



Special Focus: The Jordan Valley

The Jordan Valley has become increasingly out of bounds for Palestinians living in other parts of the West Bank. A series of new permit restrictions introduced in the past six months have severely tightened access for both people and goods to get in and out.

These permit restrictions add to a movement regime within the Jordan Valley that was already very restricted. A combination of military zones, military bases, settlements and Israeli-declared conservation areas within the Jordan Valley impedes movement for Palestinians residents and permit holders alike.

The Jordan Valley is a stretch of fertile land located at the base of a mountain ridge that runs adjacent to the Jordan River. The valley crosses Israel and the West Bank; reaching from the Sea of Galilee in the North to the Dead Sea in the South. Since 1967, 5 military outposts and approximately 21 settlements have been established throughout the Jordan Valley on either side of Road 90. Approximately 6,250 settlers live in the area and 53,000 Palestinians, (including the population of Jericho).



to landowners are not for overnight stays, and people are obliged to travel back and forth daily. They frequently face delays at either Tayasir or Hamra checkpoints that connect the Jordan Valley with the rest of the West Bank.

Workers: Workers who want to work in the Jordan Valley are required to have a permit. Permits for workers in the agricultural areas of the Jordan valley are issued by the Israeli District Coordination Office (DCO) or by settlements on which farm hands work. The permits are valid only for a limited period of time, and are subject to security restrictions.¹

iii. Military zones, Israeli-declared conservation areas and Israeli settlements

Palestinian non-residents of the Jordan Valley even with permits are prohibited to travel on Road 90 (the main highway running through the Jordan Valley) north of Al 'Auja partial checkpoint.

Access to water sources and grazing areas is also increasingly limited because of the presence of extensive Israeli-declared conservation areas and military zones, particularly in the northern areas of the Jordan Valley.

The example of Al Jiftlik village (see map on page 3) clearly illustrates these difficulties Straddled on all sides by settlements, military closed areas and military bases, villagers have difficulties leaving their village to graze their animals or even market their crops within the West Bank. Compounding this problem is the restriction on workers from Tammoun and Tubas to travel to this area, preventing optimal work on the land and reducing income even further.

The semi nomadic Bedouin populations that live in communities scattered throughout the Valley, rely on water springs and open grazing areas but are being forced to remain in more limited areas. The result is that farmers are forced to sell their animals as they can no longer graze and water them. This loss of income is exacerbated by the low price of meat on local markets and difficulties faced marketing cheese and milk products – again, in large part due to access and transportation constraints.

1. Movement restrictions in the Jordan Valley

There are 21 physical obstacles in the Jordan Valley, including a series of checkpoints, earth mounds, road gates, earth trenches and road blocks restricting movement into and within the area.

