

## مجموعة الرقابة الفلسطينية



### PALESTINIAN MONITORING GROUP

## Summary of Israeli Violations, 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004

Since its establishment on 28 August 2003, the Palestinian Monitoring Group has monitored all aspects of ground conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This report covers Israeli violations during the period 01 September 2003 to 31 August 2004 and features analysis of major trends in 17 categories of events monitored by the Palestinian Monitoring Group. It is based on Daily Situation Reports and Monthly Summary Reports of the Palestinian Monitoring Group.

Daily Situation Reports are a survey of daily events collated from information provided by Palestinian Authority civilian ministries and security agencies. Monthly Summary Reports provide an overview of events for each month, drawn from the month's Daily Situation Reports. The information reported through the PMG process only represents data available at the time of distribution.

### Summary of Trends

*Descriptive Summary:* From 01 September 2003 to 31 August 2004, the Israeli army or Israeli settlers carried out over 30,000 acts of violence against Palestinian civilians and their communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).

Violence was highest in May 2004, when some 12 per cent of total violations occurred. Following the defeat of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's "Unilateral Disengagement" plan, by his own Likud party, on 02 May 2004, the Israeli army launched 4 incursions into the Gaza Strip. During the month, deaths, injuries, attacks, house demolitions and house occupations all peaked. All districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were closed and arrest levels of Palestinian civilians were high, at 639 arrests, peaking the following month. Additionally, the third highest number of curfews during the year – 78 – was imposed in May.

Frequent Israeli raids and incursions, including 98 raids in Khan Yunis and 153 in Rafah, along with intensive air attacks on civilian neighbourhoods, resulted in the deaths of 129 Palestinian civilians in May, including 105 in Gaza districts.<sup>1</sup> The Israeli army assassinated 11 Palestinian civilians and injured 616 Palestinian civilians – 491 in the Gaza Strip. Incursions and raids in Gaza districts also led to the highest number of house demolitions during the year, with 250 houses demolished – 233 of which were in the Gaza Strip.<sup>2</sup>

Israeli military and Israeli settler violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory resulted in the **deaths** of 734 Palestinians from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Data from the period indicates a correlation between the level of Palestinian deaths and the frequency of Israeli army **raids, incursions and attacks**, during which the Israeli army uses an array of weaponry, such as helicopter missiles, tanks shells, navy boats and machineguns to assail Palestinian civilian population centers. Additionally, the frequency of **injuries** generally corresponded to the frequency of killings.

Throughout the period, the Israeli army conducted an intense campaign of **arrests** against Palestinian civilians, arresting 5,882 Palestinians from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Though Israel released 400 Palestinian political prisoners, through a prisoner exchange with the Lebanese group, Hizbullah in January 2004, the Israeli army arrested an additional 534 Palestinians during that same month.

There is a general correlation between arrest levels and the frequency of Israeli army raids and incursions. For example, in October 2003, when incursions increased from none in September, to 8 in October, and raids increased from 161 in September, to 386 in October, arrests increased from 347 in September to 577 in October.

Throughout the period, the Israeli authorities continued widespread **demolition of Palestinian houses**. House demolitions were carried out under a number of pretexts, including as punishment against Palestinian political prisoners and their families; due to lack of relevant construction licenses, which are rarely issued to Palestinian civilians in Jerusalem or Area C; due to proximity to existing or planned Wall segments, Israeli settlements, or bypass roads; due to the Israeli army's widening of the zone adjacent to the Egyptian border (Philadelphi route); or in areas from where fire has been opened, or rockets have been launched, towards Israeli targets.

Israeli **restrictions on Palestinian freedom of movement** remained intense throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Repeated **closures of crossing points** along the perimeter of the Gaza Strip prevented workers from entering industrial zones and crossing the Green Line for work.<sup>3</sup> The Israeli military imposed hundreds of **curfews** on Palestinian towns and villages, during which every aspect of daily life is disrupted as Palestinian civilians are prohibited from leaving their houses.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the year, the Israeli army prevented Palestinian civilians without permits from entering Jerusalem and restricted movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israeli army also regularly restricted movement between Palestinian locales within the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israeli army set up thousands of flying **checkpoints** within the OPT, leveled

roads connecting towns and villages, and maintained permanent checkpoints and dirt barricades, closing entrances to Palestinian locales and preventing pedestrian and vehicular traffic from crossing. On 22 March 2004, the day the Israeli military extra-judicially killed Hamas movement founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the Israeli army imposed an official, total **closure** over districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which remained in place as of 31 August 2004.<sup>5</sup> Though some movement between districts was possible during this period, the time required to reach a particular destination was significantly longer.

Ongoing restrictions on Palestinian freedom of movement contribute to increased Palestinian poverty and unemployment rates, negatively impact economic, education and livelihood activities, and impede access to health facilities.

**Israeli settler violence** occurred throughout the period, simultaneously as the Israeli government expanded settlements, announced the construction of new settlements, proceeded with construction of the Wall, and continued to expand the network of bypass roads that connect Israeli settlements and hinder Palestinian freedom of movement. Wall construction and measures associated with it continued after the International Court of Justice's 9 July 2004 ruling that the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is in breach of international law and that Israel is obliged to stop and reverse construction and dismantle its associated regime. (See Palestinian Monitoring Group, *Trend Analysis: Israeli Wall Activity Since the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice*, 13 September 2004).

As construction of the Wall proceeds through the West Bank, increasing numbers of Palestinian civilians are losing their sources of livelihood, and access to basic social services such as health and education is restricted. A number of villages are at risk of being depopulated, given their location in the vicinity, or along the direct route, of the current Wall or its approved or projected path.

Settler violence and settlement activity increased dramatically in the latter half of the reporting period, from 01 March to 31 August 2004, during which some 68 per cent of activity occurred. Israeli settlers carried out individual attacks on Palestinians and their property and carried out repeated, organized group raids of Palestinian areas. During the first six months of 2004, Israeli soldiers directly participated, or provided protection to Israeli settlers, in at least 15 acts of violence against Palestinian civilians. In only one incident reported during the first six months of 2004 did Israeli soldiers intervene to protect Palestinian civilians from an Israeli settler attack.

The combined occurrence of settlement activity and settler violence in some areas, along with the failure of Israeli law enforcement authorities to address acts of settler violence, results in a consistent pattern of intimidating and physically harming Palestinian civilians and their property, clearing Palestinian land, and/or displacing Palestinian civilians and further altering the demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

*Numerical Summary:* From 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004, the Israeli army or Israeli settlers carried out over 30,000 violent acts against Palestinian civilians, as follows:

- Caused the deaths of 734 Palestinians and injured 4,102;
- Carried out 51 incursions;
- Carried out 4,078 attacks on Palestinian locales;
- Carried out 6,965 raids into Palestinian villages, towns, cities, and refugee camps;
- Arrested 5,882 Palestinians;
- Deported 48 Palestinians;
- Partially or completely demolished 1,165 Palestinian houses and buildings;
- Carried out 1,050 attacks on public and private Palestinian property<sup>6</sup>;
- Forcibly occupied 482 Palestinian houses;
- Imposed 732 curfews on Palestinian villages, towns, cities and refugee camps;
- Imposed over 3,424 closures of districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
- Closed Palestinian crossing points 1,026 times;
- Disrupted Palestinian school sessions 230 times;
- Carried out 76 attacks on hospitals, medical personnel and ambulances;
- Carried out 104 attacks on religious sites and Palestinian worshippers;
- Carried out 327 acts of settler violence or settlement activity throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### **FOCUS ON MAY 2004**

On 05 May 2004, the Israeli army, including 22 tanks and 4 bulldozers, carried out an incursion into the city of Deir Al Balah in the central Gaza Strip, opened intensive fire towards civilian houses, killing 1 Palestinian National Security officer and injuring 15 civilians. The Israeli army demolished 1 house, walls of 2 houses and 1 cement factory and levelled cultivated land in the area. On 17 May 2004, the Israeli army, including 118 tanks, carried out an incursion into Palestinian Territory near Tall as Sultan neighbourhood in Rafah city, and Tall Zu'rob neighborhood in Rafah refugee camp. The Israeli army opened intensive fire, and Israeli army helicopters fired missiles towards civilian houses, killing 6 civilians, and destroying the electrical network, leading to a power blackout.

