barrier, which many see as a de facto and unilaterally imposed border. In 2009, it emerged that approval has been given for the construction of an estimated 2,500 new housing units in the West Bank. Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is opposed to the removal of settlements in the West Bank." [28a] (Executive summary)

See also [Section 25: Freedom of movement](#)

### Settler violence

3.36 The OCHA Report, *Unprotected: Israeli settler violence against Palestinian civilians and their property* dated December 2008 stated that:

"For decades, Israeli settler violence has had a significant humanitarian impact on Palestinian civilians in the oPt. It has led to the death and injury of Palestinian civilians, caused displacement in targeted areas, and resulted in extensive damage to Palestinian property and livelihoods. Additionally, it has had a significant psychological impact on victims and witnesses to violence... settler violence is not random criminal activity carried out by rogue settlers acting independently across the West Bank. For the most part, it is organized violence, encouraged by extremist elements of Israeli society and carried out by groups. While some Palestinians experience greater levels of violence than others, due to their proximity to particular settlements, Palestinian communities throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are affected. Of particular concern is that roughly half of those Palestinians that OCHA has recorded as injured by settler violence have been children, women and the elderly." [3c] (p15)

3.37 The same report concluded that: "The ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements, both in terms of area and population, exacerbates the problem of

settler violence by increasing the level of friction between settlers and the Palestinian population. This is particularly problematic, given that, over the course of the past several years, part of the settler population in the West Bank has become increasingly aggressive.” [3c] (p15)

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## The Separation Wall

- 3.38 The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) in a report dated 21 June 2006 stated:

“In June 2002, the Israeli government started the construction of a Wall officially devised to prevent terrorist attacks against Israeli citizens by physically separating Israel and Israeli settlements from the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Israeli Ministry of Defence, April 2005). This Wall consists of an eight-meter concrete construction in some areas (around Qalqiliya, Tulkarm, Bethlehem and East Jerusalem). In other places, it takes the form of a barrier, from 60 to 100 meters wide, which includes buffer zones with trenches and barbed wire, trace paths to register footprints, an electric fence with sensors to warn of any intrusion, a two-lane patrol road and fortified watchtowers at regular intervals (CHR, September 2003, para. 7; OCHA, 7 March 2004, p.2; ICJ, 9 July 2004, para.82). It does not follow the Green Line (the 1949 armistice line generally accepted as the border between the two entities), but penetrates into the OPT, leaving substantial parts of Palestinian territory and some Palestinian communities on the Israeli side (ICJ, 9 July 2004, para. 119; OCHA, September 2005; CHR, August 2005).” [19a](p9)

- 3.39 The United Nations, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in a report, “*Assistance to the Palestinian people*” dated 7 May 2009 noted:

“Barrier construction within the occupied Palestinian territory in deviation from the Green Line continued despite the advisory opinion rendered by the International Court of Justice in July 2004 and the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions ES-10/17 on 15 December 2006. As of August 2008, 57.2 per cent (415 km) of the planned route of the barrier (725 km) had been completed, and 2 km were under construction. The pace of construction has been slow since the previous report, and updated figures are not yet available.” [55a] (p8)

- 3.40 Jane’s Sentinel Risk Assessment, Gaza and the West Bank, updated 22 May 2009, stated that:

“In urban areas and near major roads, the barrier is built of contiguous eight meter high concrete blocks, while in rural areas it is a multi-layer obstacle, made up of ditches, barbed wire, patrol roads, wire fence with intrusion detection sensors and sand run-offs. In a number of areas, the barrier deviates significantly from the 'Green Line' (the 1967 armistice line) but while the structure annexes some seven per cent of the West Bank to Israel, this is less than was previously feared. As of May 2008, some 409 km of the barrier, or 57 per cent of its total projected length of 723 km, had been completed. The construction of the barrier has seen the number of suicide attacks within

Israel drop, but freedom of movement for Palestinians in the West Bank has been dramatically curtailed.” [28a] (Executive Summary)

See [Section 25 – Freedom of Movement, Separation Wall.](#)

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## 4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

4.01 Mideastweb.org noted in its account of events, updated 14 June 2009, that:

“A tour of the Middle East by US President George Bush in January of 2008 apparently failed to achieve support for US Middle East policy goals, which included support for Israeli-Palestinian peace based on negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority controlled by the Fatah. Egypt and Saudi Arabia continued to push for Fatah-Hamas reunification, which would effectively end the peace negotiations. However, Israelis and Palestinians pledged to negotiate seriously regarding ‘core issues’ such as Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees. The Israeli government issued contradictory declarations regarding status of a building freeze in West Bank settlements and areas of East Jerusalem annexed in the Six Day war.... The most obvious obstacle to peace continued to be the Hamas controlled regime in Gaza. Islamic Jihad and Popular Resistance Committee terrorists continued to launch Qassam rockets and mortar fire at the Israeli town of Sderot and other western Negev targets... On February 27, 2008, an Israeli missile strike killed 5 Hamas terrorists who it later claimed were plotting to carry out a large scale terror attack. On the following day, Hamas responded with a barrage of 30 rockets... Israeli-Palestinian negotiations resumed. According to Abbas, the sides were discussing core issues such as the future of Jerusalem, but no details were made public. Israel announced contracts to build housing for settlers in the Har Choma neighborhood of East Jerusalem and other areas in the West Bank, angering Palestinians. This announcement was followed by several contradictory announcements by Israeli government officials regarding settlement expansion policies. In April, Israel removed a number of checkpoints in the West Bank and allowed Palestinian forces to enter Jenin.

“Extensive indirect negotiations brokered by Egypt led to a truce (‘lull’) between Israel and the Hamas went into effect June 19. The lull applies only to Gaza and not to the West Bank. Israel is forbidden to attack within Gaza, Hamas and others are to refrain from rocket and terror attacks on Israel... Despite occasional Qassam rocket fire and mortars, the truce held

“Hamas and affiliated organizations continued to launch rockets into Israel and announced that they would not be renewing the ‘lull’ (tahidia) agreement on December 19. The lull had been negotiated June 19, 2008. Hamas unilaterally announced that it would run for six months only... On December 27, Israel began Operation Oferet Yetzuka. (Operation Cast Lead).” [10b]

### ISRAELI ‘SIEGE’ OF THE OPTS

4.02 The Palestine Monitor (PMC), in an article dated 18 May 2009, stated that:

“The Israeli blockade that has been imposed on Gaza since 2007 has severely limited the Gazan people’s basic food supply. In addition to this, the blockade is causing a water and sanitation crisis by not allowing enough electricity, fuel and replacement parts into the territory so they can keep the infrastructure in working-condition.

“When humanitarian organizations call on Israel to end their hostilities and to lift the blockade, Israel has a standard response—to blame Hamas for the entire population’s suffering.” [33b]

- 4.03 In its weekly update of 13 – 19 November 2008 the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) stated that:

“Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) have continued to impose a tightened siege (border control) on the OPT and imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Occupied East Jerusalem.

**“Gaza Strip**

“IOF have continued to impose a siege on the 1.5 million civilians of the Gaza Strip. The border crossings of the Strip have been closed for more than two years as part of IOF’s collective punishment policy, imposing severe restrictions on the movement of civilians and goods. As a result, the territory is unable to secure its basic needs of food, medicine, and other supplies, pushing the poverty rate above 80%.

“The continued Israeli ban on fuel supplies required for civilian life in the Gaza Strip has led to the paralysis of the educational sector. Healthcare facilities have registered a drop in clients due to the transport crisis, and hundreds of healthcare professionals have been unable to reach their work places.

“The tightened siege has led to the collapse of the Gaza Strip economic sectors. Most production facilities have ceased to operate due to the siege and restriction on movement of goods and individuals” [44a] (p2)

- 4.04 The same source reporting on the West Bank observed:

“IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians throughout the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. Thousands of Palestinian civilians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue to be denied access to Jerusalem. The IOF have established checkpoints in and around Jerusalem, severely restricting Palestinian access to the city. Civilians are frequently prevented from praying at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. There are approximately permanent 630 roadblocks, manned and unmanned checkpoints across the West Bank. In addition, there are some 60-80 ‘flying’ or temporary checkpoints erected across the West Bank by IOF every week.

“When complete, the illegal Annexation Wall will stretch for 724 kilometers around the West Bank, further isolating the entire population. 350 kilometers of the Wall has already been constructed. Approximately 99% of the Wall has been constructed inside the West Bank itself, further confiscating Palestinian land.” [44a] (p3)

See [Section 24: Humanitarian issues](#) and [Section 25 – Freedom of Movement, Separation Wall](#)

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## THE GAZA WAR: DECEMBER 2008 TO FEBRUARY 2009



## Hamas takes control of the Gaza Strip

- 4.05 The Congressional Research Service in its report *Israel and Hamas: Conflict in Gaza 2008 – 2009* dated 15 January 2009 stated that:

“Since Hamas’s inception, it has maintained its primary base of support and particularly strong influence in the Gaza Strip, even though its current political headquarters is in Damascus, Syria. Hamas’s politicization and militarization can be traced to the intifada (‘uprising’) that began in the Gaza Strip in 1987 in resistance to the Israeli occupation. Hamas refuses to recognize the right of Israel to exist, refuses to renounce the use of violence, and refuses to consider itself bound by previous agreements reached by the PLO with Israel.

“Hamas’s victory in January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections set in motion a chain of events that has led to the current crisis. The refusal of the United States, the European Union, and much of the rest of the world to have direct dealings with or to give financial assistance to a Hamas dominated PA cabinet led to a tense standoff that was only temporarily averted by a February 2007 Hamas-Fatah ‘unity agreement’ brokered by Saudi Arabia.

“These tensions contributed to the factional fighting between Hamas and Fatah that led to Hamas’s forcible takeover of the Gaza Strip in June 2007. In response to the Hamas takeover, PA President Abbas dissolved the Hamas led cabinet and appointed a “caretaker” technocratic PA government in the West Bank, leading to renewed U.S. and international assistance for the PA in the West Bank that prompted Hamas to tighten its grip on Gaza even further.” [31a] (p10)

## Triggering the “Gaza War”

- 4.06 The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Report, “*The Gaza War - A Strategic Analysis*” dated 2 February 2009 recounted that:

“The immediate triggers to the war were on Israeli raid that killed six Hamas gunmen inside the Gaza Strip on November 4, 2008. Hamas responded with a barrage of rockets, and Israeli sources report that some 190 rockets were fired into Israel in November. The ceasefire was due to expire on December 19th, and Hamas issued a statement that it would end the ceasefire on December 18, 2008. The statement claimed Israel had not honored the terms of the ceasefire or allowed humanitarian aid into Gaza. Hamas then continued its rocket and mortar attacks, firing some 200 rockets during November 4, 2009-December 21, 2009. On December 21st, it launched some 70 rockets, but issued a statement that it might renew the ceasefire, —“if Israel stopped its aggression” in Gaza and opened up its border crossings.” [18a] (p9)

- 4.07 It continued:

“Israel responded as a state using modern weapons, conventional forces, and advanced technology. It exploited these capabilities to minimize its casualties, to attack Hamas in ways designed to produce maximum damage in a minimum amount of time, and in a form designed to deter Hamas and other threats to Israel by showing that even limited attacks on Israel would result in Israel’s use of massive amounts of force. At the same time, Israel did take some steps to limit civilian casualties and collateral damage.” [18a] (p10)

- 4.08 The UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in its January 2009 Humanitarian Report, reported that up to the date of the unilateral Israeli ceasefire (18 January 2009):

“The scope of civilian suffering during the Israeli military operation in Gaza (27 December-18 January) was immeasurable. Upon his return from a visit into Gaza the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, stated: “The destruction I saw was devastating – both in human and material terms. The magnitude of loss of life and injury to the civilian population is bound to have a lasting impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of the Palestinians in Gaza. All aspects of life and livelihood have been affected.”

“The three weeks of almost uninterrupted Israeli aerial bombardments, artillery shelling and ground operations resulted in the killing of 1,440 people and the injury of another 5,380, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gaza. While the exact number of civilians among the dead and injured remains unknown, nearly half of the casualties were women and children. With Gaza’s borders effectively sealed and no proper shelters or warning system within the Gaza Strip, the civilian population had no safe haven during the operation. Military operations also seriously impeded the ability of rescue teams to evacuate the wounded.” [3d]

- 4.09 On 14 December 2008, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk attempted to visit the Occupied territories in his official capacity but was refused entry by Israel. In his report A/HRC/10/20 dated 11 February 2009, he stated that:

“The present report does not have benefit from a recent mission to Gaza. Such a mission was planned and attempted in mid-December 2008, but was not carried out due to the denial of entry to the Special Rapporteur .... The mission to Gaza was to include a visit to the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and was supposed to commence with a scheduled meeting with the President of the Palestine Authority, Mahmoud Abbas. Entry was denied on 14 December 2008; the Special Rapporteur was detained in a facility close to Ben Gurion Airport, then expelled from Israel the day after....(p2) In the present report, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, in the light of Human Rights Council resolution S-9/1, focuses on the main international law and human rights issues of the attacks by Israel on Gaza that commenced on 27 December 2008 and continued for 22 days. He challenges the widespread emphasis on whether Israeli force was disproportionate in relation to Palestinian threats to Israeli security, and focuses on the question of whether Israeli force was legally justified at all. He concludes that such recourse to force was not legally justified given the circumstances and diplomatic alternatives available, and was potentially a crime against peace.

“The Special Rapporteur also gives relevance to the pre-existing blockade of Gaza, which was in massive violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, suggesting the presence of war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity. He considers the tactics pursued during the attacks by both sides,

condemning the firing of rockets at Israeli civilian targets, and suggests the unlawfulness of disallowing civilians in Gaza to have an option to leave the war zone to become refugees, as well as the charges of unlawful weapons and combat tactics. He recommends that an expert inquiry into these matters be conducted to confirm the status under international law of war crimes allegations, and to consider alternative approaches to accountability.” [3e] (p4)

- 4.10 The United Nations, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in a report, *Assistance to the Palestinian people* dated 7 May 2009 noted:

“The already fragile situation in Gaza, which was under the de facto control of Hamas, deteriorated following the Israeli military operation Cast Lead, which lasted from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. The operation resulted in extensive destruction of and damage to homes and the public infrastructure, as well as some United Nations and government facilities. An estimated 21,000 homes were destroyed or badly damaged in the fighting.<sup>5</sup> At the height of the fighting, nearly 51,000 people were displaced in shelters, and a larger number of people were believed to be living with host families.<sup>6</sup> The impact of the violence compounded the already serious humanitarian situation that had been caused by the 18 months of sustained closure of Gaza to all but the most essential commodities.” [55a](p6)

#### EVENTS BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND JUNE 2009

- 4.11 The United Nations, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in a report, *Assistance to the Palestinian people* dated 7 May 2009 noted:

“Hostilities ended in the unilateral ceasefires that were declared on 18 and 19 January 2009, following which Palestinian reconciliation efforts resumed. In February, March and April 2009, new rounds of talks were held in Cairo under the aegis of Egypt, with committees focusing on the reform of the Palestine Liberation Organization, security, government, elections and conciliation. On 7 March 2009, Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad submitted his resignation to facilitate the formation of a consensus government, but President Abbas did not accept it. Elections were held in Israel on 10 February 2009, and a new Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, was sworn in on 31 March 2009.” [55a] (p4)

- 4.12 The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Occupied Palestinian territory in *The Humanitarian Monitor* for May 2009 reported that:

“The last few days of May saw a sharp increase in violent events occurring in two different contexts, intra-Palestinian conflict and Israeli settler violence, which overshadowed the more “routine” violence affecting the civilian population during the rest of the month. On 30 May, an armed clash between Palestinian Authority (PA) forces and Hamas operatives erupted in Qalqiliya City in the course of an arrest operation. This clash resulted in the death of six people: three members of PA security forces, two armed Hamas militants, and the owner of the building from which the latter were operating. This is the highest recorded single-day death toll from intra-Palestinian fighting in the West Bank since OCHA began collecting OPT casualty data in January 2005.” [3f]

“The decline in military activities witnessed in the month of April came to an end in early May, when the Israeli Air Force (IAF) began a series of airstrikes against Palestinian targets, and Palestinian militants increased the frequency of rocket and mortar fire targeting towns and military bases in southern Israel. “On 2 May, Israeli airstrikes targeting tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border resulted in the killing of two Palestinians and the injury of four others present in one of the targeted tunnels. Israeli airstrikes targeting tunnels and metal workshops continued throughout the month. Other tunnel incidents during May, including collapse due to precarious building conditions and electrocution, resulted in the death of eight Palestinians and the injury of another four. In 2008, there were at least 46 Palestinians killed, and 69 others injured, in tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. Since the implementation of unilateral ceasefires on 18 January 2009, 24 Palestinians were killed and 29 others injured.” [3f]

- 4.13 The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH) reported on 6 June 2009 that:

“The world watched on June 4 as US President Barack Obama addressed the Muslim world in his much anticipated speech in Cairo... [He] addressed a number of issues concerning the US’s relationship with Muslims, including the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. While he unsurprisingly opened this leg of his speech with support for Israel ... Obama’s speech was met positively among most Palestinians, especially in comparison with his predecessor George W. Bush. While the Israeli government was cautiously approving of the speech, some Israeli expressed reservations as to his reference to a settlement freeze and a Palestinian state.” [21d]

- 4.14 The article continued:

“However, just as President Obama is coming with a different mentality, which seeks reconciliation rather than isolation and hostility, the Palestinians and Israelis still seem to have a long way to go to follow his lead.

“On June 5, 30-year old Yusef Srour was shot and killed by Israeli forces in the West Bank town of Nilin during the weekly protest against the separation wall there. A day earlier, three people were killed in a standoff between PA security forces and Hamas gunmen in Qalqilya. Earlier in the day, a PA security officer was killed by an apparent grenade from Hamas operatives holed up in a building in the city.

“This day of violence comes after an even more violent day on May 31 when six people were killed in Qalqilya when PA forces tried to arrest Hamas operatives who holed themselves up in a building. As a result, the building owner was killed along with three PA security men and two Hamas gunmen.

“The resumption of interfactional violence is some of the worst in the last two years and has deeply threatened the already tense Cairo talks between Hamas and Fateh. Although the talks are scheduled to resume on July 5, Hamas has already said it may cop out because of the Qalqilya situation. On June 1, Hamas upped the ante by saying that its fighters would violently resist any PA forces that attempted to arrest them.” [21d]

4.15 The same report from MIFTAH stated that:

“On June 4, 17 members of the UN team investigating human rights violations during Israel’s 22-day invasion of Gaza left the Strip via Rafah after Israel refused to cooperate with it in the West Bank or Israel proper. The head of the team, Richard Goldstone has said he was “shocked by the devastation” he saw during his four day tour of Gaza. While he did not disclose any of the teams’ findings, at a press conference on June 4, Goldstone said Israel repeatedly refused their calls to cooperate. The response,” he said, “was a complete refusal.” [21d]

It continued:

“On June 5, the Israeli military began demolishing a Bedouin encampment, which is home to 180 people in the northern Jordan Valley after demolition orders were issued to them on Monday by the Israeli military. According to the army, the Bedouins were demanded to evacuate their homes on the premise that the area was a “closed military zone.

“On June 2, 33-year old Amjad Abu Khdeir was killed near Jerusalem’s Jaffa Gate when an extremist Israeli shot him after inquiring about whether he was “Arab.” Abu Khdeir, a father of four, was with his Israeli employer on the way to work when they were attacked by the man. The employer was also shot and injured.

“Settlers from the settlements of Yitzhar and Qadumim near Nablus went on a violent rampage on June 1, setting fire to hundreds of dunams of Palestinian crops. The fires were the peak of four days of attacks on Palestinians in the area, which resulted in six wounded Palestinians after settlers, threw heavy stones at them on the main road.” [21d]

4.17 According to the PCHR, in its Weekly Report dated 10 June 2009:

“During the reporting period, one Palestinian was killed by IOF in the West Bank. Additionally, IOF wounded 13 Palestinian civilians, including four children and a paramedic, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. During the reporting period, a Palestinian civilian was killed and 12 others, including four children and a paramedic, were wounded when IOF used force against peaceful demonstrations organized by Palestinian civilians to protest the construction of the Annexation Wall in Bal’ein and Ne;lin villages, west of Ramallah. According to eyewitness, the victim was shot dead when he attempted to offer help to a wounded child. In the Gaza Strip, on 04 June 2009, an 11-year-old child died of wounds he had sustained on 06 January 2009 when IOF bombed his family’s house. The attack killed the child’s father and grandmother. On 06 June 2009, a Palestinian civilian was wounded when IOF gunboats opened fire at Rafah beach.” [44c]

4.18 The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported on 10 June 2009 that: “On 8 June 2009, Palestinian gunmen were identified by IDF forces north of the Nahal Oz fuel terminal [Gaza Strip] with several trucks and at least five horses loaded with explosive devices and mines. A new organization called “the army of Allah’s supporters” claimed responsibility for the foiled terror attack.” [59a]

For more recent information see the [Latest news](#). See also [Security situation](#), [Freedom of Movement](#) and [Humanitarian issues](#).

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## 5. PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

See also [section 3: History](#) for information on the origins of Israel and OPTs which resulted in the creation of the Palestinian refugee population.

### Different 'categories' of refugee

- 5.01 The BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights (Badil) in an undated entry on Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons provides a good description of the different refugee categories and divides them into five groups:

“There are five primary groups of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons. The largest group is comprised of those Palestinians displaced/expelled from their places of origin in 1948. This includes Palestinian refugees who receive international assistance from the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) [see [Annex B](#)], i.e., ‘registered refugees’; and Palestinian refugees not eligible for international assistance.

“The second major group of Palestinian refugees is comprised of those Palestinians displaced for the first time from their places of origin in the West Bank, eastern Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip (often referred to as ‘1967 displaced persons’).

“The third category of refugees includes those Palestinian refugees who are neither 1948 or 1967 refugees and are outside the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and unable due to revocation of residency, denial of family reunification, deportation, etc., or unwilling to return there owing to a well-founded fear of persecution.

“In addition, there are two groups of internally displaced Palestinians. The first includes internally displaced Palestinians who remained in the area that became the state of Israel in 1948. The second group of internally displaced Palestinians includes Palestinians internally displaced in the West Bank, eastern Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.” [17a] (Facts & figures)

- 5.02 BADIL further noted:

“Palestinian refugees are still refugees because they are unable to exercise their basic human right to return to their homes of origin. Israel refuses to allow the refugees to return to villages, towns and cities inside Israel due to the ethnic, national and religious origin of the refugees. Israel defines itself as a Jewish state and not a state of all its citizens. This self-definition emphasizes the need for a permanent Jewish majority, Jewish control of key resources like land, and the link between Israel and the Jewish diaspora. Jewish citizens, residents and the Jewish diaspora are therefore granted special preferences to citizenship and land ownership.