i. Residence restrictions

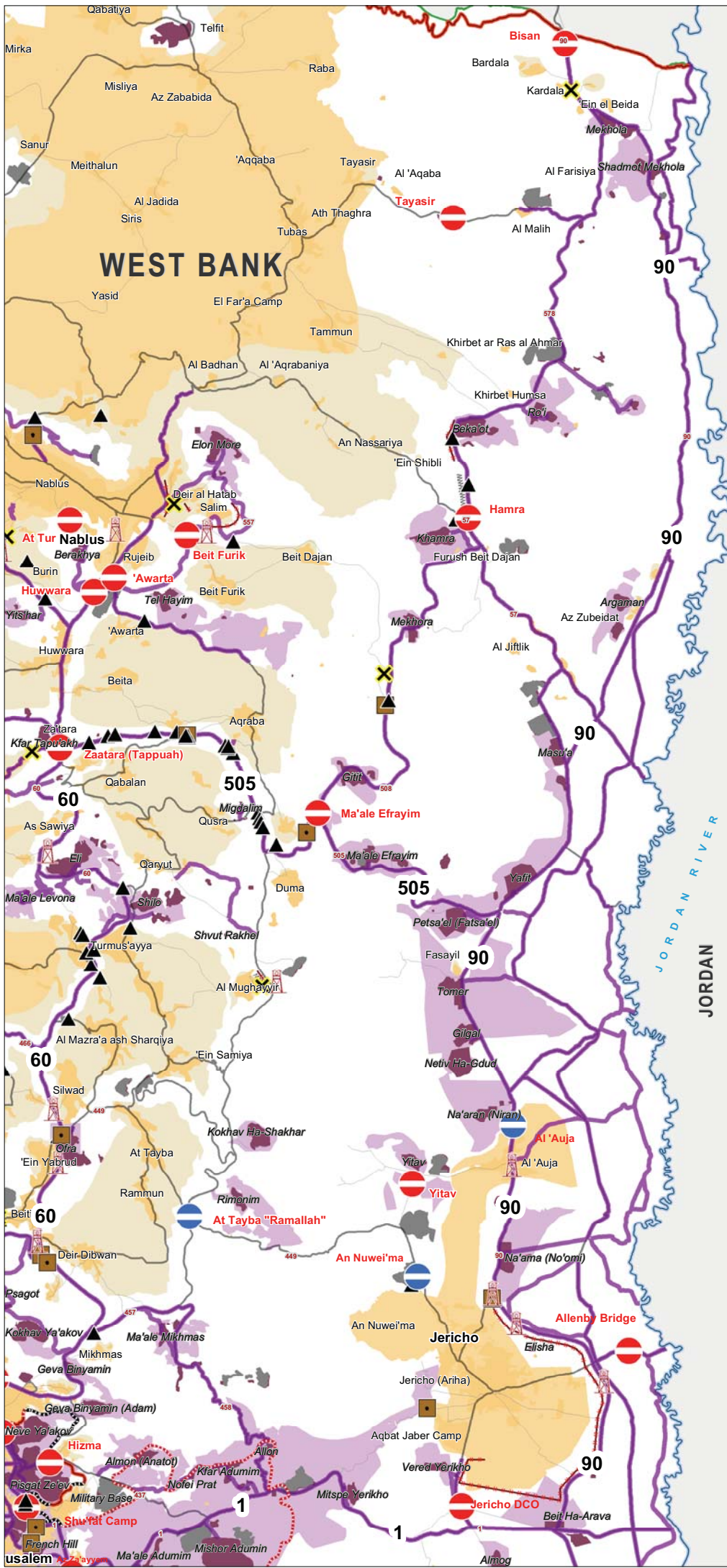
Since May 2005, only Palestinians with an address on their identification card from the north of the Jordan Valley are allowed to reside there. This has affected many people who have lived in the Jordan Valley for many years, but may not have that address on their identification card. Women who have married into a family from the Jordan valley for example, or others who were born in other areas of the West Bank but now live there are most affected. Residents of the Jordan Valley without the corrected address on their identification card fear traveling to other areas of the West Bank in case they are prohibited from returning to their homes.

ii. Permits to Access work and land

Non-resident landowners: Palestinians who own land or property in the Jordan Valley, but live in the Tubas areas of the West Bank can no longer access their property without a permit. The permits issued

Checkpoints into the Jordan Valley

Checkpoint	Permit needed (by car / bus / truck)	Remarks
Hamra	All vehicles and pedestrians (excluding residents of the north Jordan Valley with the appropriate identification card)	Since 19 Oct, only Jordan Valley residents are permitted to use this checkpoint. Workers in the Jordan Valley and non-resident landowners obtain a permit to pass through the checkpoint.
Tayasir	As above	As above
Ma'ale Efrayim	As above	As above
Al 'Auja	As above	As above



Closures

- Checkpoint
- Partial checkpoint
- Observation tower
- Road gate
- Roadblock
- Earth mound
- Earth wall
- Trench

Oslo Agreement

- Area (A)¹
- Area (B)²
- Area (C)³

1-Full Palestinian civil and military control.
 2-Full Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli-Palestinian military control.
 3-Full Israeli civil and military control.

- Nature Reserve
- Special Case (H2)

Road Network

- Restricted road

Road with restrictions for Palestinian vehicle use.

- Regional or main road
- Other road

90 Road number

Barrier

- Constructed Barrier
- Under construction
- Projected Barrier

Planned Barrier - path based on Israeli Government (Ministry of Defence - Seam Zone Authority) maps, published 30 June 2004 and IDF land seizure orders.