On 18 May 2004, the Israeli army, including 11 tanks and 4 bulldozers, and supported by helicopters, carried out an incursion into Palestinian Territory near Al Barazil neighbourhood of Rafah refugee camp, opened intensive fire towards civilian houses, levelled cultivated land, and detained 7 ambulances after damaging them by live fire. Shortly thereafter, Israeli army helicopters fired missiles into a crowd of civilians, and at houses, in Block O of Rafah refugee camp, killing 3 civilians and injuring 6 others. Israeli army helicopters fired missiles and opened fire towards civilian houses west of Tall as Sultan neighbourhood. A short time later, army helicopters fired missiles at 1 mosque, killing 4 worshippers and injuring 15 others as they were conducting morning prayers.

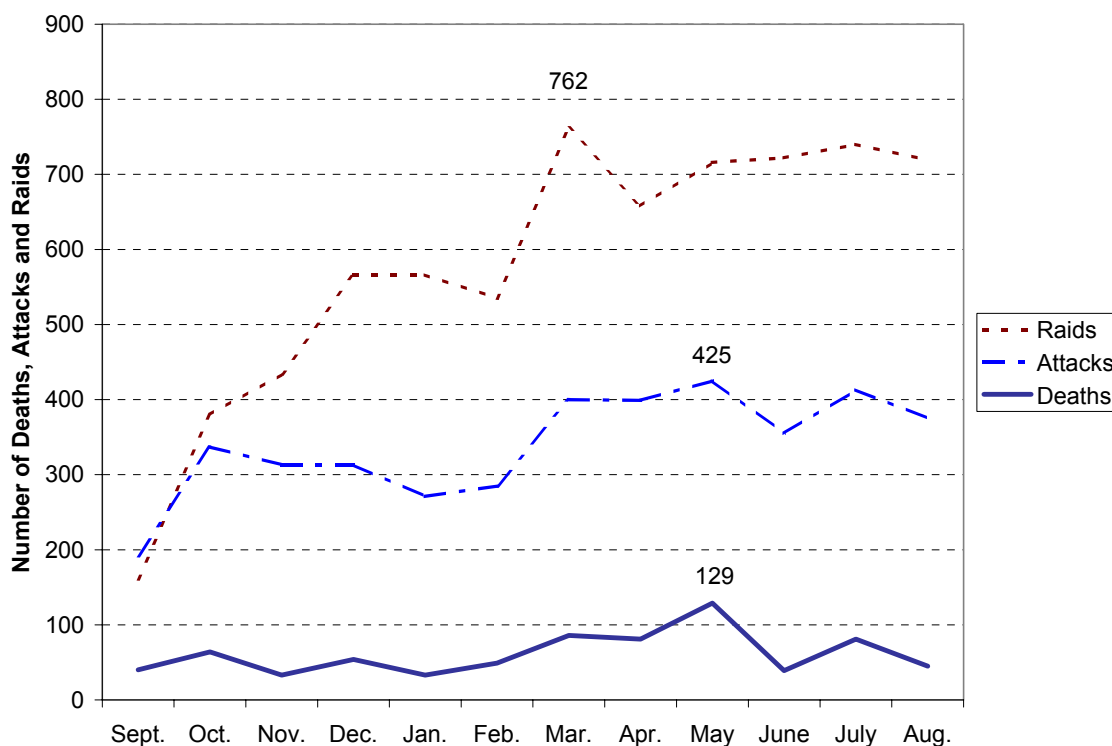
On 19 May 2004, Israeli army helicopters fired missiles towards a mass demonstration organized in solidarity with Tall as Sultan neighbourhood, killing 16 civilians, including 4 children.

## Summary of Main Incidents

### 1. Deaths, including Assassinations

#### KEY EVENTS:

- 22 March 2004: Israeli army helicopters fired 3 guided missiles at the car of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the founder of Hamas Movement in the city of Gaza, extra-judicially killing him along with 8 civilians, and injuring 17 other civilians, 6 of whom were seriously injured.
- 18 April 2004: Israeli army helicopters fired missiles towards a civilian vehicle, extra-judicially killing Dr. Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, the leader of Hamas Movement, 2 of his companions and injuring 3 other civilian bystanders.
- 19 May 2004: Israeli army helicopters fired missiles towards a mass demonstration organized in solidarity with the Rafah neighbourhood of Tall as Sultan, killing 16 civilians, including 4 children.



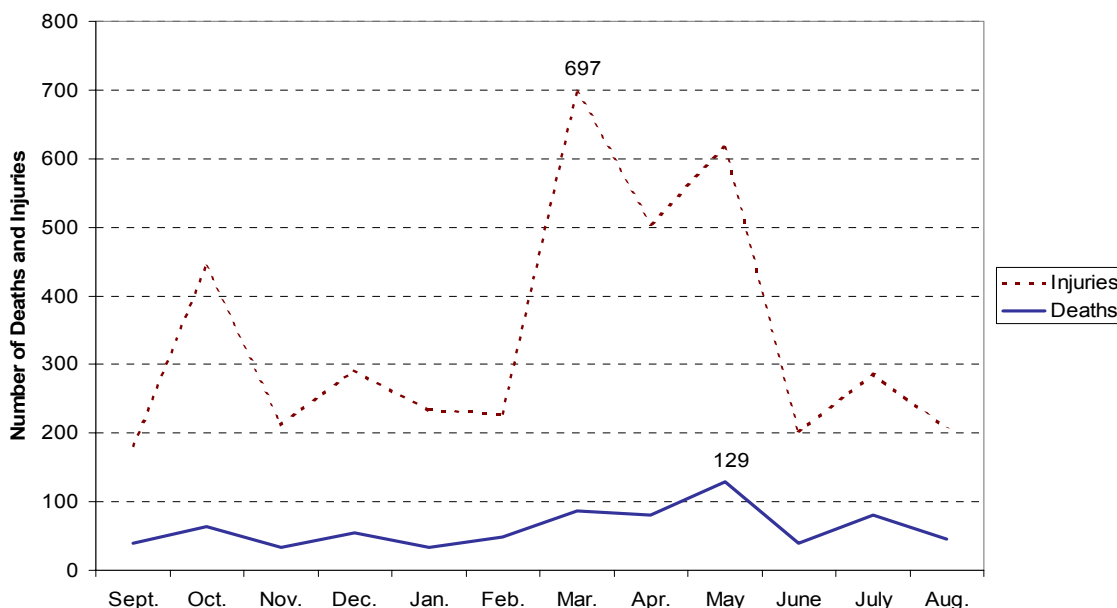
Israeli military and Israeli settler violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory resulted in the deaths of 734 Palestinians from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Israeli forces extra-judicially killed at least 82 Palestinians.

