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CHRONOLOGY

16 NOVEMBER 2005–15 FEBRUARY 2006

COMPILED BY MICHELE K. ESPOSITO

This section is part eighty-four of a chronology begun in JPS 13, no. 3 (Spring 1984). Chronology dates reflect Eastern Standard Time (EST). For a more comprehensive overview of events related to the al-Aqsa intifada and of regional and international developments related to the peace process, see the Quarterly Update on Conflict and Diplomacy in this issue.

16 NOVEMBER

The **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** shuts the Hebron–Bethlehem road to Palestinian traffic; demolishes 3 **Palestinian homes** northwest of Jerusalem for construction of the **separation wall**; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Ramallah, in Tulkarm, nr. Bethlehem, Hebron. **10 Jewish settler girls** fr. Binyamina settlement cut open sacks of olives harvested by Palestinians in nearby Sinjil; more than 10 IDF soldiers observe but do not intervene until after the damage is done, detaining 6 of the girls. (YA 11/16; PCHR 11/17, 11/24)

17 NOVEMBER

IDF plainclothesmen fatally shoot wanted **al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (AMB) mbrs. Ahmad Abahra and Muhammad Zayid** as their car crosses a checkpoint in Jenin in an apparent assassination. The **IDF** also erects a new observation tower nr. Kiryat Arba settlement in Hebron; sends troops into Silwad nr. Ramallah, fires on stone-throwing youths who confront the troops, wounding and arresting 2; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Hebron, nr. Tulkarm; begins work on a new segment of the **separation wall** northwest of Ramallah that is expected to seize at least 5,330 dunams (d.; 4 d. = 1 acre) of land in Abud village; bulldozes 26 d. of land outside Bethlehem for construction of a permanent **IDF post**. **Palestinians in Bethlehem** report that for the past few days, the **IDF** has imposed new arrangements at the entrances to the city, requiring tourists entering and exiting to leave their busses, enter a transit hall for passport and baggage checks and customs processing that last up to 2 hrs.

The **Israel Lands Admin.** issues tenders for construction of 13 new housing units in Ma'ale Adumim settlement nr. Jerusalem; the **Israeli Housing Min.** issues tenders for construction of infrastructure projects in Adam, Ariel, Ma'ale Adumim settlements. **Jewish settlers** beat a Palestinian harvesting his olive trees in Awarta. In Gaza, **100s of AMB mbrs.** fire rifles in the air, defying the ban on carrying weapons in public, calling for reform within Fatah, demanding jobs and an international investigation into the 11/04 death of Yasir Arafat based on rumors (thus far unsubstantiated) that he was poisoned. In Nablus, **AMB mbrs.** protesting a recent PA crackdown on illegal weapons and criminal activity fire on **PA police**, leaving 1 PA policeman wounded. (Arab Hotel Association press release, PCHR, REU, XIN, YA 11/17; HA, NYT, WP, WT 11/18; PCHR 11/24)

Likud PM Ariel Sharon agrees to the demand of his coalition partner, newly elected **Labor leader Amir Peretz**, to hold early elections in 2/06 or 3/06. (BBC, WT 11/17; NYT, WP 11/18)

18 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** closes the Erez crossing into Gaza, citing threats of an attack; fatally shoots an unarmed **Palestinian** “in a suspicious position” nr. a settler bypass road outside Hebron; makes a predawn raid and fires on residential areas of Jenin town and refugee camp (r.c.), orders all male Palestinians ages 16–35 to gather for an ID check, arresting 1; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Nablus; confiscates 94 d. in Bayt Jala, 115 d. in al-Khadir, 119 d. in al-Walaja for construction of the **separation wall** outside Bethlehem; confiscates 10 d. of Palestinian land nr. Jenin for “military purposes.” In Khan

Yunis, **PA police** fatally shoot a **Palestinian** in an exchange of gunfire with mbrs. of 2 **Palestinian families** in a dispute over land on the vacated Neve Dekalim settlement site that also leaves 10 other Palestinians (including 2 policemen) wounded; in response, 10s of Palestinians vandalize a police station in nearby Khan Yunis, set 2 police vehicles on fire. (HA 11/18; AP, HA, NYT, WP 11/19; WP, XIN 11/20; PCHR 11/24)

19 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** reinforces troops in Hebron; shoots, wounds a Palestinian teenager playing with a toy gun nr. Ramallah; shoots, wounds 5 Palestinians allegedly carrying weapons at checkpoints across the West Bank; conducts predawn arrest raids, house searches in Hebron, al-Jalazun r.c. nr. Ramallah, al-Khadir (arresting 10 Palestinian boys ages 14–18); confiscates 110 d. of agricultural land in al-Jaba'a southwest of Bethlehem for construction of a settler bypass road linking Gush Etzion settlement to Bethlehem. (NYT 11/20; PCHR 11/24)

20 NOVEMBER

Israel partially reopens the Erez crossing into Gaza (closed on 11/18), allowing 2,000 Palestinian workers, 1,000 businessmen, and some goods to cross per day; conducts predawn arrest raids, house searches nr. Qalqilya and in Jenin town and r.c., Nablus. (XIN 11/20; PCHR 11/24)

21 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** bulldozes 2 **Palestinian homes** in Anata nr. Jerusalem, conducts arrest raids, house searches in Dahaysha r.c. The **Israeli Housing Min.** approves plans for 350 new housing units in Ma'ale Adumim settlement. (IMEMC, PM 11/22)

After several days of mtgs. with advisers and Likud colleagues, **Sharon** asks **Israeli pres. Moshe Katsav** to dissolve parliament, announces his departure fr. **Likud** and plans to form a more moderate centrist **Forward party** (Kadima) to run in 2006 elections; 15 of Likud's 40 MKs pledge to follow Sharon. (AP, BBC, JTA, NYT, REU, WP, WT 11/21; CSM, HA, WP 11/22; WP 11/25)

22 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** closes the Sufa commercial crossing in Gaza; demolishes 1 **Palestinian**

home in Wadi al-Juz in East Jerusalem, 1 in Silwan nr. Jerusalem; conducts arrest raids, house searches, random ID checks in al-Khadir, nr. Hebron, in and around Tulkarm; sends troops into Ramallah to surround 2 mosques during dawn prayers, thoroughly checking IDs and searching Palestinians as they leave but making no arrests. **PA security forces** on a campaign to confiscate unlicensed Palestinian vehicles inadvertently foil an **IDF undercover unit** raid into Bethlehem when they stop the unit's car, bearing Palestinian plates; the undercover unit calls in **IDF** backup, which surrounds the PA officers and orders them to lay down their arms until they retreat. (IMEMC 11/22; PCHR 11/24; YA 11/30)