“Israel's laws prevent Palestinian refugees and IDPs from returning to their homes of origin. ... The international community has not exerted sufficient political will to advance durable solutions consistent with international law and relevant UN resolutions. Refugee rights have been absent from the Middle East Peace Process since it began in Madrid in the early 1990s.... There is no explicit reference to the right of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons to

return to their homes of origin. Nor is there explicit reference to the right to housing and property restitution. “ [17a]

### Size of the refugee population

#### 5.03 BADIL also noted:

“Available data on the Palestinian refugee and displaced population is characterized by uneven quality and uncertainty primarily due to the absence of a comprehensive registration system, frequent migration for political and economic reasons, and the lack of a uniform definition of a Palestine refugee. The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) administers the only registration system for Palestinian refugees. UNRWA records, however, only include those refugees displaced in 1948 (and their descendents) in need of assistance and located in UNRWA areas of operation - West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. It is estimated that there were more than 7 million Palestinian refugees and displaced persons at the beginning of 2003....” [17a] (Facts & figures)

#### 5.04 The United Nations, in its 2008 booklet ‘*The Question of Palestine and the United Nations*’ states that:

“The vast majority of Palestine refugees fall under UNRWA’s mandate, but there are also large numbers of Palestinian refugees living in other countries of the region, including the Arab Gulf States, Egypt, Iraq and Yemen, and even further afield in Australia, Europe and the Americas. Those falling outside the UNRWA mandate may qualify as refugees under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and may be assisted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Most recently, UNHCR has been providing assistance to an estimated 15,000 Palestinian refugees remaining in Iraq, as well as, in coordination with UNRWA, to those who fled from that country to Jordan and Syria. UNHCR has also provided assistance to some destitute Palestinians in Egypt and Libya. [39a] (p105)

<b>UNFacts Registered Palestine refugees</b>				
<b>Field of Operations</b>	<b>Official Camps</b>	<b>Registered families in camps</b>	<b>Registered Refugees in Camps</b>	<b>Registered Refugees</b>
Jordan	10	63,591	328,076	1,858,362
Lebanon	12	50,806	215,890	408,438
Syria	9	26,645	119,055	442,363
West Bank	19	39,895	186,479	722,302
Gaza Strip	8	93,074	478,272	1,016,964
<b>Agency total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>274,011</b>	<b>1,327,772</b>	<b>4,448,429</b>

Figures as of 31 December 2006  
Source: UNRWA



[39a] (p105)

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## THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY (UNWRA)

5.05 UNRWAs' website explains in an undated entry that:

“Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, was established by United Nations General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 to carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees. The Agency began operations on 1 May 1950. In the absence of a solution to the Palestine refugee problem, the general assembly has repeatedly renewed UNRWA'S mandate, most recently extending it until 30 June 2011.

“Since its establishment, the Agency has delivered its services in times of relative calm in the Middle East, and in times of hostilities. It has fed, housed and clothed tens of thousands of fleeing refugees and at the same time educated and given health care to hundreds of thousands of young refugees.

“UNRWA is unique in terms of its long-standing commitment to one group of refugees and its contributions to the welfare and human development of four generations of Palestine refugees. Originally envisaged as a temporary organization, the Agency has gradually adjusted its programmes to meet the changing needs of the refugees. Today, UNRWA is the main provider of basic services - education, health, relief and social services - to over 4.6 million registered Palestine refugees in the Middle East.” [16a] (Overview)

### UNRWA services to Palestine refugees

5.06 The UNRWA website, accessed on 4 February 2009, noted:

“UNRWA provides education, health, relief and social services to eligible refugees among the 4.6 million registered Palestine refugees in its five fields of operations: Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Some 1.3 million refugees, around one third of the total, live in 58 recognized camps, and UNRWA's services are located in or near these camps where there are large concentrations of refugees.

“Unlike other United Nations organizations which work through local authorities or executing agencies, UNRWA provides its services directly to Palestine refugees. It plans and carries out its own activities and projects, and builds and administers facilities such as schools and clinics. The Agency currently operates or sponsors over 900 installations with some 29,000 staff throughout its area of operations. Because UNRWA services such as education and health care are the type of services normally provided within the public sector, the Agency cooperates closely with governmental authorities in the area of operations, who also provide some services to Palestine refugees.” [16a] (p2) (Overview - Services)

5.07 UNWRA's largest activity is providing education to refugees “accounting for half its regular budget and two-thirds of its staff.” [16a] (p3) (Overview - Education)

5.08 UNWRA provides access to healthcare for:

“...about 1.3 million Palestinian refugees through its 125 primary health care centers in West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as its 63-bed hospital in Qalqilia in the West Bank. All UNRWA health facilities provide quality medical care, mother-and-child health care, family planning services and health education to increase awareness of the importance of disease prevention. For refugees in need of hospital care, especially emergency and life-saving treatment, UNRWA partially reimburses costs through agreements with specific hospitals.

“UNRWA strongly focuses on the prevention of diseases in the 58 refugee camps in the region in an environment-friendly way through the provision of safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation, sewage and solid waste management, and control of insects and rodents.

“The UNRWA's health care system is one of the most cost-effective in the region.” [16a] (p4) (Overview - Health)

See [Section 23: Medical issues](#)

5.09 UNWRA also provides support to “... Palestine refugee families unable to meet their own basic needs and helps promote the self-reliance of the refugee community through community social development.” [16a] (p5) (Overview - Relief)

5.10 The organisation has also provided emergency assistance to Palestine refugees:

“During the first intifadah (1987-1993) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Agency provided emergency medical care to the injured and food rations for both refugees and other residents of the two areas. The Agency also regularly provides tents, blankets and food to refugees in the harsh winter weather which often affects the region. Since September 2000, UNRWA has been providing emergency assistance to the thousands of refugees affected by the ongoing conflict in the West Bank and Gaza.” [16a] (p7) (Overview - Emergency)

See [Annex B – Camp Profiles – West Bank & Gaza Strip](#) for further information.

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## 6. POLITICAL SYSTEM

- 6.01 Jane's Sentinel Risk Assessment, Gaza and the West Bank, Internal Affairs updated on 6 April 2009, observed that:

"The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel established the Palestinian Authority (PA) in 1994, following the 1993 Declaration of Principles known as the Oslo Accords. The PA is intended to serve as the governing body of the West Bank and Gaza until a final agreement is reached in the peace process. Under the terms of the Accords, its authority has been split according to three zones:

"Area 'A' - the PA has political and security control;

"Area 'B' - the PA holds political control but shares security responsibilities with Israel;

"Area 'C' - Israel has political and security control.

"In practical terms, Israel also retains control over the territories' external security, air space, sea lanes and electromagnetic sphere. The 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access saw an EU force take control over the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, though Israel retains a veto over anyone travelling in and out. The crossing, moreover, is restricted to people with Palestinian ID only. Goods and other nationals have to cross into Palestinian territories through direct Israeli-controlled borders" [28a]

See [Geography](#) and [Map](#) above for a description of Areas A, B and C, and [Freedom of movement](#)

- 6.02 Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2008 report, Palestine Authority, covering events in 2007, released in July 2008 observed:

"The Palestinian Authority (PA) president is elected to five-year terms, and international observers judged the 2005 presidential election to be generally free and fair. The unicameral Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) was expanded from 88 to 132 representatives ahead of the legislative elections in 2006. The prime minister is nominated by the president. Under agreements with Israel, the PLC has no real authority over borders or defense policy. Laws governing Palestinians in the occupied territories derive from Ottoman, British Mandate, Jordanian, Egyptian, and PA law, as well as Israeli military orders." [38a]

- 6.03 The US State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008, Israel and the occupied territories, released 25 February 2009, observed in its introduction to the section on the OPTs:

"During the 1990s various agreements transferred civil responsibility to the Palestinian Authority (PA) for Gaza and parts of the West Bank. However, after Palestinian extremist groups resumed violence in 2000, Israeli forces resumed control over a number of these areas, citing the PA's failure to abide by its security responsibilities... The PA has a democratically elected president and legislative council, which select a prime minister and cabinet. In 2005 Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Mahmud Abbas won 62 percent of the vote in a presidential election regarded as generally free and

fair. In 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections, Hamas, a terrorist organization, backed candidates under the name 'Reform and Change Movement' and won 74 of 132 seats in elections that generally met democratic standards. In February 2007 Hamas formed a national unity government (NUG) with the Fatah party, but in June 2007 Hamas staged a violent takeover of PA government installations in Gaza and killed hundreds in the Fatah movement and PA security forces. Since June 2007, when President Abbas dismissed the NUG, a cabinet of independents led by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad has governed the West Bank, while elements of the former Hamas government formed the de facto ruling authority in Gaza." [15b]

- 6.04 *The Economist's* backgrounder, Palestine's Politics, updated on 3 February 2009, noted:

"Although it lacks many of a sovereign state's common features, Palestine's political system is vibrant and pluralistic, though violent at times. Until June 2007, parts of the West Bank and all of the Gaza Strip, from which Israel withdrew in 2005, were run by the Palestinian Authority (PA). Fatah, the secularist party of the late Yasser Arafat, controlled the PA until a surprising victory by the Islamists of Hamas in the parliamentary election of 2006.

"Things have gone downhill since then. Hamas and Fatah, headed by the PA's president, Mahmoud Abbas, hashed out a power-sharing agreement in February 2007. But that deal quickly broke down and internecine fighting resulted in what some fear could be a fatal schism in the territories. Hamas has a grip on Gaza, while Fatah retains control in the West Bank. Efforts at reconciliation have failed, as have efforts from America and Israel to boost Mr Abbas and make life hard for Hamas, which refuses to recognise Israel. In the aftermath of the bloody Gaza war, which deepened the division between these rival factions, foreign diplomacy is needed to mend the Palestinian schism." [49a]

- 6.05 Jane's, in its Sentinel Country assessment, updated 22 May 2009, noted that:

"The Palestinian Territories are effectively divided into two political units: an internationally recognised and accepted Abbas-led West Bank under tight Israeli security control, and a Hamas-led internationally isolated Gaza Strip, in which Israel's presence is confined to air and land incursions. Attempts are underway to bring the two factions together, although unity talks mediated by Egypt have either been rejected by Hamas or ended without agreement. PA forces, concerned that a Gaza-style takeover may be [sic] on the cards for the West Bank, continue to crackdown on Hamas militants and charities. Although possible, Israel, whose forces still control large parts of the West Bank, would undoubtedly prevent Hamas making such a move. Repeated attempts throughout 2008 to reunite the divided factions were unsuccessful, with Hamas refusing to take part in talks set for November 2008. However, in the aftermath of the Israeli campaign in the Gaza Strip, the two sides held their first high level face-to-face meeting in March 2009. Indications are that both sides are willing to compromise and look at the possibility of forming another unity government, but these talks again ended without agreement." [28a] (*Gaza and the West Bank at a Glance*)

See [Geography](#), [Political affiliation](#) and [Freedom of movement](#)

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## Human Rights

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### 7. INTRODUCTION

- 7.01 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, (USSD Report 2008) stated that:

“There were reports of PA torture, arbitrary and prolonged detention, poor prison conditions, insufficient measures to prevent attacks by terrorist groups, impunity, corruption, and lack of transparency. Domestic abuse of women, societal discrimination against women and persons with disabilities, and child labor remained serious problems. In Gaza there were reports that Hamas security forces continued to kill, torture, kidnap, arrest, and harass Fatah members and other Palestinians with impunity. Hamas and other Palestinian factions in Gaza shelled civilian targets in Israel. Both Israeli and Palestinian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) reported that Israeli authorities used excessive force, abused civilians and detainees, tortured Palestinian detainees, failed to take proper disciplinary actions, improperly applied security internment procedures, maintained austere and overcrowded detention facilities, imposed severe restrictions on internal and external freedom of movement, and limited cooperation with NGOs. A partially completed Israeli-built separation barrier isolated portions of the West Bank and restricted Palestinian movement and access to West Bank land west of the barrier.” [15b] (p23)

- 7.02 The Human Rights Watch (HRW) World Report 2009, covering events in 2008, dated 14 January 2009, stated:

“Hamas forces in Gaza and Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority forces in the West Bank have carried out arbitrary arrests of each other’s supporters, tortured prisoners in their custody, and closed down scores of charities, political societies, and other organizations. The PA prosecuted defendants before military courts, circumventing due process safeguards.

“These abuses occurred throughout the period since Hamas took control of Gaza in June 2007, peaking in July 2008 after a bombing in a Gaza City beach café killed a four-year-old girl and five members of Hamas’s armed wing, the Izzedin al-Qassam Brigades. Qassam Brigades members, who have no law enforcement powers, arbitrarily arrested over 200 people. In the West Bank, PA security forces responded by arbitrarily arresting over 100 people considered sympathetic to Hamas.

“Palestinian security forces tortured detainees during interrogation, sometimes leading to their deaths. On February 14, the General Intelligence Services (GIS), which reports to PA President Mahmud Abbas, arrested Majid al-Barghuti, leader of a mosque in a village outside Ramallah. Eight days later al-Barghuti was dead, almost certainly as a result of injuries sustained from torture. On April 13, in Gaza, armed men arrested Sami `Atiya Khattab, a former GIS captain; 36 hours later he was dead, his body bearing what a Palestinian human rights defender called “obvious signs of torture.

“In early August Hamas forces assaulted a Gaza City area controlled by the Hillis family, whom Hamas accused of sheltering the perpetrator of the beach café bombing. Of the 12 Hillis members killed, two were reportedly executed, and eyewitnesses said some of those wounded had been shot after they had surrendered.

“In mid-September Hamas forces used excessive force in an attempt to arrest members of the Dugmush clan in Gaza City. Eleven family members were killed in the clashes, including three children, and 43 people were injured. Two policemen were also killed.

“Despite the gravity of these violations, the Palestinian Authority took no steps to investigate them or hold anyone to account. Hamas authorities claimed in early June that they had punished 35 officers for ‘violating human rights’ but did not provide details.

“The struggle between Hamas and Fatah also contributed to Gaza's humanitarian crisis. In August Hamas authorities interrupted regular diesel shipments to the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility, an agency controlled by the PA in Ramallah.” [22b] (p475)

- 7.03 Amnesty International's Annual Report 2009, Palestinian Authority, covering events in 2008, released on 28 May 2009, stated:

“Inter-factional tension remained high between the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority (PA) caretaker government of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, appointed by President Mahmoud Abbas of the Fatah party, and the Hamas de facto administration in the Gaza Strip. Both the PA security forces in the West Bank and Hamas security forces and militias in Gaza arbitrarily detained hundreds of members or sympathizers of rival factions without charge or trial and often tortured and otherwise ill-treated detainees. Both security forces used excessive force against demonstrators. Hamas security forces in Gaza killed 24 members of armed clans. During the military offensive launched by Israeli forces on 27 December, Hamas forces and militias abducted political opponents and former detainees alleged to have ‘collaborated’ with Israeli intelligence services; some were summarily killed, others were beaten or shot in the legs. The PA in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza continued to clamp down on freedom of expression. Military courts in the West Bank and Gaza sentenced nine people to death; no executions were carried out. Palestinian armed groups in Gaza indiscriminately attacked towns and villages in southern Israel, killing seven Israeli civilians and two Palestinian civilians. Palestinian armed groups and individuals from the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, killed 16 Israeli civilians.” [35b]

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## 8. SECURITY SITUATION

- 8.01 The situation in Gaza remained tense with continuing strain on the Israeli/Hamas cease fire. Amnesty International (AI), *Gaza ceasefire at risk*, reported on 5 November 2008 that:

“A spate of Israeli and Palestinian attacks and counter-attacks in the past 24 hours could spell the end of a five-and-a-half-month ceasefire. This would once again put the civilian populations of Gaza and southern Israel in the line of fire.

“The killing of six Palestinian militants in Gaza by Israeli forces in a ground incursion and air strikes on 4 November was followed by a barrage of dozens of Palestinian rockets on nearby towns and villages in the south of Israel. The Palestinian attacks caused no casualties or damage, but there is a real risk that any further armed actions by either side would risk igniting another deadly campaign.

“The ceasefire was agreed between Israel and Hamas last June and has been in force since then. It has been the single most important factor in reducing civilian casualties and attacks on civilians to the lowest level since the outbreak of the uprising (intifada) more than eight years ago.” [35a]

See the [Gaza War – December 2008 to February 2009](#).

- 8.02 The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH) reported on 28 May 2009 that:

“On May 19, the Israeli intelligence chief, Yuval Diskin, told the country’s parliamentary Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that there could be no peace while Hamas rules Gaza, Israel Army Radio reported. He predicted that the power struggle would continue, with Hamas refusing to relinquish Gaza and Mr. Abbas refusing to give up the West Bank....

“The Palestinian Center for Human Rights, an independent organization, has criticized both sides ... it took Mr. Abbas’s government to task because ‘detainees, including children, are subject to torture during interrogation and/or detention.’... [a human rights activists in Gaza] estimates that 40 Fatah activists are in Gaza jails and that 400 Hamas supporters are in Fatah detention in the West Bank... Hamas and Fatah officials seek to justify their crackdowns as matters of internal security.” [21c]

- 8.03 In its Weekly Report: On Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory dated 27 May 2009; the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) stated that:

“Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) continued systematic attacks against Palestinian Civilians and Property in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (Opt) and continued to impose a total siege on the Gaza Strip. In the Gaza Strip

“IOF have continued to close all border crossings to the Gaza Strip for more than two years. The IOF siege of Gaza, which has steadily tightened since June 2007, has had a disastrous impact on the humanitarian and economic



situation in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank the IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians throughout the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. Thousands of Palestinian civilians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue to be denied access to Jerusalem.” [44b]

Also see [Recent developments](#) and [Latest News](#).

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## 9. SECURITY FORCES

### OVERVIEW

- 9.01 Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessment, *Gaza and the West Bank*, updated 22 May 2009 reported:

"The Palestinian Authority (PA) has no armed forces as such, although under the Oslo Accords in 1993 it was allowed to establish internal security forces armed with light weapons. In July 2005, the Palestinian police and security forces were estimated at 52,750, including intelligence services. A 2005 plan to reform the disjointed and ineffective security sector introduced by then interior minister Nasser Yousef was supposed to amalgamate the 13 different security services into three, but this has not yet happened. The advent of the Hamas administration in 2006 caused further upheaval with Hamas seemingly putting security service reform aside by simply introducing its own Executive Force, directly under the control of the its interior minister (then Saeed Siyam). Since the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, security there is exclusively under Hamas control and has notably improved. A variety of other armed groups not affiliated to the PA also operate in the Palestinian territories and those outside the formal security structure are generally better armed and equipped than official forces." [28a] (Executive summary)

### POLICE AND SECURITY APPARATUS

- 9.02 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, (USSD Report 2008) stated that:

"In PA-controlled areas of the West Bank, Palestinian police were normally responsible for law enforcement for Palestinians and other non-Israelis. In Gaza, Hamas enforced laws selectively.

"PA security forces included the National Security Forces (NSF), the Preventive Security Organization (PSO), the General Intelligence Service (GI), the Presidential Guard (PG), and the Police. Quasi-military security organizations, such as the Military Intelligence, exercised the equivalent of law enforcement powers. The PSO, the civil police, and civil defense fall under the legal control of the interior minister, who reports to the prime minister. President Abbas has legal authority over the NSF, PG, and GI, although all PA security branches have been put under the interior minister's operational control. The interior and justice ministries investigate complaints regarding conduct of the PA security forces... Hamas exercised de facto authority over the Gaza Strip, including policing and security functions." [15b] (Section 1d)

- 9.03 The US State Department *Country Report on Terrorism 2008*, Middle East and North Africa Overview, released on 30 April 2009 noted that:

"The primary PA security forces are the National Security Forces (NSF), police, Preventive Security Organization (PSO), Presidential Guard (PG), General Intelligence (GI or Mukhabarat), and Civil Defense. All forces are under the Interior Minister's operational control and follow the Prime Minister's

guidance. In the Gaza Strip, HAMAS has established separate internal intelligence, police, coastal patrol, border guard, and 'Executive Force' organizations. HAMAS military-wing members were often integrated into their ranks". [15c] (Israel, West Bank, Gaza)

9.04 Jane's Sentinel Risk Assessment, updated 22 May 2009 noted:

"The 13 different Palestinian security forces were supposed to have been amalgamated into three cohesive units in 2005, and while some formal progress was made, in reality most security forces remain loyal to their own chiefs. A significant number of PA police also belong to Fatah-affiliated militant groups and as a result Hamas had to give up any attempts to bring the security services to heel under its government. Instead, in May 2006, Hamas deployed its own Executive Force in the Gaza Strip, causing clashes with Fatah-affiliated security services. By the end of 2006, the Executive Force numbered nearly 6,000 members, but was deployed only intermittently and only in the Gaza Strip. International support, meanwhile, enabled Abbas to expand his presidential guard from 2,500 to some 4,000 over the same period. Both forces were heavily involved in the May-June 2007 fighting in the Gaza Strip which eventually saw the Executive Force triumph. However, Fatah's defeat in the Gaza Strip has delivered stability insofar as the two militias are no longer fighting.

"International assistance to Abbas-led security forces, now dominant only in the West Bank, picked up pace after the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip. In October 2007, PA security forces and police were deployed in refugee camps in Nablus, clashing with militants from the Fatah offshoot, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, in an attempt to restore control over the city. As part of its obligations under the Quartet's roadmap plan for peace and in the run-up to the Annapolis conference in November 2007, the PA reached agreement with some Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades to voluntarily lay down their weapons in return for Israeli amnesty, and also deployed a strengthened police force in Nablus to some effect.

"Security in the Gaza Strip is now the sole purview of Hamas, where occasional clashes and demonstrations notwithstanding, there is a greater sense of order than in the fragmented West Bank, especially since the June 2008 ceasefire with Israel. However, a renewal of intra-Palestinian clashes did occur in July 2008, seeing some Fatah-affiliated fighters flee to Israel and the West Bank. During Israel's campaign in the Gaza Strip in 2008-09, various militant groups put aside internal squabbling and engaged Israeli ground forces in fierce gun battles. Despite claims by Israel that a number of militants were killed during the engagement; Palestinians have claimed the vast majority of the casualties were civilians." [28a] (Security)

Also see [Annex C](#) – Political (armed) groups

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## ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION

9.05 The USSD Report 2008 noted:

"In practice the PA detained many without charge for months... PA security forces often ignored laws by detaining persons without warrants and without bringing them before judicial authorities. PA security forces also occasionally

disregarded court decisions calling for release of alleged security criminals. Suspects often were held without evidence and denied access to lawyers, families, or doctors. The law provides for a prompt judicial determination of the legality of detention and was observed in practice. Detainees were informed of the charges against them, although sometimes not until interrogation. There was a functioning system of bail. [15b] (Section 1d)

- 9.06 The Amnesty International Annual Report 2009, Palestinian Authority, covering events in 2008, released on 28 May 2009, stated:

“In the West Bank, PA security forces arrested hundreds of people, mostly Hamas supporters, and held them often without access to due legal process. More than 100 were detained after Hamas detained Fatah supporters in Gaza in July, but waves of arrests of Hamas sympathizers continued through 2008. Members of Fatah’s armed groups were also held in prolonged detention without charge or trial at the request of the Israeli army.