Deaths were highest in the month of May 2004, during which the Israeli army launched 4 incursions into the Gaza Strip. A total of 129 deaths occurred during the month, some 17 per cent of total deaths. Of these, 105 deaths occurred in the Gaza Strip.

There is a clear correlation between the number of Palestinians killed and the frequency of Israeli army incursions and attacks. In June 2004, during which no incursions were recorded and the number of attacks decreased, the overall death toll was lower than in April and May. In July, during which the Israeli army carried out 7 incursions and the frequency of attacks increased, the death toll doubled – compared to the previous month.

There is also a clear correlation between the number of Palestinians killed and the frequency of Israeli army raids. The second highest monthly death toll occurred in March 2004, during which Sheikh Ahmad Yassin's extra-judicial killing prompted widespread confrontations throughout the OPT between Palestinian protestors and the Israeli army. Deaths, raids and attacks all increased during March, with deaths rising from 49 in February to 86 in March, raids rising from 532 in February to 762 in March, and attacks rising from 285 in February to 400 in March.

## 2. Injuries



The Israeli army or Israeli settlers injured 4,102 Palestinians from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Rate of injury was highest in March, during which Sheikh Ahmad Yassin was extra-judicially assassinated and widespread confrontations took place throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip between Palestinian protestors and the Israeli army. Some 17 per cent of total recorded injuries – 697 injuries – occurred in March 2004.

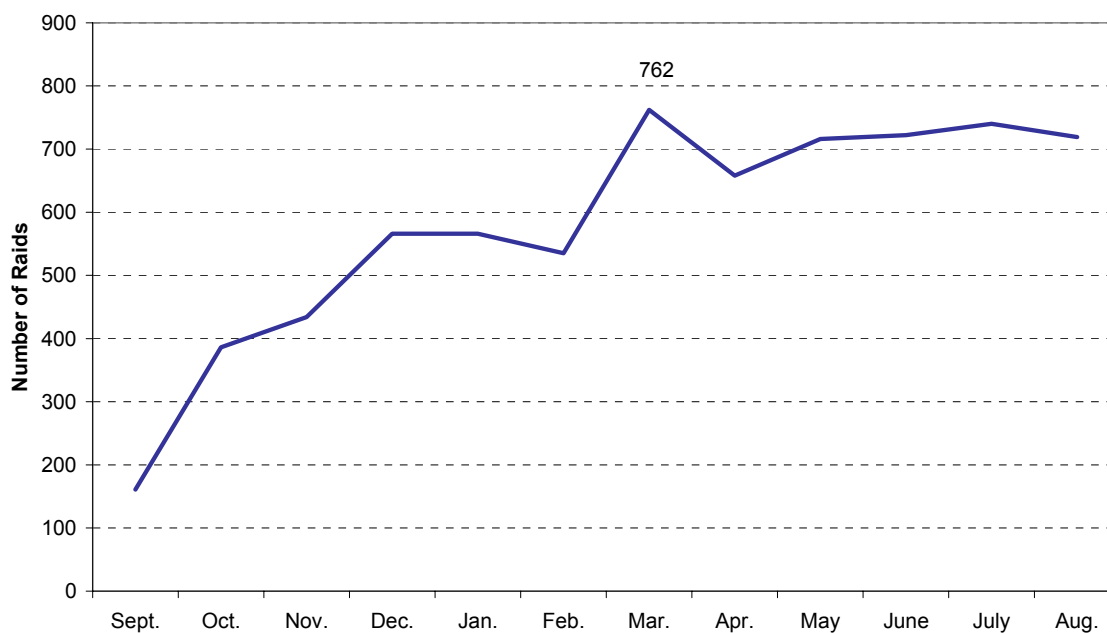
The frequency of injuries generally corresponded to the frequency of deaths. Additionally, there was a correlation between the frequency of injuries and the frequency of raids, attacks and incursions. Ten per cent of recorded injuries – 444 – were sustained in October 2003, an increase from 181 in September. During the same month, raids increased from 161 in September to 386 in October, incursions increased from none in September to 8 in October, and attacks increased from 192 in September to 337 in October.

Injury levels were high during the months of April and May 2004, with 505 and 617 injuries recorded during each respective month, some 27 per cent of total recorded injuries. In April, during which Dr. Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi was assassinated, the frequency of attacks remained the same. Though raids decreased, they remained high, relative to the months preceding March 2004. In May, the frequency of raids and attacks increased and the number of incursions rose from none in April to 5 in May.

### 3. Incursions

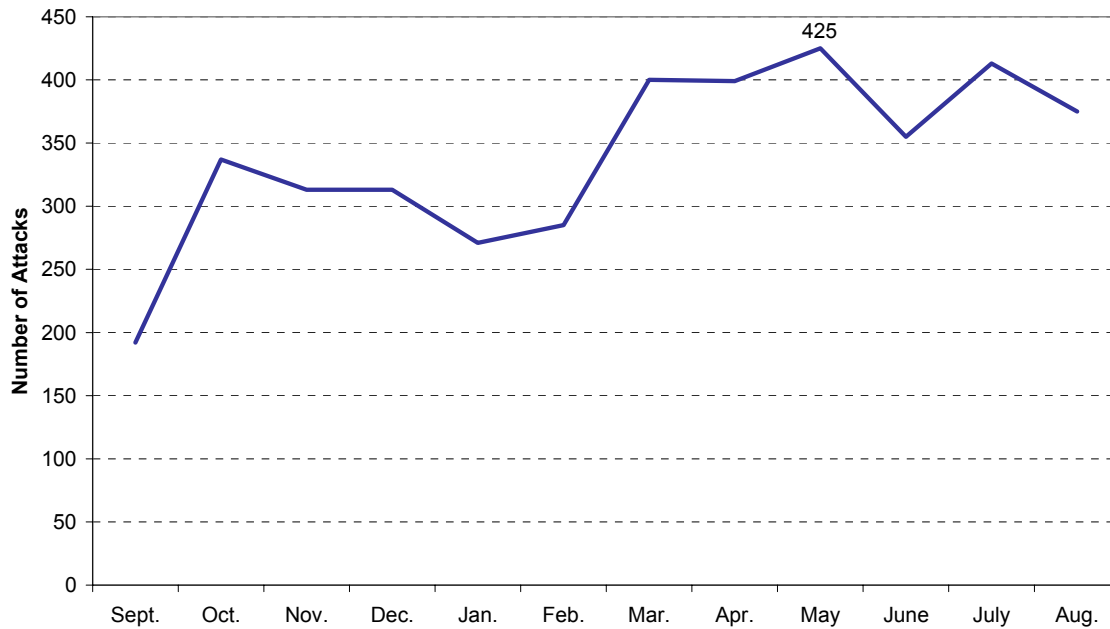
The Israeli army carried out 51 incursions from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Incursions peaked in December 2003, during which the Israeli army carried out 10 incursions, some 20 per cent of total incursions. Incursions were also high in October 2003, with 8 incursions.

### 4. Raids



The Israeli army carried out 6,965 raids into Palestinian villages, towns and cities from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. The number of raids progressively increased over the course of the year and peaked in the latter half of the reporting period, with 62 per cent of raids occurring during the six month period from March – August 2004. Raids were highest in March 2004, during which Sheikh Ahmad Yassin was assassinated. Some 11 per cent of raids – 762 – occurred in March, 708 of which occurred in the West Bank. The Israeli army also arrested 468 Palestinians in the West Bank in March.

