

CHRONOLOGY

16 MAY–15 AUGUST 2012

COMPILED BY MICHELE K. ESPOSITO

This is part 115 of a chronology begun in Journal of Palestine Studies (JPS) 13, no. 3 (Spring 1984). Chronology dates reflect North American Eastern Standard Time. For a more comprehensive overview of regional and international developments related to the peace process, see the Quarterly Update on Conflict and Diplomacy in JPS 165.

16 MAY 2012

Palestinian Authority (PA) pres. Mahmud Abbas implements a long-awaited cabinet reshuffle that retains **Salam Fayyad** as PM. The new 24-member cabinet has 11 new members, including replacements for 2 ministers in the outgoing government who were charged with corruption. The notable addition to the cabinet is former university president and political independent Nabil Kassis as finance minister. (AFP 5/16; NYT 5/21)

The **Israel Defense Force (IDF)** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron and nr. Tubas; conducts late-night patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

17 MAY 2012

IDF troops make 2 brief incursion into Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence nr. Bayt Lahiya in the north and Khan Yunis in the south. **IDF** soldiers on the n. Gaza border nr. Bayt Lahiya fire warning shots at Palestinian farmers who stray too near the border fence, forcing them to leave. **IDF** soldiers on the s. Gaza border open fire on Palestinian agricultural areas e. of Abasan, causing no reported damage or injuries. **Israeli naval vessels** fire at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 each nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Jenin and 1 each nr. Qalqilya and Tulkarm in the evening; and in 2 villages nr. Jericho and 1 each nr. Ramallah and Tulkarm late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin, including rearresting a PA General Intelligence officer released in the 2011 prisoner swap that freed captured IDF soldier Gilad Shalit. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

News hits the media that the new **U.S. amb. to Israel Dan Shapiro** recently told a meeting of the **Israeli Bar Association** that the U.S. is ready and willing to use military force against **Iran** if diplomacy and sanctions fail, stating that the military option is “not just available, but it’s ready. The necessary planning has been done.” A tape of Shapiro’s address was leaked to the AP, with an anonymous Israeli official stating: “Quite clearly he didn’t mean this to be public. . . . For the Iranians to understand that he really means it, they have to hear it publicly and clearly.” (AP, ITV 5/17; NYT, WT 5/18; see Quarterly Update [QU] in JPS 165 for details on Iran.)

At a private fundraising event in Florida that is secretly taped and leaked to the media on 9/18/12, **Republican presidential frontrunner Mitt Romney** states that “the Palestinians have

no interest whatsoever in establishing peace” and are “committed to the destruction and elimination of Israel.” He also opposes creation of an independent Palestinian state, assuming that it would become a client state of Iran. In terms of a U.S. mediating role in the peace process, he states: “The idea of pushing on *the Israelis*—to give something up, to get the Palestinians to act, is the worst idea in the world.” In response to the leak, which was seen (e.g., NYT 9/19) as likely to damage Romney’s ability to act as a peace broker if elected, Romney publicly states on 9/18 that he stands by his longtime support for the U.S. official position advocating a negotiated 2-state solution. (*Mother Jones* 9/18; NYT 9/19)

Israeli DM Ehud Barak meets with **U.S. secy. of defense Leon Panetta** in Washington to request an additional \$680 m./yr. in aid over 3 yrs. to help purchase 3–4 new Iron Dome antimissile batteries and another \$168 m. for 3 other missile programs jointly developed with the U.S. (This is on top of an increase of \$99.9 m. in funding for FY 2013 already requested by the Obama admin.) With the appeal coinciding with Israel cutting its defense budget by 5% per year for 2013 and 2014, critics complain (e.g., WP 5/17) that the U.S. is effectively helping balance Israel’s budget before balancing its own. (WP 5/17)

18 MAY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Qalqilya in the morning; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya at midday, detaining 3 Palestinian teenagers for throwing stones at IDF patrols; conducts late-night patrols in Tulkarm and 1 village nr. Jericho; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil’in, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni’lin (all nr. Ramallah). **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 3 Palestinians (including 2 teenagers) and 1 foreigner are injured. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

19 MAY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Qalqilya in the morning; in 1 village nr. Nablus at midday (firing rubber-coated steel bullets and tear gas at stone-throwing Palestinian youths who confront them, causing no serious injuries); in 1 village nr. Jenin in the afternoon; and in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya and 1 each nr. Jericho and Ramallah late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in al-Bireh. Armed **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar settlement nr. Nablus set fire to Palestinian crops and attack homes in nearby Asira village, then stone and open fire on local Palestinians who intervene, seriously wounding 1 Palestinian with live ammunition, lightly injuring 5 others with stones; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

20 MAY 2012

In Cairo, **Fatah** and **Hamas** sign an agreement laying out a timetable for implementing the 5/2010 national unity accord: (1) the **Palestinian Central Election Commission (CEC)** is to begin updating voter registrations in Gaza on 5/22 (previously blocked by Hamas); (2) **PA pres. and Fatah head Mahmud Abbas** and **Hamas leader Khalid Mishal** are to form an interim

government within 10 days; and (3) elections are to be held and a new permanent government installed within 6 mos. (NYT, WP 5/21; HA 5/22)

The *New York Times* confirms that **Hammas** is in the midst of its secret politburo elections that are expected to take several months. (NYT 5/21)

IDF troops on the s. Gaza border fire on Palestinian agricultural areas in al-Qarara, wounding 1 unarmed civilian more than 600 meters (m) fr. the border (well outside the 300-m IDF-imposed no-go zone). In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 2 nearby villages, 3 villages nr. Jenin, and 1 nr. Ramallah in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya and 1 nr. Tulkarm in the afternoon (firing tear gas at stone-throwing Palestinian youths who confront them, causing no serious injuries); in Jericho and 1 village each nr. Jenin and Ramallah in the evening; and in 1 village each nr. Jericho, Qalqilya, and Ramallah late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in ‘Ayn Bayt al-Ma’ refugee camp (r.c.) and Hebron. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

Some **30,000 Israeli Jews** march through East Jerusalem and the Old City to mark Israel’s 45th Jerusalem “reunification” day, celebrating Israel’s seizure of East Jerusalem in the 1967 war. In commemoration, **Israel’s cabinet** allocates \$91 m. for the creation of “public spaces” (not identified) in Jerusalem over the next 6 yrs. to develop tourism and infrastructure. (JTA 5/20; WT 5/21)

21 MAY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 2 nearby villages, 2 villages nr. Jenin, and 1 each nr. Jericho, Hebron, and Ramallah in the morning; stages 3 groups of synchronized patrols s. of Jenin (4 villages), e. and n. of Jenin (3 villages), and n. of Ramallah (2 villages) in the afternoon; conducts synchronized late-night patrols in 3 villages nr. Tulkarm; and conducts other late-night patrols in Jericho and nearby ‘Aqabat Jabir r.c., and in 1 village nr. Salfit. The **IDF** also conducts arrest raids, house searches in East Jerusalem in the afternoon and nr. Hebron late at night; bulldozes Palestinian irrigation networks located between 2 Jewish settlements nr. Hebron; and confiscates a bulldozer and rock crusher from a Palestinian quarry n. of Jerusalem. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

The **White House** convenes a meeting with **American Jewish leaders** to reassure them that the Obama admin. is committed to keeping Iran free of nuclear weapons. In Israel, PM **Netanyahu** reiterates his position that “the objectives of Iran are clear: It wants to destroy Israel and is developing nuclear weapons to realize that goal.” (HA 5/21; NYT, WP, WT 5/22; WJW 5/31)

22 MAY 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the c. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 2 villages in Ramallah in the morning; in 1 village each nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the afternoon; and in Jericho and 1 village nr. Jenin late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Jenin, Nablus, Salfit, Tulkarm, and 1 village each nr. Hebron and Qalqilya. **Jewish settlers** fr. Tekoa settlement nr. Bethlehem vandalize Palestinian homes in nearby Taqqua’ village; **IDF** troops observe but do not intervene. The **UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)** reports that in the previous week: (1) **Israeli authorities**

demolished a **Palestinian home** in East Jerusalem's al-Tur neighborhood (marking the 1st residence demolished in East Jerusalem for 2 mos.) and ordered a Palestinian family to demolish an addition to their home; (2) the **IDF** removed a major roadblock on the main north-south road to Hebron, significantly reducing travel times between Hebron and 4 villages to the east; and (3) **2 Palestinians** died and 4 (including a teenager) were injured in 4 smuggling tunnel accidents on the Rafah border. (PCHR 5/23; OCHA 5/25)

At the close of 2 days of talks in Tehran with Iranian **nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili**, **IAEA head Yukiya Amano** announces that Iran has agreed in principle to provide the IAEA with access to Iran's nuclear scientists and facilities, but it has not yet signed a formal statement to this effect. P5+1 nations (the 5 permanent UNSC members plus Germany) call the deal "a step in the right direction," but say they will judge Iran by its actions. **Israeli DM Ehud Barak** comments: "It looks like the Iranians are trying to reach a technical agreement that will create a deception of progress in talks in order to reduce the pressure ahead of talks tomorrow in Baghdad and postpone harshening of sanctions." (WP 5/23)

23 MAY 2012

A **Palestinian sniper** operating nr. the former Kissufim crossing on the c. Gaza border shoots and wounds 2 IDF soldiers inside Israel; no group claims responsibility. The **IDF** bulldozes a Palestinian barnyard nr. Hebron; tears down 6 residential tents in a different area nr. Hebron; demolishes a poultry farm nr. Ramallah. (PCHR, YA 5/23; OCHA 6/1; JPI 6/15)

At least **25 Senate Democrats** (of 53 total) meet with **reps. of 17 American Jewish groups** in Washington for talks on Iran and other domestic issues. The senators challenge the Jewish leaders' portrayal of Obama as weak on Iran, stating that more time is needed for strong sanctions to have deep impact. The off-the-record function is organized by the **Democratic Steering and Outreach Comm.** roughly every yr. to 18 mos. **Sen. John Kerry (D-MA)**, who has been deeply involved in forming the current U.S. policy on Iran as chmn. of the Senate Foreign Relations Comm., says the Obama admin. is willing to take military action if necessary but is concerned about Israel acting alone, stating "If we must act, we should act together." The meeting coincides with the opening of talks in Baghdad between the **P5+1** and Iran aimed at drafting specific proposals and counterproposals for reaching (in **EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton's** words) "a comprehensive negotiated solution which restores international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program." (NYT, WP, WT 5/24; NYT 5/25; WJW 5/31)

24 MAY 2012

The **IDF** issues a military order confiscating 29 dunams (d.; 4 d. = 1 acre) of Palestinian land in Dayr Istya village nr. Salfit for "security and military purposes and to combat terrorist attacks." The **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 2 villages nr. Qalqilya in the morning; stages synchronized patrols in 3 villages nr. Qalqilya in the afternoon; conducts other patrols in 2 villages nr. Jenin and Salfit in the afternoon; and undertakes late-night patrols in Tulkarm and neighboring Nur Shams r.c. **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar settlement nr. Nablus set fire to a small plot of crop land and attack Palestinians in nearby Madama village. (PCHR 5/31; OCHA 6/1)

Washington Jewish Week reports that in the previous wk., a **U.S. court** awarded the family of an American teenager killed in a 2006 **Islamic Jihad** suicide bombing in Tel Aviv (his

father was seriously injured in the attack) \$332 m. in damages from **Iran** and **Syria**. The family's lawyers argued that Islamic Jihad was sheltered by Syria and funded by Iran. The family is unlikely to collect the money. (WJW 5/24)

After a 2d day of **P5+1** talks with **Iran**, EU foreign policy chief **Ashton** announces that "significant differences" remain, but enough "common ground" existed to schedule a 3d round of meetings in Moscow on 6/18–19. (NYT, WP, WT 5/25)

The *New York Times* runs a special report on a **congressional race for a House seat representing Queens, NY**, that has been dubbed "**Israelapalooza**" for the way in which the candidates have touted their pro-Israel credentials in effort to win the endorsement of Ed Koch, former Democratic mayor of New York City, and the votes of Jewish constituents who make up 20% of the district's population. For example, candidate Grace Meng, who built her political career as an advocate for Chinese Americans and yet has never visited China, made a recent trip to Israel that she has highlighted during her campaign. (NYT 5/24)

25 MAY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 1 nearby village at night; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Dahaysha r.c. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum (nr. Qalqilya), al-Nabi Salih, and Nuba (nr. Ramallah). **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 5 Palestinians are hit by tear gas canisters in Kafr Qaddum. **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar set fire to a large wooded area and crop lands in 'Urif village. Hours later, the same settlers set fire to another plot of Palestinian crop land n. of 'Urif; as local Palestinians come to put out the blaze, the fleeing settlers grab, handcuff, and shoot in the abdomen 1 Palestinian, seriously wounding him; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene until the shooting, at which point soldiers step in to halt the violence. (PCHR 5/31; OCHA 6/1)

26 MAY 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya; and late-night patrols in 3 villages nr. Tulkarm and 1 nr. Qalqilya. (WP 5/27, PCHR 5/31; OCHA 6/1)

27 MAY 2012

Israeli naval vessels halt a Palestinian fishing boat off the s. Gaza coast, detaining 2 Palestinians onboard (released on 5/28) and ordering a 3d to sail the boat back to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** raids and searches a secondary school in Kafr Qaddum while classes are in session, firing tear gas; soon after, several **Jewish settlers** attempt to enter the school but are blocked by Palestinians. The **IDF** also patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and 2 nr. Ramallah in the morning, and in Jericho and Tulkarm in the evening; patrols in Kafr Qaddum, and 1 village each nr. Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Tulkarm late at night; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in 'Aqabat Jabir r.c. and nr. Ramallah. (PCHR 5/31; OCHA 6/1)