“In Gaza, security forces of the Hamas de facto administration detained hundreds of suspected supporters of Fatah, including more than 200 arrested after bomb attacks in July targeted Hamas members. The security forces were sometimes supported by Hamas’ armed militia, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Such militia have no legal authority to arrest or detain people; those taken into their custody were handed over to the security forces or held by the Brigades in secret locations.

“Both PA and Hamas forces rarely complied with Palestinian laws requiring that detentions be reviewed by a prosecutor within 24 hours and by a judge within 72 hours. Detainees’ right to prompt access to legal counsel was routinely ignored. Most political detainees were released after a few days but some remained in detention for weeks or even months.

“In both the West Bank and Gaza, detainees were allowed access to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), but often only after 10 or more days. In December, Israeli forces bombed and destroyed all Gaza’s prisons and detention centres, and most police stations. Some detainees were killed or injured in the bombardments, but most escaped unharmed.” [35b]

- 9.07 The ECOSOC report, *Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people* dated 7 May 2009 reported:

“On 3 February 2009, 7,951 Palestinians were reported to be detained in Israeli prisons, of whom 374 were minors, 50 of them under the age of 16. Of those, 564 Palestinian prisoners, including 5 children, are administrative detainees (detention without charge or trial).<sup>4</sup> As at the end of November 2008, more than 60 Palestinian women and more than 300 Palestinian children were reportedly being held in custody in Israeli prisons. In the West Bank, the Israeli authorities carried out at least 4,878 search operations and 3,896 detentions between 1 February and 31 December 2008. In the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army carried out 51 search operations and made 684 arrests.” [55b] (p5)

See also [Arrest and detention – legal rights](#) and [Political affiliation, subsection Political prisoners/violence](#)

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## TORTURE

9.08 The USSD Report 2008 recorded that:

“The PA Basic Law prohibits torture or use of force against detainees; however, international human rights groups reported that torture was a significant problem. Torture by PA security forces and the Hamas Executive Force reportedly was widespread and not restricted to security detainees. The PA’s actions to properly investigate, punish, and discourage torture and other abuses by its forces were minimal, lacked transparency, and were not generally effective. Hamas took no action to investigate reports of torture. Documentation of abuses was limited, due partly to fear of retribution by alleged victims. Palestinian NGOs alleged in previous years that the PA pressured individuals not to communicate allegations of abuse to NGOs. PA security officers have no formal guidelines regarding interrogations; convictions were based largely on confessions. Until issuance of a presidential decree in November 2007, the Preventive Security Organization (PSO) lacked the legal authority to detain suspects or manage detention facilities.” [15b] (Section 1c)

9.09 The report continued:

“On July 29 [2008], HRW released a report *Internal Fight: Palestinian Abuses in Gaza and the West Bank*, documenting abuses by Hamas security forces against Fatah-affiliated officials in Gaza and by Fatah against Hamas members and supporters in the West Bank.

“There were reports of significant abuses by PA security forces. The PSO and the GI were more frequently implicated in complaints of abuse than other security organizations. The Military Intelligence (MI) organization frequently exceeded its legal authority to investigate other security services’ officers and detained civilians.

“There continued to be reports of widespread abuse and violence by Hamas security forces against Fatah-affiliated officials in the Gaza Strip”. [15b] (Section 1c)

9.10 *The Amnesty International Report 2009*, Palestinian Authority, 28 May 2009 noted:

“In the West Bank, detainees complained that they had been tortured or otherwise ill-treated by the PA’s General Intelligence and Preventive Security services, apparently to make them confess involvement with Hamas’ armed wing. Methods alleged included beatings, suspension, and forcing detainees to sit or stand for prolonged periods in painful positions (shabeh)... In Gaza, allegations of severe beatings and other torture of detainees by Hamas forces and militias were widespread. After the Israeli military offensive began in December, Hamas forces and militias sharply increased their attacks on political opponents, former members of the security forces in the PA government and former detainees alleged to have ‘collaborated’ with Israeli

intelligence services. Some were summarily killed; others were shot in the legs or severely beaten...Neither the PA in the West Bank nor Hamas in Gaza took any credible measures to end impunity for torture and other ill-treatment of detainees or for excessive and unwarranted use of force by security forces against demonstrators.” [35b]

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## ISRAELI FORCES

- 9.11 The USSD Report 2008 noted with regard to the powers of the Israelis forces in the OPTs that:

“Under applicable occupation orders, Israeli security personnel may arrest without warrant or hold for questioning a person suspected of having committed or being likely to commit a security-related offense. Israeli Military Order 1507 permits detention for 10 days, before detainees see a lawyer or appear before court. Administrative security detention orders can be issued for up to six-month periods and renewed indefinitely by judges. The law expressly authorizes an appeal of the circumstances of each security detention order to the Supreme Court. No detainee successfully appealed a detention order.

“Israeli Military Order 1369 provides for a seven-year prison term for anyone not responding to a summons in security cases. Suspects are entitled to an attorney, but this right can be deferred during interrogation, which can last up to 90 days. Israeli authorities stated that policy is to post notification of arrests within 48 hours, but senior officers may delay notification for up to 12 days. A military commander may request a judge to extend this period indefinitely. Evidence for administrative detentions in security cases was often unavailable to the detainee or his attorneys due to security classification, but it was made available to the court.” 15b] (Section 1d)

- 9.12 The USSD Report 2008 continued: “Israeli authorities maintained effective control over West Bank security forces that consisted of the [Israeli Defence Force] (IDF), the Israeli Security Agency (ISA or Shin Bet), the Israeli National Police (INP), and the Border Police. Israeli authorities investigated and punished abuse and corruption, although there were reports of failures to take disciplinary action in cases of abuse.” [15b] (Section 1d)

See also [Latest News](#), [Security situation](#) and [Recent developments](#)

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## 10. JUDICIARY

### OVERVIEW

- 10.01 Europaworldonline's profile of the OPTs undated, accessed 20 May 2009, observed that:

"In the Gaza Strip, the West Bank towns of Jericho, Nablus, Ramallah, Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Hebron, and in other, smaller population centres in the West Bank, the PA has assumed limited jurisdiction with regard to civil affairs. However, the situation is confused owing to the various and sometimes conflicting legal systems which have operated in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967: Israeli military and civilian law; Jordanian law; and acts, orders-in-council and ordinances that remain from the period of the British Mandate in Palestine. Religious and military courts have been established under the auspices of the PA. In February 1995 the PA established a Higher State Security Court in Gaza to decide on security crimes both inside and outside the PA's area of jurisdiction; and to implement all valid Palestinian laws, regulations, rules and orders in accordance with Article 69 of the Constitutional Law of the Gaza Strip of 5 March 1962." [1c] (Judicial System)

### ORGANISATION

- 10.02 The Human Rights Watch report, *A Question of Security: Violence against Palestinian Women and Girls*, November 2006, described the judicial system as follows:

"The Palestinian judicial system comprises the regular courts (which hear both civil and criminal cases) and Shari`a religious courts for matters of personal status (the Shari`a courts for Muslims and religious courts for recognized non-Muslim communities). The regular courts are structured in a two tier system plus a Court of Cassation. The first level comprises the Magistrates Courts, which hear civil and criminal cases below a certain penalty or damage value. The 20 Magistrates Courts (six in Gaza and 14 in the West Bank) have a total of 35 judges and a chronic problem of backlog... Courts of First Instance act either as second tier courts for cases appealed from the Magistrates level or first tier courts for civil and criminal cases above a certain value. There are 12 courts of First Instance (three in Gaza and nine in the West Bank) with 50 judges. These courts suffer the same backlog as the Magistrates Courts. Cases heard initially by the first instance courts can be appealed to the Courts of Appeal (appealed cases from the Courts of First Instance) and there are two appellate courts, one in the West Bank and one in Gaza, with a total of 15 judges.

"The Supreme Court acts as either a Court of Cassation (final court of appeal for cases on civil, criminal, and commercial matters) or a High Court of Justice to deal with administrative cases. In addition, the Supreme Court currently acts as a Constitutional Court until one is established, as stipulated by the Palestinian Basic Law.... The Supreme Court is officially based in Jerusalem but it temporarily convenes in two locations: Gaza City and Ramallah. Twenty-two judges sit on the Supreme Court. All of the courts, including the High

Court of Justice, face problems in implementing court decisions against governmental bodies, especially the security services.” [22a] (pgs21-22)

- 10.03 Jane’s Information Group, in its Country 2009 assessment, updated 22 May 2009, stated that:

“Ramallah Appeal and High Court is the only appeal court in the northern West Bank and also hears cases for the High Court, while Magistrates Courts and Courts of First Instance deal with other judicial matters. Restriction of movement and disruption of public transport and lack of PA control over the occupied territories have severely affected the running of the Palestinian judicial system which requires the presence of three justices, a prosecutor, a defence lawyer and a clerk for trials to be legal. ... Serious judicial reforms are needed, however, to fortify the chain of justice in the eyes of ordinary Palestinians, with decree issuing and arrest making backed up by legitimate trials with an independent judiciary, issuing sentences that will actually be carried out. The judiciary has been largely powerless to stem rising lawlessness and lacks credibility in the eyes of the Palestinian public and, along with the legislative, is almost totally absent from the current security situation.” [28a] (Internal affairs)

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## INDEPENDENCE AND FAIR TRIAL

- 10.04 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, (USSD Report 2008) observed that:

“The PA court system is based on PA legal codes as well as Israeli military orders and Jordanian and Ottoman Law that predate the 1967 occupation. The Basic Law provides for an independent judiciary, but in practice, the PA sometimes avoided prosecuting cases against politically connected individuals and circumvented the authority of the courts when expedient. A High Judicial Council maintained authority over most court operations. Military courts, established in 1995 and guided by the 1979 PLO Penal Code, have jurisdiction over security personnel and crimes by civilians against security forces. They do not provide the same rights as non-military courts and generally apply longer sentences. There is a nine-judge court for election issues... PA courts were inefficient, lacked staff and resources, and often did not ensure fair and expeditious trials. A severe shortage of funds and judges and an absence of lawyers and witnesses, due in part to travel restrictions, curfews, and closures, resulted in significant a backlogs in both criminal and civil cases. PA executive and security services frequently failed to implement court decisions and otherwise inhibited judicial independence.” [15b] (Section 1e)

- 10.05 The same report added “Trials conducted in PA military courts lacked due process protections”. However it also noted that:

“Trials are public, except when the court determines privacy is required by PA security, foreign relations, a party’s or witness’s right to privacy, or protection of a victim of a sexual offense or honor crime. The law provides for legal representation, the right to question and present witnesses, to review



government-held evidence, and to appeal. Authorities generally observed these rights in practice for all citizens. Human rights organizations reported delayed hearings due to an extensive backlog and a lack of legal representation.” [15b] (Section 1e)

- 10.06 Amnesty International in its 2009 World report, covering events in 2008, issued 28 May 2009, stated that:

“The judicial systems in the West Bank and Gaza remained highly dysfunctional. The PA continued to forbid former members of the judiciary and security forces from working for the Hamas de facto administration in Gaza, and to pay them for not working. Hamas continued to use alternative prosecutors and judges who often lacked training and qualifications. Rulings made by the Palestinian High Court of Justice were frequently not implemented.” [35b]

- 10.07 The Freedom House report, *Freedom in the World 2008*, covering events in 2007, released in July 2008, noted:

“The judicial system is not independent. While the PA unveiled a draft constitution in April 2003, neither Arafat nor Abbas endorsed it. Palestinian judges lack proper training and experience. Israeli demands for a crackdown on terrorism have given rise to state security courts, which lack almost all due process rights. There are reportedly hundreds of administrative detainees currently in Palestinian jails and detention centers. The same courts are also used to try those suspected of collaborating with Israel or accused of drug trafficking. Defendants are not granted the right to appeal sentences and are often summarily tried and sentenced to death. According to the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group, alleged collaborators are routinely tortured in Palestinian jails and denied the right to defend themselves in court. These practices are not prohibited under Palestinian law.

See [Death penalty](#)

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## 11. DEATH PENALTY

- 11.01 The Israeli human rights group, B'Tselem, in an undated entry, accessed on 30 May 2009, stated that:

“The Palestinian Authority’s statutes allow the death penalty, its courts have imposed the death penalty, and the sentence has been executed. The Palestinian Penal Code applying in the West Bank enables imposition of the death penalty on a person who was convicted of committing any of seventeen offenses, while in the Gaza Strip, fifteen offenses warrant the death penalty. The two penal laws are implemented by ordinary civil courts.

“Also, the Palestinian Authority also imposes the death penalty pursuant to the PLO Revolutionary Penal Code, of 1979. The code enables imposition of the death penalty on a person who is convicted of any of forty-two offenses and is applied by special courts operated by the Palestinian Authority: military courts and state security courts. These special courts are responsible for the vast majority of death sentences imposed by the Palestinian Authority.” [25e] (**Death Penalty in the Palestinian Authority**)

- 11.02 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008, Israel and the occupied territories*, released on 25 February 2009, noted: “PA law allows the death penalty for certain offenses, including types of treason and murder. In recent years, most PA death penalty convictions were issued by military courts under the PLO Revolutionary Penal Code of 1979.... human rights organizations criticized the PLO code for allowing the death penalty to be applied to a broad range of offenses.” [15b] (**Section**)

- 11.03 The Amnesty International report *Death penalty, Palestinian Authority*, dated 29 May 2009, noted that “Several defendants have been convicted under provisions of the 1979 Revolutionary Penal Code of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). This code was never ratified by the elected legislative authority, the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC, the parliament). It is therefore not part of Palestinian law according to the Basic Law which serves as the Constitution.” [35c]

- 11.04 However the split in the PA has affected the process of how the death penalty is applied. The same Amnesty International report of 29 May 2009 noted:

“Under Palestinian Law, the death sentences must be ratified by the Palestinian Authority (PA) President before they can be carried out. However, the Hamas de-facto administration, which has been ruling Gaza since June 2007 and which remains in conflict with the West-Bank based PA caretaker government of PA President Mahmoud Abbas, has announced that it is establishing a committee composed of legal advisors and officials in the Hamas Ministry of Justice who will be responsible for ratifying death sentences in Gaza.” [35c]

- 11.05 The Amnesty International *Annual Report 2009*, covering events in 2008, released on 28 May 2009, observed that:

“In the West Bank, PA military courts sentenced four people, all civilians, to death after convicting them in summary trials of collaborating with Israeli

intelligence. Two others, both security officers, were sentenced to death for murder. In Gaza, a Hamas military court sentenced one person to death for murder and two for collaborating with Israeli intelligence, after unfair trials. No executions were carried out.” [35b]

- 11.06 There have not been any executions in the OPTs for “some years” (Amnesty International, *Death Sentences and Executions 2008*) [35d] Hands off Cain reported on 1 January 2009, that the last “legal” execution in the OPTs was on 27 June 2005 [53a]

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## 12. ARREST AND DETENTION – LEGAL RIGHTS

- 12.01 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, stated:

“Palestinian law prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention. It allows police to hold detainees without charges for 24 hours and with court approval for up to 45 days. A trial must start within six months or the detainee must be released. In practice the PA detained many without charge for months.

“Israeli law prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention, but the security services did not always observe these prohibitions. Palestinian security internees were under the jurisdiction of military law, which permits 10 days' detention without seeing a lawyer or appearing before court. There is no requirement that a detainee have access to a lawyer until after interrogation, a process that may last weeks. The ICRC is required to be notified of arrests within 12 days after they occur and allowed to visit detainees within 14 days after the arrest. [15b] (Section 1d)

See [Security forces, Arbitrary arrest and detention](#)

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### 13. PRISON CONDITIONS

- 13.01 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, stated:

“PA prison conditions were poor. Many prisons were destroyed during the Intifada and were not reconstructed. Prisoners were kept informally incarcerated. The PA generally permitted the ICRC access to detainees and regular inspections of prison conditions; however, the PA denied access to some detainees within 14 days following their arrests as required. The PA permitted independent monitoring of its prisons by Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights (PICCR) and other Palestinian NGOs, but human rights groups, humanitarian organizations, and lawyers reported difficulties gaining access to specific detainees. Human rights organizations stated their ability to visit PA prisons and detention centers varied depending on which organization ran the facility.” [15b] (Section 1c)

- 13.02 The report continued that:

“Gaza prison conditions were reportedly poor and little information was available. The ICRC was able to conduct monitoring visits to prisoners held in Gaza by Hamas in most cases ...IDF detention centers were less likely than Israel Prison Service (IPS) prisons to meet international standards with some, such as the Ofer detention center, providing living space as small as 15 square feet per detainee.” [15b] (Section 1c)

See also [Security forces, subsection Torture](#)

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## 14. POLITICAL AFFILIATION

### FREEDOM OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

- 14.01 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, stated:

“In 2006 the 132-member PLC was elected in a process that international observers concluded generally met democratic standards in providing citizens the right peacefully to change their government. The PLC did not meet during the year due to lack of a quorum... The 2005 primary elections to determine Fatah candidates for the 2006 PLC elections were marred by violence and allegations of fraud and were never completed in some areas. Israeli authorities restricted campaigning for the PLC elections in Jerusalem. Hamas-backed candidates participated in the 2006 PLC elections but only under the name ‘Reform and Change Movement,’ not ‘Hamas,’ and won 74 of 132 seats. Fatah won 45 seats; independents and candidates from third parties won the remaining seats.

“In 2005 Palestinians elected Mahmud Abbas as PA president. Seven candidates competed in a vigorous election campaign. In both the 2005 presidential election and the PLC election, the Israeli government and the PA followed the 1996 parameters for Palestinians residing in East Jerusalem to vote, but inadequate arrangements kept turnout in Jerusalem low.

“While Palestinians with residency permits were eligible to vote in Jerusalem municipal elections, most did not recognize Israeli jurisdiction in Jerusalem and did not participate. Turnout among Palestinians resident in Jerusalem was extremely low in November elections, and there continued to be no Palestinians on the Jerusalem City Council.

“There were 17 women in the 132-member PLC and three women in the 16-member Cabinet formed in June. There were seven Christians in the PLC and two in the cabinet during the year.” [15b] (Section 3)

See also [Political system](#)

### FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND ASSEMBLY

- 14.02 The USSD Report 2008 noted:

“PA law permits public meetings, processions, and assemblies within legal limits. It requires permits for rallies, demonstrations, and large cultural events, but authorities rarely denied them. The PA prohibited calls for violence, displays of arms, and racist slogans, although it rarely enforced these provisions. Following November 2007 Fatah-Hamas clashes in Gaza, Hamas banned rallies, impeded freedom of assembly, and the carrying of arms by Fatah members. Hamas members were permitted to hold demonstrations and display weapons in public in Gaza... Israeli security forces used force against Palestinians and others involved in demonstrations, and military orders banned public gatherings of 10 or more persons without a permit.” [15b] (Section 2b)

- 14.03 The same source stated with regard to freedom of association: "PA law allows for the freedom of association, but it was limited in practice. PA security services frequently raided and closed Hamas-affiliated organizations and charities. On August 6, the PA raided four charitable organizations and two printing houses in Hebron Governorate and confiscated vehicles and computers." [15b] (Section 2b)

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### Political prisoners/violence

- 14.04 The USSD Report 2008 stated that:

"Palestinian sources estimated the PA imprisoned 22 persons suspected of collaboration with Israel during the year. During the year seven persons were arrested on charges of collaboration and other charges. Many of those held in Gaza as Israeli 'collaborators' reportedly were released in 2007 after Hamas took over... Hamas executed, kneecapped, or arrested an unknown number of Palestinians in Gaza, including supporters of Fatah, in late December. Hamas claimed those arrested and killed were collaborating with Israel.

"Palestinians claimed that security detainees held under IDF military orders were political prisoners." [15b] (Section 1e)

- 14.05 The Human Rights Watch report, *Under Cover of War*, dated 20 April 2009, stated in its summary that:

"After Israel began its major military offensive in Gaza on December 27, 2008, Hamas authorities in the territory took extraordinary steps to control, intimidate, punish, and at times eliminate their internal political rivals and those suspected of collaboration with Israel. The attacks continued throughout Israel's campaign, and have slowed but not stopped since major hostilities ceased on January 18, 2009.

"During the chaos of Israel's offensive, which killed approximately 1,350 Palestinian civilians and combatants and wounded about 5,000, Hamas security forces or masked gunmen believed to be with Hamas extra-judicially executed 18 people, mainly those accused of collaborating with Israel. Masked gunmen also beat and maimed by shooting dozens of Hamas's political opponents, especially members and supporters of its main political rival, Fatah.

"The internal violence in Gaza has continued since Israel withdrew its forces. Palestinian human rights groups in Gaza have reported 14 more killings between January 18 and March 31, 2009.

"Hamas security forces have also used violence against known Fatah members, especially those who had worked in the Fatah-run security services of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Of particular concern is the widespread practice of maiming people by shooting them in the legs, which Hamas first used in June 2007, when it seized control inside Gaza from Fatah. According to the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), the human rights ombudsman organization of the Palestinian Authority, unidentified gunmen in

masks deliberately inflicted bullet wounds to the legs of at least 49 people between December 28, 2008 and January 31, 2009. ... On the other side of the internal Palestinian divide, the Fatah-run authorities in the West Bank have also increased repressive measures against Hamas members and supporters there. Between December 28, 2008, and February 28, 2009, Palestinian human rights groups recorded 31 complaints of residents who said they had been tortured by Fatah-led security forces. They also recorded one known death in custody and the arbitrary detention of two journalists from a private television station considered pro-Hamas." [22c]

- 14.06 The Amnesty international Annual Report 2009, Palestinian Authority, released on 28 May 2009, observed that hundreds of supporters or sympathisers of Hamas in the West Bank and of Fatah in Gaza were arrested by the authorities or militias on their behalf during the 2008. [35b]

See also [Security forces](#), [Arbitrary arrest and detention](#), and [Torture](#)

For more information about political rights in the OPTs see:

Human Rights Watch, [Under the Cover of War](#), 20 April 2009 [22c]

Human Rights Watch, [Gaza: Pursuit of the Laws of War](#), 8 May 2009 [22d]

Amnesty International, [Annual Report 2009](#), Palestinian Authority, 28 May 2009 [35b]

Freedom House, [Freedom in the World 2008](#), Palestinian Authority-Administered Areas (Israel), released in July 2008 [38a]

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## 15. FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND MEDIA

15.01 Freedom House in its *Freedom of the Press 2009* survey taking into the account the legal, political and economic environments (covering events in 2008), released on 1 May 2009, ranked the Palestinian Authority joint 184<sup>th</sup> out of 195 countries and considered it “Not free”. [38c]

15.02 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, stated:

“The Basic Law permits every person the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and expression, orally, in writing, or through any other form. The PA does not have laws providing for freedom of press. A press law enjoins criticizing the PA or the president, but it was not applied. The climate of violence induced self-censorship, and both the PA security forces in the West Bank and members of the Hamas security apparatus in Gaza restricted freedoms of speech and press. Individuals criticizing the authorities publicly risked reprisal, and during the year PA security forces and Hamas Executive Forces closed media offices, confiscated equipment, prevented the delivery of newspapers, and assaulted journalists during demonstrations.