## 5. Attacks



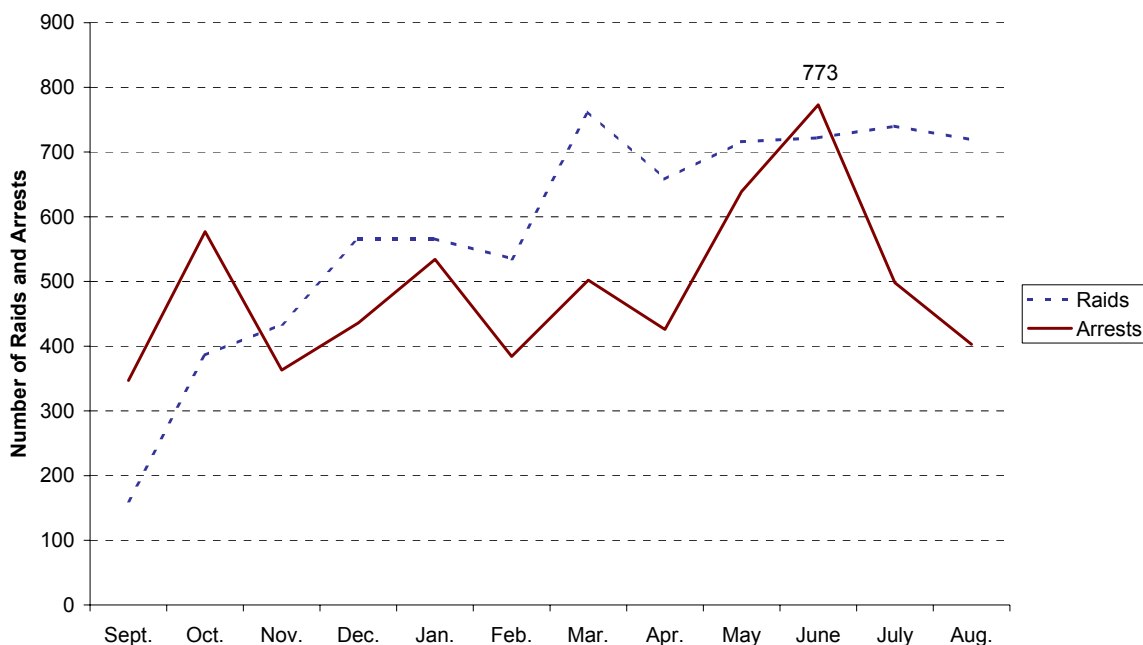
The Israeli army, using an array of weaponry (e.g. helicopter missiles, tanks shells, navy boats and machineguns), carried out 4,078 attacks on Palestinians from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Attacks peaked in May, with 425 attacks (231 in the West Bank; 194 in the Gaza Strip). Some 58 per cent of total attacks (2,367 attacks) occurred between March and August 2004, compared with some 42 per cent (1,703 attacks) from September 2003 to February 2004. During the latter half of the reporting period, the lowest monthly rate of attacks surpassed that of the highest monthly rate for the preceding six month period (355 attacks versus 329 attacks).



## 6. Arrests

### KEY EVENTS:

- 29 January 2004: Israel released 400 Palestinian political prisoners, in prisoner exchange with Hizbullah. During the same month, Israeli forces arrested an additional 534 Palestinians.
- 15 August 2004: Palestinian political prisoners launched an open-ended hunger strike in protest of harsh conditions in prisons administered by the Israel Prison Service (IPS).



The Israeli army arrested 5,882 Palestinians from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. The months following the assassinations of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and Dr. Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, witnessed the highest levels of arrests. Almost 1/4 of total arrests (1,412 of 5,882) occurred during the months of May and June 2004. Arrests peaked in June 2004, with 773 arrests, or some 13 per cent of total arrests. Though the number of overall arrests decreased in July 2004, the number of children arrested rose, from 23 in June to 63 in July. October 2003 also witnessed high numbers of arrests, with 577 Palestinians taken into Israeli custody.

On 8 December 2003, Palestinian political prisoner Bashar Eweis, 27 years old, died in Megiddo Military Prison Camp as a result of medical negligence. On 29 January 2004, Israel released 400 Palestinian political prisoners, through a prisoner exchange with the Lebanese group, Hizbullah. During the same month, Israeli forces arrested an additional 534 Palestinians.

There is a general correlation between arrest levels and the frequency of Israeli army raids and incursions. In October 2003, when incursions increased from none in September to 8 in October, and raids increased from 161 in September to 386 in October, arrests increased from 347 in September to 577 in October. In March 2004, though incursions decreased from six in February

to 2 in March, raids increased significantly from 535 in February to 762 in March. Accordingly, arrests increased from 384 in February to 502 in March.

## 7. Deportations

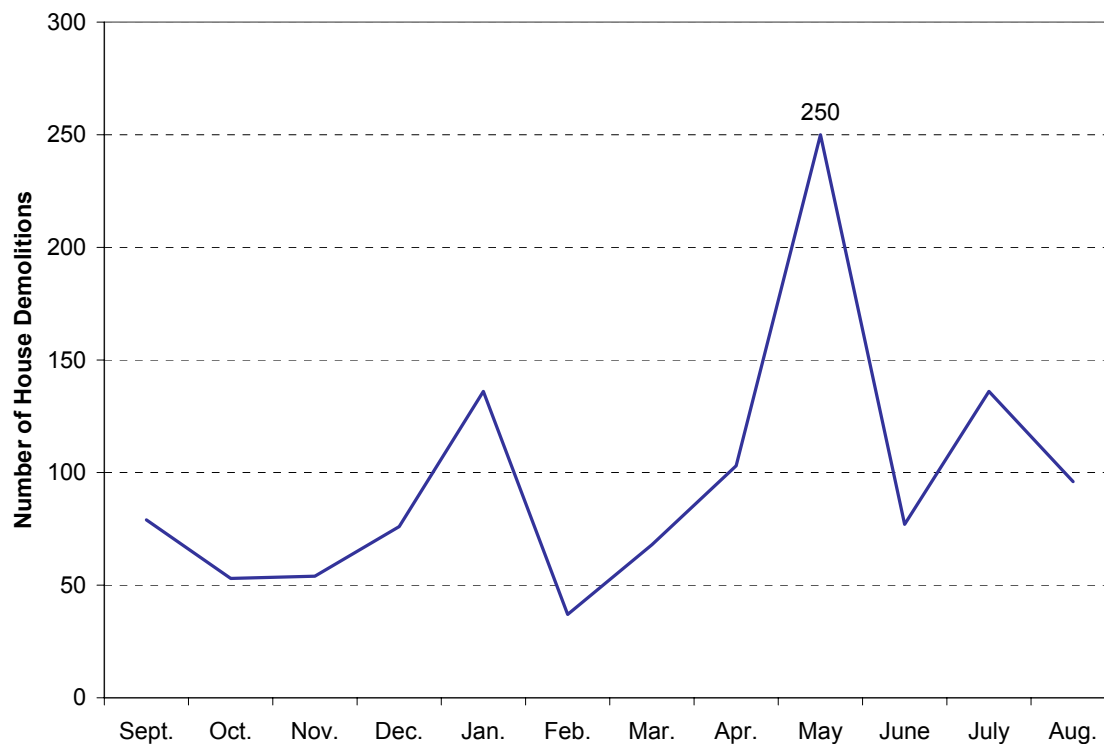
From 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004, the Israeli authorities deported 48 Palestinians, from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip, and from the West Bank to other countries. Some 73 per cent of total deportations occurred during October, November and December 2003, with 15, 8 and 12 deportations respectively.