23 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** places a curfew on Jenin, sends in 70 jeeps and 25 armored personnel carriers, conducts arrest raids and house searches, exchanging gunfire with Palestinians, leaving 1 **Palestinian** stone-thrower dead, 9 Palestinians and 2 Israeli border police wounded; wanted **Islamic Jihad Jenin cmdr. Iyad Abu al-Rub** and an aide, fearing they would be assassinated, surrender in a deal brokered by **local AMB head Zakariya Zubaydi**. The **IDF** also conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Nablus. (HA, Israeli FMin. press release, PCHR 11/24, 12/1)

24 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** sends troops back into Jenin (see 11/23) to blow up a **Palestinian home** that allegedly was a bomb-making factory, also damaging 3 stores, firing rubber bullets at stone-throwing youths who confront them, injuring 1 Palestinian; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem; for the first time since 1967, orders Hebron's Waqf authorities to close the Ibrahimi Mosque for 3 days so that **Jewish settlers** can celebrate a holy day; orders 50 Palestinian shops nr. Kiryat Arba settlement to be closed for 6 mos. "to keep public order and protect the security" of the IDF (PCHR 12/1)

25 NOVEMBER

In keeping with the agmt. brokered by Rice on 11/15, **Israel** allows the **PA** to open the Rafah crossing under **EU** monitoring for 4 hrs./day; only foot traffic will be allowed

until vehicle scanners are installed; **Egypt** will require men age 18-40 to obtain an entry visa. The **IDF** also tightens restrictions on Palestinian movement in Hebron; fires teargas at stone-throwing Palestinians outside a polling station in Aida r.c. nr. Bethlehem being used for the Fatah primaries in advance of the 1/25 elections (see Quarterly Update); conducts arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, Hebron. **Palestinians** report that a **private contractor for a Jewish settlement** nr. Bil'in recently uprooted 100s of the village's olive trees located on the western side of the **separation wall** despite **IDF** pledges that villagers would be given access to the trees to harvest them. (JTA, REU, YA 11/25; IMEMC, NYT, WP, WT 11/26; PCHR 12/1)

Extremist Jews attack a busload of **Israeli Palestinians** in Shafa 'Amr nr. Jerusalem, injuring 8 Palestinians. (IMEMC 11/26)

26 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids in Hebron. Also in Hebron, **100s of Jewish settlers** rampage through Palestinian areas of the city, forcing stores to close, vandalizing homes and shops, injuring 2 Palestinians. **Jewish settlers** fr. Harsina, under **IDF** protection, uproot 130 Palestinian olive trees in Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. Gilo nr. Bethlehem beat unconscious a 60-yr-old Palestinian passing nr. the settlement. **Jewish settlers** fr. Elon Moreh nr. Nablus cut down more than 200 Palestinian olive trees in nearby Salim. (IMEMC 11/26; HA 11/27, 11/30; PCHR 12/1)

27 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** requests that all **Israelis** and **journalists** leave Gaza until further notice; reopens the Sufa commercial crossing in Gaza (closed on 11/22); conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Arub r.c., 'Ayn Bayt al-Ma', Hebron, Nablus. The **PA security forces** launch a large-scale campaign to crackdown on criminal activity and to restore order to the West Bank and Gaza, focusing initially on Gaza, Jenin, Nablus, and Ramallah, searching for stolen property (primarily vehicles), unlicensed weapons, drugs; security forces exchange gunfire with local gunmen in Balata r.c. (IMEMC, JAZ 11/27; IMEMC 11/29; IMEMC, PCHR 12/1)

28 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** fires at least 20 artillery shells at the open area on the n. Gaza border, causing no injuries; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Hebron, al-Zababda nr. Jenin (arresting 8 Arab American University students). **Jewish settlers** driving nr. Nablus abduct, beat, release a Palestinian waiting for a taxi along the Beita-Nablus road. **Fatah** gunmen raid 10s of polling places, firing in the air, stealing ballot boxes, claiming that the party's primary voting is not fair (see Quarterly Update). (AP, NYT, REU, WP 11/29; HA, PCHR 12/1)

29 NOVEMBER

For the 2d time in a wk. (see 11/22), an **IDF** undercover unit driving a vehicle with Palestinian plates enters Bethlehem, attempts to stop a Palestinian taxi to arrest a passenger, but **PA security forces** observe and intervene, exchanging gunfire with the **IDF** unit, leaving 1 PA officer, 1 bystander wounded; the undercover unit calls in reinforcements to extract it. The **IDF** also fires rubber bullets at Palestinian stone-throwers in Hebron; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Dahaysha r.c. and Jenin town and r.c. (during which an **IDF** dog attacks and seriously injures a 12-yr-old boy), in and around Hebron (severely beating 4 Palestinians), and nr. Bethlehem. **Jewish settlers** fr. Emanuel settlement nr. Qalqilya uproot and burn a grove of Palestinian olive trees nearby. **Jewish settlers** fr. Ma'ale Adumim severely beat a Palestinian walking nr. the settlement. (IMEMC, REU 11/29; PCHR 12/1)

30 NOVEMBER

The **IDF** reinforces roadblocks around Qalqilya; sends 40 armored vehicles, escorted by helicopters, into Nablus to conduct arrest raids targeting the **AMB** and **Hamas**, shelling an apartment building, firing on stone-throwers and residential areas (wounding 10 Palestinians), rounding up all males over age 16 for ID checks (arresting 4); patrols in, fires on residential areas of Tulkarm town and r.c., nearby Anabta, and Tubas nr. Jenin; demolishes a **Palestinian home** in Bethlehem for being built without a permit; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Aida r.c. and Balata r.c., and nr. Hebron, Jenin, Ramallah, Tulkarm. In the evening, the **AMB** fires several mortars fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or

injuries. (HA, IMEMC 11/30; PCHR 12/1, 12/8; HA 12/9)