- Palestinian built-up area
- Israeli settlement
- Israeli military base
- Area of settlement municipal boundary

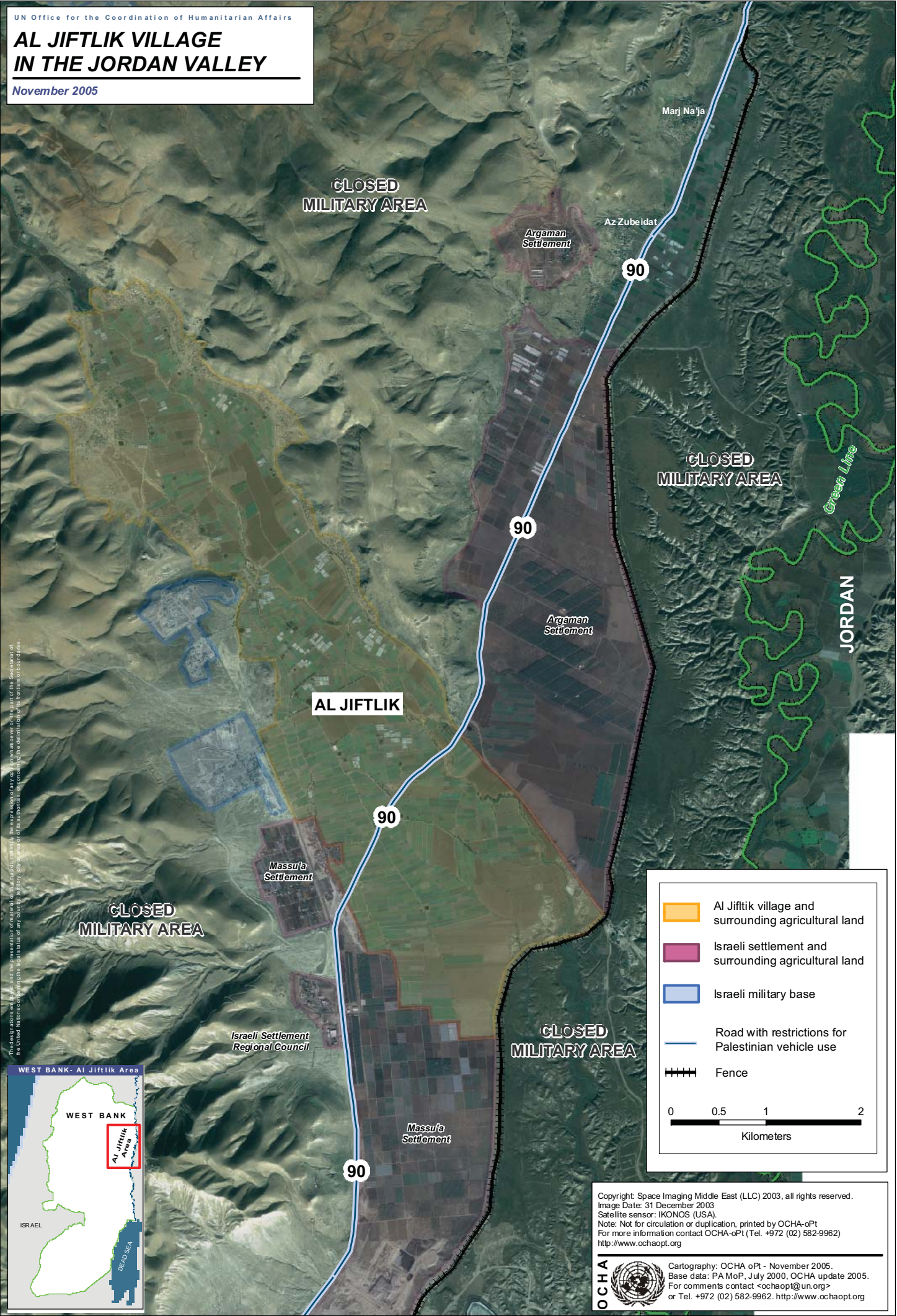
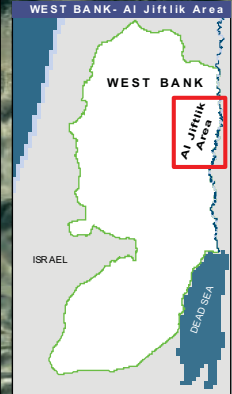
0 5 10 Kilometers



AL JIFTLIK VILLAGE IN THE JORDAN VALLEY

November 2005

This publication is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an offer of any kind. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any legal or other action. The United Nations is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this publication.