Following up on his independent "Blue White Future" initiative last quarter (see QU in *JPS* 164), **former Israeli Shin Bet head Ami Ayalon** says, "The paradigm of direct negotiations that was a cornerstone of the [peace] process during the last 20 years is over. It does not work,

and it will not work unless we change something,” recommending instead that Israel take unilateral action to create a 2-state solution on its own terms. (WT 5/28)

28 MAY 2012

Hamás’s acting PM in Gaza Ismail Haniyeh authorizes a senior **CEC team** to begin updating Gaza’s voter rolls, in keeping with agreements reached in Cairo on 5/20/12. The CEC estimates that since the rolls were last updated for the 1/2006 elections, the number of eligible but unregistered Gaza voters has grown to as many as 250,000. (NYT 5/29)

In Hamza village, just n. of Jerusalem, **Israeli security forces** demolish a gas station, car wash, 2 auto body shops, and 2 cafeterias, confiscating several motorcycles, fuel pumps, gasoline, and equipment. Deeper in the West Bank, **IDF soldiers** nr. Qalqilya fire tear gas, stun grenades at a group of Palestinian laborers attempting to cross into Israel without permits to find work, causing no injuries but starting a small fire that burns a grove of 20 Palestinian olive trees. The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jenin in the morning; in 1 village nr. Jericho in the afternoon; and in 2 villages each nr. Ramallah, Salfit, and Tulkarm and 1 nr. Jenin late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Kafr Qaddum and nr. Hebron, Qalqilya, and Salfit. (PCHR 5/31; OCHA 6/1)

A **Turkish court** indicts **4 fmr. senior IDF commanders** (fmr. IDF chief of staff Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi and those who headed the Israeli navy, air force, and military intelligence) who were in authority when Israel killed 9 Turks aboard the *Mavi Marmara* aid flotilla ship to Gaza in 2012 (see QU in *JPS* 157). The 4 officials are unlikely to appear for trial but may be tried in absentia. (NYT, WP 5/29; NYT 6/5)

The *Washington Post* runs (5/28) a special report alleging proof of an elaborate plan orchestrated either by **Iran-back Hizballah elements or operatives based in Iran** to assassinate **U.S. embassy officials and their families in Azerbaijan**. The U.S., however, refrains at this stage from accusing Iran or Hizballah of direct involvement. (WP 5/28)

29 MAY 2012

The **IDF** makes brief incursions into s. Gaza nr. Khan Yunis and c. Gaza nr. Wadi al-Silqa to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence; in both cases, Israeli helicopters providing cover to the troops fire on Palestinians working their lands nearby, causing no injuries but starting several brush fires (the largest of which destroys 30 d. of wheat). Later in the afternoon, **IDF** troops on the c. Gaza border fire toward Wadi al-Silqa, wounding 1 Palestinian civilian 1 km from the border fence (well outside Israel’s 300 m. no-go zone). In the West Bank, the **IDF** bulldozes at least 30 d. of Palestinian crop land nr. Hebron for the expansion of Harsina settlement, where 500 new housing units are planned. The **IDF** also conducts synchronized patrols in 2 villages nr. Jenin in the morning and patrols in Tulkarm town and r.c. late at night (firing tear gas and stun grenades at stone-throwing Palestinians who confront them, causing no reported injuries). **Jewish settlers** fr. Keddumim settlement nr. Qalqilya violently beat a Palestinian teenager passing nearby. An **Israeli court** sentences Bassim al-Tamimi, the main organizer of the weekly nonviolent demonstrations in al-Nabi Salih, to 13 mos. in jail (time already served) for instructing youths to throw stones at IDF troops during protests. The case rested on the testimony of a 15-yr.-old Palestinian who confessed to stone-throwing during interrogation in custody, without access to a lawyer. Tamimi was granted a humanitarian release

in 4/2012 after his mother suffered a stroke. **Israel's Tourism Min. and municipal officials in Jerusalem** allocate more than \$1 m. for a new settlement project in Silwan, in East Jerusalem. OCHA reports that in the previous week, **Israeli authorities** demolished 17 Palestinian structures in West Bank Area C (including 7 residences) and 11 animal pens in East Jerusalem; and ordered East Jerusalem Palestinians to demolish 1 **home** and 1 other structure or face demolition and fines by Israel. (WT 5/30; PCHR 5/31; OCHA 6/1)

Iranian officials confirm government computers are currently under attack by a sophisticated new virus called Flame, and accuse **Israel** and the **U.S.** of being behind it. (The U.S. declines to comment, whereas Israeli officials comment that “Israel is blessed with being a country rich in hi-tech . . . both in the civilian and defense sector” and that “it’s certainly reasonable that [someone who views Iran as a threat] uses all means at his disposal, including these, to harm the Iranian nuclear system.”) The new virus is a keystroke-logging program that steals data from infected computers and can be controlled remotely by whoever installed it. (NYT, WP 5/30; WT 5/31; JPI 6/8)

30 MAY 2012

Israeli naval vessels halt and seize 2 Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, detaining 4 fishermen. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in al-Fawar r.c. nr. Hebron and in 1 village nr. Jericho, and late-night house searches nr. Bethlehem, summoning 1 Palestinian for interrogation. (PCHR 5/31, 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

At a conference sponsored by Israel’s Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), **Israeli DM Ehud Barak** says Israel should consider imposing final borders on the Palestinians, becoming the senior-most official to propose unilateral actions in light of the stalled peace process. Others (unnamed) reportedly (NYT 5/31) urged against drastic unilateral steps, recommending that “unilateral steps could be phased in over many years and be designed . . . to give Israel a stronger hand in final status”—effectively what the Israel has been doing as unstated policy for decades. Speaking at the same conference, Gen. Shlomo Brom (Ret.), who heads INSS’s program on the Palestinian conflict, called the unilateral route “the only remaining course of action,” and former Israeli military intelligence chief Amos Yadlin, also an INSS staff member, told the conference that unilateralism was “the best of all evils,” urging Israel to take action in its own self-interest, “without conditioning it on the agreement of the Palestinians.” (NYT 5/31)

At the INSS conference in Tel Aviv, **Israeli DM Ehud Barak** also states that Israel and the U.S. have different assessments of the Iranian nuclear timetable, stating, “Our clock is ticking faster.” He says Israel believes that Iran is rapidly approaching a “zone of immunity”—the point at which its nuclear facilities would be so decentralized and well fortified that they would be beyond reach of a military strike. Speaking at the same forum, Israeli PM **Netanyahu** says that the only safe route is for Iran to stop all enrichment, to send all its uranium abroad, and to dismantle its nuclear facilities at Fordo, all of which must be verified by the IAEA. Meanwhile, former Mossad chief Meir Dagan argues that “if we bomb . . . we will give them the legitimacy to attain nuclear military capability.” Lt. Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi (Ret.), former IDF chief of staff, recommended that more time be given for diplomacy and sanctions to work. (WP, WT 5/31)

Washington Times runs a special report on how **Israel’s** expanding relationship with **China** is raising international concerns. The report states that Israel has recently been expanding trade relations and military ties with China, seeing it as a large, emerging market for its military

goods and an influential player who could pressure **Iran**. (WT 5/30; see QU in *JPS* 165 for details)

31 MAY 2012

Israel returns the bodies of 91 Palestinians (79 to the West Bank, 12 to Gaza) killed inside Israel, mostly while carrying out attacks on Israelis; the oldest body in Israel's possession was killed in 1975. Israel agreed to the significant concession on 5/14 as part of the deal to end the Palestinian prisoners' mass hunger strike (see QU in *JPS* 164). (NYT, WT 6/1)

The **IDF** patrols in 1 village each nr. Jenin, Ramallah, and Tulkarm in the morning (firing tear gas at stone-throwing Palestinians who confront them in 1 instance); in 2 villages nr. Ramallah, and 1 village each nr. Jenin, Jericho, Qalqilya, and Salfit in the afternoon; and in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. Yakir settlement nr. Salfit raze a plot of nearby Palestinian land. (PCHR 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

Israel's atty. gen. decides to prosecute fm. **Ha'Aretz** journalist **Uri Blau** for illegal possession of classified documents related to a 2008 investigative report he wrote (approved by Israel's military censor) revealing that senior IDF officers had authorized targeted killings of wanted Palestinians in the West Bank in violation of a High Court ruling banning assassinations of militants who could be apprehended. The decision makes Blau the 1st Israeli journalist to be charged for receiving leaked documents. In 2008, he had obtained 1,800 IDF documents (100s classified) from an IDF soldier, Anat Kam, currently serving 54 mos. for stealing the documents. (WP 6/1)

J Street says it is on track to raise \$2 m. for 60 congressional races for 2012—its largest campaign effort to date. The success is seen as evidence that hawkish pro-Israel advocates no longer have a monopoly on setting the U.S. political agenda on Israel and that J Street has successfully created an outlet for a sector of pro-Israel donors who never felt represented by the established pro-Israel lobbies. (NYT 5/31)

1 JUNE 2012

An **armed Palestinian teenager** infiltrates the Israeli border e. of Abassan village in s. Gaza before dawn, exchanging gunfire with **IDF soldiers** who also call in air strikes to target the border area; the **Palestinian gunman** and **1 IDF soldier** are killed. Later in the morning, **IDF troops** in the area fire across the border into Gaza, causing no injuries but starting a brush fire. **Unidentified Palestinians** respond by firing 2 Qassam **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. Hrs. later, **Israeli warplanes** fire 3 missiles at a Palestinian car inside Abassan village, killing **2 armed Palestinians** and injuring at least 1. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah in the morning; in Qalqilya in the afternoon; and in Jericho and al-Nabi Salih late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, and al-Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 3 Palestinians (including 1 child) are wounded by live ammunition and 3 are hit by tear gas

canisters. **Jewish settlers** fr. Adei Ad outpost nr. Ramallah uproot 75 almond trees fr. a nearby Palestinian plot. (JP, IDFS, REU 6/1; NYT 6/2; PCHR 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

2 JUNE 2012

Late at night, **Israeli warplanes and drones** carry out 11 **air strikes** on Gaza (5 in Nussayrat r.c., 3 nr. Bayt Lahiya, 2 in Dayr al-Balah, and 1 nr. Wadi al-Silqa). Four of the strikes in Nussayrat target a Palestinian home and damage 4 others nearby, lightly injuring 10 civilians (including 7 children). The other strikes, which injure no one, target a farm (killing 1,000s of animals, damaging a Bayt Lahiya municipal water network, and destroying an electricity generator), a workshop, and 2 open areas. Meanwhile, **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah in the morning; patrols in 1 village each nr. Ramallah and Tulkarm late at night; and conducts synchronized late-night arrest raids and house searches in 2 villages nr. Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. the Hebron area uproot 65 olive trees in the Palestinian village of Yatta. (PCHR 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

3 JUNE 2012

Unidentified Palestinians fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. Late at night, **Israeli warplanes** carry out 2 **air strikes** on areas s. and e. of Gaza City, targeting a dairy factory and an open area; no injuries are reported. Meanwhile, **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Ramallah, 2 villages each nr. Jericho and Salfit, and 1 nr. Qalqilya in the morning; stages synchronized patrols in 3 villages nr. Jenin in the afternoon; patrols in 1 village each nr. Jericho and Ramallah late at night; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Qalqilya, and in Salfit. (JP 6/3; PCHR 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

4 JUNE 2012

In Hebron, a **knife-wielding Palestinian** attempts to attack **IDF soldiers** posted outside the al-Ibrahimi Mosque/Cave of the Patriarchs but is shot and seriously wounded. The **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 each nr. Jenin, Jericho, and Tulkarm in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Tulkarm in the afternoon; and in Jericho, al-Nabi Salih, Tubas, and another 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 each nr. Jenin, Jericho, and Tulkarm late at night. (PCHR 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

Reuters reports that the **PA security forces (PASF)** have launched a campaign to crack down on “lawlessness and the proliferation of weapons” in Jenin that continues into mid-7/2012 at least. Responding to a wave of drive-by shootings and increased drug trafficking, the PASF makes nightly arrest raids. Among those reportedly arrested are “rogue” members of the security forces who have been exploiting their positions to organize and direct illegal activity. (REU 6/4; PCHR 7/19)

U.S. Treasury undersecy. for terrorism and financial intelligence David Cohen briefs **Israeli officials** in Israel on U.S. plans to impose additional bilateral sanctions on **Iran** if the current restrictions do not convince Iran to take positive steps on the nuclear front. (WJW 6/7)

5 JUNE 2012

Unidentified Palestinians fire 1 **mortar** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the afternoon, **Israeli warplanes** carry out 3 **air strikes** n. of Rafah in s. Gaza, targeting a poultry farm and damaging a nearby greenhouse; no injuries are reported. Late at night, an **Israeli warplane** makes an **air strike** on a group of **Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades (IQB)** mbrs. operating nr. the border n. of Bayt Lahiya, wounding 2 IQB mbrs. and damaging a nearby home. Also late at night, **Israeli naval vessels** halt and seize 3 Palestinian fishing boats off the s. Gaza coast, detaining 3 fishermen (released 6/6). In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the morning; in 2 villages each nr. Jericho and Ramallah and 1 each nr. Jenin and Tulkarm in the afternoon; and in Jericho and 1 village nr. Ramallah at night. The **IDF** also bulldozes 5 residential tents in Wadi al-Malih village in the Jordan Valley nr. Tubas (an area designated as an IDF firing zone), and informs another 28 families in the same community that they must relocate or face demolition; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Nablus and nearby ‘Ayn Bayt al-Ma’ r.c., in and around Jenin, and in Nur Shams r.c. nr. Tulkarm. Dozens of **Palestinians** demonstrate outside Israel’s Ofer military prison nr. Ramallah in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails; **IDF troops** fire live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and percussion grenades at the demonstrators, wounding 2. Meanwhile, 10s of **Palestinians** gather nr. the Qalandia r.c. nr. Ramallah to mark the 45th anniversary of Israel’s 1967 occupation; the **IDF** fires live ammunition and rubber-coated steel bullets to disperse the crowd, causing no serious injuries. **Jewish settlers** fr. the Hebron area burn 20 d. of Palestinian crop land in al-Zahiriyya village. **Jewish settlers** fr. Itamar settlement nr. Nablus beat a Palestinian shepherd grazing animals nearby; other Palestinians race to the scene, prompting 1 settler to fire in the air; **IDF troops** nearby intervene, arresting the shepherd and 3 other Palestinians. (YA 6/5; PCHR 6/7; OCHA 6/8)