On 20 February, the Israeli army deported Lo'ay Salama, a resident of Nablus city, to the Gaza Strip for 4 years, following a period of imprisonment of 23 months. On 8 August 2004, the Israeli army deported 1 female civilian and her 2 children from the city of Jericho to the Gaza Strip, allegedly because they hold Gaza IDs. On 22 August 2004, the Israeli army deported 1 female civilian and her 2 children, residents of Ramallah city, to Jordan, after spending 2 years in administrative detention (arrest without charge or trial), in order to place pressure on her husband, who is wanted by the Israeli army.

## 8. House Demolitions

### KEY EVENTS:

- *May 2004: The Israeli army carried out four incursions into the Gaza Strip and engaged in widespread house demolitions, particularly along the border zone with Egypt.*



The Israeli army partially or completely demolished 1,165 Palestinian houses from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. House demolitions were carried out under a number of pretexts, including as collective punishment against Palestinian political prisoners and their families; due to lack of relevant construction licenses, which are rarely issued to Palestinian civilians in Jerusalem or Area C; due to proximity to existing or planned Wall segments, Israeli settlements, or bypass roads; due to the Israeli army's widening of the zone adjacent to the Egyptian border (Philadelphi route); or in areas from where fire has been opened, or rockets have been launched, towards Israeli targets.

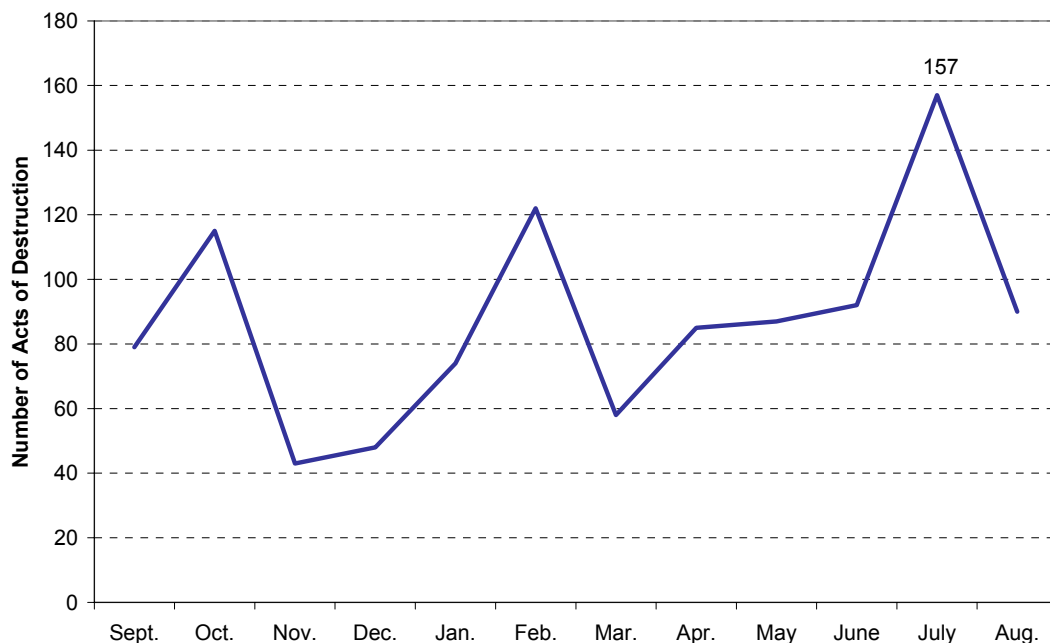
The Israeli army completely, or partially, demolished at least 45 houses or buildings belonging to Palestinian political prisoners or their families, wanted individuals or their families, and the families of, or those responsible for, attacks against Israelis.

Demolitions were highest in May 2004, with 250 Palestinian houses destroyed, 21 per cent of total demolitions. The Israeli army demolished 233 houses in the Gaza Strip in May, particularly in the zone adjacent to the Egyptian border (Philadelphi route). Most house demolitions resulted from frequent incursions and raids, including 98 in Khan Yunis and 153 in Rafah. On 2 May, the Israeli army, including several bulldozers, raided the area south of Kissufim road in the area of Abu Haddaf near Al Qarara, opened intensive fire towards civilian houses and demolished 16 houses. On 03 May, the Israeli army, including several tanks and bulldozers, raided 200 meters into West Khan Yunis refugee camp, opened intensive fire towards civilian houses and demolished 30 houses, 15 of which were partially demolished.

In July, the Israeli army demolished 136 civilian houses, including 26 houses in the West Bank and 110 in the Gaza Strip. The majority of house demolitions were a result of frequent Israeli army raids, claims that houses were located in close proximity to the Wall, and for Israeli settlement expansion. As a punitive measure, the Israeli army also demolished houses belonging to civilians killed by the Israeli army and houses belonging to political prisoners. In the southern Gaza Strip, the Israeli army demolished a large number of houses as it expanded the zone adjacent to the Egyptian border (Philadelphi route).

On 8 July, the Israeli army, including 4 tanks and 2 bulldozers, raided West Khan Yunis refugee camp, opened intensive fire and fired several tank shells towards civilian houses, injuring 3 civilians, including 1 female child, and demolished 14 houses. On 12 July, the Israeli army, including several tanks and bulldozers and supported by helicopters, raided 100 meters into An Nimsawi neighbourhood in the city of Khan Yunis, opened intensive fire, fired several tank shells towards civilian houses and demolished 26 civilian houses. On 21 July 2004, the Israeli army, supported by helicopters, raided As Salaam neighbourhood in the Rafah refugee camp, opened intensive fire, demolished 10 houses, levelled 1 green house, and damaged infrastructure.

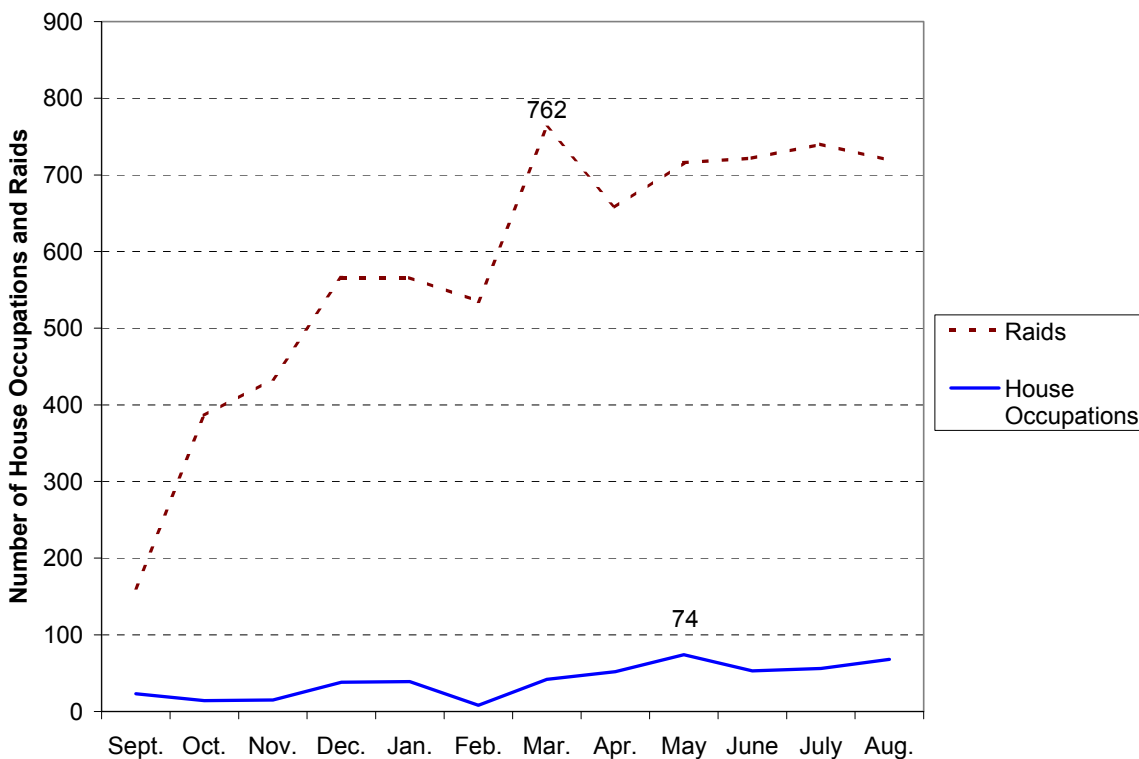
## 9. Destruction of Public and Private Property