- Al Jiftlik village and surrounding agricultural land
- Israeli settlement and surrounding agricultural land
- Israeli military base
- Road with restrictions for Palestinian vehicle use
- Fence

0 0.5 1 2
Kilometers

Copyright: Space Imaging Middle East (LLC) 2003, all rights reserved.
 Image Date: 31 December 2003
 Satellite sensor: IKONOS (USA)
 Note: Not for circulation or duplication, printed by OCHA-oPt
 For more information contact OCHA-oPt (Tel. +972 (02) 582-9962)
<http://www.ochaopt.org>

OCHA Cartography: OCHA oPt - November 2005.
 Base data: PA MoP, July 2000, OCHA update 2005.
 For comments contact <ochaopt@un.org>
 or Tel. +972 (02) 582-9962. <http://www.ochaopt.org>

2. A vulnerable economy

The economy of the Jordan Valley is based on tourism, mainly focusing in and around Jericho, whereas the rest of the Valley depends primarily on agriculture. A large number of the Palestinian communities in the Jordan Valley are farmers and/or Bedouins who traditionally graze their animals across the desert valley in search of water and fresh feed. However, if shepherds and farmers are caught crossing through the national reserves they can be fined between NIS 750 - 800 for trespassing. Movement of people through military areas is not only prohibited, but can also be dangerous. Movement restrictions are undermining the livelihoods of the communities, as well as impacting on their traditions and daily life.

More than 90% of the Jordan Valley is in Area C (i.e. under Israeli military and administrative control) except for Al Auja and Jericho in the south which are Area A and five villages which are Area B (under Palestinian administrative control). As a result, in most of the area little Palestinian infrastructure has been authorized since 1967, and many communities dotted throughout the Jordan Valley do not have an electricity or water network. Palestinian construction within Area C without a permit risks demolition by the IDF.

Jericho's tourism sector, central to the Jordan Valley economy, was devastated following September 2000. Elsewhere in the valley, agriculture plays a prominent role but has suffered under the movement restrictions. Closure can result in the complete loss of a

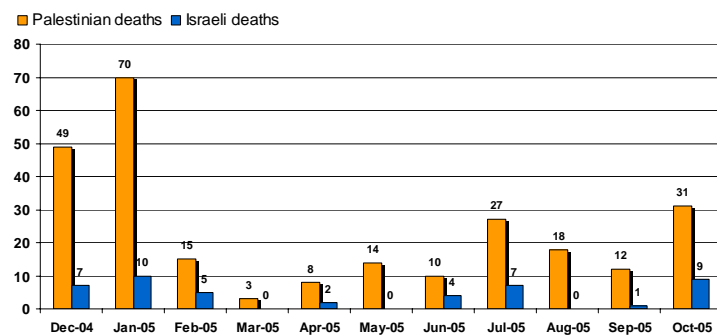
crop as workers are not available to harvest a field or the goods are not able to leave the area. Agricultural goods are subject to the same restrictions as other goods during periods of closure; however the impact is higher due to the perishable nature of milk, cheese, fresh fruit and vegetables. Delays in transportation due to security checks and delays at checkpoints can result in spoilage and therefore a reduction in value.

The permit system can cause difficulties for workers to access their place of work, impacting not only their own household income, but also the productivity of the farms upon which they work. Landowners who do have access cannot take on fully the burden of farming the land without hired labour. Problems with marketing also undermine agriculture's viability.

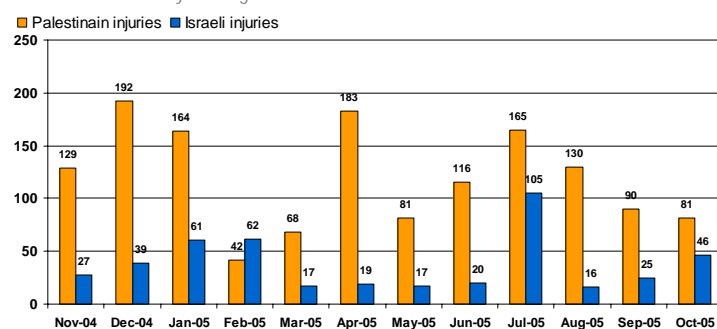
The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) regularly patrol the northern area and if Palestinians are found in the Jordan Valley without a Jordan Valley address on their identity card, they are brought or sent to Tayasir checkpoint, regardless of where their place of residence or work may be. Their identification cards are confiscated and must be collected within four days from the Palestinian district liaison office in Jericho, incurring further costs and difficulties. When identification cards are confiscated, people from Kardala, Bardala and 'Ein al Beida have been known to cross through the hills from Tayasir, on foot, through a military area, avoiding Road 90 to get home without encountering the IDF.