6 JUNE 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in 1 village each nr. Jericho and Ramallah; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. (PCHR 6/7, 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

The **Knesset** votes down (69–22) a resolution that would have retroactively legalized unauthorized settlement outposts built on private Palestinian land. **Hundreds of right-wing settlers** gather outside the High Court in Jerusalem to protest. The decision clears the way for implementation of a High Court order to demolish Ulpana outpost by 7/1/12 and Migron outpost by 8/1/12 (see QU in *JPS* 164 for background). In 4/2012, Netanyahu had urged the government to find a solution that would legalize Ulpana, but knew this draft bill would not pass legal muster with Israel’s High Court and had urged MKs to defeat the measure. Instead, he vows to have the Ulpana buildings physically moved to neighboring Beit El settlement and to build 300 new housing units inside Beit El. At the same time, the **Israeli Housing Min.** announces plans to build another 551 new settlement housing units in various other West Bank settlements. (NYT, WT 6/7; JPI 6/15)

The **International Israel Allies Caucus Foundation** hosts members of **Congress** and some 100 **evangelical Christians** for a prayer breakfast to mark “the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967.” Nine Republican House reps. [Michele Bachmann (MN), John Fleming (LA), Trent Franks (AR), Louie Gohmert (TX), Randy Hultgren (IL), Doug Lamborn (CO), Steve Stivers (OH), Joe Walsh (IL), Allen West (FL)] attend and speak at the session, all calling for moving the U.S. emb. to Jerusalem. (WJW 6/14)

7 JUNE 2012

Israel's Jerusalem municipality approves construction of 2,500 new housing units in Gilo settlement. Also in East Jerusalem, the **IDF** demolishes 5 residential tents and 5 sheds in the Arab al-Jahalin bedouin community e. of Jerusalem. In the West Bank, the **IDF** demolishes 5 wells and water and electricity networks in Bayt Qad village nr. Jenin (marking the 1st Israeli demolitions in Area B in 2012). The **IDF** also patrols in 3 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 each nr. Jericho and Salfit in the morning; in Qalqilya and 1 nearby village, and in 1 village each nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the afternoon; and in 1 village each nr. Jenin, Qalqilya, and Ramallah late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Eliezer settlement nr. Bethlehem steal fencing surrounding a plot of nearby Palestinian crop land, leaving leaflets taking credit for the action signed by the "Green Helmets." In Gaza, **1 Palestinian** is killed and 1 is injured in a smuggling tunnel collapse on the Rafah border. (PCHR 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

A **Palestinian court** convicts **Muhammad Rashid**, the former economic adviser to late PA pres. Yasir Arafat and political ally to Abbas adversary Muhammad Dahlan, of embezzling millions of dollars in public funds during Arafat's rule. Rashid had been charged in 4/2012 by an independent Palestinian anticorruption commission created in 2010. While few if any Palestinians thought that Rashid (who has lived abroad for years and was convicted in absentia) was innocent, many saw the case against him as, in the words of Palestinian analyst Hani al-Masri (WP 6/21), "a reaction to a political dispute [with Abbas], not a continuous fight against corruption." Other critics noted (WP 6/21) that the commission had been selective about the cases it chose to investigate, and that of the more than 80 cases it had investigated, few had led to charges against senior officials. (WP 6/21)

8 JUNE 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Tulkarm during the day; and in 1 village nr. Jenin and 1 nr. Ramallah late at night. The **IDF** also halts construction of a mosque in Yatta village nr. Hebron. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, and al-Nabi Salih. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; no serious injuries are reported. (PCHR 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

The **House** votes down (185–233) a Democratic procedural motion concerning the energy appropriations bill that would have provided an additional \$1 m. to the \$2 m. already proposed for the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperation programs for FY 2013 (see QU in *JPS* 164). The vote fell along party lines, with Republicans defeating the motion, accusing Democrats of adding money that Israel had not requested to deflect attention from their last minute inclusion of funding for pork barrel projects sought by Democratic constituents. Analysts noted (Jewish Telegraphic Agency [JTA] 6/8) that this was "at least the fourth attempt this Congress by Democrats to add pro-Israel language to a bill at the last minute" in order to push through approval. (JTA 3/8)

9 JUNE 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the c. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jericho in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jenin in the afternoon; and in ‘Ayn al-Sultan r.c. nr. Jericho and 1 village nr. Ramallah late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron and Tulkarm. **Palestinian, Israeli, and international activists** stage a “march of return” from Nuba village nr. Nablus to the nearby Latroun villages emptied by Jewish forces in 1948; afterward, they march toward the separation wall, where **IDF soldiers** fire rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and percussion grenades to disperse them, causing a small brush fire but no reported injuries. (PCHR 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

10 JUNE 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the c. and s. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Kafr Qaddum and 1 village each nr. Salfit and Tulkarm in the morning; in 1 village nr. Jenin in the afternoon; and in Tulkarm and 1 village each nr. Jenin and Qalqilya late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron and Qalqilya. (PCHR 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

11 JUNE 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the Gaza coast 3 times during the day, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts a rare daytime arrest raid into Tulkarm and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem and nr. Nablus. Dozens of **Palestinians** demonstrate outside Israel’s Ofer prison nr. Ramallah in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners; the **IDF** fires rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and percussion grenades to disperse them, causing no reported injuries. **Jewish settlers** fr. Ma’on settlement nr. Hebron uproot 30 olive trees on nearby Palestinian land. **Jewish settlers** fr. Karne Tzur nr. Hebron attack a Palestinian farmer working his field nearby; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene until other Palestinians come to the farmer’s aid, firing tear gas and percussion grenades to disperse the Palestinians and arresting 1. (PCHR 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

12 JUNE 2012

Israel’s High Court approves a petition by a group of **Jewish settlers** calling for the expedited demolition of 52 Palestinian homes and facilities (including a clinic and kindergarten) in Susia village nr. Hebron. Though the Israeli group **Rabbis for Human Rights** immediately files an appeal on the Susia residents’ behalf, the **IDF** serves them with the demolition orders, saying it will raze the structures within 3 days. The **IDF** makes a day-long incursion into c. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence, razing 43 d. of Palestinian crops and demolishing several irrigation networks. The **IDF** also briefly enters s. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence nr. al-Qarara. Hrs. after troops pull out, **Israeli helicopters** open fire on agricultural areas nr. al-Qarara, causing no reported damage or injuries. **Israeli naval vessels** fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Balata r.c. nr. Nablus. In East Jerusalem, the **IDF** raids a Palestinian farm in Jabal Mukabir, orders the owner to evacuate his sheep, then demolishes several animal pens and sheds,

hands the owner a demolition bill of \$12,500, and orders him to remove the debris. (PCHR 6/14; OCHA 6/15)

13 JUNE 2012

Israeli troops on the n. Gaza border fire warning shots at Palestinians scavenging for construction materials in the demolished Erez industrial zone, forcing them to flee. A **Palestinian** is killed and another is injured when they are crushed by construction materials being moved through a smuggling tunnel on the Rafah border. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in Jericho. (PCHR 6/14, 6/21; OCHA 6/22)

Israel's state comptroller Micah Lindenstrauss issues a long-awaited report faulting PM Netanyahu for "poor decision-making" in the lead-up to the 2010 Gaza aid flotilla incident that left 9 Turkish activists dead aboard the *Mavi Marmara*, concluding that Netanyahu did not listen to IDF warnings that the boarding of the flotilla could lead to violence and had not consulted adequately. (WP 6/14)

U.S. pres. **Obama** presents **Israeli pres. Shimon Peres** with the Congressional Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the U.S. During their one-on-one meeting at the White House, Peres gives Obama a petition signed by 75,000 Israelis seeking the release of Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard. (NYT, WP, WT 6/14; WP 6/17; JPI 6/22)

Casino magnate and major pro-Israel political donor Sheldon Adelson gives \$10 m. to a pro-Romney political action committee (PAC). This election marks the first time that unlimited corporate donations have been allowed under super PACs, which were deemed legal by a 2010 U.S. Supreme Court ruling. (WP 6/14)

14 JUNE 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. **IDF** troops make a brief incursion into Khuza village in s. Gaza, firing on residential areas (causing no injuries), demolishing a house under construction, and leveling 5 d. of agricultural land. Late at night, **IDF** troops on the s. Gaza border fire several **artillery** shells at armed Palestinians operating nr. the border e. of Khan Yunis, wounding 2. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized patrols in 4 villages nr. Jenin in the morning. Other **IDF** patrols are conducted in Tulkarm, 2 villages nr. Qalqilya, and 1 nr. Ramallah in the morning; in 1 village nr. Tulkarm in the afternoon; and in 1 village nr. Qalqilya in the evening. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Ramallah; 1 of the Palestinians arrested was released during the 2011 prisoner swap that freed captured IDF soldier Gilad Shalit. (PCHR 6/21; OCHA 6/22)

On the 5th anniversary of Israel's sealing of Gaza's borders after Hamas's 2007 takeover, **50 international aid groups and UN agencies** (including UNICEF and the WHO) sign a petition urging **Israel** to lift the siege of Gaza. The petition reads in full: "For over five years in Gaza, more than 1.6 million people have been under blockade in violation of international law. More than half of these people are children. We the undersigned say with one voice: end the blockade now." (OCHA 6/14; MNA, NYT 6/15)

15 JUNE 2012

Unidentified assailants fire 2 **Grad rockets** from the **Egyptian Sinai** into Israel, striking n. of Elat, causing no damage or injuries. No group takes responsibility. (HA 6/16, 6/17)

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 each nr. Jenin and Qalqilya in the morning; in Qalqilya and Tulkarm in the afternoon (stopping to harass PA security officers manning a checkpoint in Qalqilya); and in al-Nabi Salih and 1 village nr. Jenin late at night. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 1 Palestinian cameraman is moderately wounded by a rubber-coated steel bullet in al-Nabi Salih, and 3 Palestinians are hit by tear gas canisters in Kafr Qaddum. (PCHR 6/21; OCHA 6/22)

Nr. Tripoli, **Lebanon**, Palestinian refugees surround and throw stones at Lebanese soldiers who attempt to block a Palestinian from bringing a motorcycle into Nahr al-Barid r.c. The soldiers open fire on the crowd, killing **1 Palestinian** and wounding another. (WP 6/16)

16 JUNE 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the s. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts 2 sets of synchronized patrols in 2 villages each nr. Jenin and Ramallah in the morning; patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and 1 nr. Ramallah in the evening, and in Hebron late at night. (PCHR 6/21; OCHA 6/22)

17 JUNE 2012

IDF troops under helicopter escort make a predawn incursion into Wadi al-Silqa in c. Gaza to level Palestinian land to clear lines of sight. During the 12-hr. operation, Israeli helicopters repeatedly fire on surrounding areas to keep Palestinians away, wounding 1 Palestinian and starting a brush fire that destroys 15 d. of wheat. Late at night, **unidentified Palestinians** fire at least 1 **Qassam rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel. **Israeli helicopters** respond by firing 2 missiles at a Palestinian workshop in Rafah, injuring 5 Palestinian civilians (1 seriously) and damaging 7 nearby houses. **IDF troops** stationed on the Israeli side of the Erez crossing fire on open areas along the border inside Gaza, causing no reported injuries. Meanwhile, **Israeli naval vessels** fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast 3 separate times and off the s. Gaza coast once, forcing the boats to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts 2 sets of synchronized morning patrols in 3 villages nr. Jenin and 3 nr. Ramallah. Other **IDF** patrols are conducted in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the morning; in Tulkarm and 2 villages nr. Qalqilya in the evening; and in Jenin and 1 village each nr. Jericho and Tulkarm late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Tulkarm and nr. Tubas. A **Jewish settler** driving nr. Hebron fatally shoots **2 Palestinians** standing at an intersection, saying he felt threatened. **Jewish settlers** fr. Keddumim settlement nr. Qalqilya set fire to Palestinian olive and almond trees on a nearby plot of Palestinian land. A **Palestinian** demolishes his own **home** and farm in Bayt Iksa village just n. of Jerusalem after being given orders to tear down the structures or face a fine and fee for having the IDF do the job. (IDFS 6/18; PCHR 6/21; OCHA 6/22)

18 JUNE 2012

Three unidentified assailants cross into **Israel** from **Egypt** and plant a roadside bomb that they detonate when 2 vehicles pass carrying laborers who are working to build Israel's new border fence; they then open fire on the vehicles with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades; **1 Israeli Palestinian** worker is killed. **Israeli border police** respond to the scene and exchanges fire with the infiltrators, leaving **2 assailants** dead and 4 policemen injured. The 3d assailant escapes back into Egypt; Israeli units do not pursue him. (NYT, WP 6/19; NYT 6/20; JPI 6/29)

In actions Israel says are unrelated to the attack from Egypt, the **IDF** carries out **2 air strikes** on n. Gaza: 1 targets a Palestinian sniper team that fired across the Gaza border into Israel (causing no damage or injuries), killing **2 Islamic Jihad mbrs.**; the other targets Palestinians who attempted but failed to fire a rocket into Israel, killing **1 IQB mbr.** and **1 al-Aqsa Guards Group mbr.** Late at night, **IDF troops** on the c. Gaza border fatally shoot **2 Palestinians** (1 a teenager) attempting to sneak into Israel to find work. Meanwhile, **IDF troops** make a brief incursion into n. Gaza nr. Bayt Hanun to level land and clear lines of sight. **Israeli naval vessels** fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. and c. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jericho in the morning; and in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the evening. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron and Tulkarm, and nr. Jenin. (JP 6/18; NYT, WP 6/19; NYT 6/20; PCHR 6/21; OCHA 6/22; JPI 6/29)