1 DECEMBER

The **IDF** raids a Tulkarm school where Fatah primaries are being held, searches voters, leaves; arrests **al-Jazeera West Bank bureau chief Awad Rajub** at his home in Hebron "for security reasons." **Palestinians** detonate a roadside bomb nr. an IDF patrol outside Efrat settlement nr. Bethlehem, causing no damage or injuries. A **Palestinian gunman** fatally shoots another **Palestinian** in Bayt Hanun, sparking armed clashes btwn. the 2 families that leave 9 wounded. (HA, IMEMC 12/1; WP 12/2; PCHR 12/5; PCHR 12/8)

2 DECEMBER

The **IDF** makes a predawn arrest raid on Awarta nr. Nablus targeting the **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**; fires on 3 unarmed Palestinians attempting to cross the Gaza border fence into Israel to find work, killing **1 Palestinian**, wounding 2; fires on, damages a Palestinian fishing boat off Rafah, arresting the fisherman; fires tear gas, rubber bullets, percussion grenades at Palestinians holding a weekly nonviolent protest against the **separation wall** in Bil'in; confiscates 5 d. of Palestinian land nr. Alon settlement nr. Nablus for construction of an IDF outpost. **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; fire at an IDF patrol nr. the s. Gaza border, causing no damage or injuries. (IMEMC, YA 12/2; HA, IMEMC 12/3; HA 12/4; PCHR 12/8)

3 DECEMBER

After **Palestinians** fire **2 rockets** into Israel, causing no damage or injuries, an **IDF** helicopter fires missiles at an **Islamic Jihad** charity in Gaza City, damaging the building, lightly wounding 1 bystander. In response, **Palestinians** fire **3 rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. In retaliation, the **IDF** carries out artillery and F-16 air strikes on open areas in Gaza, firing at least 30 shells and 3 missiles, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** fires on, sinks a Palestinian fishing boat in Palestinian waters off Gaza, killing **1 Palestinian**, leaving 1 missing; the IDF says that it attempted to halt the boat after the Palestinian sailor headed toward Egyptian waters alone and returned

with a passenger, but the boat ignored warning shots and fired back at the naval vessel, causing no damage or injuries. (The **IDF** says that videotape that routinely records the naval unit's activity ran out about three minutes before the incident.) The **IDF** also begins work on a new segment of the **separation wall** northwest of Jerusalem in al-Jib, Dahiyat al-Barid; conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Khadir, Qabatya nr. Jenin. A **Jewish settler** injures a Palestinian child in a deliberate hit-and-run nr. Qalqilya. A **PA policeman**, **4 Palestinians** are shot dead in Bayt Hanun during a clash btwn. rival Palestinian clans that erupts at the funeral for the mbr. of 1 family who was killed on 12/1. (AP, HA, IMEMC 12/3; AFP, HA 12/4; PCHR, WT 12/5; PCHR 12/8; IMEMC 12/10)

4 DECEMBER

Israel increases the number of Palestinian workers allowed into Israel fr. the West Bank to 37,000, while **Israeli police** launch a crackdown on Palestinians working in Israel without permits, arresting 250. The **IDF** erects a fortified observation tower on the Gaza border nr. Khan Yunis; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Jenin, al-Khadir and nr. Hebron. **AMB mbrs.** fire **3 rockets** into Israel, causing light damage but no injuries. Late in the evening, the **IDF** responds with artillery strikes on rocket launch sites in n. Gaza, with fighter jets creating sonic booms over the Strip and conducting air strikes on an **Islamic Jihad** charity and alleged weapons-making factory; **Israeli DM Shaul Mofaz** approves an increase in assassinations in response to the rocket attacks. **PA police** shoot, seriously wound a Palestinian driver in Ramallah who refuses to stop for an ID check, precipitating a protest by some 100 bystanders, joined by AMB gunmen who force local shop owners to close their stores in protest. (HA, IMEMC, XIN 12/4; HA, VOI, WT 12/5; IMEMC 12/6; NYT 12/7; PCHR 12/8)

5 DECEMBER

An **Islamic Jihad suicide bomber** fr. Kefar Rai (btwn. Jenin and Tulkarm) detonates a device outside a shopping mall in Netanya, killing **5 Israelis**, wounding 31 (4 seriously). Islamic Jihad says the attack is retaliation for the IDF's 10/24 assassination of 2 of its leaders. The **IDF** immediately imposes closures on the West Bank and shuts pedestrian crossings in Gaza (keeping the Qarni

crossing open for goods); announces that it is preparing for a wide-scale retaliation operation in northern Gaza and will step up assassinations and arrest campaigns in the West Bank, with DM **Mofaz** stating that the IDF had "decided to operate in a much broader, much deeper and more intensive manner against the **Islamic Jihad** infrastructure" and would make an effort to keep fr. drawing **Hamas** into the fighting. Later in the evening, the **Israeli security cabinet** authorizes the IDF to "adopt a harsher response" to rocket fire fr. Gaza, targeting built-up areas of Gaza as well as launch sites in uninhabited areas. During the day, the **IDF** also shells uninhabited areas in n. Gaza and in s. Gaza nr. Khan Yunis, causing no damage or injuries; makes 5 mock air raids over Gaza, breaking the sound barrier; fires on residential areas of Aida r.c., wounding 2 Palestinians; conducts arrest raids in and around Hebron and in Bethlehem, Jenin (targeting **Hamas**, including detaining 2 candidates in the 12/15 municipal elections, 1 candidate in the 1/25 parliamentary elections), Ramallah; bulldozes 5 d. of Palestinian land in Silwan for construction of a parking lot for Jewish settlers. **Palestinians** throw 2 pipe bombs at an IDF patrol nr. Bethlehem and fire on an IDF checkpoint nr. Nablus, causing no damage or injuries. **PA police** fire at Palestinians in Jenin rallying in support of the Netanyahu bombing. **Israeli police** round up another 500 Palestinians working in Israel without permits (see 12/4). (BBC, HA, IDF Radio, IMEMC, XIN, YA 12/5; CSM, DS, HA, IMEMC, JAZ, NYT, REU, WP, WT, YA 12/6; AFP, PCHR 12/8)