Israeli forces or Israeli settlers carried out 1,050 attacks on public and private Palestinian property from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Forms of destruction to Palestinian property included destruction of cultivated land, uprooting olive and other fruit bearing trees, damaging Palestinian houses and buildings, and destruction of vehicles, among others.

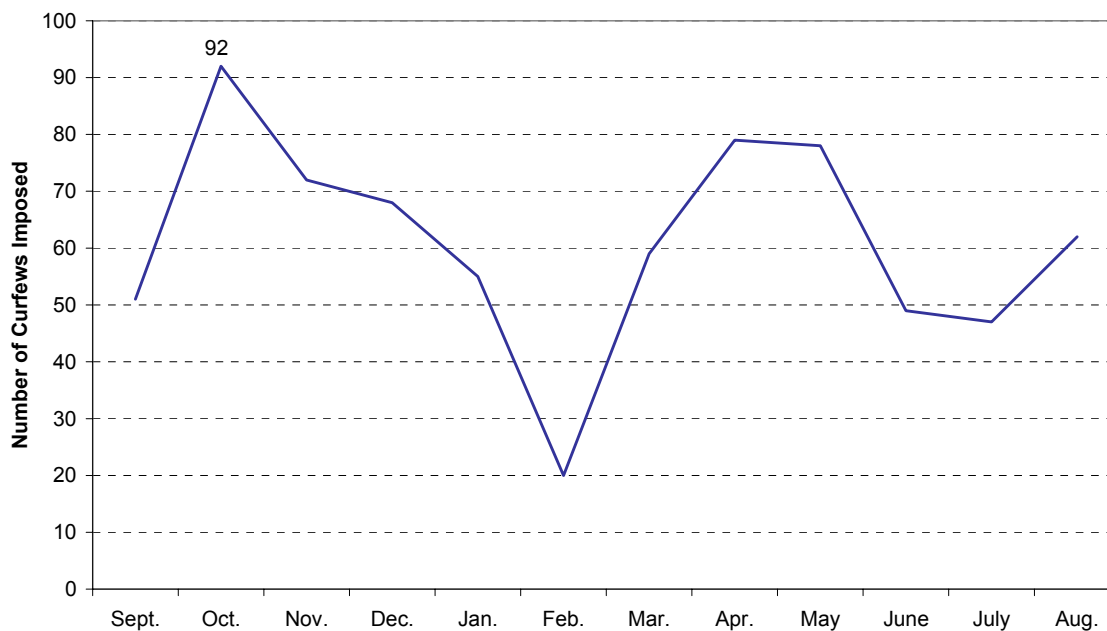
Destruction of public and private Palestinian property peaked in July 2004, with 157 attacks. Destruction was also high in October 2003 and February 2004, with 115 and 122 attacks, respectively. Combined, these three months constituted some 37 per cent of total attacks on property.

## 10. House Occupations



The Israeli army forcibly occupied 482 Palestinian houses from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. House occupations steadily increased from February until May 2004, at which point they peaked at 74 occupations. August 2004 also witnessed a high number of house occupations, with 68 occupations. There is frequently a correlation between the number of house occupations and the frequency of raids, during which Israeli soldiers often forcibly occupy the houses of Palestinian civilians during ground operations.

## 11. Curfews



The Israeli army imposed 732 curfews on Palestinian villages, towns, cities and refugee camps from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. During curfew, Palestinian civilians are prohibited from leaving their houses, disrupting every aspect of daily life.

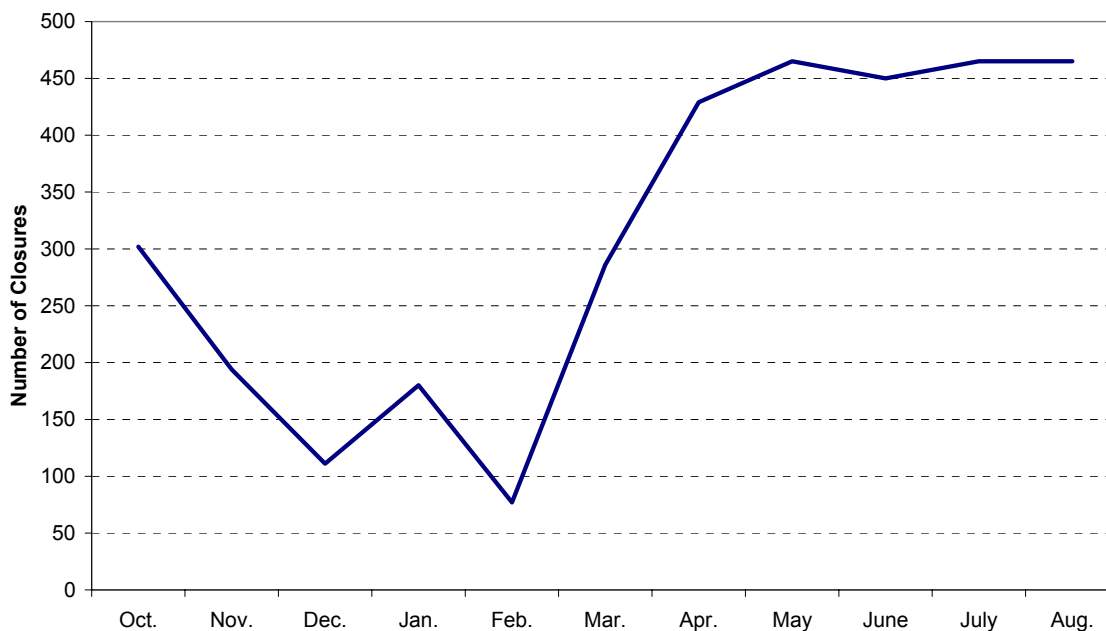
There is frequently a correlation between the number of curfews imposed and the frequency of raids and incursions. Curfews peaked in October 2003, with 92 curfews imposed. During the same month, the number of raids doubled, from 161 in September to 386 in October. Also, there was a significant increase in the number of incursions, from none in September to 8 in October.

The number of curfews decreased after October 2003, with some 30 per cent of total curfews imposed from November 2003 to February 2004. The frequency of curfews began to rise again in March 2004, during which Sheikh Ahmad Yassin was assassinated. The second highest occurrence of curfew during the reporting period occurred from March to May 2004, with some 30 per cent of total curfews imposed during this three month period. Some 31 per cent of total raids also occurred during this period.