The **Israel Project**, a Washington-based pro-Israel group, hosts a debate between **foreign policy advisers to Pres. Obama and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney**, covering numerous issues including Iran, Syria, military aid, and Obama's commitment to Israel. Romney advisers accuse Obama of failing to support Israel and of being more concerned with preventing Israel from attacking Iran than halting Iran's nuclear program. Obama adviser Robert Wexler calls Obama's "degree of military and strategic support [to Israel] unparalleled," emphasizing that the Obama admin. worked strenuously behind the scenes to ensure there has not been a UN vote on Palestinian statehood since the Palestinians launched their UN statehood bid in 9/2011. (WJW 6/21)

In **Lebanon**, clashes erupt at the funeral for a Palestinian refugee slain by Lebanese troops outside Nahr al-Barid r.c. on 6/15, leaving **1 Palestinian dead** and 7 Palestinians and 3 Lebanese soldiers injured. The clashes spread to 'Ayn al-Hilwa r.c. in Sidon, where at least **1 Palestinian** is killed and 3 Palestinians and 3 Lebanese soldiers are injured. Demonstrations (but no clashes or injuries) are reported in Biddawi r.c. nr. Tripoli and Shatila r.c. in Beirut. (JAZ 6/18)

19 JUNE 2012

Israeli pres. Shimon Peres says he has met with **Palestinian pres. Mahmud Abbas** and other Palestinian officials several times in recent months to discuss resuming peace talks. The Palestinians do not comment. (WT 6/20)

A previously unknown group calling itself the **Mujahiddin Shura Council of Jerusalem** (which claims ties to al-Qa'ida) releases a video claiming responsibility for the 6/18 cross-border attack on **Israel** from **Egypt**. The video shows the 2 assailants killed by the IDF, identifying them as an Egyptian and a Saudi. (WP 6/20; NYT 6/21)

Responding to recent Israeli air strikes and cross-border shootings in Gaza that killed 6 Palestinians, **Hamas's IQB** for the 1st time in more than a year fires a barrage of at least 45 **rockets** (including at least 10 Grads) fr. Gaza into Israel; 1 rocket damages an Israeli police barracks and injures 2 police officers, but the others land in open areas. The IQB says it is aiming predominantly at open areas to minimize the severity of its rocket fire and to “send a message” to Israel. Expecting retaliation, Hamas security officials vacate their bases. **Israel** initially issues a stern warning and carries out 1 **air strike** on a Palestinian rocket-launching team nr. Dayr al-Balah, wounding 1 armed Palestinian. Late at night, however, **Israeli warplanes and drones** carry out 7 **air strikes** on Hamas targets across Gaza, seriously wounding 1 IQB mbr. The targets include a garage and a group of armed Palestinians in Gaza City, a vacant house in al-Bureij r.c., and 2 IQB training camps nr. Bayt Lahiya and Rafah. (HA 6/19; NYT, YA 6/20; PCHR 6/21; OCHA 6/22)

In the West Bank, **Jewish settlers** set fire to a mosque in the village of Jaba nr. Bethlehem and spray graffiti on its walls warning the Israeli government against evacuating the unauthorized settlement outpost of Ulpana (5 buildings, 30 families). This is the 12th mosque vandalized by Jewish settlers since 1/2011. **Jewish settlers** also vandalize the car of the settler leader negotiating the terms of Ulpana's evacuation with the Israeli government. OCHA reports that in the previous week, the **IDF** carried out several significant demolitions in Israeli-controlled Area C: 14 residential structures and 11 animal pens in the al-Hirma bedouin community near Bethlehem (64 displaced, including 37 children); 6 seasonal residential structures in the Jordan Valley (20 displaced); 1 residential structure nr. Qalqilya; and 2 animal pens nr. East Jerusalem. (NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 6/20; OCHA 6/22)

The **P5+1** and **Iran** close 2 days of “intense and tough” nuclear talks in Moscow. Both sides say that the talks were so detailed and so heated that they need a break to digest all that has been discussed and to confer with their governments. Iran reportedly offers to halt enrichment of uranium to 20% purity if the international community acknowledges Iran's right to enrich uranium and immediately rolls back sanctions. The P5+1 refuses to delay or waive sanctions until Iran meets specific benchmarks of compliance. **Ashton** announces that the sides plan to send technical experts to Istanbul on 7/3 “to make sure all clearly understood the nature of both sides' proposals” and to gauge the prospects for narrowing gaps and holding more negotiations. Meanwhile, the next round of EU and U.S. sanctions are scheduled to go into effect as scheduled on 7/1. (NYT 6/19; NYT, WP 6/20; NYT 7/2; WT 7/4; NYT 7/5)

Unidentified U.S. and Western officials confirm to the *Washington Post* (6/20) that the U.S. and Israel jointly developed the Flame virus to map and monitor Iran's computer networks in preparation for a major cyberwarfare campaign. They said, however, that Israel deployed the virus unilaterally, without consulting the U.S., leading to its premature detection by Iran and to development of critical Iranian countermeasures. U.S. intelligence officials had hoped that Flame would reside undetected on Iran's networks for years sending back valuable information. Computer experts said (WP 6/20) that Flame contained “DNA-like evidence” linking it to the Stuxnet virus (see QU in *JPS* 158). This would make the Stuxnet and Flame attacks the first recorded sustained cyber-sabotage campaign against a state. (WP 6/20)

Lebanon releases 9 Islamists (7 Lebanese, 1 Palestinian, 1 Saudi) tied to **Fatah al-Islam** who were among the approximate 180 people detained during the 2007 clashes between Fatah al-Islam and the Lebanese army in Nahr al-Barid r.c. in n. Lebanon (see Quarterly Update [QU] in *JPS* 145–46). (WT 6/20)

20 JUNE 2012

Kadima head Shaul Mofaz arrives in Washington for his 1st official visit as Israel's vice PM in charge of overseeing peace process issues. He meets with **U.S. secy. of state Hillary Clinton** and U.S. security officials and urges the U.S. to support reviving peace talks with the Palestinians, stating that the greatest threat to Israel is not Iran but a Palestinian demographic majority. He presents his own peace plan (1st unveiled in 2009 and not endorsed by Netanyahu), which calls for the creation of an interim Palestinian state with temporary borders on 60% of the West Bank, land swaps making up for the other 40%, and Israel's permanent control over most settlement areas. (WP 6/20)

Israeli drones and warplanes carry out another 5 **air strikes** across Gaza, leaving at least **2 armed Palestinians and 1 Palestinian child** dead and 10 Palestinians (2 armed, 8 civilian) wounded. The strikes include (1) an air strike on Gaza City targeting 2 members of the Salafist **Tawhid and Jihad (TAJ)** group whom Israel now alleges were involved in the 6/18 attack on Israel from the Sinai (**1 TAJ member** is killed, 1 is wounded; a family picnicking nearby is also hit, leaving a **13-yr.-old Palestinian boy** dead, and 4 mbrs. of his family, including 3 children, seriously injured); (2) 2 missiles fired at a rocket-launching team in Rafah (**1 armed Palestinian killed**, 1 wounded); (3) air strikes on 2 IQB training camps in Jabaliya r.c. and Nussayrat r.c. (injuring 5 bystanders in nearby homes). Meanwhile, **Palestinians** fire more rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, damaging a house but causing no injuries. Since 6/17, Israel has carried out at least 17 air strikes on Gaza, and Palestinians have fired more than 100 rockets and mortars. By late evening, **Hamas officials in Gaza** say that Gaza's factions have agreed to an **Egyptian-brokered** cease-fire with Israel to end 3 days of cross-border violence. In addition, **Israeli naval vessels** fire on and detain 3 Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza shore, questioning 6 fishermen (all released on 6/21). In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Salfit, and nr. Hebron and Jenin; conducts late-night patrols in Jericho. (YA 6/20; NYT, PCHR, WP 6/21; PCHR 6/28; OCHA 6/29)

Overnight, the **YESHA settlers' council** reaches a deal with the **Israeli government** to peacefully evacuate Ulpana outpost in exchange for a promises that 300 new housing units will be built in neighboring Beit El settlement and that the deal would not be used as a precedent for deciding the fate of other unauthorized settlement outposts. Meanwhile, some 1,000 Israeli police officers undergo special training to prevent violence and injuries during the Ulpana evacuation. (NYT 6/20)

Several U.S. representatives from both parties testifying before the House Armed Services Comm. recommend that the Pentagon begin preparing for military action against **Iran**, including expediting deployment of bunker-busting munitions that could target Iran's underground facilities. (WP 6/21)

21 JUNE 2012

On the 2d day of his trip to Washington, Israeli vice PM **Mofaz** meets with **U.S. national security adviser (NSA) Thomas Donilon**. Pres. **Obama** joins the meeting unexpectedly and talks with Mofaz for 35 mins. about his recent calls to resume negotiations. (WJW 6/28)

Violence on the Gaza border is down significantly, with the 6/20 cease-fire generally seeming to hold. The **IDF** reports 7 Qassam **rockets** fired into Israel during the day, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, **Ulpana settlers** agree to the deal brokered by YESHA on

6/20 to evacuate their outpost voluntarily. The **IDF** patrols in 4 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jericho in the morning; and in Tulkarm, 1 nearby village, 2 villages nr. Ramallah, and 1 nr. Qalqilya late at night. (HA 6/21; PCHR 6/28; OCHA 6/29)

22 JUNE 2012

By late afternoon, **cross-border incidents in Gaza resume**, with Palestinians firing some 26 **rockets and mortars** and Israeli warplanes and drones carrying out at least 5 **air strikes**. One Palestinian rocket hits a factory in Sderot, injuring 1 Israeli civilian; the Israeli strikes kill at least 2 **Palestinians** (both armed) and injure at least 23 (2 militants, 6 PASF officers, and 15 civilians, including 1 woman and 1 child). Israel's targets included a rocket-launching team nr. al-Bureij r.c. (1 killed); a group of armed Palestinians nr. Jabaliya (1 killed, 2 wounded); 2 IQB training camps in n. and c. Gaza (11 bystanders injured); and a PASF compound in the center of Gaza City (6 PASF officers and 4 bystanders injured). Israel now estimates that Palestinians have fired more than 130 rockets and mortars into Israel since 6/18. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in al-Nabi Salih in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Jericho and 1 each nr. Jenin and Ramallah in the afternoon; and in Jericho, neighboring 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c., 1 nearby village, and 1 village each nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah late at night. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 1 Palestinian is hit by a tear gas canister in Bayt Umar and moderately injured. (YA 6/22; HA, NYT, WP 6/23; PCHR 6/28; OCHA 6/29)

23 JUNE 2012

Cross-border violence continues in Gaza. During the day, **Palestinians** fire some 20 **rockets** into Israel, causing damage in 1 instance but no injuries. **Israel warplanes and drones** carry out at least 3 **air strikes** on groups of armed Palestinians in Gaza City and n. Gaza, killing 2 **Palestinians** (1 civilian, 1 Popular Resistance Comm. [PRCs] mbr.) and wounding 9 (2 armed and 7 civilian, including 1 woman). Late in the evening, **Hamas authorities in Gaza** announce that another cease-fire with Israel has been brokered by Egypt, effective immediately. After the announcement, **Palestinians** fire at least 5 more **rockets** (no damage or injuries), but Israel does not respond. In total across 6/17–23, 11 Palestinians (7 armed; 4 civilians, including 2 children) were killed, and 49 Palestinians (7 armed; 6 PASF; and 36 civilians, including 2 women and 1 child) and 3 Israelis (2 police, 1 civilian) were injured. Palestinians fired around 155 rockets (including at least 10 Grads) and mortars; Israel carried out at least 25 air strikes. In addition, OCHA reports that during the period, several Palestinian rockets fired toward Israel fell short or exploded prematurely, killing 2 **Palestinian children** (a baby and a 5-yr.-old) and injuring 19 Palestinians (including 4 children ages 3–12). Furthermore, 2 **armed Palestinians** were killed and 26 were injured when a building that had been hit by the IDF collapsed while they were inspecting the damage. Meanwhile, in the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah in the morning; 1 village each nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the afternoon; and Ni'lin and 1 village nr. Salfit late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Salfit. **Palestinian, Israeli, and international activists** take part in a nonviolent demonstration

against Israeli land confiscations and settlement expansion in Bayt Umar nr. Hebron; the **IDF** fires tear gas and percussion grenades to disperse them, causing no injuries; 3 Palestinians are arrested. **Jewish settlers** seize several water wells on Palestinian farmland nr. al-Khadir village nr. Bethlehem. (HA 6/23; WP 6/24; PCHR 6/28; OCHA 6/29; see also OCHA 6/22)

24 JUNE 2012

No cross-border violence is reported in Gaza. The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya and 1 nr. Ramallah in the morning; and in al-Nabi Salih and 1 other village nr. Ramallah late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and nr. Qalqilya. **Jewish settlers** tear down a fence surrounding a plot of Palestinian agricultural land nr. al-Khadir village nr. Bethlehem. (PCHR 6/28; OCHA 6/29)

25 JUNE 2012

Russian pres. Vladimir Putin makes a 1-day visit to **Israel** for the unveiling of a monument dedicated to Russian soldiers. In addition, he meets with Israeli PM **Netanyahu**, DM **Barak**, and other senior officials who urge Russia to pressure Iran to halt its nuclear program, Syria to halt violence against the opposition, and the Palestinians to resume negotiations. Putin is noncommittal. (NYT, WP 6/26; JPI 7/6)

Unidentified Palestinians fire 2 mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Israeli naval vessels** fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah in the morning; and in Qalqilya, 1 nearby village, and 1 village nr. Ramallah late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron and nr. Salfit. (TOI 6/25; PCHR 6/28)

26 JUNE 2012

Russian pres. **Putin** meets with PA pres. **Abbas** in Ramallah and tours holy sites in Bethlehem. Putin calls the Palestinian conditions on resuming negotiations with Israel “responsible” and reiterates that Russia would recognize a Palestinian state. (WT 6/27)

Jewish settlers begin evacuating Ulpana outpost, moving into new mobile homes placed on an Israeli border police base next to neighboring Beit El settlement. Meanwhile, **Israel’s Jerusalem planning comm.** approves construction of 180 new housing units for Armona Hanatsiv settlement on 67 d. of confiscated Palestinian land in Sur Bahir. (NYT, WP 6/27)

Unidentified Palestinians fire 4 Grad rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing light damage in 1 instance but no injuries; 2 of the rockets are intercepted by Israel’s Iron Dome antimissile system. **Israeli naval vessels** fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the c. Gaza coast forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron, and nr. Bethlehem and Jenin. The **IDF** also makes a late-night raid into Salfit, searching the offices of **Hamas-affiliated Palestinian Council (PC) mbrs. Omar ‘Abd al-Raziq and Nasser ‘Abd al-Jawwad** as well as a nearby house. OCHA reports that in the previous week, the **IDF** demolished another 3 residential structures, 9 animal pens, and 1 portable kitchen in Wadi al-Malih village in the Jordan Valley nr. Tubas (an area designated as

an IDF firing zone), where several structures were demolished on 6/5/12. (JP 6/26; PCHR 6/28; OCHA 6/29)

As civil war escalates in **Syria**, **Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) col. Ahmad Salih Hassan** is shot dead near Damascus. The PLA is technically a wing of the PLO but is incorporated into the Syrian army. Government sources blame the Free Syrian Army (FSA) for Hassan's killing, whereas opposition groups claim he was killed by government forces for refusing orders to target the FSA. Hassan is the 6th PLA officer to be killed since 1/2012.