6 DECEMBER

Overnight, the **IDF** raids Kefar Rai, arrests 15 Palestinians in connection with the 12/5 Netanyahu bombing, including the bomber's father, 3 brothers; also conducts arrest raids in villages around Hebron and Tulkarm, in Bethlehem. **PA security forces** detain 13 **Islamic Jihad** mbrs. in Balata r.c. and Nablus, exchanging fire with **AMB** and Islamic Jihad gunmen opposed to the arrests, causing no reported injuries; also arrest 4 Islamic Jihad mbrs. in the n. West Bank. During the day, the **IDF** suspends Palestinian VIP passage through checkpoints; further tightens restrictions on Palestinian movement in the West Bank; conducts an air strike on Gaza City, targeting and destroying a 1950s statue of the unknown soldier; confiscates 85 d. of Palestinian land outside Bethle-

hem for construction of a permanent checkpoint to separate the western rural areas of Bethlehem fr. the rest of the governorate; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Balata r.c., Hebron; raids, closes 2 Islamic charities in Jenin. A **Palestinian** dies of injuries received earlier. (AP, HA, IMEMC, JAZ, XIN, YA 12/6; NYT, WP 12/7; PCHR, YA 12/8)

Israel suspends further implementation of the 11/15 **Rafah arrangements** brokered by U.S. Secy. of State Condoleezza Rice, aimed at easing Palestinian movement in and out of Gaza, between Gaza and the West Bank, and within the West Bank; tells the **U.S.** that it will not resume discussion of the issue until **PA Pres. Mahmud Abbas** acts against Palestinian militant groups. (NYT, WP, WT 12/9; HA 12/9, 12/10; HA 12/13; WP 12/15, HA 12/16) (see Quarterly Update)

7 DECEMBER

IDF air strikes target the **head of the Popular Resistance Comm.'s (PRC) Salah al-Din Brigades Mahmud Arqan**, assassinating him as he drives through a residential area of Rafah, wounding at least 5 bystanders. In retaliation, **Palestinians** fire several **rockets** and 1 **mortar** fr. n. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; **IDF** artillery fires 10s of shells on roads and uninhabited areas in n. Gaza, causing no reported casualties. The **IDF** also conducts arrest raids nr. Ramallah and in Balata r.c., Hebron, Tulkarm; raids Waqf offices, 2 charitable societies in Jenin, confiscating computers and files, sealing the buildings; conducts arrest raids in Bani Na'im nr. Hebron, Bayt Laqia, Bethlehem, Kafr Dan nr. Jenin, al-Khadi, Tulkarm r.c. Late in the evening, the **IDF** raids the Muslim Youth Association in Hebron, confiscates computers, copiers, documents and vandalizes and seals the building. A **Palestinian woman** (a bystander) is killed, several Palestinians are wounded in a clash btwn. rival clans in Bayt Hanun in continuation of the fatal violence of 12/3. (Israeli FMin. press release, JAZ, JP, YA 12/7; HA, NYT, PCHR, WP, WT, XIN 12/8; HA 12/9; PCHR 12/15)

8 DECEMBER

The **IDF** assassinates **senior AMB mbr. Iyad Qaddas**, firing a missile at a house where he is staying in Jabaliya r.c.; a **2d AMB mbr., Iyad Najjar**, is killed and 1 **AMB mbr.** and 5 bystanders are wounded.

Following the assassination, the **PRC** (firing **rockets**), **IDF** (responding with artillery and air strikes) trade heavy fire across the n. Gaza border, leaving 4 Palestinian civilians wounded. The **IDF** also demolishes 3 **Palestinian homes**, 2 shops nr. Jenin; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Ramallah (including arresting the mayor of Bayt Laqia, who is a Hamas mbr.), nr. Tulkarm and in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Tubas; confiscates 10 d. of Palestinian land east of Bethlehem for construction of an IDF post. At the Qalandia checkpoint outside Ramallah, an **AMB mbr.** fatally stabs an **IDF soldier**, is arrested; the **IDF** immediately seals the crossing until further notice. **PA police** raid some 40 Palestinian homes in Hebron and Tubas, arresting more than 10 **Islamic Jihad mbrs.** in connection with the 12/5 Netanya bombing; Islamic Jihad denounces the raids and warns the PA against becoming an "arm of Israel," while the **AMB** and **PRCs** warn that they will not renew the unilateral truce at the end of the yr. if the arrest campaign continues. (Israeli FMin. press release, XIN, YA 12/8; AFP, BBC, HA, JAZ, NYT, PCHR, REU, WP, WT, XIN, YA 12/9; HA 12/10; PCHR 12/15)

9 DECEMBER

In the 2d such incident in a wk. (see 12/2), an **IDF naval patrol** fires on a Palestinian boat nr. the Egyptian border, suspecting it of being involved in smuggling arms; 1 **Palestinian** is killed, 1 is missing. The **IDF** fires tear gas, rubber bullets at the car of **UN special rapporteur on human rights Jon Dugard** when he visits Bil'in village to observe the weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the **separation wall**; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Hebron, Nablus and nr. Qalqilya, Tulkarm; enters, fires on residential areas of Jenin; issues confiscation orders for Palestinian land west of Dura for construction of 5 observation towers surrounding Nahal Negohot settlement. A **17-yr.-old Palestinian girl** attempts to stab an IDF soldier in Hebron, is arrested. (YA 12/9; AP, HA, IMEMC 12/10; NYT 12/11; PCHR 12/15)

10 DECEMBER

The **IDF** fires 3 shells at s. Gaza, causing no damage or injuries; conducts arrest raids in Hebron, Jenin, Nablus and nr. Bethlehem, Tulkarm. **AMB mbr. Khadir Rayan** dies of wounds sustained in the 12/8 Qaddas

assassination. (HA, IMEMC 12/10; HA 12/11; PCHR 12/15)

11 DECEMBER

The **IDF** makes a major raid on Balata r.c., sending in 40 armored vehicles, fatally shooting **AMB cmdr. Iyad al-Hashash** and wounding a 2d Palestinian in what may be an assassination, searching 10s of homes; exchanges fire with Palestinians nr. Jenin, causing no casualties; fires on stone-throwing Palestinian youths nr. Askar r.c., wounding 2; fires on Palestinian fishing boats nr. Khan Yunis for no apparent reason, wounding 1 Palestinian; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jayyus, Jenin. **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, striking nr. Sederot, causing damage to a water network but no injuries; the **IDF** shells the suspected launch site in an open area of n. Gaza in response, causing no damage or injuries. Nr. Balata r.c., a **Palestinian** dies when a hand grenade he intends to throw at an IDF patrol explodes prematurely. (HA, IMEMC 12/11; PCHR 12/15)