## 12. Closures Per District

### KEY EVENTS:

- *22 March 2004: On the day the Israeli military extra-judicially killed Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the Israeli army imposed an official, total closure of districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which continued as of 31 August 2004.*

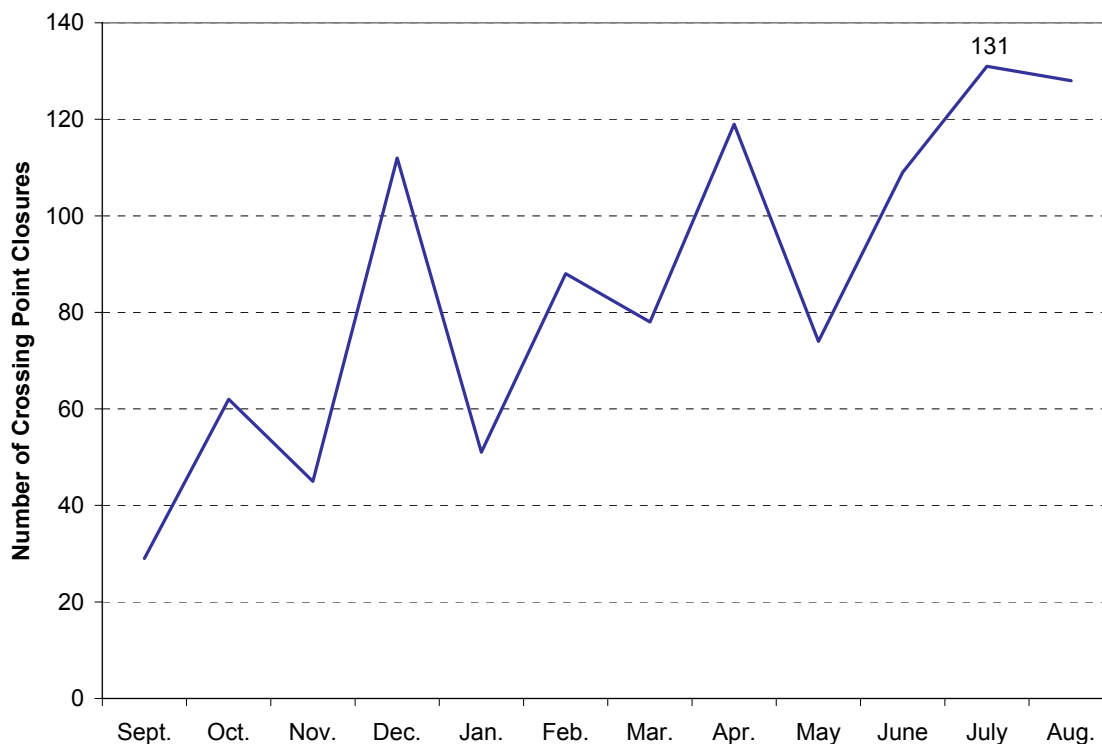


\* This graph excludes data from September 2003.

The Israeli army imposed 3,424 closures of districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, from 01 October 2003 – 31 August 2004. Closures were highest in the months of May, July and August, with 465 closures each month.

The Israeli army prevented Palestinian civilians without permits from entering Jerusalem and restricted movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israeli army also restricted movement between Palestinian locales within the West Bank and Gaza Strip throughout the year. The Israeli army set up thousands of flying checkpoints throughout the 15 districts, leveled roads connecting towns and villages, and maintained permanent checkpoints and dirt barricades, closing entrances to Palestinian locales and preventing pedestrian and vehicular traffic from crossing. Closure of districts contributes to increased poverty and unemployment rates, negatively impacting economic, education and livelihood activities and impeding access to health facilities.

### 13. Closure of Crossing Points

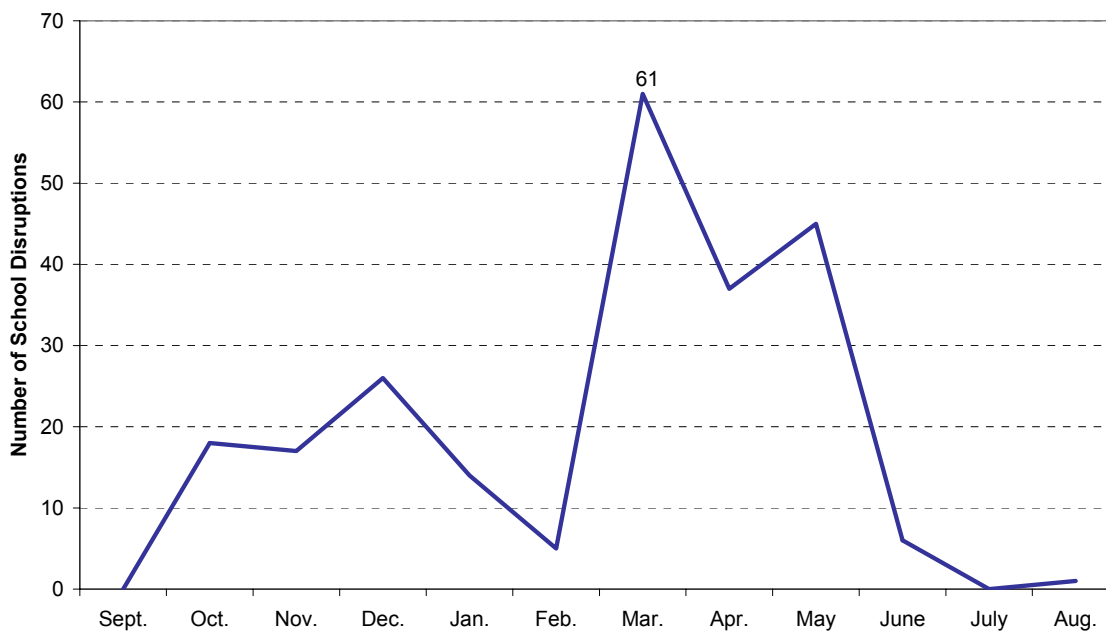


The Israeli army closed Palestinian crossing points 1,026 times from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Whereas the crossing point from the West Bank to Jordan was closed only twice, closures of the 5 crossing points in the Gaza Strip were frequent, preventing workers from entering industrial zones and crossing the Green Line for work.

Crossing point closures progressively increased over the course of the year, peaking in July 2004, with 131 closures. Crossing point closures were also high in December 2003 and April, June, and August 2004, with over 100 crossing point closures in each month. Some 25 per cent of total crossing point closures occurred during July and August 2004 alone.



## 14. School Disruptions



From 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004, there were 230 cases in which Palestinian school sessions were disrupted by Israeli soldiers. School disruptions were highest in March 2004, with 61 disruptions, or some 26 per cent of total disruptions. Other months featuring high rates of school disruption were April and May 2004, with some 36 per cent of school disruptions occurring in those two months. The low number of attacks in June, July and August were due to the onset of summer vacation in all schools.

## 15. Medical Obstruction

The Israeli army carried out 76 attacks on hospitals, medical personnel and ambulances from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. The majority of these attacks occurred during the period from May to August 2004, with 44 attacks, or some 48 per cent of total attacks, occurring during that four month period.

On 1 April 2004, the Israeli army raided a psychiatric hospital in the city of Bethlehem and opened fire. Israeli helicopters opened intensive fire towards the 2nd floor of the hospital, causing severe damage to the building. The Israeli army arrested 17 civilians, including 8 officers from a military medical unit.

## 16. Attacks on Religious Sites

The Israeli army and Israeli settlers carried out 104 attacks on religious sites from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Some 38 per cent of attacks occurred during the months of October, November and December 2003.