“There were three Palestinian daily and several weekly newspapers, several monthly magazines, and three tabloids. The PA operated one television and one radio station. There were approximately 30 independent television and 25 independent radio stations. Violence between Hamas and Fatah resulted in polarization of the Palestinian press. Working conditions for journalists in the West Bank and Gaza deteriorated noticeably during the year; however, some international news outlets maintained offices in Gaza.” [15b] (Section 2a)

See also [Political affiliation](#)

Further information about freedom of speech can be found in the following sources:

The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008* [15b]

Reporters without Borders, *Palestinian Territories* [51a] and *More journalists arrested as a result of tension between Palestinian factions*, 29 May 2009 [51b]

Committee to protect Journalists, *Attacks on the Press in 2008: Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, dated 10 February 2009. [58a]

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## 16. HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS, ORGANISATIONS AND ACTIVISTS

- 16.01 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009, stated

“Palestinian human rights groups and several international organizations monitored the PA's human rights practices. According to the PA Ministry of Interior, at year's end approximately 4,700 NGOs were registered and 1,700 were active in the West Bank. PA officials usually cooperated with and permitted visits during the year by UN representatives or other organizations such as ICRC; however, since the beginning of the Intifada, several NGOs voluntarily deferred criticism of the PA's human rights performance, and documentation of abuses was very limited. NGOs, however, criticized the PA's inadequate security performance.... The GI and the civil police in the West Bank appointed liaisons with human rights groups.... The quasi-governmental ICHR serves as the PA's ombudsman and human rights commission.” [15b] (section 4)

See [Civil society network on the question of Palestine](#) [4b]

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## 17. CORRUPTION

- 17.01 Jane's Information Group, updated 26 November 2008, in its Sentinel Risk Assessment noted:

“The PA has faced persistent allegations of widespread corruption, particularly under the PLO leadership of Yasser Arafat prior to his death in November 2004. In 2005 (the last year it was included in the list), the PA was ranked 107 out of 158 in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index and according to International Monetary Fund findings, top officials are estimated to have siphoned off as much as USD7 billion over a 10-year period. The installation of Fayyad's government in 2007 has seen a renewed push to implement financial controls; reforms that were agreed during Fayyad's tenure as finance minister in 2003-05, but stalled under Hamas and subsequent international sanctions. The Fayyad government has worked to implement previous reforms and the PA's 2007 Reform and Development Plan places great emphasis on financial oversight mechanisms. However, corruption and nepotism continues to be rife.” [28a] (Section Security)

- 17.02 The USSD Human rights report 2008, released 25 February 2009 stated:

“The law provides criminal penalties for official corruption; however, the government did not implement the law effectively.

“There was a widespread public perception of corruption, notably within the PA security forces and the Hamas Executive Force. Many social and political elements called for reform. PA ministers were subject to financial disclosure laws, and the PA attorney general's office is responsible for combating government corruption.

“The law requires official PA institutions to "facilitate" acquisition of requested documents or information to any Palestinian, but it does not require PA agencies to provide such information. Reasons for denial generally referred to privacy rights and security necessity.” [15b] (Section 3)

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## 18. FREEDOM OF RELIGION

- 18.01 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009 noted: "The Basic Law provides for religious freedom, and the PA generally respected this right in practice." The same source added: "The Basic Law states that Islam is the official religion and that the principles of Islamic law shall be the main source of legislation but also calls for respect and sanctity for other 'heavenly' religions. Religion must be declared on identification papers and personal status legal matters must be handled in ecclesiastical courts." [15b] (Section 2c)

Further information about Freedom of religion can be found in the following sources:

US State Department, *International Religious Freedom Report 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 19 September 2008 [15c]

The Association of Religion Data Archives. *Israeli Occupied Territories (Palestine)* accessed 12 June 2009. [60a]

The Israel Project, *Religious Freedom in Israel*, accessed 12 June 2009. [61a]

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## 19. ETHNIC GROUPS

19.01 The web site [Mapsofworld.com](http://Mapsofworld.com), accessed 29 May 2009, noted that:

“There are a number of ethnic groups in Palestine. Major portion of the people are Sunni Muslims. But also there is a considerable section of the Christian community in Palestine. Besides, the other ethnic groups in Palestine also include a very small number of Samaritan, Jewish and Druze communities.

“Half of the ethnic groups of Palestine live in the areas of British mandate Palestine that is Israel, Gaza strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem. The other half consisting mainly of refugees live in other places of the world.

“The Gaza strip consists of about an approximate of 99.4% of Palestinian Arab and others. The Jewish community in Palestine accounts for 0.6% of the population in the Gaza strip. In the West Bank, the rate of population of the Palestinian Arabs along with others is 83%. However there are also a good percentage of Jews living in West Bank. The Jews accounts for 17% of the total population in the West Bank area. The Christians that are found in the Gaza strip is about 0.7% of the population. But the same in [the] case of the West Bank is 8%.” [56a]

See [Section 15: Freedom of religion](#).

Further information about Ethnic groups can be found in the following sources:

US State Department, [International Religious Freedom Report 2008](#), Israel and the occupied territories, released on 19 September 2008 [15c]

The Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project, [Assessment for Palestinians in Israel](#) accessed 12 June 2009. [62a]

Minority Rights Group International (MRG) [State of the World's Minorities 2008](#), 11 March 2008 accessed 12 June 2009. [63a]

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## 20. LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER PERSONS

### Legal rights

20.01 The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) report, *State-sponsored Homophobia – A world survey of laws prohibiting same sex activity between consenting adults*, May 2009, stated that in Gaza sexual acts between members of the same sex were illegal:

“Male/Male Illegal Female/Female Legal

Criminal Code Ordinance of 1936 Section 152 Unnatural offences — (2)

Anyone who:

(a) commits sexual intercourse with another person against the order of nature, or

(b) commits sexual intercourse with an animal, or

(c) permits or allows the above mentioned acts is considered to have committed a felony punishable by imprisonment for a term of ten years.

(Unofficial translation)” [29a] (p14)

20.02 However Sodomylaws.com, last edited on 24 November 2007, stated “It is unclear if sodomy is illegal in Palestine.” [30a] The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, (USSD Report 2008) released on 25 February 2009 noted that “There was no legal discrimination against homosexuals” [15b] (Section 5)

20.03 According to Globalgayz.com, in an undated entry, “It’s difficult to separate information about Palestinian gays from the Israeli gay scene. Since Palestine is a very homophobic culture many Palestinian gays and lesbians are forced against their cultural and religious will to hide in Israel where homosexuality is much more acceptable and, indeed, protected.” [32a]

20.04 Globalgayz.com further stated in 2009 that:

“The topic of LGBT rights in Palestine remains one of the more taboo issues in the region. Male homosexuality is illegal in Gaza, with laws dating to the British Criminal Code Ordinance of 1936, and it is reported to be legal in the West Bank but there are conflicting reports. Palestine has no civil right laws that protect LGBT people from discrimination or harassment. The Palestinian political organizations, both secular and fundamentalist, tend to avoid the issue of LGBT-rights. Recently, a handful of LGBT-organizations have arisen to aid LGBT Arabs and Palestinians, all of which are headquartered in Israel: Jerusalem Open House, Black Laundry, Aswat (‘Voices’) for women. Same-sex marriages, civil unions or domestic partnerships are not remotely given legal recognition in Gaza or the West Bank. Gay Palestinians frequently seek refuge in Israel fearing for their lives, especially fearing death from members of their own families.” [32b]

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### Government and societal discrimination

20.05 Sodomylaws.com, accessed 10 February 2009, noted that “The social taboo is overwhelming and there have not been reports in the press of anyone being charged with sodomy. Homosexuals are routinely murdered by their families, or

escape to Israel or other countries.” [30a] On the same subject the USSD Report 2008 report stated “... cultural and religious traditions reject homosexuality, and Palestinians alleged that PA security officers harassed, abused, and sometimes arrested homosexuals due to orientation.” [15b] (Section 5)

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## 21. WOMEN

### OVERVIEW

21.01 Palestinian law states that women, amongst others, are equal without discrimination. However during 2008 women did face some societal discrimination. (USSD Report 2008) [15b] (Section 5)

21.02 The Freedom House report, Freedom in the World 2008, Country Report, Palestinian Authority-Administered Areas (Israel), released on 2 July 2008, observed that:

“While Palestinian women are under-represented in most professions and encounter discrimination in employment, they have fuller access to higher education. A political quota system was instituted in 2005, mandating that women be represented on each party’s list for [Palestinian Legislative Council] PLC elections. Personal status law, derived in part from Sharia, puts women at a disadvantage in matters of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Rape, domestic abuse, and ‘honor killings,’ in which women who are raped or engage in extramarital sex are murdered by a relative, are not uncommon. In 2006, 17 women in the PA are reported to have been victims of honor killings; according to a report by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, such killings have risen in Gaza in 2007. These murders often go unpunished. Human Rights Watch released a report in November 2006 citing widespread abuse of women in Palestinian society, with reference to instances of rape victims being forced to marry assailants, and light sentences for honor killings. The report pointed out that women’s treatment in instances of rape or abuse is increasingly determined by tribal leaders or PA-appointed governors, and not by the courts, a situation that Human Rights Watch said leads to arbitrary decisions. The report urged the PA to make the protection of women a top priority; in October 2007, the PA Ministry of Women’s Affairs found that legal options for victims of domestic abuse were extremely limited.” [38a]

See Violence against Women and Honour Crimes below.

21.03 The ECOSOC report, *Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people* dated 7 May 2009 reported:

“The participation rate for women in the labour force was only 15.2 per cent in 2008, as compared with 66.8 per cent for men. The unemployment rate for women in 2008 was 23.8 per cent. The poverty rate among households headed by females was 61.2 per cent, compared with 56.9 per cent for households headed by males in the occupied Palestinian territory in 2007. The poverty rate among female-headed households with seven or more children is 79.7 per cent, compared with 68.6 per cent for households with five or six children.

And continued

“According to UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, an estimated 2,500 pregnant women per year face difficulties in obtaining access to a delivery facility owing to the Israeli closure system. In addition, the



United Nations Population Fund highlighted the risks for more than 40,000 pregnant women in the Gaza Strip who were denied proper medical treatment during the military operation of December 2008 and January 2009.” [55b] (p15)

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## SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND LEGAL RIGHTS

- 21.04 In a report from the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), *Social and Economic Situation of Palestinian Women 2000-2006* dated 16 February 2007 it was noted that:

“The Basic Law guarantees citizens' rights and affirms its commitment to guarantee basic freedoms and fundamental human rights. Yet the law is coded in the masculine gender and nowhere explicitly states that references to citizens or to Palestinians actually include both males and females. Some argue that they implicitly do since the use of the masculine form is conventional in Arabic, as in many other languages. Theoretically, then, the Basic Law gives Palestinians, males and females alike, the opportunity to an education, employment, and political participation, and all other citizens' rights without discrimination.” [23a] (p27)

- 21.05 The US State Department *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released on 25 February 2009 (USSD Report 2008) stated with regard to women in the workplace:

“Palestinian labor law states that work is the right of every capable citizen and regulates the work of women. However, during the year the rate of female participation in the workforce did not exceed 14 percent compared to 67 percent for males. Women endured prejudice and repression. Cultural restrictions associated with marriage occasionally prevented women from completing mandatory schooling or attending college. Families often disowned Muslim and Christian women who married outside their faith. Local officials sometimes advised such women to leave their communities to prevent harassment.” [15b] (Section 5)

- 21.06 On the subject of marriage and inheritance the USSD Report 2008 observed:

“For Muslims, personal status law is derived from Shari'a (Islamic law). Shari'a pertaining to women is part of the governing 1976 Jordanian Status Law, which includes inheritance and marriage laws. Women can inherit but not equally. Men may take more than one wife but rarely do. Women may make marriage contracts to protect their interests in divorce and child custody but rarely did so. Children often stayed with the mother; men paid child support and alimony. Ecclesiastical courts rule on personal status issues for Christians.” [15b] (Section 5)

- 21.07 The ESCWA Report 2007 also stated:

“The legal framework for Health law has been reviewed and the findings showed that it does not take into consideration any of the international laws, agreements or covenants of any sort. It is far from addressing the health rights of citizens generally, and those of women particularly, from a holistic perspective. The only commitment the laws reflect is their complying with the international agreement for women's health which focuses on providing

maternal health care during pregnancy and after delivery. It also considers gender equality in receiving information and care relevant to family planning.” [23a] (p27)

21.08 The report continued:

“Although the Criminal Law addresses issues of rape, abortion, and adultery, the health codes do not address the consequences of such events on the women's physical, mental and emotional health, nor do they address the protection of related health rights from violations such as physical, sexual, domestic and public violence against women. They also lack codes that address women's (and men's) mental and psychological health.” [23a] (p27)

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## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

21.09 In reporting violence against women the USSD Report 2008 stated:

“Rape is illegal, but its legal definition does not address spousal rape. PA law does not explicitly prohibit domestic violence, but assault and battery are crimes. According to HRW, few cases were successfully prosecuted. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, violence against wives, especially psychological, was common in the West Bank and Gaza. A woman must provide two eye witnesses, not relatives, to initiate divorce on the grounds of spousal abuse.

“In April the Palestinian NGO Society Voice Foundation released the results of a field study concluding that in the Gaza Strip 75 percent of women witnessed verbal, physical, sexual, or other types of violence, and 42 percent were victims of violence.

“According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), conditions in Gaza were associated with increased levels of violence against women. In 2007 two in five women in Gaza reported being victims of violence, up from one in five in 2006. There were a handful of NGO-funded women's shelters in the West Bank; there were no shelters in Gaza. Women generally approached village or religious leaders for assistance.” [15b] (Section 5)

21.10 The ESCWA 2007 report stated that: “Another legal aspect to be considered is the extent of the practice and rule of customary law which has disempowered women, since women issues are judged in the context of custom. All conflicts over matters that are culturally highly sensitive, such as rape, honor killing, sexual violence and physical abuse in the domestic sphere, are handled by customary laws. [23a] (p28)

21.11 In its' report *A Question of Security: Violence against Palestinian Women and Girls* published on 6 November 2006, Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated that:

“... Palestinian women and girls who suffer from family violence pay the price for their abuse. The criminal justice system and health care providers largely ignore these abuses, leaving Palestinian women and girls with little protection. Inadequate and discriminatory laws condone the violence and perpetuate a

situation of virtual impunity for perpetrators. Most women and girls consider it futile to pursue justice for family violence. Those who do report abuse confront authorities that prioritize the need to avoid public 'scandal' and maintain the reputation of the victim's family over her own health and life." 22a]

21.12 The HRW report continued:

"There is no legislation outlawing domestic violence. Marital rape is not a crime under penal codes in force in the West Bank and Gaza. Only male relatives can file incest charges on behalf of minors. Rapists who agree to marry their victim are exonerated from punishment. Courts apply laws providing a reduction in sentence for murders committed in a "fit of fury" even in clearly premeditated cases involving "honor" crimes. The government poorly enforces laws that do penalize violence, due in part to police and doctors lacking the training, expertise and will to take family violence seriously. While the West Bank has a few small domestic violence shelters, they are not accessible to all women. Gaza lacks any women's shelter for victims of violence... There is no question that the Palestinian Authority faces daunting economic, political and security challenges, at this particular juncture, that hinder its response to all social and criminal justice problems. Yet despite these challenges, the Palestinian Authority has built important new institutions and reformed and unified some laws, such as those governing the justice system and children's rights. Now the same must be done to protect women and girls from family violence." 22a]

21.13 Human Rights Watch, in its 2008 World Report, covering events in 2007, released 30 January 2008, stated that:

"Violence against women and girls inside the family is a serious problem in the OPT. Law enforcement and health officials lack adequate training, guidelines, and commitment to report and investigate the problem. Even in the rare instances where the authorities pursue cases, perpetrators benefit from laws that reduce penalties for men who attack female relatives suspected of dishonoring the family, relieve from criminal prosecution rapists who agree to marry their victims, and allow only male relatives to file incest charges on behalf of minors." [22b] (p490)

### Honour crimes

21.14 Human Rights Watch's *World Report 2008*, released 30 January 2008, stated that "The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights reported that as of late August [2007], 11 women had been murdered by relatives in so-called "honor killings" in Gaza in 2007." [22b] (p491) The USSD Report 2008 stated that "The PA Ministry of Women's Affairs reported there were 51 honor killings from 2004 to 2007." [15b] (Section 5)

See Freedom House - Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa, dated 14 October 2005 for further background. [38b]

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## 22. CHILDREN

### OVERVIEW

22.01 UNICEF's OPTs country website, undated, accessed 19 February 2009 stated that:

"Children's quality of life and well-being continues to decline rapidly for the eighth year in a row. Israeli military incursions, closures, curfews and internal Palestinian violence mar children's daily lives.

"Children are at risk of being killed, injured or detained. In 2008, a total of 38 children were killed between 1 January and 5 March, a rise from the 2007 monthly average of four children killed.

"Frequent violence disrupts children's education, particularly in the northern and southern West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Curfews, closures and movement restrictions impede children's and teachers' ability to access schools. In sum, these conditions negatively impact children's ability to learn, their concentration and their performance at school. Children also have limited opportunities for extra-curricular activities, which are vital in the development of life skills." [34b]

22.02 The same website continued:

"Children and their families are living in an environment increasingly characterized by violence, poverty, insecurity, physical destruction and the depletion of regular means of support, studies show. The results are proving devastating for children's development, protection and psychosocial well-being ... Children suffer from heightened stress and anxiety. A 2007 survey showed that 90 per cent of children were affected by violence, an increase of 13 per cent since 2006. The presence of violence in homes and schools is of particular concern. Just over half of mothers surveyed in a 2006 study said that their children (aged 5-17) had been exposed to violence at school (45.2 per cent) and at home (93.3 per cent)." [34b]

22.03 The UNICEF website, OPT country page, accessed on 19 February 2009, reported "Armed conflict continues to kill dozens of children each year in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Poverty has dramatically worsened since 2000; access to jobs, schools, and medical care is hampered by hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks. In Gaza half of the population is under age 18, making efforts on behalf of children especially urgent." [34b] (Background)

22.04 The Palestine Monitor fact sheet, Children in Palestine, updated on 18 December 2008:

- "60% of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories are under 19-years-old.
- One in 3 Palestinian males aged 15-19 is an unskilled worker. Unemployment is a severe problem for young Palestinian men: 20% of 15-19-year-olds cannot find paid work.
- 20% of Palestinian females marry between the ages of 15-19. More than 1 in 10 subsequently divorce.

- According to the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF): 'Conditions have rarely been worse for Palestinian children.' One in 10 Palestinian children now suffer from stunted growth due to compromised health, poor diet and nutrition and 50% of Palestinian children are anemic, and 75% of those under 5 suffer from vitamin A deficiency...
- Rising poverty and unemployment is affecting school attendance across Palestine. In the 2005/6 school year the number of students whose families could not afford the NIS 50 (\$11) school fee doubled from 29,000 to 56,000.
- Up to 67% of families are living in poverty across the West Bank. In Gaza poverty rates have spiralled to 85% this year, severely affecting every aspect of children's lives.
- Increasing numbers of Palestinian children are now working to support their families instead of attending school. Palestinian children under the age of 14 can cross Israeli checkpoints without permits, and at least one thousand Palestinian children now cross into Israel every day, to work in garbage tips salvaging glass and metal. More than half of the Palestinian children who work in Israel, or Palestine, do not attend school at all." [33a]

22.05 Further background information, including basic socio-economic statistics can be found on the [UNICEF OPTs country webpage](#).

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## LEGAL RIGHTS

22.06 The Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) stated in an article dated 20 November 2007 that:

"Despite not being able to ratify international treaties because of its legal status and the fact that it is not recognized as a government, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) endorsed the Convention [on the Rights of the Child] in 1995, and thus has a moral duty to respect and promote UNCRC standards of child protection within its jurisdiction.

"On the 18th anniversary of the Convention, children's rights in the occupied Palestinian territories are still routinely and widely violated as a result of the Israeli occupation and the PNA's failure to undertake appropriate measures for the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Convention.

"Since the start of its occupation of the Palestinian territory in 1967, Israel has carried out policies and practices that have continuously violated Palestinian children's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

On the Palestinian level, the PNA has still not fully undertaken appropriate measures to implement the rights enshrined in the Convention domestically. While it has drafted and adopted a national Child Law in 2004, it must take other executive steps to implement national laws which would guarantee Palestinian children's enjoyment of the rights set out in the Convention." [20a]

## VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

22.07 Children have been caught up in the violence between Israel and the Palestinian Authorities/militant groups. The Palestine Monitor fact sheet updated on 18 December 2008 noted “Since the talks began at the end of last year until September of 2008, the firing has not stopped. As a result, 79 Palestinian children have been killed, and a further 370 injured. During this same period of time, 4 Israeli children have been killed and a further 11 injured as a result of the conflict.” [33a]

22.08 The USSD Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2008, Israel and the occupied territories, released 25 February 2009, observed:

“The [Israeli Defence Force] IDF used minors as human shields; Palestinian terrorist groups used minors to conduct attacks, smuggle weapons, and act as human shields. OCHA reported that between January 1 and December 23 [2008], 71 children were killed in Gaza by the IDF. Palestinian factional violence killed 15 children in Gaza over the same period. In the West Bank, 17 children were killed, including 13 by the IDF, two by Israeli settlers, and one by Palestinians. Excluding the final week of the year in Gaza, a total of 618 children were injured in the West Bank and Gaza. The IDF and Israeli settlers were responsible for 99 percent of the 397 injuries to children OCHA recorded in the West Bank (352 were reported as injured by the IDF and 41 by Israeli settlers).” [15b] (Section 5)

22.09 UNICEF, in its latest humanitarian update (18 July 2008) for Palestine recorded that:

“More children have died in the conflict with Israel in the first half of 2008 than during all of 2007. Despite a ceasefire with Israel, Gaza’s borders remain largely closed. Shortages of fuel and electricity translate into electricity cuts of 8 – 10 hours/day, disruptions in water distribution, sewage treatment, and to a lesser extent, health care.