II. Monitoring Issues²

Casualties: Palestinian and Israeli Deaths



Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes



Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

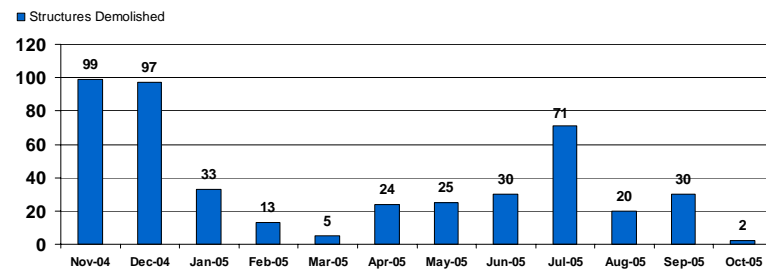
Casualties

From 28 September to 1 November 2005, 31 Palestinians were killed and 81 injured. Most of these casualties occurred during Israel Defence Forces (IDF) search and arrest campaigns in the West Bank and Israel Air Force (IAF) aerial strikes in the Gaza Strip after 19 October.

Nine Israelis were killed and further 46 injured. The majority of these casualties occurred after a suicide bombing in the Israeli town of Hadera on 26 October.

Casualty figures in the month following Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip are higher than reported in the previous month (September 2005) and are the highest Palestinian and Israeli fatalities reported since February 2005.

Structures demolished

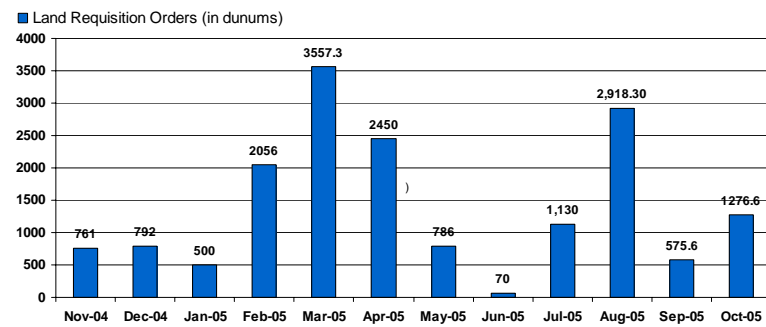


Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

Structures demolished / people affected

For the same period (28 September to 1 November 2005), two structures were demolished by the IDF in the West Bank (Tubas governorate) for reportedly being built without permits. A further six structures were damaged, four of these during IAF aerial strikes in the Gaza Strip. The number of structures demolished is significantly lower than in September 2005 and the lowest number of structures demolished since November 2004.

Land Requisition Orders



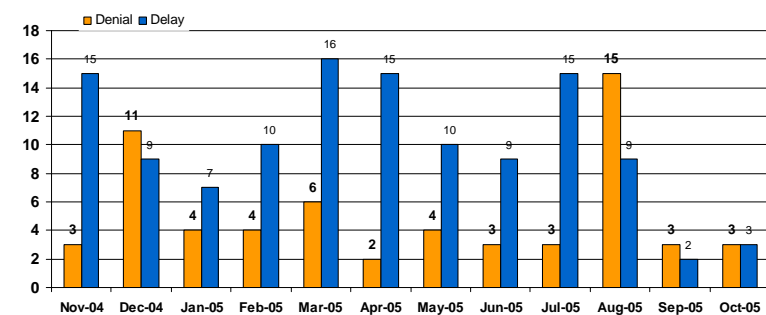
Source: OCHA Weekly Briefing Notes

Land levelling/requisition/trees destroyed

IDF military orders requisitioned 1276.6 dunums (127.7 hectares) of land between 28 September and 1 November 2005.³ This includes large requisition orders totalling 929 dunums (92.9 hectares) for land in three villages north of Ramallah for the construction of the Barrier around Ar'iel and Emmanuel settlements. Large requisition orders were also issued in Tulkarm governorate (totalling 164.1 dunums/16.4 hectares) for the construction of a new fence around Avnei Khefets and Enav settlements. The amount of land requisitioned remains comparatively high in 2005.

Land levelling continued for the construction of the Barrier in Qalqiliya, Salfit, Ramallah/Al Bireh, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron governorates.

Ambulance Incidents



Source: PRCS

Ambulance incidents⁴

The number of reported incidents involving denials and delays (in excess of 30 minutes) at IDF checkpoints for Palestinian ambulances providers remained low in October 2005. Three denials of access and three delays of access were reported by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in the West Bank.