12 DECEMBER

Before dawn, the **IDF** sends undercover units into Nablus to arrest 6 Palestinians, including **PA General Intelligence officer Amjad Mus'ad**; in the evening, fires 27 artillery rounds at n. Gaza in response to 3 **mortars** fired by Palestinians towards Israel, causing no damage or injuries on either side; late in the evening, undercover units return to Nablus, surround a PA security vehicle patrolling the area, order the **7 PA security officers** to lie on the ground, confiscate their weapons and phones, hold them for an hr., release them. The **IDF** also lifts the seal on the West Bank and Gaza imposed on 12/5, opens Qalandia crossing (closed since 12/8); raids and closes 10s of shops in Anabta, withdraws, later returns to conduct arrest raids and house searches; bulldozes a **Palestinian home** in East Jerusalem, sparking clashes with 10s of local Palestinians; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Nablus, nr. Tulkarm. **IDF soldiers** bar an ambulance fr. transporting a critically ill 10-yr.-old Palestinian boy to a hospital in Jerusalem, beating a female paramedic and driver, arresting the paramedic; a 2d ambulance arrives, takes the patient to a Ramallah hospital. In Dayr al-Balah, **10 AMB gunmen** angry over the Fatah primaries raid a PA election office, force it to close (see Quarterly

Update). In Gaza City, **unidentified gunmen** fire on a **PA police** patrol, killing **1 PA policeman**, wounding a 2d; the incident may be connected to the Bayt Hanun clan violence (see 12/7) as the dead policeman belongs to 1 of the families. (AP, HA, IMEMC, PCHR, PRCS, XIN, YA 12/12; AP, NYT 12/13; PCHR 12/15; PLO press release 12/21)

13 DECEMBER

The **IDF** makes a predawn raid on Nablus, clashes with stone-throwing Palestinian youths and gunmen, leaving **1 Palestinian bystander** dead and more than 20 Palestinians and 2 IDF soldiers wounded; shells uninhabited areas of n. Gaza in response to **4 mortars** fired by Palestinians into Israel (no damage or injuries on either side); raids, imposes a curfew on Bardala nr. Tubas; conducts arrest raids nr. Hebron, Jenin, Tulkarm and in Bethlehem, Birzeit, Ubidiyya nr. Bethlehem, Salfit nr. Nablus (arresting a **Hamas** mbr. running in the upcoming 1/25 elections). About **100 AMB gunmen** occupy 3 election offices in Gaza and 1 in Nablus in ongoing Fatah primary disputes (see Quarterly Update); gunmen at 2 Gaza offices eventually leave without incident; gunmen at the Gaza City office fire in the air, causing no injuries; gunmen at the Nablus office steal a computer, a television set. A **Palestinian farmer** in Abasan, Gaza, is killed when he accidentally triggers unexploded **IDF** ordnance. A **Palestinian** dies of injuries received earlier fr. settlers in Hebron. (AFP, AP, BBC, HA, IMEMC 12/13; AFP, NYT, WT 12/14; HA, PCHR 12/15; PLO press release 12/21)

14 DECEMBER

IDF conducts air strikes on 2 cars in Gaza City, assassinating **4 PRC mbrs.** and wounding 1 bystander in one case, and wounding **Islamic Jihad spokesman Khadir Habib** and 3 bystanders in the other. Later, **Palestinians** fire **5 rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; in response, the **IDF** fires artillery shells at n. Gaza areas, carries out 2 air strikes on a n. Gaza access road, wounding 2 Palestinians. During the day, the **IDF** also conducts arrest raids in and around Jenin, in Nablus (reportedly finding a **Qassam rocket**, explosives in the search of a Hamas building). Late in the evening, the **IDF** makes air strikes on the Bayt Lahiya home of a **PRC** leader, injuring a relative, and on an **Islamic**

Jihad charity in Rafah, causing damage but no injuries; conducts an air strike on an agricultural school in Bayt Hanun, injuring 1 Palestinian; launches 4 air strikes on open areas of n. Gaza, causing no damage; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Tulkarm and nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah. **Israel** approves construction of 200 new housing units in Ma'ale Adumim settlement and 40 in Ariel Brakha, Nokdim. A group of **AMB mbrs.** storms the **Fatah** headquarters in Gaza, demanding jobs; exchanges fire with another group of Fatah mbrs. who drive them away, leaving 3 wounded. (BBC, HA, IMEMC, JAZ, REU, YA 12/14; DS, JAZ, NYT, PCHR, PMC, WP, YA 12/15; PLO press release 12/21; PCHR 12/22)

15 DECEMBER

The **IDF** seals the West Bank; closes the Sufa, Qarni crossings into Gaza; imposes a closure on Tulkarm, barring most travel into and out of the area; raids the offices of Future Studies and Media in Hebron, confiscating computers; bulldozes 500 sq. m. of Palestinian land nr. Kiryat Arba settlement; conducts late night arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Jenin, Tulkarm. **Palestinians** fire **4 rockets** towards Ashkelon, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** responds with 10 air strikes, 21 artillery rounds on the n. Gaza no-go zone, wounding 3 Palestinians. (IMEMC, JAZ, WP, YA 12/15; NYT 12/16; Israeli cabinet communiqué 12/18; PCHR 12/22; HA 1/13)

16 DECEMBER

Palestinians in n. Gaza, the **IDF** in s. Israel trade **mortar** and tank fire throughout the day (Palestinians firing some 11 mortars, the **IDF** some 27 shells), causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** also launches air strikes on s. Gaza targeting Palestinians firing **rockets** into Israel; sends troops into Anabta, fires on residential areas, then fires on Palestinian stone-throwers who emerge to confront them; conducts arrest raids, house searches around Tulkarm and in Bayt Laqia nr. Ramallah, Hebron; begins bulldozing 345 d. of Palestinian land in Bayt Jala for construction of a new segment of the **separation wall** nr. Bethlehem. The **AMB, Islamic Jihad** claim joint responsibility for a drive-by shooting nr. Hebron that kills 1 **Jewish settler**, wounds 2; the **IDF** detains 3 journalists in the area. A **Palestinian** dies of a beating he sustained fr. the **IDF** several

days previously in East Jerusalem. (BBC, REU 12/16; HA, WP 12/17; HA, NYT 12/18; PLO press release 12/21; PCHR 12/22)