“Previously self-reliant families are increasingly food insecure, notably in Gaza. Across oPt, the share of spending on food over total household expenditure is as high as 64% in urban areas and 60% in rural areas. In Gaza, a UNICEF-supported assessment linked rising child malnutrition to insufficient meat and fruit intake and less household income.” [34a]

22.10 The Palestine Monitor fact sheet, updated on 18 December 2008, on the subject of arrests of children by Israeli forces reported:

“Contrary to international norms and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Israel is a signatory, children under the age of 16 in the oPt can be arrested, tried and treated in the same manner as adults.

“Israel has often chosen to sidestep both its own regulations, and those of the UN Convention by charging and sentencing children as young as twelve years old.

“Between the ages of 12-14, children can be sentenced for offenses for a period of up to 6 months. After the age of 14, Palestinian children are tried as adults. There are no juvenile courts, and children are often detained in centers together with adults...Over the last eight years an estimated 6,700 Palestinian

children were arrested and detained in Israeli prison facilities and treated in the same manner as adults.” [33a]

22.11 With regard to violence not directly related to the conflict, the USSD Report 2008 stated “Child abuse was reported to be a widespread problem. A 2006 HRW study cited a Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics survey indicating high levels of domestic violence, aggravated during times of political violence. There were no updated statistics during the year. The Basic Law prohibits violence against children; however, PA authorities rarely punished perpetrators of familial violence.” [15b]

22.12 The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), in its OPT Monthly Update 15 June 2009, recorded that:

“As at end-May, only six truckloads of construction material had entered Gaza since “Cast Lead” destroyed homes, schools and critical infrastructure. Many families are using mud to rebuild homes. According to Defense for Children International, around 700 children were held in Israeli detention facilities during 2008, including 20-30 children held on the basis of secret evidence, without charges or trial.” [34a]

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## EDUCATION

22.13 The United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) in statistical tables states that the compulsory school age runs from 6 to 15 based on 2007 figures 18 September 2008. [27a]

22.14 UNICEF’s OPTs country website, undated, accessed 23 September 2008, in discussing education reported that:

“Educational quality is also suffering. A recent United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) survey found an 80 per cent and 40 per cent failure rate in Math and Arabic exams respectively among fourth to ninth graders in Gaza.

“Early childhood and educational programmes are non-comprehensive, uncoordinated and the policies governing their delivery are either non-existent or unimplemented. Only 20 per cent of children ages 3-6 years are enrolled in primary school. Limited community mobilization in early childhood development and the relatively high cost of enrolment in early childhood programmes leave behind children in marginalized communities.” [34b]

22.15 The World Health Organisation, accessed 18 September 2008 gave the latest available literacy rates for 2007 as 97 percent for males and 90 per cent females. It also gives the gross primary school enrolment ratio - total as 89 per cent. [20c]

22.16 The ECOSOC report, *Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people* dated 7 May 2009 reported:

“The Israeli occupation continues to have a negative impact on access to education by young people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Restrictions on movement and the construction of the barrier in the West Bank and military operations in the Gaza Strip impede access to schools and other educational activities by students and teachers. As a consequence, the quality of education is reportedly declining. The Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education reported a decline in enrolment rates and test scores in mathematics, Arabic and English, according to the results of national tests conducted for the school year 2007/08.” [55b] (p14)

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## HEALTH AND WELFARE

22.17 UNICEF.org country website, accessed on 19 February 2009, stated that:

“Palestinian children are fighting for their survival. Infant and under-5 mortality rates have improved little over the last five years, and under the current circumstances, achieving the Millennium Development Goal on child survival will be a challenge. More than one in 10 children is stunted, one in two is anaemic and 75% of children under the age of five are deficient in vitamin A. Avian flu could also pose a significant new risk to their health and nutrition.

“In Gaza, where military operations have damaged water and electricity networks, there is a marked increase in the incidence of diarrhoea, as well as intra-hospital infections. Deepening poverty and food shortages in Gaza are also exacerbating nutrition deficiencies in children.” [34b]

The [UNICEF website](#) also contains useful statistics on health and nutrition.

See [Medical issues](#), [Women](#).

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## 23. MEDICAL ISSUES

### GENERAL HEALTH

23.01 A report from the Health Work Committees (HWC), Health Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories after seven years of Al-Intifada, 28 September 2007 recounted that there had been deterioration in general health provision for example:

“• 2% of the families do not have safe drinking water resources, where the percentage reached 31.5% in Dier Al Balah.

• The decrease by 12% in the number of women who get care after delivery during the last couple of years.

• 10% of the Palestinians suffer from at least one chronic illness, with an increasing percentage of 31% compared with the year 2006.

• 34.1% of pregnant women get the Tetanus vaccination during their last month of pregnancy.

• 2.8% of women deliver at home, where the birth of underweight babies is doubled in Gaza Strip by 9.6%. The percentage of deliveries that took place on the way to hospital or at checkpoints has reached 0.6%.

• 2.5% of children suffer from moderate or severe emaciation, and 3.85% suffer from moderate or severe weight loss.

• 14.8% of the elderly suffer from at least one disability at the age of 60, where 64.5% suffer from at least one chronic illness.

• The spread of Mumps amongst children especially in Gaza Strip.

• The rates of Anemia have increased by 56% in West Bank and 82% in Gaza amongst children under the age of 5.

• The rates of Anemia have increased to 34% amongst pregnant women in West Bank and to 52% in Gaza.

• The increase in the rates of Diarrhea among infants and babies under the age of 5, where 11.7% of them suffered from Diarrhea and 14.1% from Respiratory diseases.” (HWC) [21a] (p3)

### Healthcare system

23.02 The World Health Organisation (WHO) paper Country Cooperation Strategy for WHO and the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2006–2008 of November 2005 stated that:

“The health care system in oPt is complex. There are five major health care providers: Ministry of Health, UNRWA, nongovernmental organizations, private sector, and hospitals outside oPt. The Ministry of Health is the main health care provider. It provides primary, secondary and tertiary care and purchases the unavailable tertiary health care domestically and providers from abroad. UNRWA provides mainly primary health care services to the refugee population, and purchases secondary and tertiary care services when needed.

“The nongovernmental organization sector is extensive: from missionary hospitals, to facilities Country Cooperation Strategy for WHO and the occupied Palestinian territory supported by international organizations, to community health centres. The private for-profit health sector also provides the three levels of care through a wide range of practices. Reliable data on the private health sector is however lacking. The fifth group of providers are

hospitals outside the territory: in Jordan, Egypt and Israel. Referral abroad, particularly to Israeli health facilities, was seriously affected in recent years.

“The health care system, in addition to the complexity described, is further fragmented by the lack of access, or right to health, in oPt. The continuously volatile situation has resulted in depriving the Palestinian people of access to essential services, including health services.

“The UN Commission on Human Rights issued a resolution in 2005 regarding Israel’s violation of human rights in oPt and, among other things, requested the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to address the issue of Palestinian pregnant women giving birth at checkpoints owing to denial of access by Israel to hospitals.” [20a] (p13)

- 23.03 Jane’s Information Group in its 2009 country assessment, updated 26 November 2008 and accessed 7 May 2009 stated that:

“The Palestinian population’s access to health services has been seriously hindered by the Israeli use of internal closures inside the Palestinian Territories. Despite being severely short of funds, the standard of health care remains adequate, although child immunisation programmes have suffered from restrictions on movement and people have been unable to access a number of specialist treatments. This is especially true in the case of the Gaza Strip where border closures have restricted access to hospitals in Israel or Egypt, and electricity cuts have seen hospitals run on emergency power for a majority of the 24-hour cycle. The continuing closure and sanctions on the Gaza Strip have hit the health sector hard, with no new clinics being constructed and a poorly maintained sewage system threatening the outbreak of more diseases. This has been exacerbated by the Israeli campaign in late 2008 and early 2009 that saw hospitals damaged and medical supplies seriously depleted. Despite massive donations and assistance, aid agencies warn the situation is critical with an estimated 90,000 people having being left homeless.” [28a] (Security)

See [Section 5: UNRWA](#)

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## HEALTHCARE DELIVERY

- 23.04 The WHO report also commented that:

“The network of [Primary Healthcare Centres] PHC centres and hospitals has been considerably developed in oPt. The total number of PHC centres was 630 in 2004: 511 in West Bank and 119 in Gaza. This includes: 394 established by the Ministry of Health (62%), 54 by UNRWA (9%), and 182 by nongovernmental organizations (29%). There are 80 hospitals (57 in West Bank and 23 in Gaza). In total, 5654 hospital beds are available, with a ratio of 15.1 beds per 10 000 inhabitants. This rate is among the lowest in the region, if compared with Egypt (21 per 10 000), Jordan (18 per 10 000) and the Syrian Arab Republic (14 per 10 000). The Ministry of Health owns 51% of the beds, nongovernmental organizations 39%, private sector 9% and UNRWA 1%.

“Hospital utilization is reasonably high in the Ministry of Health hospitals (81%), but low in nongovernmental organization and private hospitals (38%) and maternity hospitals (36%) in West Bank. Data on utilization of PHC centres and clinics are incomplete: particularly, no data on the utilization of private clinics are available. For the Ministry of Health and UNRWA clinics, utilization of PHC health services significantly increased between 2000 and 2001 while between 2001 and 2003 it only increased at UNRWA facilities and remained stable at the Ministry of Health PHC centres. The latest data show an almost 10% decrease in UNRWA utilization in 2004. Health care delivery is carried out quite independently in West Bank and in Gaza, not in a unified standardized manner. Information on quality of care is limited. However, anecdotal evidence indicates the overall poor quality of care in oPt.” (WHO) [20a] (p15)

See the WHO’s maps of health care facilities in the [West Bank](#) and in the [Gaza Strip](#), dated August 2006 (More information can be found at [WHO West Bank & Gaza Office](#))

- 23.05 The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH) report, Health Work Committees (HWC), *Health Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, After seven years of Al-Intifada*, dated 28 September 2007 continued:

“The Israeli Authorities imposed arbitrary fees on patients that reach up to [US] \$500 per patient for them to transport them from Beit Hanoun crossing to one of the Palestinian or Israeli hospitals in Jerusalem by Israeli ambulances, where Palestinians ambulances were prohibited from offering this service to the Palestinian patients. The lives of thousands of passengers departing or arriving in the country are subjected to danger, especially the elderly, children, women and patients, after treatment or surgery, where they are forced to wait for long days on the crossings facing difficult conditions, which lead to complexity of their health status and exposes the risk of death.” [21a] (p3)

- 23.06 The same source further noted:

“The prevention included patients transferred to Al-Makased hospital as well, which is considered to be the pioneer transferring and training hospital in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, so as St. George Eye hospital, Augusta Victoria hospital for the diagnosis and treatment of tumors, Ramallah hospital for conducting Catheter heart operations, the Arab Medical Hospital that offers services for cancer patients, and Rafidia hospital which offers Catheter heart operations for children, noting that such services are not available in Gaza hospitals.” [21a] (p3)

- 23.07 The USSD *Country Report for Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released 25 February 2009, stated:

“Access to Israel and Egypt for medical treatment by Gazans continued to be highly restricted. However, between February and March, several hundred medical patients were allowed to leave Gaza using shuttles. On August 4 [2008], Physicians for Human Rights reported that the ISA questioned patients transiting Erez checkpoint from Gaza and could refuse passage to persons refusing to provide intelligence information to ISA. Jerusalem-based

ambulances were not permitted to serve Palestinian patients in nine communities located within the Jerusalem municipality but isolated by the separation barrier. [Palestine Red Crescent Society] PRCS ambulances from the West Bank were subjected to delays or refused entry to Jerusalem by IDF soldiers at checkpoints. PRCS employees reported being objects of verbal or physical abuse on 30 occasions through October [2008]" [15b] (Section 2d)

See also [Section 25: Freedom of movement](#)

23.08 The MIFTAH report 2007 observed:

"The Israeli Occupation Authorities have also decided to prevent the entry of the medicines manufactured or stored in the West Bank or Gaza Strip to the hospitals in Jerusalem. This had a negative impact on the entry of the medicines, which affected the hospitals ability to provide the health care for their patients, and increased the isolation of Jerusalem from its Palestinian surrounding. Adding to that, Israel is putting obstacles in the way of Palestinian doctors for them not to go outside to get their specialized training, in spite of the fact that the Israeli Occupation is mainly responsible for the low specialized medical services in West Bank and Gaza Strip." [21a] (p3)

23.09 The report further added:

"A report issued by the World Health Organization in the Occupied Palestinian Territories showed that 60% of surveyed hospitals in August 2007 recorded a disorder in a significant number of treating and diagnosing medical equipment. Also a number of oxygen intensifying stations are not functioning in 2 of 11 hospitals. And as a proof of how difficult the situation is in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, three of the four cross sectional x-ray sets operating in Gaza hospitals are not functioning, sometime due to the shortage in the spare parts needed to operate them and the difficulty for technicians to reach and operate them properly." [21a] (p3)

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## MENTAL HEALTH

23.10 The World Health Organisations' Mental Health Atlas of 2005 (WHO Report 2005) stated that:

"Mental health is a part of primary health care system. Actual treatment of severe mental disorders is available at the primary level. Mental health care in primary care is not uniformly developed. Regular training of primary care professionals is not carried out in the field of mental health. Planned with the help of WHO and the French Government, NGOs and UN agencies (particularly UNICEF) in collaboration with many Ministries run short- and long-term courses on counselling, crisis intervention, nursing and social-work in relation to mental health for health professionals, teachers, parents, adolescents, law enforcement officers etc." [20b] (p538)

23.11 The report continued:

“There are community care facilities for patients with mental disorders. The Ministry of Health operates 15 community mental health clinics (CMHC). They are staffed by a psychiatrist and nurses (without specialist training). There is one mental health clinic for children. They provide case management, home visits, school consultation, counselling, public education, emergency and crisis services, substance abuse services, rehabilitation and training, education and research programmes. The Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP), an NGO, runs four community mental health clinics. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) initiated its mental health programme in 1989. It provides services to about 250 patients per week. UNRWA has started day care centres for the disabled. Almost one-third of all mental health patients are seen at the CMHCs.

“The other category is mainly composed of school counsellors. In Bethlehem, more than 40% of the beds are earmarked for women. Mental Hospitals offer a certain number of beds for forensic psychiatry. There are no beds earmarked for patients with substance abuse. There are no private mental health beds.” (WHO) [20b] (p538)

23.12 The WHO Report 2005 stated that:

“There are NGOs involved with mental health. They are mainly involved in advocacy, promotion, prevention and treatment. Many NGOs are working in West Bank and Gaza. Almost 50 of them employ at least 2 psychosocial/mental health staff members. Most of them provide counselling and work with specific groups like children, women, drug abusers etc. More than 80% of services offered by NGOs pertains to the urban population. The Gaza Community Mental Health Programme (GCMHP) runs 4 community mental health clinics. It is also involved in public education campaigns, occupational therapy and crisis intervention. Other NGOs offer counselling as a part of other (non-mental health) services. The United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) provides counselling and help in supply of medication. UNICEF provides educative and promotive services and materials for playing, reading, learning and self-expression to children. NGOs provide services to the less seriously ill population. Their services are often directed at specific segments of population like the mentally challenged, psycho-geriatric, substance abusers, children, women, political victims, victims of trauma etc.” [20b] (p538)

23.13 The report continued:

“Mental health is an increasing concern in OPT. Recent studies have shown that stressors such as the severe restriction on movement and lack of access to education and health care are present in everyday life. One study showed that 52% of those surveyed had thought of ending their life, 92% felt no hope for the future, 100% reported feeling stressed, and 84% expressed feelings of constant anger because of circumstances beyond their control. Feelings of insecurity have also increased in the areas directly affected by the Separation Barrier: 90% compared to 75% in other areas.” (WHO) [20a] (p10)

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## DRUG AVAILABILITY

23.14 The WHO Report 2005 also noted “A national therapeutic drug policy/essential list of drugs is present. It was formulated in 1999. Psychotropics are available at the Primary Health Centres. UNRWA and some of the NGOs use essential drug lists. [20b] (p538) The same source also noted “The following therapeutic drugs are generally available at the primary health care level: carbamazepine, phenobarbital, phenytoin sodium, sodium valproate, amitriptyline, chlorpromazine, diazepam, fluphenazine, haloperidol, lithium, carbidopa. Other drugs like benhexol, clozapine and cloimipramine are included in the essential drug list.” [20b] (p539)

See also [Women](#) and [Children](#)

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## 24. HUMANITARIAN ISSUES

- 24.01 The ECOSOC report, *Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people* dated 7 May 2009 reported:

“The occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, the use of arbitrary detention, the disproportionate use of force, house demolitions, severe mobility restrictions, lack of building permits and closure policies continue to intensify the economic and social hardship of the Palestinian residents of the occupied Palestinian territory. Internal Palestinian conflict has also continued to cause casualties and disrupted the delivery of essential services to the population.

“Attacks by Palestinian militants and the launching of rockets into Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip continued in 2008, as did Israeli military operations. In December 2008, the Israeli army launched a 22-day military operation in the Gaza Strip that killed a reported 1,440 people and injured 5,380, and gravely deepened the existing humanitarian and economic crisis caused by the ongoing blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip, which has remained isolated since June 2007, with rapidly deteriorating conditions, a near collapse of the private sector and shortages of essentials such as food, electricity and fuel.

“The Israeli closure system remains a primary cause of poverty and humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, and restricts Palestinian access to natural resources, including land, basic social services, employment, markets and social and religious networks. However, despite those constraints, the Palestinian Authority managed to make some progress in areas such as security, public financial management, local public infrastructure and health and education services, not least because it was able to fully pay civil servants every month. Israeli settlement and outpost expansion, land confiscation and the construction of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the road map and the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, isolate occupied East Jerusalem, severely intrude into the West Bank and curtail economic and social life.” [55b] (p2)

Further information on Humanitarian issues can be found in the following sources

OCHA, *OCHA in OPT* accessed 12 June 2009. [3i]

Division for Palestinian rights, DPA/UN, *Civil society network on the question of Palestine* Last updated 24 August 2007 accessed 12 June 2009. [4b]

UNRWA (the *United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East*) accessed 12 June 2009. [16a]

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## 25. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

- 25.01 Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessment, Security, updated 26 November 2008, noted:

"The Israeli authorities continue a policy of closure, imposing severe and frequently arbitrary restrictions on freedom of movement in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, contributing to a serious humanitarian crisis marked by extreme poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity. The movement restrictions have also severely compromised Palestinian residents' access to health care, education, and other services. The PA has remained unable to guarantee its people's human rights and after a period of particularly severe closures on the Gaza Strip in January 2008, Hamas bulldozed sections of the border wall to Egypt and allowed Gazans unrestricted access for a few days until agreement was reached with Cairo to close the border again." [28a] (Security)

- 25.02 The USSD *Country Report for Human Rights Practices 2008*, Israel and the occupied territories, released 25 February 2009, (USSD Report 2008) stated

"The Basic Law provides for freedom of movement, and the PA generally did not restrict freedom of movement.

"The IDF restricted the movement of Palestinians and frequently heightened these restrictions citing military necessity. These restrictions on movement affected virtually all aspects of life, including access to places of worship, employment, agricultural lands, schools, hospitals, and the conduct of journalism and NGO activities." [15b] (Section 2d)

- 25.03 The USSD 2008 further noted that:

"Since June 2007 Israel has enforced a strict blockade of Gaza, seriously impeding people and goods from entering or leaving. Virtually no humanitarian goods or fuel entered Gaza between November 5 and December 25 during a flare-up of hostilities between Israel and Hamas. Israel permitted additional humanitarian goods to enter Gaza immediately prior to and during IAF airstrikes that began on December 27. The shortages of fuel caused by the closure resulted in widespread blackouts throughout Gaza and damaged electrical grid infrastructure. Israeli prohibition of access to Gaza beginning in early November for foreign journalists resulted in widespread protests by international news agencies. Israel also denied entry to Gaza to foreign staff of international NGOs working in Gaza from November 4 until the end of the year." [15b] (Section 2d)

- 25.04 The Forced Migration Review paper - Identity and movement control in the OPT, dated August 2006, considered issues of freedom of movement and observed that Israel "... unilaterally administers entry visas and work permits for the tens of thousands of Palestinian non-ID holders in the OPT and for foreign visitors. Israel controls all access to and from the OPT, to and from enclaves/cantons it has established within it and – despite 'disengagement' – has total control over all human and vehicular traffic into and out of the Gaza Strip." [36a]



- 25.05 On the same subject B'TSELEM - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories - recorded in an undated entry on its website, accessed 18 September 2008, that:

“The restrictions on movement that Israel has imposed on the Palestinian population in the Occupied Territories over the past five years are unprecedented in the history of the Israeli occupation in their scope, duration, and in the severity of damage that they cause to the three and a half million Palestinians who reside there. In the past, Israel has imposed either a comprehensive closure on the Occupied Territories or a curfew on a specific town or village to restrict Palestinian freedom of movement, but never has Israel imposed restrictions as sweeping and as prolonged as those currently in place.

“Israel uses a number of means to restrict Palestinian movement in the West Bank. These means, which are part of a single, coordinated control mechanism, which Israel adjusts to its needs, include the following: permanent and temporary checkpoints, physical obstructions, the Separation Barrier, forbidden roads or roads with restrictions on Palestinian use, and the movement-permit regime. By implementing these means, Israel has split the area into six geographical areas: North, Center, South, the Jordan Valley and northern Dead Sea, the enclaves resulting from the Separation Barrier, and East Jerusalem, an integral part of the West Bank. Movement between the sections and within each section has become, in recent years, hard, slow, and complicated. Also, Israel almost completely forbids the movement of Palestinians between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and impedes Palestinians from entering Israel and from going abroad.” [25c]

- 25.06 In its position paper ‘Separated Entities: Israel Divides Palestinian Population of West Bank and Gaza Strip’, dated September 2008, B'TSELEM reported that:

“Israel is taking unilateral measures to institutionalize and perpetuate a new factual and legal reality of separation between residents of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, while severing the interdependent social, economic and cultural ties between the two groups, infringing their rights and impeding the possibility that the Palestinian people will realize their right to self determination. Since the beginning of the current intifada, Israel has taken various measures designed to separate the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, to split the Palestinian population into two separate entities and to cut those off from each other. This policy escalated in the past year with a new requirement imposed on Palestinians whose registered address is in the Gaza Strip, to hold a permit in order to be present in the West Bank, and with the removal of such persons from the West Bank and defining them ‘illegal aliens’. The new permit regime is an unprecedented, legally baseless move, by which Israel is turning Palestinian residents of the OPT into ‘illegal aliens’ in their own homes.” [25d]

- 25.07 The USSD Report 2008 stated that:

“According to OCHA, as of September, in the West Bank there were 630 obstacles to movement, including 75 fully manned checkpoints, 18 occasionally manned checkpoints, 230 earth mounds, 68 cement roadblocks, 97 road gates, 46 earthen walls, 22 trenches, and 74 road protection fences.