A new charity funded by **3 Russian Jewish billionaires** and comanaged with the **Israeli government** plans to offer a **\$1-m. "Genesis Prize"** for excellence in any field. The prize is intended to "honor those who attribute their success to Jewish values" and to "recognize the role of Jewish identity in encouraging universal achievements." (NYT 6/27)

An Iranian detained in **Kenya** ca. 6/20 on charges of plotting an attack on Israelis there says that he was interrogated by **Israeli agents**. Israel's amb. to Kenya refuses to comment other than to say the matter is an internal Kenyan issue. (WT 6/28)

27 JUNE 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron and late-night patrols in 1 village nr. Jericho. A **settler security guard** at Ma'ale Adumim settlement in Hebron shoots and seriously wounds a Palestinian who allegedly attempted to take his gun. An **Israeli court** convicts **senior Hamas official Ibrahim Hamed** as a principle planner of multiple Palestinian suicide attacks that killed 46 people and wounded more than 400 during the al-Aqsa intifada that began in 9/2000. (NYT, PCHR 6/28; PCHR 7/5; OCHA 7/13)

28 JUNE 2012

The **PA** announces that pres. **Abbas** will receive new Israeli vice PM **Mofaz** on 7/1 in Ramallah to discuss relaunching peace talks. Mofaz's office says discussions about a meeting are underway but does not confirm that a date has been set. (WP 6/29)

Jewish settlers complete the evacuation of Ulpana outpost. The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Tulkarm in the morning; and in 1 village each nr. Jenin, Jericho, Qalqilya, and Ramallah late at night. (NYT 6/29; PCHR 7/5; JPI 7/6; OCHA 7/13)

Hamas reports that **senior IQB official Kamal Ghanaja** (an aide to assassinated IQB commander Mahmud al-Mabhuh; see QU in *JPS* 155) has been killed in Damascus. His body, bound and tortured, was found in his burned Damascus home. While Hamas accuses Israel of assassination, **Israel** says it believes the Syrian regime, angry over Hamas's refusal to support Assad, carried out the murder. Syrian opposition groups suspect pro-government militias. (WP 6/29)

Washington Jewish Week reports that 60 rabbis representing the Washington-based **Rabbinic Cabinet of the Jewish Federation of North America (JFNA)** recently made a lobbying trip to New York to meet with the **UN representatives of 12 countries** (mostly Eastern European) to press the UN to reverse its "poor and unjust treatment of Israel," to block Palestinian statehood efforts, and to urge the dismantling of UN committees that focus exclusively on Palestinian issues (e.g., the Division for Palestinian Rights, the Comm. on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Special Comm. to Investigate Israeli Human Rights Practices Affecting the Palestinian People). The group was

advised by fm. U.S. ambs. to the UN Richard Shifter and Jeanne Kirkpatrick. The JFNA says it requested meetings with 14 countries, but 2 (unnamed) declined. (WJW 6/28)

29 JUNE 2012

Debate over moving toward a universal draft threatens to split **Netanyahu's** newly expanded coalition. Ultra-Orthodox groups, angry over calls to remove their exemption from service based on religious reasons, raise the issue of service waivers for Palestinian citizens of Israel. The 2002 Tal Law exempting ultra-Orthodox Jews engaged in religious studies was invalidated by the High Court in 2/2012 and is set to expire at the end of 7/2012. (NYT 6/30)

Israel's Housing Min. publishes tenders for the construction of 171 housing units in Gilo and Pisgat Ze'ev settlements in East Jerusalem. **IDF troops** on the Gaza border e. of Bureij r.c. catch and arrest 3 Palestinians (including 2 teenagers) attempting to sneak into Israel to find work. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages each nr. Ramallah and Salfit in the morning; and in 2 villages nr. Tulkarm and 1 each nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah late at night. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 5 Palestinians are lightly injured by tear gas canisters (4 in Kafr Qaddum, including a child; 1 in Bil'in). (PCHR 7/5; OCHA 7/13)

UNESCO's World Heritage Comm. approves (13–6) a Palestinian request to place Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem on its list of world heritage sites at risk because of its urgent need for repairs. The U.S. strongly opposed the request, stating the church was not imperiled. Israel denounces the vote, saying, "UNESCO is motivated by political and not cultural considerations." (WP 6/30)

30 JUNE 2012

The **Palestinians** postpone indefinitely the **Abbas-Mofaz mtg.** announced on 6/28 and set for 7/1. Though no official reason is given, insiders say (WP 7/1) that Abbas came under strong pressure from other Palestinians not to meet. (WP 7/1)

The **IDF** patrols in 1 village each nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah in the morning; and in 2 villages nr. Jericho and 1 each nr. Bethlehem, Jenin, Qalqilya, and Tulkarm late at night. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Ramallah. (PCHR 7/5; OCHA 7/13)

1 JULY 2012

Israel's Jerusalem municipal authorities demolish 4 Palestinian shops nr. Damascus Gate in the Old City; the shops were the target of an arson attack the previous week, but had already been slated for demolition in 2/2010 as part of a municipal infrastructure development project. Late at night, **Israeli warplanes** make 2 **air strikes** on an IQB training site nr. Gaza City, causing no injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized patrols in 2 villages nr. Tulkarm in the morning; conducts other daytime patrols in 1 village each nr. Tulkarm and Ramallah; and conducts late-night patrols in 'Ayn Bayt al-Ma' r.c. and 2 villages nr. Jenin and

Ramallah. The IDF also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Qalqilya and nr. Hebron (including in Bayt Umar). (PCHR 7/5; OCHA 7/13)

2 JULY 2012

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney announces plans for a 2-day visit to **Israel** before he formally accepts the Republican nomination. He plans to meet with Israeli PM Netanyahu, PA PM Salam Fayyad, U.S. amb. to Israel Daniel Shapiro, and leaders of Israel's Labor party. He has visited Israel 3 times previously, most recently in 1/2011. (NYT, WP 7/3)

An **Israeli drone** makes a predawn **air strike** on a Palestinian rocket-firing team nr. Dayr al-Balah, missing them and causing no injuries, but damaging 2 homes. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Qalqilya during the day; raids and searches a Palestinian home nr. Jenin in the afternoon; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Tulkarm, and nr. Bethlehem and Qalqilya. (PCHR 7/5; OCHA 7/13)

Hamis authorities suspend the **CEC**'s work a day before voter registration is scheduled to open across Gaza, accusing **Fatah** authorities of having intimidated Hamas supporters in the West Bank to keep them from registering there. Fatah spokesman Fayiz Abu Aita calls the Hamas action a "suspension of the reconciliation process." (NYT 7/3)

In Israel, public debate intensifies regarding a 2/2012 High Court decision to order the 2002 Tal Law, exempting ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students from military service, to expire on 7/31 and to move toward a universal draft. Fearing a coalition split over the issue, Israeli PM **Netanyahu** disbands a committee he had charged with forming the new policy on national military service. Instead, he orders the leaders of the parties in his coalition to draft the policy proposal, stating that if no agreement can be reached by 7/31, he will instruct the IDF to "draft according to its needs" but take "into consideration the various publics so as to prevent a rift in the nation." Kadima head **Mofaz**, who joined the coalition based on a pledge by Netanyahu to move toward a universal draft, calls the move a "crass" violation of their coalition agreement. (NYT 7/3; WT 7/4; WP 7/5)

3 JULY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Jenin in the morning; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in 2 villages nr. Jenin. (PCHR 7/5; OCHA 7/13)

In a television interview in Beirut, **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command (PFLP-GC)** leader **Ahmad Jibril** states that his faction, along with Hizballah and Iran, would fight to defend **Syrian pres. Bashar al-Asad** if foreign forces intervene in Syria. Jibril claims to have discussed the matter with **Hizballah leader Hasan Nasrallah**, but Hizballah does not comment. (WT 7/4)

Al-Jazeera satellite TV airs a special investigative report in which it claims to have uncovered new evidence that **Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat** did not die of natural causes in 11/2004 but was assassinated. The station funded scientific tests of Arafat's clothing (kept by his widow, Suha Arafat) by a Swiss forensic institute that found unusually high traces of the radioactive substance polonium-21. **Suha Arafat** immediately calls for Arafat's body to be exhumed and tested. The **PA** says only that it would not "stand in the way of an exhumation." (JAZ 7/3; NYT, WP 7/5)

Iran and the **P5+1** end 2 days of talks in Istanbul. Though the sides do not comment on progress, they say that deputies to Ashton and Jalili will soon meet to discuss how to reduce gaps in their positions and move negotiations forward. The meeting is later set for 7/24 in Turkey. (NYT 7/5, 7/10)

4 JULY 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. (PCHR 7/5, 7/12; OCHA 7/13)

5 JULY 2012

IDF troops on the n. Gaza border nr. Bayt Hanun fire warning shots at Palestinians scavenging for recyclable goods in the former settlement sites, wounding 1 Palestinian. **Unidentified Palestinians** fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. OCHA reports that over the past 3 days, Israel has allowed Gaza authorities to import 20,000 tons of construction aggregates that have been stored at the Sufa crossing since it was closed in 10/2007. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Jenin and Jericho in the afternoon; and in Jericho, 1 nearby village, and 2 villages nr. Ramallah late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Taffuh settlement nr. Nablus cut down at least 120 olive trees in the nearby Palestinian village of Yatma. **Jewish settlers** also seize 5 d. of Palestinian agricultural land nr. al-Khadir village nr. Bethlehem and install a mobile home. (TOI 6/5; PCHR 7/12; OCHA 7/13)

Ha'Aretz journalist **Uri Blau**, who used leaked classified government documents for several reports he published, confesses to reduced charges of possessing classified information without authorization but "with no intention to harm national security" in exchange for 4 mos. community service. (WP 7/6) (see 5/31/12)

6 JULY 2012

For the 2d day in a row, **unidentified Palestinians** fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Jericho, nearby 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c. and Fasayil village, and 3 villages nr. Ramallah in the morning; and in Jenin in the afternoon. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Tulkarm. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters. A Palestinian in Bil'in is moderately injured by a rubber-coated steel bullet; 3 Palestinians (including a child) are hit by tear gas canisters in Kafr Qaddum; and 3 internationals and 1 Palestinian are arrested. In addition, tear gas canisters and percussion grenades spark a brush fire in Kafr Qaddum, destroying 20 Palestinian olive trees. (TOI 6/6; PCHR 7/12; OCHA 7/13)

7 JULY 2012

IDF troops open fire across the s. Gaza border into residential and agricultural areas of Khan Yunis in the morning, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm, 3 villages nr. Ramallah, and 1 village nr. Jericho in the morning; in Tulkarm and 1 village nr. Jericho in the afternoon; and in 2 villages nr. Jericho late at night. (PCHR 7/12; OCHA 7/13)

Acting on a tip from **Israeli intelligence**, police in **Cyprus** arrest a suspected **Hizballah** operative (a dual Lebanese-Swedish citizen) for allegedly plotting an attack on Israeli tourists. (JTA 7/15; NYT 7/19; JPI 7/27)

8 JULY 2012

IDF troops on the c. Gaza border capture and arrest 2 Palestinians (including 1 teenager) attempting to sneak into Israel to find work. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Jericho, neighboring 'Ayn al-Sultan r.c., and 2 villages each nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah in the morning; in Ramallah, 2 nearby villages, and 1 village nr. Qalqilya in the afternoon; and in Jericho late at night. The **IDF** also conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Qalqilya in the afternoon; and nr. Bethlehem, Jenin, and Ramallah late at night. (PCHR 7/12; OCHA 7/13)

Hamas authorities in Gaza demolish 200 residential structures (180 belonging to 1 clan) in the Abu Amrah area of Gaza City, saying they were built without permission on "state land." Some families are offered modest compensation. (OCHA 8/3)

9 JULY 2012

An **Israeli government-appointed commission headed by former Israeli supreme court justice Ephraim Levy** issues a nonbinding legal judgment that Israel's presence in the West Bank is not occupation and that the government should grant retroactive approval to **unauthorized settlement outposts**. The commission states that unauthorized outposts were established with the knowledge and encouragement of senior government officials that amounted to "implied agreement" by the government. (NYT 7/10) (see Doc. C1 in *JPS* 165)