Since 24 September, the Gaza Strip has been sealed off with the closure of all four major crossing points (Erez, Karni, Sufa and Rafah crossings). Gazans referred for medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip experienced access restrictions during this period with Rafah crossing predominately closed and Erez crossing only open for emergency medical referrals after prior coordination.

Access for Palestinian workers and traders into Israel from the Gaza Strip⁵

Erez crossing point is the only access point for Gazan workers and traders with valid permits to enter Israel. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Labour, as of 9 September, 278 work permits were issued for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to work in Israel, including 124 with overnight stay.

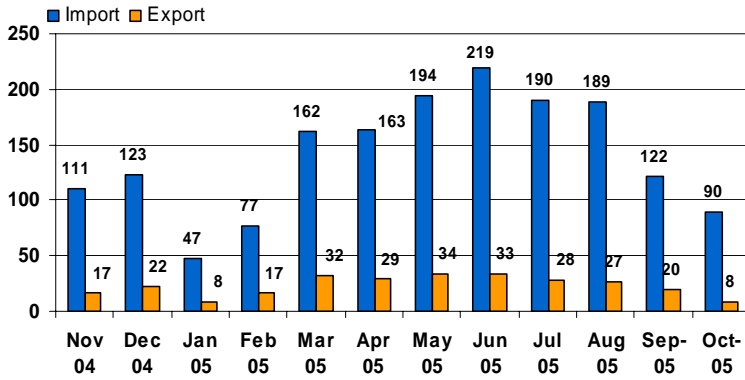
The average daily crossing for Palestinian workers and traders through Erez crossing in the Gaza Strip in September 2005 fell to 128 workers and 120 traders.⁶ This is lower than reported in the previous month (August 2005). Movement for workers and traders has been severely restricted since 13 August 2005 (coinciding with Israeli preparations for disengagement). Following Palestinian militant rocket attacks on 24 September that injured six Israelis, the crossing has been closed to all Palestinian workers and traders. This closure continued throughout the month of October, coinciding with several Jewish holidays.⁷

Erez Crossing: Average Daily Labour Movement

	Nov 04	Dec 04	Jan 05	Feb 05	Mar 05	Apr 05	May 05	Jun 05	Jul 05	Aug 05	Sep 05	Oct 05
Workers to Israel	0	72	49	390	1,451	3,200	2,067	3,588	1,767	281	128	0
Traders to Israel	N/A	N/A	17	70	158	224	103	362	175	168	120	0

Source: Palestinian National Security Forces, Data for 2004 obtained from UNSCO.

Karni Crossing: Average Daily Truckloads of Imports / Exports

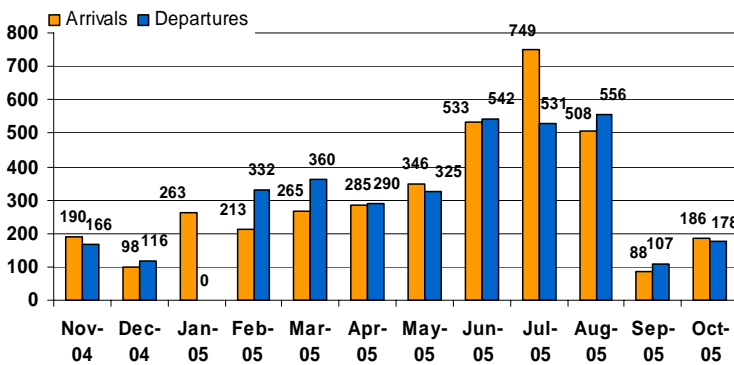


Source: Data Nov 04 -May 05 UNSCO. Jun 05 onwards OCHA. All data received from Ministry of National Economy.

Access for Gazan trade movement through Karni crossing⁸

Karni crossing is the principle point for transporting commercial goods to/from the Gaza Strip. The average daily number of truckloads of imported and exported goods through Karni crossing fell in October 2005 for the second consecutive month.⁹ Karni crossing was completely closed between 24 September – 9 October. Outside of usual closing hours (Saturdays) it was completely closed for a further six days (including half days) after 10 October and was open for another four days for imported goods only.¹⁰