There were an additional 69 obstacles in the H2 area of Hebron not otherwise counted as staffed checkpoints which OCHA counted separately from the total number of obstacles. During the year of the 71 gates or checkpoints along the separation barrier, 40 were accessible only to Palestinians in possession of permits. Operating hours of the accessible gates were limited and although schedules were announced, openings and closings were erratic. Closure of major checkpoints was at times arbitrary and hindered Palestinians from reaching workplaces, school, places of worship, and health services. ... Between January and October, OCHA recorded 3,078 'temporary' checkpoints in the West Bank, a weekly average of 76.2, due to arrests or other operations. Over the same period Israeli forces made 3,341 arrests.

"Israel continued to restrict access to the Jordan Valley by Palestinians residing in other areas of the West Bank. Highway 90, the main north-south highway in the Jordan Valley, was not explicitly restricted from use by Palestinians, but Palestinians not resident in the valley have been prohibited from driving cars across the four main access points since April 2007." [15b] (Section 2d)

- 25.08 The UN ECOSOC report *Assistance to the Palestinian people* of 7 May 2009 stated that:

"Gaza's crossings remained closed for most of 2008, and smuggling through the tunnels played an increasing role in the economy. Some humanitarian assistance was allowed to enter Gaza, including the bulk entry of wheat grain, medicines and limited amounts of educational materials, but it proved to be very difficult to import other humanitarian goods, such as cement and generators. Moreover, UNRWA was long unable to bring paper into Gaza to print its human rights curriculum, while the Agency's emergency food aid programme was suspended on two occasions in 2008 due to lack of supplies. UNRWA continued to face difficulties in importing plastic for bags for its food distribution.

"The Erez crossing point, the only passage for movement of people between Gaza and the West Bank via Israel, remained virtually closed after June 2007, except for representatives of foreign media, who were denied access in November 2008, and international aid organizations. Karni, the main crossing point for goods, continued to be closed as from June 2007, except for the conveyer belt. The Rafah crossing also remained officially closed, although a few hundred Palestinians, mainly persons seeking medical care, students and pilgrims, were able to cross each month for specific purposes." [55a] (p7)

- 25.09 The UN ECOSOC report *Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation...* of 7 May 2009 stated that:

"By April 2009, the closure had not been lifted, and the flow of goods and cash into the Gaza Strip continue to be severely restricted. An alternative tunnel economy, largely regulated by Hamas, has developed in Rafah along the Egypt-Gaza border, with estimates of the number of active tunnels ranging from 200 to 600. These were targeted by Israeli air strikes starting in December 2008 because of suspicions that arms were being smuggled through the tunnels. Following the ceasefire, operations are reported to have resumed in many of the tunnels, supplying the market with a range of goods, including fuel." [55b] (p9)

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## Separation wall

25.10 In the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, dated 21 January 2008, it was recorded that:

“The wall that Israel is at present building, largely in Palestinian territory, is clearly illegal. The International Court of Justice in its Advisory Opinion on the construction of the wall found that it is contrary to international law and that Israel is under an obligation to discontinue construction of the wall and to dismantle forthwith those sections that have already been built. Israel has abandoned its claim that the wall is a security measure only and now concedes that one of the purposes of the wall is to include settlements within Israel. The fact that 83 per cent of the West Bank settler population and 69 settlements are enclosed within the wall bears this out.

“The wall is planned to extend for 721 kilometres. At present 59 per cent of the wall has been completed and 200 kilometres have been constructed since the International Court of Justice handed down its Advisory Opinion declaring the wall to be illegal. When the wall is finished, an estimated 60,000 West Bank Palestinians living in 42 villages and towns will reside in the closed zone between the wall and the Green Line. This area will constitute 10.2 per cent of Palestinian land in the West Bank. There are, however, suggestions that the route of the wall will be revised to include additional Palestinian lands in the south-eastern West Bank near to the Dead Sea. If this plan is implemented some 13 per cent of Palestinian land will be seized by the wall. The closed zone includes many of the West Bank’s valuable water resources and its richest agricultural lands.” [39d] (p16)



**Occupied Palestinian Territory**

**West Bank Barrier Route Projections, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) (July 2008) [3b]**

25.11 In September 2008 a joint report from IDMC and Badil recorded that:

“Israel’s Wall and its associated regime under construction in the occupied West Bank since June 2002, moreover, also appear to be creating a new wave of displacement. In some regions, the Wall is a concrete wall of approximately 8-9 metres high (more than twice the height of the Berlin Wall) with watchtowers and sniper positions every 300 metres, while in other regions it is an electric fence approximately 3-5 metres high with a buffer zone, trenches, barbed wires, sensors and cameras. The route of the Wall

has been revised many times; the latest route was approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 30 April 2006 and is 703 km long (more than twice the length of the 1949 armistice line, or 'Green Line'). While the Wall follows the Green Line on some 20 percent of the route, most of it is being built inside the 1967-occupied Palestinian West Bank, thereby isolating West of the Wall some 10.1 percent of the Palestinian land, which is likely to be annexed by Israel. The total amount of land de facto annexed by the Wall, if Jewish colonies ('settlements') and related infrastructure are included, is 46 percent." [19b](p15)

- 25.12 Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people:

"The barrier intrudes significantly into the West Bank, looping around settlements and fragmenting the West Bank into non-contiguous enclaves of Palestinian territory, isolated from the rest of the West Bank. By September 2008, 57 per cent of the barrier had been constructed, passing through 171 Palestinian communities and displacing 27,841 people in 3,880 families. The Israeli authorities have confiscated 49,291 dunums [One dunum = 1,000 m2.] of land for the construction of the barrier, most of which lie in the northern West Bank, which contains the most fertile lands. The barrier has also segregated 274,607 dunums from their owners." [55b] (p6)

See [History - Separation Wall](#)

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### Travel permits and ID cards

- 25.13 A paper from the Forced Migration Review dated August 2006, Palestinian Displacement, FMR 26 - Identity and movement control in the OPT reported:

"Israel rigorously controls the identities of the four million Palestinians living under its control in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. The occupying authorities have ingeniously engendered statelessness for an entire population.

"Since it occupied the OPT in 1967 – and regardless of the Oslo process – Israel has reserved exclusive power of civil registration and issuing of IDs for Palestinians." [36a]

- 25.14 As a result of the Oslo Accords the act of issuing identity cards passed to the Palestinian Authority. Nonetheless, because Israel retained – and continues to retain – control over the Palestinian population registry, it is Israel that determines the rights and status of all Palestinians living on occupied land. [36a]
- 25.15 West Bank and Gaza are entitled to change the colour of their ID cards to green, the colour of ID cards issued by the PA, though some still carry the older Civil Administration (as the government system under Israeli supervision was known until 1994) versions. East Jerusalemites still hold blue ID cards. The PA-issued ID cards contain a photograph and relevant personal information. [36a]

25.16 The USSD 2008 noted that:

“The PA issued passports for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Because there were no commercial flights from the territories and permits to use Ben Gurion airport were not available, travellers departed by land into Jordan or Egypt. NGOs claimed that Israeli authorities harassed their representatives who landed at Ben Gurion airport. Foreign citizens of Palestinian ethnicity had difficulty obtaining or renewing visas permitting them to enter the West Bank and Israel both from Ben Gurion airport and land entry points.” [15b] (Section 2d)

25.17 The USSD 2008 further noted that:

“West Bank and Gaza residents can enter Jerusalem only with an Israeli-issued travel permit. During the year Israeli authorities prohibited passage between Gaza and the West Bank, except for a very limited number of Palestinians holding Israeli permits. During the month of Ramadan, only Palestinian men over 50 and women over 45 were permitted to enter Jerusalem without a permit. Palestinians under the age limit were required to obtain a permit.” [15b] (Section 2d)

See [Annex D](#) for examples of ID cards.

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## 26. CITIZENSHIP AND STATUS

### Stateless Palestinians

- 26.01 The paper from the Forced Migration Review dated August 2006, *Palestinian Displacement, FMR 26 - Identity and movement control in the OPT* reported:

“Palestinians are the largest stateless community in the world. Statelessness has dominated and shaped the lives of four generations of Palestinian refugees since their exodus in 1948.”

“Today more than half of the eight million or so Palestinians are considered to be de jure stateless persons. These fall broadly into three categories: holders of the ‘Refugee Travel Document’ (RTD) issued by Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and some other Arab countries holders of nationalities of convenience – mainly temporary Jordanian passports holders of the Palestinian passport issued by the Palestinian Authority (PA) which is considered as a travel document pending formation of a fully fledged Palestinian state. All persons legally resident and registered, born or naturalised in Palestine under the British Mandate (1919-1948) were British Protected Persons, holders of British (Palestine) passports. Citizenship in both Jewish and Arab states – proposed by the Partition Plan set out in UN Res. 181 in 1947 – was meant to be granted to all inhabitants. However, when Britain promptly ended its mandate on 15 May 1948, it was left to the successor state, Israel, to determine entitlement to nationality.” [36a]

See [Palestinian refugees](#)

### Status of Palestinians in East Jerusalem

- 26.02 The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in an undated transcript of a video, Crisis Guide: the Palestinian Conflict, stated:

“From 1948 to 1967 the city was divided: Israel controlled the western section and located many of its government institutions there; Jordan controlled the east and denied Jews access to their holy sites in the Old City. The Israeli military victory of 1967 gave it physical control of the entire city. Israel promptly declared Jerusalem its undivided, eternal capital, and annexed it in 1980. However Israel has allowed the Jordanian monarchy to retain custodial control of Islamic holy sites in the old city. Few governments recognize Israel's claim over all of Jerusalem. Since shortly after the 1967 war, Israel has encouraged Jewish residents to live in East Jerusalem and created legal hurdles for Arabs to claim residency, pass down property to descendants, or establish businesses. Almost entirely Arab between 1949 and 1967, the population of the section of Jerusalem annexed by Israel has grown steadily more Jewish in the past four decades.” [24a]

- 26.03 B'TSELEM noted in an undated entry on its website, accessed 10 February 2009, with regard to Palestinian residents in areas of East Jerusalem and West Bank annexed by Israel in 1967:

“... Israel conducted a census in these areas and granted permanent residency status to residents in the annexed areas present at the time the census was taken. Persons not present in the city for whatever reason forever lost their right to reside in Jerusalem. Permanent residents were permitted, if they wished and met certain conditions, to receive Israeli citizenship. These conditions included swearing allegiance to the State, proving that they are not citizens of any other country, and showing some knowledge of Hebrew. For political reasons, most of the residents did not request Israeli citizenship. Setting the municipal boundary to run through neighbourhoods and villages also created a distinction between Palestinians regarding their rights, since residents living in the un-annexed area continued to be residents of the West Bank, and were subject to military rule.” [25a]

26.04 The same source continued:

“Palestinians hold the status of ‘permanent resident’ of the State of Israel. This is the same status granted to foreign citizens who have freely chosen to come to Israel and want to live there. Israel treats Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem as immigrants who live in their homes at the beneficence of the authorities and not by right. The authorities maintain this policy although these Palestinians were born in Jerusalem, lived in the city, and have no other home ...

“Permanent residency differs substantially from citizenship. The primary right granted to permanent residents is to live and work in Israel without the necessity of special permits. Permanent residents are also entitled to social benefits provided by the National Insurance Institute and to health insurance. Permanent residents have the right to vote in local elections, but not in elections to Knesset [Parliament]. Unlike citizenship, permanent residency is only passed on to the holder's children where the holder meets certain conditions. A permanent resident with a non-resident spouse must submit, on behalf of the spouse, a request for family unification. Only citizens are granted the right to return to Israel at any time.” [25a]

See also [UNRWA](#) and [Palestinian refugees](#)

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## 27. FORGED AND FRAUDULENTLY OBTAINED DOCUMENTS

27.01 The Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa in a response “Israel: Availability of fraudulent or illegally obtained identity documents (2005 - 2007)” dated 04 May 2007 stated;

“Information on the availability of fraudulent or illegally obtained identity documents in Israel was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

“In January 2007, Israeli media reported on the arrest by Jerusalem police of six Arab residents of East Jerusalem and one from the West Bank (Ynetnews 10 Jan. 2007). Those arrested were suspected of operating a network that sold false documents to Jews and Arabs across Israel (ibid.) as well as to Palestinians living in the Palestinian Territories (ibid.; Jerusalem Post 11 Jan. 2007). Among the documents that the suspected forgers sold to hundreds of people (ibid.) were Israeli identification cards, Israeli insurance cards and fake court protocols (ibid; Ynetnews 10 Jan. 2007) on Arab family reunification cases (Jerusalem Post 11 Jan. 2007). The documents, which in some cases were sold for thousands of shekels [hundreds of Canadian dollars (Canada 11 Apr. 2007)] (Ynetnews 10 Jan. 2007; Jerusalem Post 11 Jan. 2007), were bought from intermediaries who forged the documents in their own homes (ibid.). According to the Jerusalem Post, ‘[t]housands of forged Israeli documents have been sold to Palestinians in recent years, and police are investigating whether the fake ID cards were used in terrorist attacks’ (ibid.)” [57d]

See also [Section 28: Exit and return](#)

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## 28. EXIT AND RETURN

- 28.01 The Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa in a response *Travel documents issued by the Israeli government to residents of the West Bank and Gaza...* dated 17 March 2008 stated;

“According to the United States Central Intelligence Agency's The World Factbook, transnational issues involving the Gaza Strip and West Bank remain subject to the terms outlined in the 28 September 1995 Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (US 24 Jan. 2008a; *ibid.* 24 Jan. 2008b). Under the agreement, a Joint Civil Affairs Coordination and Cooperation Committee (CAC) was established to deal with civil policy matters such as travel to and from the West Bank and Gaza and the granting of permits (Israel 28 Sept. 1995, Annex III, Art. I).

“Annex I, Article IX of the Agreement, which instructs on entry and exit and movement within the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, makes specific provisions for Israel's right to impose closures at crossing points for security reasons (*ibid.*). It also stipulates that Gaza and West Bank residents wishing to enter Israel must carry an identity card in addition to other documentation specified by the government of Israel and communicated to the CAC (*ibid.*).” [57b]

- 28.02 The Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa in a response “Procedure for Palestinians who lived in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip to return there...” dated 26 October 2004 stated:

“The documents required depend on the place of residence (West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem). A person who does not have a particular document can sometimes provide others that are equally acceptable. For example, all Palestinians residing in the Gaza Strip or in the West Bank (except East Jerusalem) who want to return to the Occupied Territories require, in theory, a valid travel document issued by the Palestinian Authority (a Palestinian Authority Passport). According to the BADIL Resource Center, “these documents have been issued by the Palestinian Authority since 1994 with approval by Israeli authorities” and indicate that the bearer's name appears on the Israeli military authorities' population registry (in other words, that the person is recognized as a resident of the Occupied Territories) (20 Oct. 2004).

“Two sources indicated that Palestinians lacking the required documents cannot return to the Occupied Territories ... The director of the BADIL Resource Center stated that most Palestinians are inadmissible to the Occupied Territories (BADIL Centre 20 Oct. 2004). Among the categories of inadmissible persons are “those who have not held legal resident status in the [Territories] under the Israeli military regime prior to their departure (i.e. large majority of Palestinian refugees); persons who held legal resident status in the [Territories] before but whose exit permit/travel documents have expired and cannot be renewed via the Israeli authorities of the Palestinian Authority; persons with valid travel documents who are denied re-admission by the Israeli authorities for alleged security reasons;” and “Palestinians who have held (temporary) residence in other countries” (*ibid.*; see also IPCRI 20 Oct. 2004). According to the PHRMG spokesperson, among the people who cannot return to the Occupied Territories are those who lost their permission

documents and those who stayed abroad longer than permitted (18 Oct. 2004).” [57c]

See also [Section 27: Forged and Fraudulently obtained documents](#)

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## Annexes

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### Annex A: Chronology of events

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- 1947** **29 November:** United Nations general assembly passes a partition plan dividing the British Mandate of Palestine into two states. Accepted by the Jewish leadership but rejected by the Arab leadership.
- 1947-1949:** The Nabka, meaning "disaster" or "cataclysm" in Arabic. Up to 900,000 Palestinians flee or are expelled from their homes in the part of the land that becomes the state of Israel.
- 1948** **9-11 April:** Deir Yassin massacre. Between 100 and 254 Palestinian villagers, mainly women, old people and children are killed during and after an attack on the village of Deir Yassin near Jerusalem by Irgun members.
- 1948** **15 May:** Declaration of Israel as the Jewish state. British withdraw from Palestine. Arab-Israeli war. Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Lebanon declare war on Israel. Egypt, Jordan and Syria invade Israel.
- 1949** **April:** Israel and Arab states agree an armistice. Israel has taken about 50 per cent more land than was originally allotted to it by the UN partition plan.
- 1956:** Egypt nationalises Suez Canal (July 26). France, Britain and Israel plan invasion of Egypt. Israel invades the Sinai Peninsula (October 29). Pressure from the US and USSR force France, Britain and Israel to withdraw.
- 1964** **May:** The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is founded in Cairo by the Arab League. The PLO states its goal as the destruction of the Israel through armed struggle, and the restoration of an "independent Palestinian state" between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.
- 1967** **June:** Six Day war. Israel launches a pre-emptive attack on Egypt, Syria and Jordan. Israel captures Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria and the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan. In this year, Israel begins settlement programme in areas captured during the Six Day war.
- 1968-1970:** War of Attrition. Limited war fought between Egypt and Israel in which Egypt attempts to regain the Sinai Peninsula lost in the Six Day war. The war ended with a ceasefire in August 1970 with the same frontiers as at the start.
- 1969** **2 February:** Yasser Arafat is appointed chairman of the PLO. Yasser Arafat led the Palestine Liberation Organisation for 25 years
- 1972** **5 September:** Eleven members of the Israeli Olympic team and one German police officer are killed by Palestinian group Black September at the Munich Olympics.
- 1973** **6 October:** Yom Kippur war (October war). In a surprise attack on the Jewish Day of Atonement, Egypt and Syria retake the areas in Sinai and the Golan Heights that were lost in the Six Day war. Despite initial gains they are soon forced to retreat by Israeli forces.

- 1974 13 November:** As thousands protest outside, Yasser Arafat makes his first appearance before the UN General Assembly, delivering his "olive branch and freedom fighter's gun" speech.
- 1974 22 November:** The PLO is granted observer status at the UN.
- 1978 17 September:** Menachem Begin, Israel's prime minister, and Anwar Sadat, Egypt's president, sign the Camp David Accord, with Israel agreeing to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula in exchange for peace and a framework for future negotiation over the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- 1979 26 March:** Peace deal between Egypt and Israel. Egypt becomes the first Arab country to recognise Israel. Later in this year, Arab League suspends Egypt's membership of the league following Egypt's peace agreement with Israel. The organisation moves its headquarters to Tunis.
- 1981 6 October:** Sadat is assassinated by members of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad organisation, while reviewing a military parade, in retaliation for Sadat's recognition of Israel.
- 1982 6 June:** Israel invades Lebanon to remove PLO fighters who it says are threatening its border. PLO relocates to Tunis as it is driven out of Lebanon by Israel during the six-month invasion of the country. Remains active in Lebanon but not to the same extent as before 1982.
- 1982 September:** Sabra and Shatila massacre. Lebanese Phalangists (members of a Christian paramilitary group) kill up to 2,750 Palestinians in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila.
- 1983 August:** The Israeli army withdraws from most of Lebanon, maintaining a self proclaimed "security zone" in the south.
- 1985 25 September:** Three Israelis are killed on their yacht off the coast of Larnaca, Cyprus, by Force 17, a commando group from Fatah, the largest organisation in the PLO.
- 1985 1 October:** Israel's Operation Wooden Leg attempts to kill Arafat with an air raid on his headquarters in Tunis. He survives, but 60 members of the PLO are killed including much of the leadership.
- 1987 8 December:** First intifada (uprising) starts. Palestinians begin general strikes, riots and civil disobedience campaigns across the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israeli army replies with tear gas, plastic bullets, and live rounds. Sheikh Ahmed Yassin creates Hamas from the Gaza wing of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.
- 1988 15 November:** At a meeting of the Palestine National Council in Algeria, Yasser Arafat unilaterally proclaims a State of Palestine.
- 1990 August:** The PLO supports Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Kuwait responds by severing ties with the PLO and cutting its financial backing. After Iraqi forces are defeated, Kuwait expels some 400,000 Palestinians who had been living in the emirate.

- 1991**    **October:** The Madrid conference, hosted by the Spanish government and cosponsored by the US and Soviet Union, begins.
- 1993**    **13 September:** Oslo declaration of principles. PLO and Israel agree to recognise each other.
- 1994**    **25 February:** Baruch Goldstein, an American-Israeli settler, enters the Cave of the Patriarchs, a religious site in Hebron, and kills 29 Palestinians, injuring another 125.
- 26 October:** Israel and Jordan sign a peace treaty ending 45-years of hostility. Israel agrees to recognise the special role of Jordan over Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem.
- 1995**    **4 November:** Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's prime minister is assassinated by Yigal Amir, an Israeli orthodox Jewish student who is against the Middle East peace plan. Shimon Peres takes over as prime minister.
- 2000**    **July:** The Camp David summit between Ehud Barak, Israel's prime minister, and Arafat, the chairman of the Palestinian Authority, aimed at reaching a "final status" agreement ends after Arafat refuses to accept a proposal drafted by US and Israeli negotiators.
- September:** Palestinians riot after Ariel Sharon, of the Likud party in Israel, visits the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Second intifada begins.
- 2001**    **6 February:** Sharon is elected the leader of Likud and refuses to continue negotiations with Arafat.
- 1 June:** A Hamas suicide bomber attacks a nightclub. Twenty-one Israelis killed, mainly teenagers, more than 100 injured.
- 17 October:** Rehavam Zeevi, Israel's tourism minister is shot dead in Jerusalem by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.
- December:** Sharon sends troops into Ramallah shelling and surrounding the Palestinian government's West Bank headquarters; Arafat is unable to leave.
- 2002**    **March:** Israeli army launches Operation Defensive Shield, the country's biggest military operation in the West Bank since the Six Day war in 1967. In the same year, Israel begins construction of separation barrier between the West Bank and Israel, but for some of its length it serves to annex large areas of Palestinian land.
- 27-28 March:** Beirut summit between heads of Arab nations to discuss plans to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Arafat is unable to attend as Israel will not guarantee he will be able to return. Arab leaders collectively offer Israel peace, recognition and normal relations in return for Israel's withdrawal from Arab lands captured since 1967, the restoration of a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital and a "fair solution" for the 3.8 million Palestinian refugees.
- 2004**    **22 March:** Sheikh Yassin, the founder and leader of Hamas, is assassinated by an Israeli helicopter gunship.