17 DECEMBER

Senior Abu Rish Brigades (ARB) leader Khalid Abu Sitta is killed, 3 bystanders are wounded when his car mysteriously explodes nr. Khan Yunis; ARB claims it is an assassination, but the IDF denies involvement. **Palestinians** fire 2 **mortars** fr. Gaza towards Israel, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** fires 3 missiles at a rocket launching site nr. Khan Yunis, causing no damage or injuries; fires a missile at the main Rafah-Khan Yunis road, creating large crater; fatally shoots a **PRC mbr.** laying a roadside bomb nr. Erez crossing; fatally shoots 1 **Palestinian**, wounds a 2d who attempts to sneak into Israel fr. Bayt Lahiya to find work; fires on, wounds a mentally handicapped Palestinian who strays close to the Israeli border nr. Khan Yunis; fires on residential areas of Kafr al-Labad nr. Tulkarm, wounding, arresting, evacuating to an Israeli hospital a member of the **PA security forces**; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Issawiyya, Tulkarm (shooting and wounding a wanted **Islamic Jihad mbr.**) and nr. Hebron, Jenin. In response to the AMB-Islamic Jihad drive-by shooting on 12/16, the IDF closes some 50 roads in Hebron with sand barriers, blocks the main northern and southern entrances to Hebron with cement barriers. **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar cut down more than 150 Palestinian olive trees nr. Nablus. (BBC, HA, IMEMC, NYT 12/18; AFP 12/19; PLO press release 12/21; PCHR 12/22)

18 DECEMBER

The **IDF** conducts 11 air strikes and 6 mock air raids on n. Gaza (destroying a bridge nr. Bayt Hanun; hitting several main roads in Bayt Hanun, Bayt Lahiya, and Um al-Nasser; damaging several homes and injuring 6 Palestinian bystanders, including 3 children). Later, **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza towards Ashkelon, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** threatens to cut off electricity to the Gaza Strip if rocket attacks continue. The **IDF** also tightens restrictions on Palestinian movement into and out of Qalqilya; bars a **Palestinian** heart attack victim fr. crossing a checkpoint into Tulkarm (still under closure; see 12/15) to reach a hospital, allowing him to die; con-

ducts arrest raids in Balata r.c. (an IDF dog bites a 12-yr.-old and a 19-yr.-old Palestinian), Bayt Umar nr. Hebron, al-Bireh, Tulkarm (targeting the AMB). In Alar nr. Tulkarm, 2 Palestinian construction workers surprise an **IDF undercover unit** inside an unfinished house; the soldiers detain and beat the men, fire on other Palestinians who arrive on the scene, call in reinforcements to extract them. An **IDF jeep** hits, injures a 10-yr.-old Palestinian nr. Qalqilya. **Israel** issues tenders for the construction of 137 new housing units in Ariel and Karnei Shomron settlements. **Jewish settlers** fr. Matan nr. Qalqilya raze 110 d. of nearby Palestinian agricultural land. (AP, BBC, HA 12/18; WT, XIN, YA 12/19; HA, PLO press release 12/21; PCHR 12/22)

Sharon is hospitalized after suffering a mild stroke. Doctors say there will be no permanent damage; he will not be at any greater risk of another stroke, will stay in the hospital for "a few days" of observation. (JTA, NYT, WP, WT 12/19; NYT, WP, YA 12/20)

19 DECEMBER

Overnight and into the predawn hours, the **IDF** conducts at least 13 air strikes on n. Gaza, destroying a bridge outside Bayt Hanun, damaging roads, hitting a PA naval police building, injuring 2 officers. **Israel** allows the Palestinians to increase the hours of operation at the Rafah crossing fr. 4 hrs./day to 8 hrs./day. The **IDF** also exchanges fire with Palestinian gunmen in Nablus's old city, wounding 2 gunmen; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Ramallah and in al-Khadir, Qabatya. An **IDF undercover unit** enters Burkin nr. Jenin, abducts, beats, detains a Palestinian. (IMEMC, PCHR 12/19; PCHR 12/22)

20 DECEMBER

The **IDF** shoots, wounds a 15-yr.-old Palestinian attempting to sneak into Israel fr. Dayr al-Balah to find work; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Ramallah and in Azun nr. Qalqilya, Nablus, Qabatya, Yamun nr. Jenin; fires rubber-coated steel bullets at Palestinian stone-throwers who confront the troops, injuring 5, precipitating gunfire fr. Palestinian militants that leaves 1 IDF soldier wounded. A **Palestinian** detained by an **IDF undercover unit** on 12/19 is released at the entrance to Jenin. **Palestinians** fire 5 **rockets** fr. Gaza towards Sederot and an IDF base, causing no injuries; **IDF** artillery shells

uninhabited areas of n. Gaza in response. **Jewish settlers** fr. Ma'on bulldoze 15 d. of Palestinian land abutting the settlement. Some **20 armed AMB mbrs.** demanding jobs in the security services, financial aid fr. the PA for 300 local AMB mbrs. occupy Bethlehem's municipal building overlooking Manger Square; the stand-off ends peacefully when the PA agrees to consider their demands, allows them to walk out. Some **2,000 Palestinians** rally outside the PC headquarters in Gaza City to express frustration over the PA's failure to control the security situation inside Gaza. (AFP, AP, BBC, YA 12/20; HA, IMEMC, NYT 12/21; PCHR 12/22; WT 12/24)

The **Israel Lands Administration** demolishes **3 Israeli Palestinian homes** in Lod (Lydda) for lack of permits; another 2,000 houses are threatened. (Arab Association for Human Rights press release 12/22)

21 DECEMBER

Two IDF undercover units riding in vehicles with Palestinian plates raid Jenin, fatally shoot **Izzeddin al-Qassam Brigades cmdr. Zayid Musa** in an apparent assassination; open fire on Palestinians who gather to protest the killing, wounding 5; the IDF conducts arrest raids, house searches in Alar, Qalqilya and nr. Bethlehem, Nablus, Ramallah. **Israel** warns that it may cut off Gaza's electricity supply if rocket attacks continue. In Gaza, the **principal and vice principal of the American International School** (1 Australian, 1 Dutch) are kidnapped, held for 8 hrs., released unharmed by **PFLP mbrs.** seeking the release of PFLP leader Ahmad Saadat, who has been jailed by the PA at Israel's request since 4/02. (IMEMC 12/21; JAZ, NYT, PCHR 12/22, 12/29)