Rafah Passenger Terminal: Average Daily Arrivals / Departures

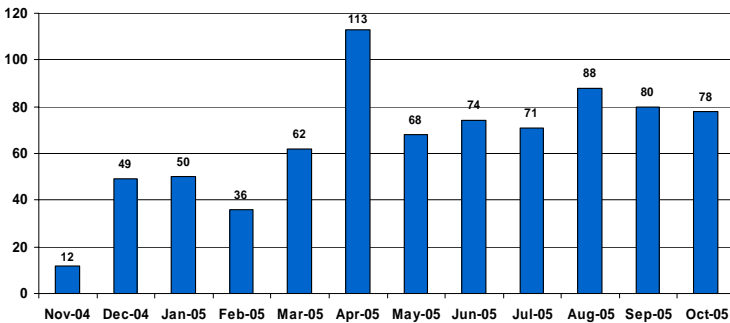


Source: Data Nov 04 -Feb 05 UNSCO. Mar 05 onwards OCHA. All data received from Ministry of Civilian Affairs.

International Palestinians' access from the Gaza Strip

Rafah Passenger Terminal is the principal point of access for Gazans travelling overseas and is located on the Egyptian border. Following the Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip, Israel has closed the terminal since 7 September. Since this time it has been opened sporadically (one day in September and six days in October).¹¹ The closure of passenger terminal is reflected in the low average number of daily arrivals and departures in October 2005.

Humanitarian Incidents



Source: Access and Closure Information System (ACIS) and UNRWA monthly reports

Humanitarian Access¹²

In October 2005, international organisations reported 78 access incidents. UNRWA filed 76 reports (compared to 79 in September 2005) in which the delivery of aid and/or the movement of personnel were obstructed by the IDF or Israeli Border Police. The humanitarian access incidents reported by UNRWA involved delay and/or denial of access at fixed and mobile checkpoints throughout the West Bank. The incidents predominately occurred at checkpoints at the entrance to Jerusalem.

On the evening of 24 October, Erez crossing in the Gaza Strip was closed to all internationals, including UN agencies and international diplomatic passport holders. The crossing re-opened on the 25 October but was closed again on the 26 October following the Hadera suicide bombing. It was again re-opened at 2 pm on 27 October.

Access for water transporters / tankers¹³

Closure measures and the West Bank Barrier continue to have a severe effect on water transport; closures can result in the inability of water tankers to reach their destination. According to a WaSH MP survey in 2005, 200 Palestinian communities are not connected to water networks and in 11 other communities, over half of the households are not connected to a network.

Access for Gaza fisherfolk¹⁴

Since January 2005, the Israeli authorities have restricted Palestinian fishing up to ten nautical miles from the Gaza Strip coastline. Between 24 September and 6 October, all fishing from the Gaza Strip coastline was prohibited.

Palestinian olive harvest¹⁵

The olive harvest began in the West Bank in September 2005 and will continue until mid-November. OCHA reported a limited number of access incidents in September and October for Palestinian farmers trying to access their land during the olive harvest. The incidents primarily involved Palestinian farmers in the northern West Bank not being able to access their land in the closed areas (areas between the Barrier and the 1949 Armistice Line or 'Green Line') due to denial of permits, the closure of Barrier gates and Israeli settlers preventing access for Palestinians to olive groves near settlements.

III. New humanitarian reports

Palestinian Perceptions Issue Paper No. 2 – Children and Youth in the Gaza Strip. The Swiss Development Corporation, UNDP and Near East Consulting reported that poverty and economic welfare in the Gaza Strip are not conducive to child and youth welfare. Children and youth living in poor households are more like to face challenges to their education, their health, their nutritional status or their psychological well-being. See [www.palestinianperceptions.ps].

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics Press Release on unemployment. PCBS Labour Force Survey results (July – September 2005) found that unemployment (relaxed definition) increased to 28.4% in the 3rd quarter of 2005 (an increase in 2.1% from 2nd quarter 2005). Unemployment is highest in Jenin governorate in the West Bank and in Gaza North governorate in the Gaza Strip. The average daily net wage increased slightly to 74.5 NIS (USD 15.74) while the percentage of employees whose monthly wages are below the poverty line increased to 57%. See [<http://www.pcbs.org>].

Palestinian Monitoring Group – Education Under Occupation. PHG released a report analysing trends in the disruption to Palestinians' schooling resulting from Israeli military and settler activity between during the 2003-05. See [<http://www.phrmg.org>].

IV. Humanitarian assistance to the oPt

European Commission proposes EU strategy for support to Palestinians. The EC's post-disengagement strategy is medium-term and builds on the €60 million post-disengagement plan already being implemented. The strategy is conditioned on progress being made towards the Road Map and in the six priority areas identified by the UN Special Envoy to the Quartet on Gaza Disengagement.