- 17 April:** Abd al-Aziz al-Rantissi, the co-founder of Hamas and successor to Yassin, is killed by the Israeli army.
- 9 July:** International Court of Justice rules that the Israeli separation barrier violates international law and must be removed.
- 11 November:** Arafat dies.
- 2005**
- 9 January:** Mahmoud Abbas is elected president of the Palestinian National Authority.
- 10 January:** Sharon creates government of unity with Labour and United Torah Judaism parties.
- August:** Completion of Israel's unilateral disengagement plan from Gaza and four West Bank settlements.
- 2006**
- 25 January:** Hamas wins a majority of seats in the Palestinian legislative elections. The US, Israel and several European countries cut off aid to the Palestinians as the Islamist movement rejects Israel's right to exist.
- 25 June:** Palestinians cross the border from the Gaza Strip and capture Corporal Gilad Shalit, killing two Israeli soldiers and wounding four others.
- September:** Violence erupts between Fatah and Hamas parties in the Gaza Strip. Abbas attempts to prevent civil war. Abbas's Fatah movement supports a Palestinian state alongside Israel, while Hamas rejects Israel's right to exist.
- 1 October:** Eight people are killed in Gaza in factional infighting between Hamas and Fatah as a new wave of violence erupts.
- October:** A number of mediation conferences are held. Egypt and Qatar send their foreign ministers to meet with both sides. Other Palestinian groups like the Islamic jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine mediate between the two sides to stop the clashes.
- 13 November:** Following talks between Hamas and Fatah, both sides agree to form a unity government unaligned with either movement. Muhammad Shbeir, a Gaza academic who is close to Hamas but not a party member accepts the offer to head the government.
- 15 December:** Hamas accuses Fatah of involvement in a gun attack on Ismael Haniya, Palestinian prime minister, as he crosses the border from Egypt into Gaza.
- 16 December:** Abbas calls for new elections as a solution to the ongoing crisis.
- 2007**
- 21 January:** Abbas meets Khaled Meshaal of Hamas in Damascus in response to an invitation by Bashar Al-Assad, the Syrian president.

**30 January:** Fatah and Hamas reach a ceasefire agreement mediated by Egypt after a series of clashes that lead to the death of 32 Palestinians. Both sides welcome a Saudi initiative to meet in Mecca.

**8 February:** Hamas and Fatah agree on a deal in Mecca to end factional warfare that has killed scores of Palestinians and to form a coalition, hoping this would lead Western powers to lift crippling sanctions imposed on the Hamas-led government.

**9 February:** The Quartet welcomes the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in reaching the agreement to form a Palestinian National Unity government but later reaffirms that it must obey international demands to recognise Israel, renounce violence and abide by previous peace agreements.

**15 February:** Ismail Haniya and his cabinet resign. Haniya is re-appointed by President Abbas and begins the process of forming a new Palestinian unity government.

**15 March:** Palestinians reach agreement on the formation of the government.

**17 March:** The new Palestinian unity government holds its first cabinet meeting in Gaza City, with ministers in the West Bank participating from Ramallah via video link.

**March:** Israel refuses to talk to the coalition, saying it fails to meet international demands - renouncing violence, recognising Israel and honouring past peace deals.

**March:** Hamas-Fatah violence erupts in Gaza, leaving one Fatah fighter dead, and seven people wounded, in the first deadly clash between the two groups, since the unity government was formed.

**March:** Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, describes Ismail Haniya, his Palestinian counterpart and senior Hamas leader, as a "terrorist".

**April:** Israel plans Gaza invasion, a day after Ehud Olmert, Israeli prime minister, calls for a regional peace conference with Arab states.

**April:** The US gives Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, \$60m to boost his presidential guard and for other security expenses. The money would also be used for security improvements at Gaza's main commercial crossings with Israel, for logistics and communications equipment, and other security expenses. Several US legislators had held up the money, fearing it could reach Hamas, which formed a unity government with Abbas's Fatah party after months of negotiation.

**May:** Israel presses ahead with air raids on Gaza, launching five attacks after dark. The strikes came after Ehud Olmert, the prime minister, said that Israel would continue its crackdown on Hamas following Qassam rocket attacks on Sderot that killed one Israeli civilian and injured one. 2007 June: Hamas issues Gaza arms ultimatum and tightens its grip and control on the territory. Abbas issues new government, and announces Salam Fayyad, an economist, as the emergency government head. Abbas swears in new emergency government, by passing Hamas.

**June:** Palestinian aid embargo lifted. The US and the European Union resume aid to Palestine. Abbas announces it is time to resume peace talks with Israel.

**November:** George Bush, US president, hosts peace talks between Palestine and Israel at Annapolis, Maryland, while Hamas still holds control over Gaza. Reproduced from [Al Jazeera.Net](#) last updated on 18 March 2008 [37a]

**2008 20 January:** After Israel cuts Gaza fuel supplies in retaliation for rocket and sniper fire from Gaza, Gaza power plant, supplying about 20% of Gaza's electricity, is shut down by Hamas, precipitating condemnation of Israel and international outcry.

**23 January:** After months of preparation, Hamas blasts holes in Gaza/Rafah barrier, allowing hundreds of thousands of Gazans to enter Egypt freely. Border breach is partly closed by Egyptians by January 28, but reopened by Hamas and eventually resealed by Egypt.

**27 February-3 March:** Large scale Israeli raid in Gaza kills over 100.

**6 March:** Terror attack by Palestinian in Jerusalem's Yeshivat Merkaz Harav kills 8.

**19 June:** Israel-Hamas truce in Gaza.

**1 July:** Three Israelis killed and over 50 wounded in a bulldozer attack in Jerusalem. Police shot and killed the militant attacker

**28 July:** Fatah arrests about 50 Hamas activists in West Bank.

**30 July:** Hamas forces in Gaza detained 160 supporters of the rival Fatah movement after three explosions, including one that killed six people, a Palestinian human rights group says

**4 August:** Israel permits Fatah loyalists fleeing Gaza repression by Hamas (Hilles clan) to cross to Gaza

**August:** Gaza doctors affiliated with Fatah begin strike against Hamas Govt.

**16 September:** At least 11 killed in internecine Palestinian fighting in Gaza.

**4 November:** IDF discovers tunnel into Israel being built from Gaza, launches incursion to destroy it. Six Hamas gunmen killed. Hamas and others launch about 35 rockets into Israel in the coming days and IDF retaliates. Operations continue for several days. Both sides insist they want the truce to continue.

**9 November:** Quartet meeting at Sharm el Sheikh reaffirms support for Annapolis peace negotiations process. Hamas cancels participation in the Egyptian hosted Palestinian unification meeting that was to begin in Cairo.

**9 November:** Hamas announces that the "lull" (tahidiya) has expired and that it will not be renewed. Rocket fire from Gaza is stepped up.



**24 December:** About 60 rockets and mortar shells are launched at Israel by Hamas and associated groups from Gaza.

**27 December:** Israel launches Operation Oferet Yetzuka (Operation Cast Lead) with continuous air strikes at rocket launching facilities, factories, smuggling tunnels, Hamas command and control centers. About 400 Palestinians are killed by December 31. Hamas broadens rocket strikes to include Israeli towns and cities as far away as Beersheba and Yavneh.

**2009 18 January:** Israel announces unilateral cease fire in Operation Cast Lead, after killing about 1,300 Palestinians and losing a total of 13 Israeli dead. Hamas declares a cease fire later the same day, but sporadic rocket fire continues, along with IDF retaliations.

**10 February:** Israeli elections give a majority to a bloc of right-wing parties, but the dovish center Kadima party gets the largest number of votes of any party.

**1 June:** UN Human Rights Council investigative panel led by Judge Richard Goldstone enters the Gaza strip to investigate alleged Israeli war crimes, leaving

**4 June:** Israel refused to cooperate.

Address by President Obama in Cairo - Historic speech of rapprochement with the Arab and Muslim world also has direct implications for Israeli-Palestinian conflict, since the President calls for an end to Israeli construction of settlements in the occupied territories, as well as Arab recognition of Israel. (Mideastweb timeline, updated 6 June 2009 [10c])

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## Annex B – Camp Profiles – West Bank & Gaza Strip

### GAZA UN REFUGEE CAMP PROFILES

CAMP	NUMBER OF REGISTERED REFUGEES
Jabalia	106,846
Rafah	97,412
Beach	80,567
Nuseirat	58,727
Khan Younis	61,539
Bureij	29,805
Maghazi	23,161
Deir el-Balah	20,215
<b>Total</b>	<b>478,272</b>

[Click on each camp name on the map for a profile of the camp]



**The Gaza Strip** is unique amongst UNRWA's five fields of operations as the majority of its population is refugees and over half of the refugees live in eight camps. Most of

the people who fled to the Gaza Strip as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war were from Jaffa, towns and villages south of Jaffa, and from the Beersheva area in the Negev. In all, some 200,000 refugees came to Gaza, whose original inhabitants numbered only 80,000. Such an influx severely burdened this narrow strip of land; an area of only 360 square kilometers. Over three-quarters of the current estimated population of some 1.4 million are registered refugees; representing 22.42 per cent of all UNRWA registered Palestine refugees.

The refugee camps in the Gaza Strip have one of the highest population densities in the world. For example, over 80,688 refugees live in Beach camp whose area is less than one square kilometer. This high population density is reflected in the overcrowded UNRWA schools and classrooms. More than 2,066 new pupils registered in the Agency's schools for the year 2004/2005. In average, 81% of the camps houses are connected to sewers while total area of paved roads and alleys is 385,000m<sup>2</sup>.

UNRWA Headquarters (Gaza) and the UNRWA Gaza Field Office are located in Gaza City. The Agency co-operates its humanitarian work with the Palestinian Authority, which was established in 1994.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

- Number of schools: 187
- Student enrolment: 7,274
- Number of primary health care facilities: 18
- Annual medical and dental patient visits (1 July 2005 – 30 June 2006): 3,029,474
- Refugees registered with UNRWA's "special hardship" programme: 86,971
- Number of community rehabilitation centres: 7
- Number of women's programme centres: 10
- Number of vocational and technical training centres: 1
- Vocational and technical training places: 1,044
- Number of microfinance and micro-enterprise loans awarded: 81,065
- Cumulative value of loans awarded: \$ 81.2 million

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## WEST BANK REFUGEE CAMP PROFILES

CAMP	NUMBER OF REGISTERED REFUGEES
Aqabat Jabr	6,264
Ein el-Sultan	1,828
Shu'fat	10,717
Am'ari	10,377
Kalandia	10,759
Deir Ammar	2,335
Jalazone	10,966
Fawwar	7,912

Arroub	10,246
Dheisheh	12,804
Aida	4,715
Beit Jibrin	2,054
Far'a	7,540
Camp No.1	6,683
Askar	15,591
Balata	22,855
Tulkarm	17,981
Nur Shams	8,998
Jenin	15,854
<b>Total</b>	<b>486,479</b>

[Click on each camp name on the map for a profile of the camp]



The West Bank covers 5,500 square kilometers with an estimated population of 1.8 million. Approximately, one quarter of the refugees live in nineteen recognized refugee camps and the majority live in West Bank towns and villages. Some camps are located next to major towns and others are situated in rural areas. While the West Bank has the largest number of camps in UNRWA's five fields of operations, the largest camp, Balata, has a similar size population to the smallest camp in Gaza.

After the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, and subsequent related agreements, the West Bank refugee camps gradually came under different zones: Shufat camp, which is situated within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem, remained under Israeli

control. Kalandia camp fell under "zone C" and remained under full Israeli control; six camps: Deir Ammar, Jalazone, Fawwar, Arroub, Far'a and Nur Shams, fell under joint Palestinian/Israeli control (zone B); and the remaining eleven camps fell under exclusive Palestinian Authority control (zone A). Following the implementation of the first phase of the 1998 Wye River Memorandum, Far'a and Nur Shams came under "zone A" raising the total number of camps under full Palestinian Authority control to thirteen.

Camp residents have been hard hit by closures imposed on the West Bank by the Israeli authorities, since they are largely dependent on income from work inside Israel. Subsequently, unemployment has risen and socio-economic conditions in the camps have deteriorated.

The West Bank camps are active social units. While UNRWA does not administer the camps, the Agency only administers its own installations and programmes. Camp residents run their own activities and camp committees in each camp are regarded as an official body representing the camp population. UNRWA sponsors a number of women's programme centres, community rehabilitation centres, and supports youth activities centres to cater to the needs of women, refugees with disabilities and youth. Several Palestinian NGOs as well as Palestinian Authority ministries are active in the West Bank camps and provide various services.

The Agency runs elementary and preparatory schools. However, the main problem facing UNRWA's education programme in the West Bank is overcrowding with an average of 50 pupils per classroom. Due to the growth in the school population and the shortage of school buildings, 24 schools are run on a double shift basis, i.e. they share the same school building, and 21 schools operate in rented premises. In addition, many schools have been damaged by Israeli military activity since September 2000.

The Agency runs a network of primary health care facilities and a 43-bed hospital in the town of Qalqilia. A major problem facing the Agency's health programme, as in other fields, is the high number of daily patients' visits to the health centres and the heavy workload of doctors and other health staff. The average number of patient visits per doctor per day is 89.

#### **FACTS AND FIGURES (Figures as of 31 December 2006)**

- Number of schools: 94
- Student enrolment: 59,023
- Number of primary health care facilities: 36
- Annual medical and dental patient visits (1 July 2005 – 30 June 2006): 1,543,538
- Refugees registered with UNRWA's "special hardship" programme: 38,126
- Number of community rehabilitation centres: 15
- Number of women's programme centres: 16
- Number of vocational and technical training centres: 3
- Vocational and technical training places: 1,352
- Number of microfinance and micro enterprise loans awarded: 23,039

**Source:** United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

<http://www.un.org/unrwa/english.html>

Camp Profiles <http://www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/westbank.html> [16b]

Accessed 4 February 2009

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## Annex C – Political (armed) groups

### **Al-Fatah, also Al-'Asifa**

Headed by Yasser Arafat (Died 11 November 2004), Fatah joined the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1968 and won the leadership role in 1969. Its commanders were expelled from Jordan following violent confrontations with Jordanian forces during the period 1970-71, beginning with Black September in 1970. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 led to the group's dispersal to several Middle Eastern countries, including Tunisia, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, and others. Maintains several military and intelligence wings that have carried out terrorist attacks, including Force 17 and the Western Sector. Two of its leaders, Abu Jihad and Abu Iyad, were assassinated in recent years.

#### Activities

In the 1960s and the 1970s, Fatah offered training to a wide range of European, Middle Eastern, Asian, and African terrorist and insurgent groups. Carried out numerous acts of international terrorism in Western Europe and the Middle East in the early-to middle 1970s. Arafat signed the Declaration of Principles (DOP) with Israel in 1993 and renounced terrorism and violence. There has been no authorized terrorist operation since that time.

#### Strength

6,000 to 8,000

#### Location/Area of Operation

Head-quartered in Tunisia, with bases in Lebanon and other Middle Eastern countries.

#### External Aid

Has had close political and financial ties to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other moderate Gulf states. These relations were disrupted by the Gulf crisis of 1990- 91. Also had links to Jordan. Received weapons, explosives, and training from the former USSR and the former Communist regimes of East European states. China and North Korea have reportedly provided some weapons. (Dudley Knox Library) [45a]

### **Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)**

#### Description

Marxist-Leninist organization founded in 1969 when it split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Believes Palestinian national goals can be achieved only through revolution of the masses. In early 1980s, occupied political stance midway between Arafat and the rejectionists. Split into two factions in 1991; Nayif Hawatmah leads the majority and more hard-line faction, which continues to dominate the group. Joined with other rejectionist groups to form the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF) to oppose the Declaration of Principles signed in 1993. Broke from the APF - along with the PFLP - over ideological differences. Has made limited moves toward merging with the PFLP since the mid-1990s. [45a]

#### Aims and objectives

The DFLP's political and ideological objectives are essentially fourfold: revolutionary change in the Arab world, especially in the conservative monarchies, as a precursor to the achievement of Palestinian objectives; the placing of the Palestinian struggle on the international agenda within a general world context of liberation in Africa, Asia and Latin America; resistance to US policy in the region, including American support for the

non-aligned bloc; and solidarity with all national liberation movements that fight against imperialism and racism. (Jane's Country Assessments [28a])

#### Activities

In the 1970s, conducted numerous small bombings and minor assaults and some more spectacular operations in Israel and the occupied territories, concentrating on Israeli targets. Involved only in border raids since 1988, but continues to oppose the Israel-PLO peace agreement.

#### Strength

Estimated at 500 (total for both factions).

#### Location/Area of Operation

Syria, Lebanon, and the Israeli-occupied territories; terrorist attacks have taken place entirely in Israel and the occupied territories. Conducts occasional guerilla operations in Southern Lebanon.

#### External Aid

Receives limited financial and military aid from Syria. [45a]

### **Force 17**

#### Description

Formed in early 1970s as a personal security force for Arafat and other PLO leaders.

#### Activities

According to press sources, in 1985 expanded operations to include terrorist attacks against Israeli targets. No confirmed terrorist activity outside Israel and the occupied territories since September 1985, when it claimed responsibility for killing three Israelis in Cyprus, an incident that was followed by Israeli air raids on PLO bases in Tunisia.

#### Strength

Unknown.

#### Location/Area of Operation

Based in Beirut before 1982. Since then, dispersed in several Arab countries. Now operating in Lebanon, other Middle Eastern countries, and Europe.

#### External Aid

PLO is main source of support. [45a]

### **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)**

#### Description

On 9 September 1993, in letters to Israeli Prime Minister Rabin and Norwegian Foreign Minister Holst, PLO Chairman Arafat committed the PLO to cease all violence and terrorism. On 13 September 1993, the Declaration of Principles between the Israelis and Palestinians was signed in Washington, DC. We have no information that any PLO element under Arafat's control was involved in terrorism from that time through 1995. (There were two incidents in 1993 in which the responsible individuals apparently acted independently.) One group under the PLO umbrella, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), suspended its participation in the PLO in protest of the agreement and continues its sporadic campaign of violence. The US Government



continues to monitor closely PLO compliance with its commitment to abandon terrorism and violence. [45a]

### **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-Special Command (PFLP-SC)**

#### **Description**

Marxist-Leninist group formed by Abu Salim in 1979 after breaking away from the now defunct PFLP-Special Operations Group.

#### **Activities**

Has claimed responsibility for several notorious international terrorist attacks in Western Europe, including the bombing of a restaurant frequented by US servicemen in Torrejon, Spain, in April 1985. Eighteen Spanish civilians were killed in the attack.

#### **Strength**

50.

#### **Location/Area of Operation**

Operates out of southern Lebanon, in various areas of the Middle East, and in Western Europe.

#### **External Aid**

Probably receives financial and military support from Syria, Libya, and Iraq. [45a]

### **Abu Nidal Organization (ANO)**

#### **Other Names**

Arab Revolutionary Brigades; Arab Revolutionary Council; Black September; Fatah Revolutionary Council; Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims

#### **Description**

The Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), an international terrorist organization, was founded by Sabri al-Banna (a.k.a. Abu Nidal) after splitting from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1974. The group's previous known structure consisted of various functional committees, including political, military, and financial. In August 2002, Abu Nidal died in Baghdad, probably at the hands of Iraqi security officials; the new leadership of the organization remains unclear.

#### **Activities**

The ANO has carried out terrorist attacks in 20 countries, killing or injuring almost 900 persons. The group has not staged a major attack against Western targets since the late 1980s. Major attacks included the Rome and Vienna airports in 1985, the Neve Shalom synagogue in Istanbul, the hijacking of Pan Am Flight 73 in Karachi in 1986, and the City of Poros day-excursion ship attack in Greece in 1988. The ANO is suspected of assassinating PLO deputy chief Abu Iyad and PLO security Chief Abu Hul in Tunis in 1991. The ANO conducted no attacks in 2007.

#### **Strength**

Current strength is unknown.

#### **Location/Area of Operation**

The group is largely considered inactive, although former and possibly current ANO associates might be in Iraq and Lebanon.

#### **External Aid**

The ANO's current access to resources is unclear, but it is likely that the decline in state support has had a severe impact on its capabilities. [45a]

### **Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (al-Aqsa)**

#### Other Names

Al-Aqsa Martyrs Battalion

#### Description

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade consists of loose cells of Palestinian militants loyal to, but not under the direct control of the secular-nationalist Fatah movement. Al-Aqsa emerged at the outset of the 2000 Palestinian al-Aqsa intifada as a militant offshoot of the Fatah party to attack Israeli military targets and settlers with the aim of driving Israel from the West Bank and Gaza and establishing a Palestinian state. Al-Aqsa has no central leadership; the cells operate with autonomy, although they remained ideologically loyal to Palestinian Authority (PA) President and Fatah party head Yassir Arafat until his death in November 2004. [45a]

#### Aims and objectives

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades supports Fatah's policy of a two state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Originally, the group was a vehicle for Fatah participation in the intifada, which was dominated by rival Islamist groups carrying out violent attacks that cannot be directly traced back to the Fatah leadership. With at least 30 per cent of the AMB estimated to be members of the security forces, the group's activities have often been linked to disgruntlement in the security sector, typically over pay and reform. (Jane's Country Assessments [28a])

#### Activities

Al-Aqsa initially focused on small arms attacks against Israeli military personnel and settlers in the West Bank. In 2002, however, the group began to conduct suicide bombings against Israeli civilians. Al-Aqsa suspended most anti-Israel attacks as part of the broader unilateral Palestinian ceasefire agreement during 2004 but resumed them following Hamas's victory in January 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council elections. Al-Aqsa members continued the anti-Israeli and intra-Palestinian violence that contributes to the overall chaotic security environment in the Palestinian territories. In 2007, the majority of al-Aqsa attacks were rocket and mortar attacks into southern Israel from HAMAS-ruled Gaza. Israel agreed to extend a conditional pardon to 178 West Bank al-Aqsa members, but did not expand the program to the rest of the organization. Al-Aqsa has not targeted U.S. interests as a policy, although its anti-Israeli attacks have killed some dual U.S.-Israeli citizens.

#### Strength

Current strength is unknown, but most likely numbers a few hundred.

#### Location/Area of Operation

Al-Aqsa operates mainly in the West Bank but has conducted attacks inside Israel and the Gaza Strip. The group has members in refugee camps in southern Lebanon and overseas, although it has not demonstrated transnational capability.