## 17. Settler Violence and Settlement Activity

### KEY EVENTS:

- 1 October 2003: Israeli cabinet approved the route for the second phase of Wall construction.
- 21 October 2003: UN General Assembly demanded that Israel stop and reverse construction of the Wall in Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- 18 December 2003: Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced his plan for “Unilateral Disengagement”.
- 14 April 2004: In Washington, DC, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon met with US President George W. Bush, who gave support for “Unilateral Disengagement” and the permanence of some West Bank settlements.
- 2 May 2004: Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s Likud party voted against “Unilateral Disengagement” in referendum.
- 19 February 2004: International Court of Justice heard oral arguments regarding the “Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.”
- 9 July 2004: ICJ ruled that “Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (including East Jerusalem) have been established in breach of international law,” (paragraph 120) and that Israel must cease and reverse construction of the Wall and dismantle its associated regime.



The Israeli army or Israeli settlers carried out 327 acts of settler violence or settlement activity throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip from 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004. Such activity increased dramatically in the latter half of the reporting period, during which some 68 per cent of activity occurred. Prior to that period, October and November 2003 witnessed the highest rate of settler violence and settlement activity, with 18 per cent of total activity recorded during that two month period.

Violence perpetrated by Israeli settlers included *physical attacks on Palestinian civilians*, including children and the elderly; *attacks on private Palestinian property*, including attacks on houses, businesses, vehicles and livestock, and destruction, levelling and confiscation of Palestinian land (including cultivated areas); and *attacks on religious sites*.

Israeli settlers carried out individual attacks on Palestinians and their property and carried out repeated, organized group raids of Palestinian areas, attacking Palestinian civilians, opening fire, setting fire to vehicles, buildings and cultivated land and engaging in other forms of property destruction.

Israeli settlers in the old city of Hebron repeatedly attacked Palestinian civilians there during the first six months of 2004. On 09 March and 22 April, Israeli settlers severely beat two Palestinian females, including a 10 year old girl. Both victims were hospitalized following the attacks. On 17 May, a group of Israeli settlers threw hot water over an 11 year old Palestinian boy, who was subsequently hospitalized for burn treatment.

Israeli settler violence occurred simultaneously as the Israeli government expanded settlements, announced the construction of new settlements, proceeded with construction of the Wall, and continued to expand the network of bypass roads that connect Israeli settlements and restrict Palestinian freedom of movement.

In many cases, Israeli soldiers provided protection to Israeli settlers as they attacked Palestinian civilians, or directly participated in violent attacks. During the first six months of 2004, Israeli soldiers directly participated, or provided protection to Israeli settlers, in at least 15 acts of violence against Palestinian civilians. In one incident, Israeli police officers participated with Israeli settlers in perpetrating violence. In only one incident reported during the first six months of 2004 did the Israeli army intervene to protect Palestinian civilians from an Israeli settler attack.

On 8 January, Israeli police officers and Israeli settlers severely beat 3 Palestinian labourers near the settlement of Ma'ale Adummim and detained them for several hours. The labourers were transferred to hospital for treatment of injuries sustained during the attack. On 24 March, a group of Israeli settlers and soldiers kidnapped a Palestinian farmer from the village of Bardala, took him to an uninhabited area near the village, and severely assaulted him.

On 5 June, Israeli soldiers and a group of Israeli settlers raided the village of Yasuf in the Salfit Governorate. Confrontations took place between the Israeli army and Israeli settlers and Palestinian civilians, after which the Israeli army imposed curfew and detained two Palestinian civilians.

The combined occurrence of settlement activity and settler violence in some areas, along with the failure of Israeli law enforcement authorities to address acts of settler violence, results in a consistent pattern of intimidating and physically harming Palestinian civilians and their property, clearing Palestinian land, and/or displacing Palestinian civilians and altering the demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

**ANNEX: Israeli Violations, 01 September 2003 – 31 August 2004**  
*This data is based on Daily Situation Reports of the Palestinian Monitoring Group.*

Event Type	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	TOTAL
<b>Deaths</b>	40	64	33	54	33	49	86	81	129	39	81	45	<b>734</b>
<b>Injuries</b>	181	444	213	291	234	227	697	505	616	201	287	206	<b>4102</b>
<b>Incursions</b>	0	8	5	10	7	6	2	0	5	0	7	1	<b>51</b>
<b>Attacks</b>	192	337	313	313	271	285	400	399	425	355	413	375	<b>4078</b>
<b>Raids</b>	161	386	434	566	566	535	762	658	716	722	740	719	<b>6965</b>
<b>Arrests</b>	347	577	363	436	534	384	502	426	639	773	498	403	<b>5882</b>
<b>Deportations</b>	0	15	8	12	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	6	<b>48</b>
<b>House Demolitions</b>	79	53	54	76	136	37	68	103	250	77	136	96	<b>1165</b>
<b>Destruction of Public and Private Property</b>	79	115	43	48	74	122	58	85	87	92	157	90	<b>1050</b>
<b>House Occupations</b>	23	14	15	38	39	8	42	52	74	53	56	68	<b>482</b>
<b>Curfews</b>	51	92	72	68	55	20	59	79	78	49	47	62	<b>732</b>
<b>Closures (per District)</b>	ALL	302	194	111	180	77	286	429	465	450	465	465	<b>3424</b>
<b>Closure of Crossing Points</b>	29	62	45	112	51	88	78	119	74	109	131	128	<b>1026</b>
<b>School Disruption</b>	0	18	17	26	14	5	61	37	45	6	0	1	<b>230</b>
<b>Medical Obstruction</b>	4	6	9	2	3	0	4	4	12	11	10	11	<b>76</b>
<b>Attacks on Religious Sites</b>	12	16	12	13	9	2	4	8	8	8	6	6	<b>104</b>
<b>Israeli Settler Violence/ Settlement Activity</b>	6	34	26	12	14	13	42	33	30	30	36	51	<b>327</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1204</b>	<b>2543</b>	<b>1856</b>	<b>2188</b>	<b>2223</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>3152</b>	<b>3018</b>	<b>3653</b>	<b>2975</b>	<b>3070</b>	<b>2733</b>	<b>30476</b>

\* *Figure estimated to be 450, but not included in total.*

<sup>1</sup> An incursion is a widescale Israeli army operation involving significant prior planning, sizeable tank and troop deployment and other military support, and generally lasting more than 1 day. Incursions are distinct from “raids”, which are targeted Israeli army ground operations with relatively narrow aims, requiring limited troops and lasting a relatively short period of time. “Attacks” are specific incidents in which the Israeli army – in a situation other than an “incursion” or a “raid” – opens fire with ammunition towards Palestinian targets, including from the air, ground or sea.

<sup>2</sup> House demolitions are defined as the targeted demolition of a Palestinian residential facility.

<sup>3</sup> There are six Palestinian “crossing points”: from the West Bank to Jordan (1); Gaza Strip to Egypt (1); Gaza Strip to Israel (3); and Gaza International Airport (1).

<sup>4</sup> “Curfews” refer to the Israeli army policy of prohibiting Palestinian civilians from leaving their houses for a specific period of time.

<sup>5</sup> There are 15 districts in the OPT: 10, including Jerusalem, in the West Bank, and 5 in the Gaza Strip. District boundaries employed by the Palestinian Monitoring Group correspond with those of the Palestinian Authority.

<sup>6</sup> Involves damage to, or destruction, of private and public property, both targeted and incidental. Only non-targeted damage to, or demolition of, Palestinian residential facilities is included.