During the day, **unidentified Palestinians** fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the evening, **Palestinian gunmen** inside Gaza fire into Israel, hitting a parked civilian vehicle, but causing no injuries. Late at night, **Israeli warplanes and helicopters** carry out 3 **air strikes** on Khan Yunis and Rafah in s. Gaza, causing no reported casualties. The targets include a training site used by the al-Ansar Brigades (military wing of a small faction called al-Ahrar Movement, which was formed shortly after Hamas's 2007 takeover of Gaza by disaffected Fatah members who aligned themselves with Hamas), and 2 open areas used by rocket-launching teams. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah in the morning; in Tulkarm in the afternoon; and in Qalqilya, 1 nearby village, and 1 village nr. Jenin late at night. The **IDF** also bulldozes a plot of Palestinian agricultural land outside Qalqilya and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bayt Umar. **Jewish settlers** stone Palestinian cars driving nr. Hebron. **Jewish settlers** also enter a Palestinian area (exact location not reported) to pray at a local religious site without proper coordination with the IDF; the **IDF** intervenes to remove the settlers. (TOI 7/9; WT 7/11; PCHR 7/12; OCHA 7/13; JPI 7/20)

10 JULY 2012

The **IDF** makes a brief incursion into s. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence e. of al-Qarara. OCHA reports that in the previous week or so, 5 Palestinian children were injured when they accidentally triggered **unexploded IDF ordnance** that they found near Gaza's al-Bureij r.c. OCHA also reports that since 6/24, Israel has allowed Gazans to export 2 truckloads of garments to both Jordan and Britain. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts synchronized patrols in 2 villages nr. Tulkarm in the morning; conducts other daytime patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah; patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah late at night (firing rubber coated-steel bullets, tear gas, and percussion grenades to disperse stone-throwing Palestinians who confront them in 1 instance, causing no reported injuries); and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Bayt Umar and Hebron, and nr. Qalqilya. (PCHR 7/12; OCHA 7/13)

11 JULY 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron and in Tubas; conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Tulkarm and 1 nr. Jericho. (PCHR 7/12, 7/19; OCHA 7/20)

12 JULY 2012

Israeli troops makes 2 brief incursion into n. Gaza, e. of Gaza City and e. of Jabaliya, to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence. **IQB mbrs.** fire at the soldiers, but **IDF** troops inside Israel fire **4 artillery shells** at them, killing **1 IQB mbr.** and wounding 3. The **IDF** later makes another brief incursion into n. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence e. of Jabaliya, firing warning shots at Palestinian farmers working in the area, forcing them to flee. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Ramallah, 2 nr. Qalqilya, and 1 nr. Jericho in the morning and afternoon; conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Salfit and 1 nr. Ramallah; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in al-Bireh, arresting local Hamas leader and fmr. governor of al-Bireh, Shaykh Jamal Tawil. (PCHR 7/19; OCHA 7/20)

In **Syria**, **13 PLA fighters** are abducted from the Nayrab r.c. in Aleppo and killed, sparking a large protests in Yarmuk (an unofficial Palestinian r.c.) near Damascus. (NYT 7/14 MNA 7/22; NYT 8/4)

13 JULY 2012

IDF soldiers on the n. Gaza border nr. Bayt Lahiya open fire on 2 Palestinians attempting to sneak into Israel to find work, killing **1 Palestinian** and wounding and detaining the other. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and 1 nr. Ramallah in the morning; in Jericho and Tubas in the afternoon; and in 2 villages nr. Salfit (synchronized) late at night. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters. In total, 1 Palestinian photographer (Bil'in) and 1 Palestinian demonstrator are hit by tear gas canisters; 1 Palestinian demonstrator (Kafr Qaddum) was moderately wounded by rubber-coated steel

bullets; and 7 Israeli and international protesters were arrested (including a reporter for the *New York Times*). (PCHR 7/19; OCHA 7/20; PCHR 7/26)

Palestinians in Syria's Yarmuk r.c. hold a 2d major demonstration to protest the killing of 13 PLA mbrs. from Nayrab r.c. on 7/12. This time, Syrian forces fire on the protesters, sparking clashes between the army and FSA elements inside the camp, marking the 1st time that Syrian forces have fired on an antigovernment rally by Palestinians since the civil unrest began in 2011. Details of casualties were not reported, but the incident is seen as “a significant tipping point” in Palestinian involvement in the Syrian civil war. The Local Coordination Comm. in Yarmuk calls for mass protests and a general strike to protest the killings. (NYT 7/14; MNA 7/22; NYT 8/4)

14 JULY 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in 2 villages nr. Salfit (synchronized), in Jericho and 1 nearby village (synchronized), and 1 village each nr. Bethlehem, Jenin, Qalqilya, Ramallah, and Tulkarm. **Jewish settlers** fr. Adei Ad outpost nr. Nablus beat a Palestinian shepherd grazing his sheep nearby and kill his sheep; an Israeli guard fr. nearby Shilo settlement intervenes and the settlers flee; the guard summons Israeli border police, who photograph the scene and take the shepherd's formal complaint. (PCHR 7/19; OCHA 7/20)

In Israel, **1,000s of Israelis** demonstrate in Tel Aviv to mark the 1st anniversary of the launch of the 2011 social justice protests against the rising cost of living. During the protest, one of the prominent activists connected with the **July 14 Movement**, Moshe Silman, immolates himself and is critically injured (he dies on 7/20). (WP 7/17; NYT 7/21)

15 JULY 2012

Around this date (before Ramadan begins on 7/20), **Israel**, as a goodwill gesture to Abbas, advances the **PA** almost \$45 m. in VAT taxes for 7/2012 to help it meet monthly budget expenditures. Israel notably makes the move just before a visit by **U.S. secy. of state Hillary Clinton**, though it says it was not asked to do so by the U.S. (JPI 8/3)

The **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Jericho in the morning; conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah, in Jenin and 1 nearby village (synchronized), and in 1 village nr. Jericho; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, and Nablus. (PCHR 7/19; OCHA 7/20)

16 JULY 2012

U.S. secy. of state **Clinton** meets with Israeli leaders (including PM **Netanyahu**, Pres. **Peres**, DM **Barak**, FM **Avigdor Lieberman**) and **Quartet special envoy Tony Blair** in Jerusalem and with **PA PM Salam Fayyad** in Ramallah. Though the main purpose of her visit is to discuss Iran, Syria, and other regional changes brought by the Arab Spring, she tells the Israeli and Palestinian sides that they must resume peace talks soon and avoid all unilateral actions. She emphasizes that while the international community is ready to offer ample support for a return to negotiations, the hard work must be done by the parties themselves. (WP 7/17)

Israel allows **40 Palestinian prisoners** held in its Ramon prison to receive visits from family members from Gaza, marking the 1st time Israel has allowed family visits for Gazan prisoners since Hamas seized control of the Strip in 6/2007. **Unidentified Palestinians** fire 1

Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts evening arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin; and conducts late-night patrols in al-Nabi Salih. (TOI 7/16; WP 7/17; PCHR 7/19; OCHA 7/20)

Christians United for Israel (CUFI) opens its 7th annual conference in Washington. At least 5,600 participants attend. Organizers note that CUFI now has 1.1 m. members, 754,000 Facebook fans, and 96 college chapters. The conference theme is “Defend America; Vote Israel.” CUFI founder James Hagee focuses on the importance of Christian Zionism and supporting Israel as part of “living out God’s mandate.” Other speakers include Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT), fmr. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations head Malcolm Hoenlein, and Zionist Organization of America pres. Morton Klein. The speakers focus on Iran, U.S.-Israel security cooperation, and halting Palestinian incitement. (WJW 7/19)

17 JULY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Tulkarm (synchronized) and 1 nr. Ramallah during the day; patrols in Jenin, Jericho and 2 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah late at night; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. **Hamis authorities in Gaza** hang 3 Palestinian prisoners (all convicted of murder in 2004, 2009, and 2010). (PCHR 7/19; OCHA 7/20)

The **Knesset education comm.** votes to grant full university status to an academic center in Ariel settlement, deep in the West Bank, making it the first accredited Israeli university in occupied Palestinian territory. The decision comes as **Palestinian medical students from al-Quds University in Abu Dis**, just outside East Jerusalem, await a verdict on their appeal of a 2/2012 Israeli ruling that denied their request to be allowed to sit for Israeli exams that would certify them to practice in East Jerusalem or Israel. The Israeli government had denied the students permission to sit for the exams on the grounds that al-Quds was not an accredited Israeli university and could not gain accreditation because it was a Palestinian entity located in the West Bank. When they then sought permission to take the tests as foreigners, the Israeli court denied permission on the grounds that al-Quds could not be considered a foreign university, since it also has a campus in East Jerusalem. There has long been a shortage of doctors to treat Palestinians in East Jerusalem, where most Palestinian doctors are forced to work without licenses. (HA 2/13/12)

After 2 weeks of unsuccessful efforts to draft plans that would integrate ultra-Orthodox Jews and Palestinian citizens of Israel into the Israeli military, **Kadima head Shaul Mofaz** quits PM Netanyahu’s governing coalition; **Netanyahu** does not try to dissuade him. Analysts believed the decision (e.g., NYT 7/19) hurts both Kadima and Likud, and might hasten early elections. (NYT 7/18, 7/19)

Fmr. Israeli government attorney David Scharia is named the **UNSC’s** chief counterterrorism lawyer, marking the first time that an **Israeli** has been appointed to a security post within the UN Secretariat. (WP 7/18)

18 JULY 2012

The **IDF** bulldozes 3 agricultural storehouses and a well nr. Hebron; conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah, 1 nr. Hebron, and 1 nr. Jenin; and conducts separate late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron. Hundreds of **Jewish settlers**, escorted by the **IDF**, enter Balata village nr. Nablus to pray at Joseph's Tomb; the IDF imposes a curfew on local Palestinians during the visit. (PCHR 7/19, 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

In **Bulgaria**, a **suicide bomber** detonates a device outside a bus boarding Israeli tourists in the port city of Burgas, killing at least **6 Israelis** and wounding 32 plus the Bulgarian tour operator. **Israel** blames **Iran** for the blast and vows retaliation, but Iran denies the allegation, and no group takes responsibility. (NYT, WT 7/19; NYT, WP 7/20; JPI 7/27)

19 JULY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah, 1 early in the morning and the other late at night; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya and Ramallah. **Jewish settlers** fr. Bet Ayn nr. Hebron uproot 47 olive and almond trees, and 10 grape arbors on nearby Palestinian land. **Jewish settlers** raze 14 d. of Palestinian agricultural land nr. Bethlehem to establish a settler-only road. (PCHR 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

U.S. intelligence officials assert, without offering evidence, that a **Hizballah cell linked to Iran** carried out the 7/18 suicide attack on **Israeli tourists in Bulgaria** in retaliation for Israel's recent assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists. (NYT 7/20)

U.S. pres. **Obama** signs legislation to extend the terms of **Israel's** loan guarantees through the end of 9/2016. Without the move, loan guarantees would have expired at the end of 9/2012. Since 2004 the U.S. has given Israel \$9 b. in loan guarantees, of which Israel has used \$5.2 b. (HA 7/22; *Foreign Policy* online 7/31)

20 JULY 2012

To mark the start of Ramadan, **Israel** eases access restrictions for West Bank Palestinians wanting to enter East Jerusalem, permitting children 12 and under and adults over 40 to enter without permits. In addition, the **IDF** removes 2 key roadblocks: one on the main road from Aqraba village to Nablus and the other in the Jordan Valley, opening the main northeastern entrance to Jericho from Road 90 (closed since 2000). The **IDF** also patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the morning, 1 nr. Qalqilya in the afternoon, and 1 nr. Qalqilya late at night; conducts late night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; no serious injuries or arrests are reported. (PCHR 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

21 JULY 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the morning and in 1 village nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Tulkarm late at night. (PCHR 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

An **Israeli court** agrees to delay the evacuation of **Migron outpost** (scheduled for 8/1) until 8/21 to allow the High Court to hear an appeal by some Migron settlers claiming to have

purchased their lots from the Palestinian owners. Lawyers for Peace Now, representing the Palestinians, win a further delay until 8/28 to prepare for the case. (CSM 9/1; HA, JAZ 9/2)

22 JULY 2012

No Israeli-Palestinian violence is reported. (PCHR 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

The **Israeli DM** files a petition with **Israel's High Court** to allow the demolition of 12 small bedouin enclaves (200 families, 1,500 individuals) in Area C in the Hebron Hills so the area (known as Firing Zone 918) may be used for military purposes; those evicted would be relocated to Yatta village in Area B. Israeli forces expelled some 700 Palestinians from the enclaves in 1999 and demolished their structures and wells, but the families sued the government in 2000 and were granted permission to return to the area until the case was resolved. After 5 yrs. of mediation, the sides declared an impasse in 2005. The government decided to take action now after noticing (according to the filing) "an increasing trend of augmenting and strengthening the population on the C Grounds." (NYT 7/24; WT 7/25)

23 JULY 2012

The **IDF** stops Palestinian workers nr. Qalqilya from laying water pipes from a well to a nearby plot of agricultural land, confiscating their excavator and a welding machine. The **IDF** also patrols in Tulkarm in the morning; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. Susia settlement nr. Hebron seize 5 d. of nearby Palestinian land. (PCHR 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

The **longest-ever Palestinian hunger striker, Akram Rikhawi**, ends his fast after 103 days in exchange for a pledge that Israel will release him 5 mos. early (in 1/2013). (NYT 7/24)

In Brussels for a regular meeting with the EU, **Israeli FM Avigdor Lieberman** requests that, in light of the 7/18 Bulgaria attack, the **EU** add **Hizballah** to its terrorist list. The EU says that thus far there is no proof of Hizballah's involvement in terror. (NYT 8/16)