22 DECEMBER

Islamic Jihad mbrs. fire **2 rockets** fr. n. Gaza towards an IDF base nr. Ashkelon, injuring 5 IDF soldiers; the **IDF** retaliates with artillery fire on the launch site, killing **1 Palestinian** bystander in adjacent Jabaliya r.c.; **Israel** warns that it could send ground forces back into Gaza. The **IDF** also raids Nablus, assassinates **local PFLP cmdr. Bashar Hanani** (also reported as Bashar Khalani), **AMB mbrs. Ahmad Jayyusi and Anas Hamad**; shells areas northwest of Bayt Lahiya, wounding a farmer working his land; sends troops into Qabatya, fires on stone-throwing youths who confront them,

wounding 5 Palestinians; raids, searches a building in Qiffin nr. Tulkarm, confiscating files fr. and sealing the offices of the Loans Association, Palestinian Peoples Party, Popular Campaign against the Wall, and Union of Agricultural Relief Comms.; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, Nablus, Ramallah and nr. Hebron, Jenin; uproots 200 Palestinian olive trees northwest of Hebron to erect a gate cutting al-Jaba village off fr. a nearby Jewish settlement. In the evening, the **Israeli security cabinet** approves new measures, known as **Operation Blue Skies**, aimed at curbing Palestinian rocket fire fr. Gaza, including using artillery, helicopter, and gunboat fire to enforce a new n. Gaza buffer zone; more stringent monitoring of the Gaza Strip by air; "other steps we have not taken until now," but does not immediately give orders for the **IDF** to implement the plan. (BBC, IMEMC, JTA, PCHR, PM, XIN, YA 12/22; BBC, HA, IMEMC, JTA, NYT, WP, WT 12/23; PCHR 12/29)

23 DECEMBER

The **IDF** conducts predawn arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin and in Tubas, late-night arrest raids, house searches in Nablus and nr. Hebron, Ramallah. In Gaza, **10s of AMB mbrs.** hold a press conference to say that they would support postponing of elections if Israel bars East Jerusalem Palestinians fr. voting. (IMEMC, YA 12/23; IMEMC, NYT, WP 12/24; PCHR 12/29)

24 DECEMBER

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in Ramallah. Late in the evening, the **IDF** raids Tubas nr. Jenin, patrols streets, stops and seizes a PA police car, arrests **3 PA policemen**; the PA joint liaison team intervenes to secure the policemen's release and the return of the car. The **AMB, Islamic Jihad** each fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Jewish settlers** fr. Yitzhar cut and damage more than 100 Palestinian olive trees nr. Nablus. **PA police** in Gaza City hold a group of armed **Hamas** mbrs. at a checkpoint, order them to surrender their weapons; the Hamas mbrs. open fire, wounding 2 policemen, and flee the scene; the **PA Interior Min.** issues a statement vowing to beat "with an iron fist all those who shed Palestinian blood and assault Palestinian security personnel." (HA, IMEMC 12/24; HA 12/25; PCHR 12/29)

The **Knesset** passes a law to compensate Jews who purchased property or held bank accounts in British Mandatory Palestine and whose property was seized by the State of Israel after 1948. Compensation is expected to run to \$220 m. Commenting on the passage of the measure, **MK Michael Melchior (Labor)** says "this is not a question of money but of ethics and morality for the Jewish state." (AFP 12/24)

25 DECEMBER

Sharon, returning to work a wk. after suffering a mild stroke, orders the IDF to implement **Operation Blue Skies** to enforce a no-go zone in n. Gaza by all means possible without re-entering the Strip in order to prevent rocket fire, stating that the operation will be open ended; the IDF takes no immediate action, however. The **U.S.** says (12/28) that it approves the decision, seeing it "in the context of [the PA's] failure to address the security situation"; that the PA should take "effective measures against such acts [i.e., rocket fire] so that the measures Israel is taking are not necessary." During the day, the **IDF** extends the 12/15 general closure on the West Bank and Gaza until 1/3 because of Hanukah; seals the Erez crossing (closed to most Palestinians since 12/16) to VIP and humanitarian cases; sends troops into Anabta, fires live ammunition at stone-throwing youths who confront them, wounding 1; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Hebron. Late in the evening, the **IDF** launches an air strike on a **Fatah** office in Bayt Lahiya, destroying it and cutting electricity to the area; conducts 2 air strikes on a bridge southwest of Bayt Lahiya, also damaging several nearby homes; conducts 3 air strikes on open areas in n. Gaza, causing no injuries. **Jewish settlers** fr. Elon Moreh cut down 120 Palestinian olive trees in Burin, nr. Nablus. In Gaza City, **Hamas mbrs.** detonate an explosive device outside the home of **PA police official Abu Wa'il Saada**, causing damage but no injuries; Saada family mbrs. exchange fire with the Hamas mbrs., causing no injuries. (AFP, IMEMC, Israeli cabinet communiqué, NYT, WT 12/25; HA, YA 12/26; CSM, PCHR, PMC 12/29)

26 DECEMBER

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus and in Aida r.c., Ramallah (surrounding 2 mosques and stopping Palestinians for ID checks as they

head to morning prayers); occupies a house under construction nr. Tulkarm as an IDF post; fires on residential areas of Nablus, wounding 2 Palestinians. **Palestinians** fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza towards Ashkelon (causing damage but no injuries), 2 towards Sederot (causing no damage or injuries); the **IDF** responds with artillery fire on n. Gaza. The **AMB, Islamic Jihad, PRCs** issue a statement that they plan to carry out joint attacks on Israeli targets if Israel goes ahead with plans to enforce a no-go area in n. Gaza. **Israel** issues tenders for construction of 150 new settlement housing units in Beitar Ilit and 78 in Efrat, both nr. Jerusalem. (IMEMC 12/26; JTA, REU, WT, XIN 12/27; PCHR 12/29)