#### External Aid

Iran has exploited al-Aqsa's lack of resources and formal leadership by providing funds and other aid, mostly through Hizballah facilitators. [45a]

## Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS)

### Other Names

Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya; Izz al-Din al Qassam Battalions; Izz al-Din al Qassam Brigades; Students of Ayyash; Student of the Engineer; Yahya Ayyash Units; Izz al-Din al-Qassim Brigades; Izz al-Din al-Qassim Forces; Izz al-Din al-Qassim Battalions; Izz al-Din al Qassam Forces

### Description

HAMAS, which includes military and political wings, was formed at the onset of the first Palestinian uprising or Intifada in late 1987, as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. The armed element, called the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, conducts anti-Israeli attacks, including suicide bombings against civilian targets inside Israel. HAMAS also manages a broad, mostly Gaza-based network of "Dawa" or ministry activities that include charities, schools, clinics, youth camps, fund-raising, and political activities. A Shura council based in Damascus, Syria, sets overall policy. After winning Palestinian Legislative Council elections in January 2006, HAMAS took control of significant Palestinian Authority (PA) ministries, including the Ministry of Interior. HAMAS subsequently formed an expanded, overt militia called the Executive Force, subordinate to the Ministry. This force and other HAMAS cadres took control of Gaza in a military-style coup in June 2007, forcing Fatah forces to either leave Gaza or go underground there. [45a]

### Aims and objectives

Politically, Hamas aims to apply the rule of Islam throughout Palestine, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean. Its charter, published in August 1988, defined this land as an eternal Islamic endowment that could not be compromised under any circumstances. Hamas adopted jihad as the only means of liberating the Palestinian Territories from the hands of Israel. The Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades engage in military activity in support of these political objectives. In reality, there is an increasing divergence between Hamas' rhetoric and reality. For instance, in 2004 the group offered the Israelis a 10-year ceasefire if they withdrew from all land captured during the Six Day War. Hamas has not officially retracted the offer and as far as can be ascertained, it remains on the table. As if to confirm this, in June 2006, Hamas put its name to an 18-point plan produced by Hamas and Fatah prisoners in Israeli jails that offered, at the very least, implicit recognition of Israel. (Jane's Country Assessments [28a])

### Activities

Prior to 2005, HAMAS conducted numerous anti-Israeli attacks, including suicide bombings, rocket launches, improvised explosive device (IED) attacks, and shootings. HAMAS, however, has not directly targeted U.S. interests, although the group makes little or no effort to avoid soft targets frequented by foreigners. The group curtailed terrorist attacks in February 2005, after agreeing to a temporary period of calm brokered by the PA, and ceased most violence after winning control of the PA legislature and cabinet in January 2006. After HAMAS staged a June 2006 attack on IDF soldiers near Kerem Shalom that resulted in two deaths and the abduction of Corporal Gilad Shalit, Israel took steps that severely limited the operation of the Rafah crossing. HAMAS maintained and expanded its military capabilities in 2007. In June 2007, HAMAS took control of Gaza from the PA and Fatah in a military-style coup, leading to an international boycott and closure of Gaza borders. HAMAS has since dedicated the majority of its activity in Gaza to solidifying its control, hardening its defenses, tightening security, and conducting limited operations against Israeli military forces. HAMAS fired rockets from Gaza into Israel in 2007 but focused more mortar on attacks targeting Israeli incursions. Additionally, other terrorist groups in Gaza fired

rockets into Israel, most, presumably, with HAMAS support or acquiescence. HAMAS internal security efforts have centered on confronting threats to the group's hold on power, including arrest operations against Fatah. In June 2007, HAMAS took control of Gaza, leading to a drawn-out struggle between HAMAS and supporters of Fatah. The majority of HAMAS activity in Gaza is directed at solidifying their control over Gaza and weakening Fatah through kidnappings, torture, and the use of the "Executive Force" as a de-facto security apparatus. The continued international boycott and perceived efforts to destroy HAMAS have increased anti-U.S. sentiment on the Palestinian street, a development that could lead cells affiliated with HAMAS to launch attacks, including suicide bombings, without the sanction of HAMAS' senior leadership.

#### Strength

HAMAS probably has several hundred operatives in its armed wing, the al- Qassam Brigades, along with its reported 9,000-man Executive Force and tens of thousands of supporters and sympathizers.

#### Location/Area of Operation

HAMAS has an operational presence in every major city in the Palestinian territories and currently focuses its anti-Israeli attacks on targets in the West Bank and within Israel. HAMAS could potentially activate operations in Lebanon or resume terrorist operations in Israel. The group retains a cadre of leaders and facilitators that conducts diplomatic, fund-raising, and arms smuggling activities in Lebanon, Syria, and other states. HAMAS is also increasing its presence in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, probably with the goal of eclipsing Fatah's long-time dominance of the camps.

#### External Aid

HAMAS receives some funding, weapons, and training from Iran. In addition, fundraising takes place in the Gulf countries, but the group also receives donations from Palestinian expatriates around the world and private benefactors in Arab states. Some fundraising and propaganda activity takes place in Western Europe and North America. [45a]

### **Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)**

#### Other Names

Palestine Islamic Jihad-Shaqaqi Faction; PIJ-Shaqaqi Faction; PIJ-Shallah Faction; Islamic Jihad of Palestine; Islamic Jihad in Palestine; Abu Ghunaym Squad of the Hizballah Bayt Al-Maqdis; Al-Quds Squads; Al-Quds Brigades; Saraya Al-Quds; Al-Awdah Brigades

#### Description

Formed by militant Palestinians in Gaza during the 1970s, Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) is committed to both the creation of an Islamic state in all of historic Palestine, including present day Israel, and the destruction of Israel through attacks against Israeli military and civilian targets. [45a]

#### Aims and objectives

PIJ's strategic objective is the complete liberation of Palestine as defined by the borders of the British Mandate (contemporary Israel and Gaza and the West Bank). It considers armed struggle by the Palestinian people, conducted with the active support of the Arab and Muslim worlds, as the only viable strategy for achieving this objective.

PIJ also seeks the establishment of an Islamic regime in a liberated Palestine but states it will not impose this by force. (Jane's Country Assessments [28a])

#### Activities

PIJ terrorists have conducted numerous attacks, including large-scale suicide bombings against Israeli civilian and military targets. In 2006, the group conducted two suicide bombings and launched numerous home made rockets from Gaza into neighboring Israeli towns. PIJ continues to plan and direct attacks against Israelis both inside Israel and in the Palestinian territories. Although U.S. citizens have died in PIJ mounted attacks, the group has not directly targeted U.S. interests. All but one of PIJ's attacks in 2007 consisted of rocket attacks aimed at southern Israeli cities.

#### Strength

Unknown.

#### Location/Area of Operation

Primarily Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. The group's senior leadership resides in Syria. Other leadership elements reside in Lebanon and official representatives are scattered throughout the Middle East.

#### External Aid

Receives financial assistance and training primarily from Iran. Syria provides the group with safe haven. [45a]

### **Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)**

#### Other Names

PLF-Abu Abbas; Palestine Liberation Front – Abu Abbas Faction

#### Description

In the late 1970s the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) splintered from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), and later split into pro-PLO, pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. The pro-PLO faction was led by Muhammad Zaydan (a.k.a. Abu Abbas) and was based in Baghdad prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

#### Activities

Abbas's group was responsible for the 1985 attack on the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro and the murder of U.S. citizen Leon Klinghoffer. In 1993, the PLF officially renounced terrorism when it acknowledged the Oslo accords, although it was suspected of supporting terrorism against Israel by other Palestinian groups into the 1990s. In April 2004, Abu Abbas died of natural causes while in U.S. custody in Iraq. Current leadership and membership of the relatively small PLF appears to be based in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. The PLF took part in the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections but did not win a seat.

#### Strength

Estimates have placed membership between 50 and 500.

#### Location/Area of Operation

Based in Iraq from 1990 until 2003. The group currently is based in Lebanon and Syria.

#### External Aid

Unknown. [45a]

## Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

### Other Names

Halhul Gang; Halhul Squad; Palestinian Popular Resistance Forces; PPRF; Red Eagle Gang; Red Eagle Group; Red Eagles

### Description

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a Marxist-Leninist group founded by George Habash, broke away from the Arab Nationalist Movement in 1967. The PFLP does not view the Palestinian struggle as religious, seeing it instead as a broader revolution against Western imperialism. The group earned a reputation for spectacular international attacks in the 1960s and 1970s, including airline hijackings that killed at least 20 U.S. citizens. A leading faction within the PLO, the PFLP has long accepted the concept of a two-state solution but has opposed specific provisions of various peace initiatives. [45a]

### Aims and objectives

The ultimate aim of the PFLP and the PFLP-SC is the destruction of the state of Israel and the establishment of a democratic society achieved through a social revolution in its place. The Palestinian rights to self-determination, an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and the return of refugees are seen as measures necessary to establish a democratic state. The Palestinian situation is therefore viewed as part of a greater proletarian struggle. (Jane's Country Assessments [28a])

### Activities

The PFLP stepped up its operational activity during the al-Aqsa intifada. This was highlighted by at least two suicide bombings since 2003, multiple joint operations with other Palestinian terrorist groups, and the assassination of Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi in 2001 to avenge Israel's killing of the PFLP Secretary General earlier that year. In March 2006, the PFLP's current Secretary General, Ahmed Sa'adat, who had been imprisoned by the Palestinian Authority for his involvement in the Ze'evi assassination, was seized from the Jericho prison compound by Israeli forces and is now awaiting trial. The PFLP-GC is suspected in several rocket attacks against Israel in 2007.

### Strength

Unknown.

### Location/Area of Operation

Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.

### External Aid

Receives safe haven and some logistical assistance from Syria. [45a]

## Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLPGC)

### Description

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLPGC) split from the PFLP in 1968, claiming it wanted to focus more on resistance and less on politics. Originally, the group was violently opposed to the Arafat-led PLO. Ahmad Jibril, a former captain in the Syrian Army, whose son Jihad was killed by a car bomb

in May 2002, has led the PFLP-GC since its founding. The PFLP-GC is closely tied to both Syria and Iran. [45a]

#### Aims and objectives

The destruction of the state of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state, with a pro-Syrian foreign policy. The PFLP-GC was founded on the principles of rejecting compromise with Israel. (Jane's Country Assessments [28a])

#### Activities

The PFLP-GC carried out dozens of attacks in Europe and the Middle East during the 1970s and 1980s. The organization was known for cross-border terrorist attacks into Israel using unusual means, such as hot-air balloons and motorized hang gliders. The group's primary focus now is on supporting Hizballah's attacks against Israel, training members of other Palestinian terrorist groups, and weapons smuggling. The PFLP-GC maintains an armed presence in several Palestinian refugee camps and its own military bases in Lebanon. The PFLP-GC has been implicated by Lebanese security officials in several rocket attacks against Israel in 2007.

#### Strength

Several hundred to several thousand.

#### Location/Area of Operation

Headquartered in Damascus with bases in southern Lebanon and a presence in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria.

#### External Aid

Receives logistical and military support from Syria and financial support from Iran. [45a]

#### Sources:

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<http://www.nps.edu/Library/Research/SubjectGuides/SpecialTopics/TerroristProfile/TerroristGroupProfiles.html> [45a]

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Sentinel country risk assessments, Gaza and the West Bank

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Accessed 7 May 2009 (subscription only)

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## Annex D – ID Cards

ACCESS AND ID CARDS

There are approximately 2.3 million Palestinians with West Bank ID cards.<sup>11</sup>

**PALESTINIAN WITH WEST BANK ID CARD**

Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) carry ID cards with orange covers (issued by the Israeli authorities) or green covers (issued by the Palestinian Authority). The cards issued by the PA are nearly identical to the Israeli card (they are written in Hebrew), except for a Palestinian Authority seal on top. The ID number on the PA cards, essential to regulate access and movement, is linked with the Israeli computer system.

A West Bank ID holder requires a permit to pass through any of the numerous military checkpoints along the Green Line into Israel and Jerusalem. To obtain a permit, a person needs to pass a security check and obtain a magnetic card. Since September 2000, these permits have been difficult to obtain and often have been cancelled without notice. In addition, further movement restrictions have been imposed on West Bank ID holders. For most of this time, Palestinians above the age of 16 require a permit to travel from one Palestinian city to another within the West Bank. A permit is also needed to enter any Israeli settlement or industrial zone located in the West Bank where they may be employed.

Each ID card states whether the cardholder is Muslim or Christian. The bottom half of the ID card lists the marital status and names of other family members. The card contains no information about citizenship.

West Bank ID holders are prohibited (since 1993) to access Jerusalem health and educational services. Instead, they have had to travel to West Bank towns - Bethlehem and Ramallah. The Wall will now put at risk those Palestinians with West Bank IDs located on the Jerusalem side of the Wall to access services in the West Bank. These difficulties raise concern that the Jerusalem Wall will force Palestinian populations to leave their homes.

There are approximately 215,400 Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards.<sup>12</sup>

**PALESTINIAN WITH JERUSALEM ID CARD**

In 1967, the Israeli Government incorporated part of the West Bank into Israeli municipal Jerusalem. Palestinians residing within these newly defined municipal boundaries were given a special Jerusalem residency status. They were provided with Israeli-issued ID cards with a blue cover. Until a year ago, they were listed as "Arab" in the nationality section of their ID card. The bottom half of these cards list citizenship only for those who have Jordanian passports. They are not, therefore, citizens of Israel.

As residents of Jerusalem, these Palestinians ostensibly have freedom to move in and out of Jerusalem and throughout most of the oPt. In practice, however, they are often stopped by border and civil police in Jerusalem.

Palestinians with Jerusalem IDs can also work in Israel, pay taxes to the Israeli Government and receive national insurance benefits. Their services are administered through a separate and under-resourced administration in the eastern part of Jerusalem. The more than 170,000 Israelis residing in adjacent areas of East Jerusalem, use the more efficient government offices in West Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup>

The right of Jerusalem ID holders to live in Jerusalem is not guaranteed. Under Israeli law, if they reside outside of Jerusalem for seven years, they lose their ID card and residency.

The construction of the Wall will leave thousands of Palestinians with Jerusalem IDs on the West Bank side of the Wall. They face losing access to education and health services. They also risk losing their Jerusalem residency which could result in a separation from the person's home, employment and family.

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The main text of this COI Report contains the most up to date publicly available information as at 15 June 2009. Further brief information on recent events and reports has been provided in the Latest News section to 5 August 2009. 110



ACCESS AND ID CARDS.....continued

There are over 1.1 million Palestinians with Israeli ID cards.<sup>14</sup>



PALESTINIAN WITH ISRAELI ID CARD

Palestinians with Israeli ID cards are considered citizens of Israel. The Israeli Government, categorises Israeli citizens by religious and national-ethnic affiliation. Each Israeli ID card states in the nationality section whether the citizen is a Jew, Arab, Druze or a member of other ethnic groups. In April 2002, the Israeli Ministry of Interior issued new regulations which leave the "nationality" section blank. This change affected only newly-issued ID cards. Most ID cards still in use list the national-ethnic or religious identity. The bottom half of the ID card lists citizenship as Israeli.

These cardholders have total access to Jerusalem and freedom of movement in most of the West Bank. Although a holder of an Israeli ID card, someone listed as 'Arab' is more likely to be questioned, delayed and at times denied access.<sup>16</sup> While there is no restriction on the movement of persons with Israeli ID cards, there is a military order prohibiting entry into West Bank Palestinian cities. The Jerusalem Wall will restrict their movement in Palestinian areas.

There are over 5 million Israeli Jewish citizens with Israeli ID cards.<sup>15</sup>



ISRAELI - JEWISH CITIZEN WITH ISRAELI ID CARD

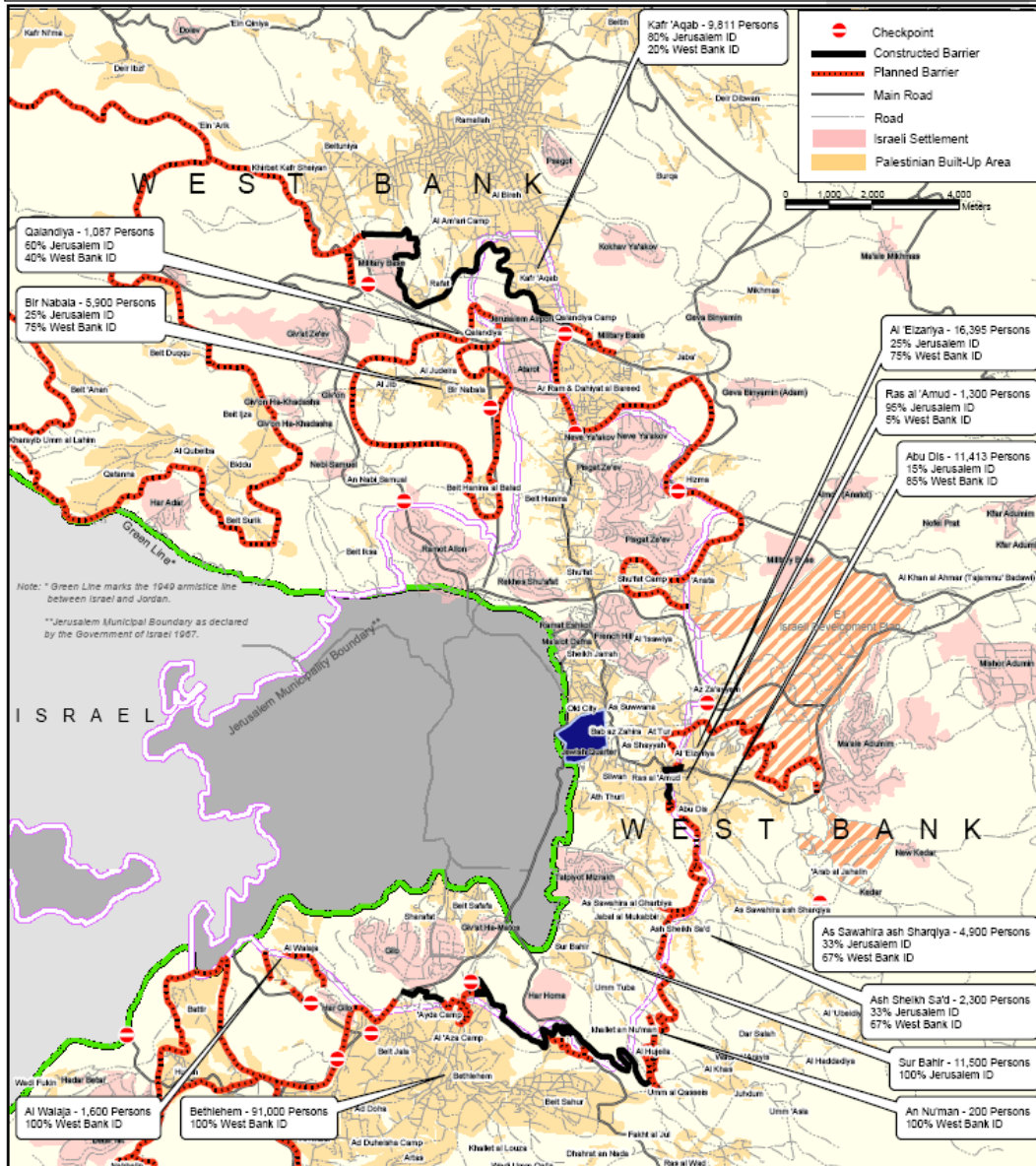
Jewish Israeli citizens carry Israeli ID cards with blue covers. The nationality section of their ID card lists them as "Jewish", but this has been left blank for new ID cards issued after April 2002. Israeli citizenship is listed on the bottom part.

There are approximately 384,000 of these Israelis classified as Jewish, who live in settlements in the West Bank including Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup> They hold Israeli ID cards and are allowed free movement throughout the West Bank but are restricted from entering Palestinian cities. The Jerusalem Wall will have little, if any, effect on these ID cardholders.

111 The main text of this COI Report contains the most up to date publicly available information as at 15 June 2009. Further brief information on recent events and reports has been provided in the Latest News section to 5 August 2009.

### HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF THE JERUSALEM BARRIER: Effect on ID Cardholders

Palestinians living in this area hold either a Jerusalem ID which entitles them to reside and use services in Jerusalem, or a West Bank ID which forbids them from entering Jerusalem without a permit. In many places, both West Bank and Jerusalem ID holders reside in the same communities. With the construction of the Barrier, some Palestinians with Jerusalem IDs will live on the West Bank side of the Barrier. They will face considerable problems reaching education, hospitals and other services to which they are entitled to on the Jerusalem side. A significant number of people with West Bank ID cards will be located on the Jerusalem side of the Barrier. They are forbidden to use Jerusalem services and face severe travel restrictions to reach the West Bank.



OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  
Cartography and Barrier Themes: OCHA/RCR  
Humanitarian Information Centre - November 2003  
Base data: MoPIC (2002) updates OCHA (2003); GSE (1998)

Planned Barrier path based on Israeli Government land seizure orders and Ministry of Defence (Seam Line Authority) maps (Oct 2003). Figures and estimates collected from local authorities by OCHA.

The map authors employed and incorporated information on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of territories, their areas or their authorities, or concerning the delimitation of their frontiers.

Source: [http://www.osaarchivum.org/galeria/the\\_divide/cpt09files/im\\_part4.pdf](http://www.osaarchivum.org/galeria/the_divide/cpt09files/im_part4.pdf) [54a]

See: [Freedom of Movement](#)

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## Annex E – Guide to acronyms

<b>AI</b>	Amnesty International
<b>CFR</b>	Council on Foreign Relations
<b>COIS</b>	Country of Origin Service
<b>CSIS</b>	Center for Strategic and International Studies
<b>DCI/PS</b>	Defence for Children International - Palestine Section
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>ESCWA</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>FCO</b>	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)
<b>FH</b>	Freedom House
<b>HRW</b>	Human Rights Watch
<b>IAGCI</b>	Independent Advisory Group on Country Information
<b>ICG</b>	International Crisis Group
<b>IDF</b>	Israeli Defense Force
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IDMC</b>	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
<b>ILGA</b>	International Lesbian and Gay Association
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>MIFTAH</b>	Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy
<b>MRG</b>	Minority Rights Group International
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OPTs</b>	Occupied Territories
<b>PA</b>	Palestinian Authority
<b>PLC</b>	Palestinian Legislative Council
<b>PLO</b>	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
<b>PNC</b>	Palestinian National Council
<b>RI</b>	Refugees International
<b>TI</b>	Transparency International
<b>UKBA</b>	United Kingdom Border Agency
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCRC</b>	United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child
<b>UNCS</b>	United Nations Cartographic Section
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDPR</b>	United Nations, Division for Palestinian Rights
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>UNSG</b>	United Nations Secretary General
<b>USSD</b>	United States State Department
<b>WBG</b>	World Bank Group
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

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