Egypt eases travel restrictions on **Palestinians** that will make it easier for Gazans to enter and will allow them to stay for up to 72 hrs. before returning or transiting through. All Palestinians must still have Palestinian national identification, a passport, or proof of residency in a 3d country and obtain a visa. The move comes a week after **newly elected Egyptian pres. Mohamed Morsi** held separate meetings in Cairo with PA pres. **Abbas** and **Hamas leader Khalid Mishal**. (NYT, WT 7/24)

24 JULY 2012

Unidentified Palestinians fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; 1 rocket is intercepted by Israel's Iron Dome antimissile system. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in Hebron in the evening and nr. Hebron late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Ma'on and Susia settlements nr. Hebron uproot at least 45 olive trees fr. a plot of nearby Palestinian land. OCHA reports that **Israeli authorities** in East Jerusalem demolished 1 Palestinian animal pen and forced a Palestinian family to demolish an extension to their home. In West Bank Area C, the **IDF** demolishes 3 Palestinian agricultural storehouses and 4 wells nr. Bethlehem and Hebron. (YA 7/24; PCHR 7/26; OCHA 7/27)

Pro-Israel Republican donor Sheldon Adelson, who previously pledged to spend \$100 m. of his personal wealth to defeat Obama in the 2012 presidential campaign, agrees to give at least \$6.5 m. to fund a new advertising campaign (word of mouth, social media, television) by the **Republican Jewish Coalition** aimed at drawing Jewish voters in the key battleground states of Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania away from Pres. **Obama** and to **Republican candidate Mitt Romney**. (NYT 7/25)

25 JULY 2012

The **World Bank** reports that the Palestinian economy is facing its worst crisis since 1994, noting that the recent growth rate of 7.7% between 2007 and 2011 is insufficient to run a state because it is overly contingent on donor aid. The report says that sustainable growth can only be met through increased trade and private sector growth, which are hampered by restrictions imposed by Israel. Separately, **UN special coordinator for the Middle East peace process Robert Serry** warns that the PA is facing insolvency and has been late paying government salaries because donors have failed to fulfill pledges. (WP 7/26)

IDF troops make a brief incursion into s. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence e. of Khan Yunis. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in Jericho. **Jewish settlers** fr. Shilo settlement nr. Ramallah beat 4 Palestinian farmers attempting to reach their crop land nearby; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. (PCHR 7/26, 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

26 JULY 2012

Gaza's power plant begins operating on 4 turbines for the first time since 2006, after Israel (in a gesture to mark Ramadan) allowed the **UN Development Program** to import new transformers to replace those destroyed by an Israeli air strike in 2006. The improved capacity of the plant and additional Israeli fuel imports to mark Ramadan reduce rolling blackouts across Gaza to 8–10 hrs./day (down from around 12 hrs./day in recent months). The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho and Ramallah in the morning; conducts synchronized patrols in 4 villages nr. Jenin at midday; patrols in al-Nabi Salih in the afternoon, firing rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing Palestinian youths who confront them (causing no serious injuries); and conducts synchronized patrols in 2 villages nr. Jericho in the evening. (PCHR 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

PA Fin. Min. Nabil Kassis says the government is finding it harder each month to meet its routine budget expenses because donors, including the U.S. and Arab states, have failed to fulfill their 2012 pledges. The PA had hoped to close a \$1.1 b. gap in its \$4 b. budget, but is expected to fall short by \$250,000, despite increasing taxes and making cuts to subsidies. (WT 7/27)

Republican candidate Mitt Romney begins a 6-day international tour of Britain, Israel, and Poland to point up his foreign policy skills. The theme of the trip is “the importance of locking arms with the nation’s allies.” Aides say that on the Middle East, Romney intends to highlight differences with Obama over plans for the peace process, support for Israel, Iran’s nuclear program, and the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. (WT 7/26; see QU in *JPS* 165 for details.)

The **International Israel Allies Caucus Foundation** (formed by Israeli Knesset mbrs. and mbrs. of the U.S. House of Representatives in 2008) sponsors 2 panels on Capitol Hill to mark nearly 20 yrs. since the signing of the 9/2003 Oslo Accord and to discuss how to move the peace process forward. Speakers include **former State Dept. adviser to the negotiations Aaron David Miller, Likud MK and avid settlement supporter Danny Danon** (who supports annexation of the West Bank except for the Palestinian population, which would be left to fend for itself), **right-wing settler leader and former MK Rabbi Benny Elon** (who supports annexation of the West Bank and creation of a Palestinian state in Jordan), and **Israeli negotiator to the Oslo talks Yossi Beilin** (who says: "My interest is not necessarily a Palestinian state. All I want is a Jewish majority forever."), and *Jerusalem Post* dep. managing editor Caroline Glick (who says Oslo was destined to fail because Palestinian leaders "raised a generation of kids who value death"). The only representative of the Palestinian viewpoint, **American Task Force on Palestine (ATFP) dir. Ghaith al-Omari**, praises Oslo for establishing a sense of "mutual respect" necessary for moving talks forward and calls for a quick resumption of negotiations. Elon responds that there will be no progress until the Palestinians understand that the Jewish people "are back in Zion, back in Jerusalem." (WJW 7/26)

27 JULY 2012

Unidentified Palestinians fire 2 **rockets or mortars** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 3 villages nr. Ramallah (2 synchronized) in the evening; conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Jenin and Jericho; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron and Nablus, firing tear gas and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them in Nablus (causing no serious injuries). **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; a Palestinian child (al-Nabi Salih) and 1 Swedish activist (Kafr Qaddum) are moderately injured by tear gas canisters, and 1 Palestinian (Kafr Qaddum) is moderately injured by a rubber-coated steel bullet. (YA 7/28; 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

Pres. **Obama** signs into law the **U.S.-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act**, which calls for an unprecedented strengthening of military, intelligence, and technology cooperation intended to preserve Israel's qualitative military edge. Experts describe the act as prescribing a "laundry list of security enhancements" for Israel (see QU in *JPS* 165 for details). (JTA, White House press release 7/27; WP 7/28, 7/30; *Defense News* 8/1)

Hamas acting PM in Gaza Ismail Haniyeh meets with Egyptian pres. **Morsi** in Cairo to discuss Fatah-Hamas reconciliation prospects and ways of further easing the siege of Gaza. (WP 7/28)

28 JULY 2012

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney arrives in Israel on the 2d stage of his international tour (see 7/26), which he hopes will increase support for him among evangelical Christian voters who are wary of his Mormon faith and among Democratic Jewish voters

disaffected by Pres. Obama. He pledges that he will “stand as one” with Israel. (NYT, WP, WT 7/28; NYT 7/30)

Unidentified Palestinians fire 2 Qassam rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Israeli naval vessels** fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts early morning patrols in Jericho, nearby ‘Ayn al-Sultan r.c., and 1 village nr. Ramallah; patrols in al-Nabi Salih in the afternoon, firing rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them (causing no serious injuries) and arresting 1 Palestinian teenager; and patrols in 1 village nr. Jericho in the evening. Late at night, **14 Palestinians** without Israeli work permits drive towards the al-Za‘im checkpoint e. of Jerusalem, believing the checkpoint would be unmanned and they would be able to sneak into Israel to find work; when they discover that Israeli border police are at the crossing, they attempt to turn their car around to flee; the **Israeli border police** open fire on the vehicle, killing **1 Palestinian**, wounding 3, and arresting the rest. (YA 7/28; PCHR 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

29 JULY 2012

On the 2d day of his trip to Israel, Republican presidential candidate **Romney** prays at the Western Wall and gives a public address to 300 select supporters in Jerusalem (calling Jerusalem the capital of Israel). He vows to support Israel’s right to defend itself and calls for **Israel** and the U.S. to use “any and all means” to prevent **Iran** from obtaining a nuclear weapon. He does not repeat the comment his foreign policy aide, **Dan Senor**, made en route to Israel that Romney would “respect” an Israeli decision to strike Iran unilaterally, nor does he mention the Palestinians or the peace process. Romney meets with his former business colleague PM **Netanyahu**, who makes kind remarks but is seen (e.g., WP 7/30) as being careful not to take sides in the election. He also meets with Israeli pres. **Peres** and **PA PM Salam Fayyad**; the Romney camp cancels at the last minute a planned meeting with Labor party officials. In an interview with CNN later in the day, Romney says that the U.S., in consultation with Israel, should move its embassy to Jerusalem. In response, **White House spokesman Josh Earnest** says: “The view of this administration is the capital should be determined in final status negotiations between the parties. That’s the position held by the previous administrations, both Democratic and Republican.” (NYT, WP, WT 7/30; WP 7/31; WJW 8/2)

Timed with Romney’s visit to Israel, the **Obama admin.** leaks a story to the Israeli daily *Ha’Aretz* that NSA **Donilon** briefed an **Israeli official** (some say PM Netanyahu, though Israel explicitly denies this) over dinner in Israel earlier in 7/2012 on “U.S. contingency plans for any attack on **Iran**,” emphasizing that the U.S. is making serious preparations for a military strike if such action is deemed necessary. A Netanyahu spokesman says Donilon did not share any operational plans. Donilon’s office says it does not comment on private meetings. (WT 7/30)

In Tunis en route to Israel, **U.S. defense secy. Leon Panetta** says **Israel** and the U.S. are united in support of strong sanctions against **Iran**. (NYT, WP 7/30)

Israeli naval vessels fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jenin in the morning; patrols in 2 villages nr. Jenin and Ramallah in the evening. **Jewish settlers** block roads and stone Palestinian cars nr. the evacuated settlement of Homesh nr. Jenin. (PCHR 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

30 JULY 2012

At a \$50,000-a-couple fundraising breakfast for top donors in Jerusalem, Republican presidential candidate **Romney** tells supporters that the Palestinian economy is more the victim of “cultural” flaws than Israeli restrictions. Romney also dramatically understates Israeli GNP (\$21,000 per capita vs. \$32,282) and overstates Palestinian GNP (\$10,000 per capita vs. \$1,600). **Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erakat** remarks: “All I can say is that this man needs a lot of education. He doesn’t know the region, he doesn’t know Israelis, he doesn’t know Palestinians, and to talk about the Palestinians as an inferior culture is really a racist statement.” Romney then leaves for Poland, the last leg of his tour. Of note: the breakfast, which brought in over \$1 m., marks the 1st fundraising event for a U.S. presidential candidate ever to be held in Israel. (NYT, WP 7/31; WJW 8/2; JPI 8/10; see also WP 7/28)

Overnight, **IDF troops** on the s. Gaza border sporadically fire into agricultural areas along the Gaza border e. of Khuza for hours, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night patrols in 1 village nr. Jenin; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Qalqilya and nr. Jenin. (PCHR 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

31 JULY 2012

PA PM **Fayyad** and **Israeli Fin. Min. Yuval Steinitz** sign an economic agreement, to go into effect on 1/1/2013, that will regulate taxes and bilateral trade with the aim of reducing illegal trade and tax evasion and building the PA’s tax revenue base. It is the first major Israeli-Palestinian economic agreement since the 1994 Paris Protocol, which sets out in detail the economic relationship between Israel and the PA. (JP, UPI 8/1; JPI 8/17)

Overnight (similar to 7/30), **IDF troops** on the s. Gaza border fire into agricultural areas along the Gaza border e. of Khan Yunis sporadically for hours, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in Tulkarm and 1 village nr. Jenin in the morning; patrols in 1 village nr. Jenin late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Halmish settlement nr. Ramallah uproot and burn 30 Palestinian olive trees on Palestinian land nr. al-Nabi Salih. OCHA reports that **Israeli authorities** demolished an extension to a Palestinian home in East Jerusalem. (PCHR 8/2; OCHA 8/3)

With the Tal Law exempting the ultra-Orthodox from military service set to expire at midnight, Israeli DM **Barak** orders the IDF to start drafting ultra-Orthodox Jewish men and gives IDF officials 1 mo. to draft official guidelines to implement the order. (NYT, WP, WT 8/1)

Israeli pres. **Peres’s office** releases the text of a letter that it says is from **Egyptian pres. Mohamed Morsi**, formally responding to a Ramadan greeting Peres sent on 7/15/12. The text, welcomed by Israel, pledges to work to promote Middle East peace and get bilateral Israeli-Egyptian relations back on track, particularly regarding border security. Morsi aides deny that any letter was sent, but Peres’s office releases copies that show Morsi’s name typed (not signed) and an accompanying letter from the Egyptian amb. on embassy letterhead, indicating that the letter had been cleared with Morsi’s office. Official bilateral relations do not suffer, and public optimism on future relations increased. Most analysts believe (e.g., NYT, WP 8/1) that the incident simply reflects Morsi’s attempt to speak to 2 audiences, Israel and the international community, and his constituency in Egypt, hostile or at best ambivalent concerning the peace treaty with Israel. (NYT, WP 8/1)

1 AUGUST 2012

U.S. defense secy. Leon Panetta arrives in **Israel** for a 2-day visit intended to calm Israeli fears over **Iran** and to project a U.S.-Israeli unified front. He urges Israel to allow sanctions and diplomacy time to work and to avoid unilateral actions. Separately, Israeli PM **Netanyahu** warns that “time to resolve this issue peacefully is running out.” Meanwhile, **anonymous U.S. admin. officials** say (NYT 8/2) they are optimistic that “Israel has no imminent plans to attack and may be willing to let the United States take the lead in any future military strike, which they say would not occur until next year at the earliest.” (*Defense News* 8/1; NYT, WP 8/2; WP 8/21)

IDF troops make a predawn incursion into c. Gaza to level land and clear lines of sight along the border fence e. of al-Maghazi r.c.; they withdraw later in the morning. In the West Bank, the **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. (PCHR 8/2, 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