Saudi Arabia contributes more than USD 7.5 million to UNESCO. The contribution to UNESCO of over SR 28 million is to support educational programmes in the oPt.

USAID project supporting mothers and newborns in Bethlehem. USAID concluded a USD 3.5 million project with the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem to build a new labour and delivery ward, expand its Emergency Department Services, renovate a larger nursery and create a day care centre.

UNICEF Appeals for Additional Funding. UNICEF has highlighted that an additional USD 3.2 million is urgently needed for health services, educational and psychosocial support in the oPt. US 15.3 million has already been received in 2005 but more funding is needed.

New FAO project on food insecurity. FAO announced a new project to provide the PA with updated information on food insecurity. The new project will update a 2003 assessment by FAO that found that food insecurity is a reality for 40 percent of the 3.6 million people living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

¹ Palestinian farmers in the Jordan valley are more vulnerable to the fluctuations in the security situation. For example, workers from Tammun with a permit issued by the Ro'i settlement were able to travel through Tayasir or Hamra checkpoint, along Road 90 during the close imposed in October 2005. This permission was not granted to DCO permit holders, implying that workers in Palestinian farms were prevented from travelling to work and those working in settlements could work.

² OCHA monitors a number of indicators related to the protection of civilians in our Weekly Briefing Notes. OCHA is also tasked with monitoring the specific commitments given by the Government of Israel to Ms Caroline Bertini in August 2002 in her capacity as Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the UN Secretary-General. Ms Bertini's mission was in response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation and was to assess the nature and scale of the humanitarian needs and to clarify the respective responsibilities of those actors involved. The Government of Israel made and/or confirmed a number of humanitarian commitments to Ms Bertini during her mission. Since this time OCHA has produced monthly reports monitoring the Government of Israel's actions in relation to these commitments. The monitoring of the Bertini Commitments is now included in the Monitoring Section of the Humanitarian Update.

³ The amount of land requisitioned in September 2005 has been updated to include a previously unreported military order (18 September) to requisition land belonging to Palestinian farmers from the villages of Al Jab'a (Bethlehem governorate) and Surif (Hebron governorate) to create a new terminal crossing.

⁴ Government of Israel Bertini Commitments (2002): (1) Palestinian ambulances will wait no more than 30 minutes at any checkpoints; and (2) Effective mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that Palestinians seeking critical medical services (child delivery, dialysis, chemotherapy etc) can quickly pass all checkpoints.

⁵ Government of Israel Bertini Commitment (2002) (confirmed during the Bertini mission): Increase in the number of work permits for Palestinian workers in Israel from the Gaza Strip.

⁶ The average daily Palestinian labour movement through Erez crossing is calculated excluding weekends i.e. Fridays and Saturdays.

⁷ Rosh Hashanah (4 – 5 Oct.), Yom Kippur (13 Oct.), Sukkot (18 – 24 Oct.) and Simchat Torah (25 Oct.).

⁸ Government of Israel Bertini Commitment (2002) (confirmed during the Bertini mission): Increase in the shipments at Karni crossing in the Gaza Strip. For more information see OCHA *Gaza Access report* (October 2005).

⁹ The average daily number of truckloads of imported and exported goods is calculated on the basis of 30 days per month.

¹⁰ For more information see OCHA *Gaza Access report* (October 2005).

¹¹ For more information see OCHA *Gaza Access report* (October 2005).

¹² Government of Israel Bertini Commitments (2002) - Facilitation of International Organisations: (1) Israel will fully facilitate the assistance activities of international organisations with particular reference to UNRWA; (2) Israel agrees to review and strengthen the liaison arrangements between international agencies and the IDF to facilitate assistance activities; and (3) Israel will improve the situation at checkpoints, including the deployment of more experienced IDF personnel.

¹³ Government of Israel Bertini Commitment (2002): Problems related to water deliveries to Palestinian towns and villages will be addressed to ensure that daily water deliveries in proper quantities can be supplied by Palestinian water tankers.

¹⁴ Government of Israel Bertini Commitment (2002)(confirmed during the Bertini mission): The fishing zone for Palestinian fishing boats of the Gaza Strip will be extended to 12 nautical miles. For more information see OCHA *Gaza Access report* (October 2005).

¹⁵ Government of Israel Bertini Commitment (2002)(confirmed during the Bertini mission): Facilitation of the Palestinian Olive Harvest.