Around this date, **House Foreign Affairs Comm. mbr. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL)** launches a new congressional caucus, the **Congressional Hellenic-Israeli Alliance**, aimed at supporting the growing bilateral relationship between Israel and Greece, and on a broader level, Cyprus. It is also aimed at reinforcing a budding U.S.-Israeli-Greek-Cypriot alliance to pressure Turkey on regional affairs. (*The Hill* 8/7)

2 AUGUST 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Jericho in the early morning; patrols in Jericho, nearby ‘Aqabat Jabir r.c., and 1 nearby village late at night. **Jewish settlers** fr. Givat Ariel settlement nr. Ramallah spray graffiti on a wall in a nearby Palestinian village and try to set fire to a Palestinian car. (PCHR 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

3 AUGUST 2012

The **IDF** patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Salfit in the morning; in 2 villages nr. Qalqilya and 1 nr. Ramallah in the evening; and in 2 villages nr. Salfit (synchronized) late at night. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil‘in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni‘lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 2 Palestinians (including 1 journalist) are moderately injured by tear gas canisters. (PCHR 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

4 AUGUST 2012

IDF soldiers shoot and wound a **Syrian man** attempting to cut through the border fence on the Golan Heights to flee Syria; Syrians on the Syrian side of the border evacuate him. Israel reports that several Syrians have tried to escape into Israel in recent weeks as the Syrian civil war has escalated, but have fled unharmed following warning shots. (WP 8/5)

The **IDF** conducts predawn patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah; conducts late-night patrols in 2 villages nr. Ramallah and 1 nr. Jericho; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron and Ramallah. (PCHR 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

5 AUGUST 2012

As many as 35 **unidentified gunmen** attack an **Egyptian checkpoint near the Rafah border**, fatally shooting **16 Egyptian security officers** and wounding 3. Some of the assailants then steal 2 armored personnel carriers, which they pack with explosives and drive toward Kerem Shalom commercial crossing, where the borders of Egypt, Israel, and Gaza meet. The **IDF** calls in an air strike on the vehicles as they breach the border, killing at least 3 assailants. No group takes responsibility. **Egypt** seals the Rafah border crossing into Gaza as a precaution. **Israel** shuts the Israeli-Egypt side of Kerem Shalom and halts fuel shipments to Gaza through the Israel-Gaza side, but otherwise continues to allow limited imports of goods from Israel to Gaza. **Hamas authorities in Gaza** deny any Palestinian involvement, call the attack “terrorism,” and close smuggling tunnels from their side as well, stating that “Palestinian resistance factions are committed to fighting only against the Israeli occupation, and they launch their operations only from the Palestinian territories.” (MNA, NYT, WP 8/6; NYT 8/7)

An **Israeli warplane** makes an air strike on Rafah targeting 2 **Tawhid and Jihad** mbrs. as they ride a motorcycle through Rafah, assassinating **Eid Oukal** and wounding Ahmad Said Isma‘il; Israel accuses the men of being behind the 6/18 Sinai attack that killed an Israeli Palestinian worker and of plotting other cross-border attacks on Israeli civilians; no mention is made of the Sinai attack earlier in the day. Later, **unidentified Palestinians** fire 2 Qassam rockets fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** responds by directing **artillery fire** and shooting from helicopters at the demolished Dahaniyya airport site and open areas e. of Rafah for several hours, causing no reported injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the morning; conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, and Ramallah. (NYT, PCHR 8/6; PCHR 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

The **PA** cancels plans to host a meeting in Ramallah of foreign **envoys representing the Non-Aligned Movement** to express solidarity with the Palestinians, stating that **Israel** has refused to grant entry permits to the representatives of Algeria, Bangladesh, Cuba, Indonesia, and Malaysia on the grounds that their countries do not recognize the State of Israel. The PA reportedly (NYT 8/6) intended to announce plans to revive its UN statehood effort at the opening of the next UNGA session in 9/2012. The group was also expected to release a “Ramallah Declaration” denouncing Israeli settlement expansion. (NYT, WP 8/6)

Iran airs the confessions of more than a dozen alleged conspirators to the killing of 5 nuclear scientists since 2010, claiming that the suspects were trained in **Israel** by the Mossad. (WP 8/6)

6 AUGUST 2012

Egypt suspects that Islamist militants who were persecuted under the Mubarak regime staged the 8/6 attack on the n. Sinai border and vows a swift response and reassertion of government control over the Sinai Peninsula. Egyptian pres. **Morsi** and SCAF head Field Marshal **Tantawi** make a joint visit to El-Arish in a show of unity. **Israeli and Egyptian brigadier generals** meet at Kerem Shalom to discuss their investigations of the incident. Israeli PM **Netanyahu** issues a formal statement of condolences, stating, “It is clear that Israel and Egypt have a common interest in maintaining a quiet border.” (NYT, WP 8/7)

Israel allows 54 Gazans with family members in Israeli jails to visit their relatives. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Jericho before dawn; conducts late-night patrols in Jericho, Qalqilya (firing tear gas and stun grenades at stone-throwing youths who confront them, causing no injuries), Salfit and 1 nearby village, and 1 village nr. Ramallah; and conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches in Kafr Qaddum and Salfit. (PCHR 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

7 AUGUST 2012

With Israel's suspension of fuel shipments to Gaza since 8/5, rolling blackouts across **Gaza** increase fr. 8–10 hrs./day to 12 hrs./day. An uncorroborated report says that **unidentified Palestinians** fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Ramallah in the morning; conducts arrest raids, house searches in 1 village nr. Jenin in the morning and 2 villages nr. Hebron and Jenin late at night. OCHA reports that since 8/1, the IDF has demolished 3 structures in the Bethlehem area: a restaurant, part of another building, and a local road used by Palestinian farmers to access their crop land. (Mivzak Live [Internet] 8/7; PCHR 8/9; OCHA 8/10)

Israel's Finance Comm. allocates nearly \$1.8 m. to move some structures at Migron settlement outpost to the site near Psagot where Migron settlers are to relocate. (JPI 8/17)

8 AUGUST 2012

Unidentified Palestinians fire 1 Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In the West Bank, the **IDF** enters 1 village nr. Jenin in the afternoon, searching a car repair shop and arresting 1 Palestinian. (Israel Army Radio 8/8; PCHR 8/9, 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

The *Washington Post* runs a special report on the tensions in **Druze villages in the Golan Heights** over the civil war in **Syria**, noting that deepening divisions between Asad loyalists and an increasing number of critics have occasionally erupted in violence. (WP 8/8)

9 AUGUST 2012

Israeli naval vessels fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. Dozens of **Palestinian supporters of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)** stage a protest march fr. Ramallah to Israel's Ofer military prison nearby to denounce the retrial of DFLP Politburo mbr. Ibrahim Abu Hajla, who was released in the 12/2011 prisoner swap that freed IDF Cpl. Gilad Shalit but was later redetained. **IDF soldiers** fire live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the demonstrators, wounding 5 (including 1 child, 1 woman). (PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

Experts say that a new malware program spreading across **Lebanon**, named **Gauss**, is clearly the product of the same developers as the Stuxnet and Flame viruses used to attack **Iran** (believed by most experts to have been developed jointly by **Israel** and the **U.S.**). Gauss steals customer data from banks (including Citibank and the online service PayPal) to track how money flows into and out of accounts; it appears to have been designed only for surveillance, not attack. Analysts say the virus has also popped up in Israel and the occupied territories, and several other countries worldwide. (NYT, WP 8/10)

Israel's security cabinet approves an **Egyptian request** to deploy 5 attack helicopters in the Sinai to bolster security, modifying the terms of their peace treaty. (JPI 8/24)

10 AUGUST 2012

Egypt partially reopens the Rafah crossing for Palestinian travel. Smuggling tunnels along the Rafah border remain closed; Palestinians report that costs of construction materials in Gaza have spiked 20%–30% since 8/5 because of tunnel closures. **Israeli bans** on fuel imports also continue, forcing **Gaza's power plant** to shut down 2 turbines for lack of fuel, causing rolling blackouts across the Strip to increase fr. 12 hrs./day to 16 hrs./day. **Palestinians** (accompanied by Israeli and international activists) hold weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the separation wall, land confiscations, and settlement expansion in Bil'in, Kafr Qaddum, al-Ma'sara, al-Nabi Salih, and Ni'lin. **IDF** soldiers fire live ammunition (al-Nabi Salih only), rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas, and stun grenades at the protesters; 1 Palestinian is moderately injured by a rubber-coated steel bullet (Kafr Qaddum) and several demonstrators are beaten by IDF soldiers in al-Ma'sara. (PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

11 AUGUST 2012

IDF troops on the s. Gaza border e. of Khan Yunis fire warning shots at farmers working their land nr. the border fence, wounding 1. In the West Bank, the IDF conducts evening arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. (PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

12 AUGUST 2012

A day after the **PA** urges **Egypt** to destroy smuggling tunnels on the Gaza border, saying they pose a threat to Egyptian security and undermine Palestinian national unity efforts, **Hamis officials in Gaza** say that they will close tunnels on the Rafah border if **Egypt** opens the border to trade. (JPI 8/24)

An unconfirmed report says that **unidentified Palestinians** fire a Qassam **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Israeli naval vessels** fire warning shots at Palestinian fishing boats off the n. Gaza coast, forcing them to return to shore. In the West Bank, the **IDF** patrols in 1 village nr. Salfit late in the evening, firing warning shots at a Palestinian car (no injuries reported) and ordering it to stop; the car is searched and allowed to go on its way. The **IDF** also conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Nablus, and Salfit. **Jewish settlers** fr. Susia settlement nr. Hebron spread poison on nearby grasslands used by local Palestinian shepherds, killing 7 sheep. (Mivzak Live [Internet] 8/12; PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

IDF Central Command formally reclassifies Bruchin outpost as a legal settlement, implementing a 3/2012 cabinet decision to legalize 3 outposts retroactively (see QU in *JPS* 163). The formal reclassifications of Rachelim and Sansanna have not been implemented yet. (JPI 8/24; PCHR 8/16)

Israel's daily *Ha'Aretz* for the 2d time in recent days reports that a new National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) by the **Obama admin.** has added a "last-minute update" on **Iran** stating that Iran has "boosted efforts" to advance its nuclear program. The U.S. meanwhile has not announced that a new NIE has been written. U.S. officials refuse to comment except to say that U.S. intelligence continues to believe: (1) that Iran has not made a decision on whether to develop a nuclear weapon and (2) that Iran's is years away from being able to produce a nuclear bomb. Meanwhile, **Israel's dep. FM Danny Ayalon** calls on the international community to

issue a declaration that diplomacy toward **Iran** has failed, raising fears that Israel is preparing a military strike. (HA, REU 8/12; NYT, WP 8/13)

13 AUGUST 2012

In East Jerusalem, **PLO Exec. Comm. mbr. Hanan Ashrawi** addresses diplomats from Asia, the EU, Latin America, and the Middle East, calling on them to increase donor aid to the PA and to support a revived Palestinian statehood bid at the UN (see QU in *JPS* 165 for details). (NYT 8/14)

Israeli Jerusalem municipal officials approve construction of 12 commercial and hotel towers (24–33 floors each) on East Jerusalem’s Jabal Abu Ghunaym/Har Homa settlement site. The **IDF** conducts late-night arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin and Qalqilya. **Jewish settlers** fr. Eliezer settlement nr. Bethlehem, escorted by the **IDF**, bulldoze and level 5 d. of Palestinian agricultural land and a well in nearby al-Khadir village; the leveling cuts off Palestinian access to another 11 d. of crop land. (PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

14 AUGUST 2012

After 3 days of a partial opening of the Rafah border (see 8/10/12), **Egypt** allows the crossing to open in both directions. Around 20% of smuggling tunnels along the Rafah border have resumed operations. **No Israeli-Palestinian violence is reported.** (PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18)

Israel reports that since 2009, **8,217 men and women from abroad** have opted to move to Israel and become full or dual citizens in order to serve in the **IDF**. Of the 8,217, 1,661 came from the U.S. and 1,685 from Russia. Most have come through Garin Tzabar, a diaspora Israeli Scouts program that prepares willing scouts for immigration over a series of weekend workshop. (NYT 8/15)

15 AUGUST 2012

The **IDF** conducts late-night patrols and house searches in 4 villages nr. Hebron (3 synchronized). (PCHR 8/16; OCHA 8/18; PCHR 8/30; OCHA 8/31)

Fmr. Israeli national security adviser Uzi Arad warns that Pres. **Obama** has only a “brief window of opportunity” to dissuade PM **Netanyahu** and DM **Barak** against striking Iran, saying Obama must quickly impose stiffer sanctions and publicly declare his willingness to use military force. Analysts say (NYT 8/16) that “Dayan’s assessment seems to buttress the theory that the collective saber rattling is part of a campaign to pressure the Obama administration.” (NYT 8/16)

CHRONOLOGY SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	(Agence France-Presse, Paris)
AP	(Associated Press [Internet])
CNN	(Cable News Network [Internet])
CSM	(<i>Christian Science Monitor</i> , Boston)
HA	(<i>Ha’Aretz</i> [Internet], Tel Aviv)
IDFS	(Israel Defense Force Spokesperson, [Internet])

ITV (Israel Television Network, Jerusalem)
JAZ (al-Jazeera Satellite Channel Television, Doha)
JP (*Jerusalem Post* [Internet], Jerusalem)
JPI (*Jerusalem Post International Edition*, Jerusalem)
JTA (Jewish Telegraphic Agency [Internet])
MNA (Ma'an News Agency, Bethlehem)
NYT (*New York Times*, New York)
OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Weekly Briefing Notes, Jerusalem)
PCHR (Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Gaza)
REU (Reuters [Internet])
TOI (*Times of Israel* Internet)
UPI (United Press International [Internet])
WJW (*Washington Jewish Week*, Rockville, MD)
WP (*Washington Post*, Washington)
WT (*Washington Times*, Washington)
YA (*Yedi'ot Aharonot*, Tel Aviv)