27 DECEMBER

The **IDF** conducts air strikes to destroy 2 vacant **AMB** buildings in n. Gaza; fires 3 shells at the eastern border of Gaza nr. al-Maghazi r.c., causing no injuries; demolishes a **Palestinian home** in Bayt Hanina outside East Jerusalem for being constructed without permits; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Jenin, Nablus; completes a section of the **separation wall** btwn. Qalandia checkpoint s. of Ramallah and the al-Ram and Dahiyat al-Barid area nr. Jerusalem. Nr. Tulkarm, 2 Palestinian teenagers throw Molotov cocktails at an IDF patrol, causing no injuries; 1 is shot, wounded by the IDF. Some **20 AMB gunmen** occupy the n. Gaza governor's office, Education Min. offices, and a shari'a court for several hrs., demanding jobs in the PA security forces; some **400 Palestinians**, including **AMB mbrs.**, hold a similar protest outside the Fatah headquarters in Bethlehem. The **Jewish "hilltop youth" settlers** set up 13 new unauthorized outposts nr. existing settlements in the Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, Nablus, Qalqilya, and Ramallah areas. (HA, IMEMC, JAZ, REU, YA 12/27; DS, HA, IMEMC, NYT 12/28; PCHR 12/29)

28 DECEMBER

The **IDF** carries out at least 8 predawn air strikes on the n. Gaza no-go zone (causing no casualties) and a predawn air strike on al-Mughraqa s. of Gaza City (tearing up a main street, damaging water and phone networks, but causing no casualties). Early in the day, the **IDF** warns of the imminent launch of **Operation Blue Skies**, dropping leaflets on n. Gaza that warn residents to stay away fr. the border area and the sites of

vacated n. Gaza settlements, saying that anyone in the zone after 6:00 P.M. local time risks being shot; maps on the leaflets show the no-go zone as roughly corresponding to the n. Gaza settlement areas evacuated under disengagement, though also including areas 1.5 miles into Gaza housing some 100,000 Palestinians, whom the IDF recommends evacuate for "a limited period of time"; reportedly no Palestinians leave. Shortly before the deadline, **AMB mbrs.** fire 4 **rockets** at Sederot and a nearby IDF base, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** begins several hrs. of artillery fire (at least 25 strikes), fire fr. helicopters on the n. Gaza zone (wounding 1 Palestinian militant, 1 teenage bystander) and mock air raids breaking the sound barrier over the Strip, marking the start of the operation. Late in the evening, the **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Hebron. **AMB mbrs.** angry over the Fatah party list submitted today for the 1/25 elections (see Quarterly Update) seize election offices in 5 towns in Gaza, wage shoot-outs with the **PA police**, leaving 1 Gaza City policeman wounded. In Rafah, **Palestinian gunmen** kidnap a **British aid worker, her parents**; immediately begin negotiating with the **PA** for their release. (AFP, IMEMC, Israeli FMin. press release, JAZ, NYT, XIN 12/28; DS, IMEMC, JTA, NYT, PCHR, PMC, WP, WT, YA 12/29)

29 DECEMBER

An **Islamic Jihad suicide bomber** fr. al-Til detonates a device at a checkpoint nr. Tulkarm, killing 1 **IDF soldier**, 2 **Palestinians** and wounding 3 IDF soldiers, 7 Palestinians. A **Palestinian** stabs, injures an Israeli in the Atarot industrial zone nr. Jerusalem, flees. The **IDF** seals Qalqilya, Tulkarm; continues to shell the n. Gaza no-go zone, targeting 6 main access roads; sends troops into Jenin town and r.c., patrolling streets, firing on residential areas, occupying several homes as observation posts, then raiding and searching the **PA General Intelligence** headquarters; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Balata r.c. (firing on residential areas, wounding 2 Palestinians), al-Til and nr. Hebron, Jenin, Ramallah; begins to bulldoze Palestinian land east of Shavei Shomron settlement nr. Nablus to install a fence around the settlement. **Jewish settlers** fr. Kiryat Arba vandalize Palestinian homes, steal chickens in Hebron. Mbrs. of a **Palestinian clan** angry over the arrest of a relative on drug and auto theft charges

storm a **PA police** station in Gaza City, exchange gunfire with police, leaving 1 **PA policeman**, 1 **gunman** dead. **Unidentified Palestinian gunmen** fire on Abbas's Gaza City home, causing no injuries; Abbas is not there. (HA, IMEMC, JAZ, YA 12/29; HA, IMEMC, NYT, WP, WT 12/30; PCHR 1/5)

30 DECEMBER

The **IDF** continues to shell the n. Gaza no-go zone; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Dayr al-Ghusun nr. Tulkarm, Jenin town and r.c. (firing on stone-throwing youths who confront troops, wounding 9), al-Til, Yatta; removes without incident 3 unauthorized settlement outposts nr. Beit El, Kiryat Arba, Shvut Rachel. Some **100 PA policemen** occupy the Rafah border terminal to protest the death of a policeman on 12/29; **EU monitors** shut the crossing, leave the area for several hrs., until the demonstration breaks up. In Gaza City, a **Palestinian clan** attacks a **PA police** station, trades gunfire with police for a 2d day in an attempt to force them to free a jailed relative; a **14-yr.-old Palestinian** is fatally shot in the crossfire. During the day, the **AMB, Hamas** hold separate rallies in Gaza protesting the kidnapping of 3 **Britons** on 12/28; the Britons are released late in the evening; just before freeing them, a group calling itself the **Brigades of the Mujahiddin** (reportedly connected to **Fatah**) issues a videotaped statement claiming responsibility, calling on Britain to take a harder line with Israel. (IMEMC, JAZ, YA 12/30; NYT, WP, WT 12/31; HA 1/1; PCHR 1/5)

31 DECEMBER

The **IDF** makes 1 air and 3 artillery strikes on a field deep inside the n. Gaza no-go zone nr. Bayt Lahiya, killing 2 **Palestinians**; occupies the **PA military intelligence headquarters** in Jenin, forcing all PA officers to leave, arresting 1; conducts arrest raids in and around Jenin town and r.c., and in Hebron, Nablus, al-Til, Tulkarm, Yatta. Some **50 AMB gunmen** occupy a PA Interior Min. office in Gaza for several hrs., demanding jobs. Some **30 armed mbrs. of a Palestinian clan** that clashed with PA police in Gaza City on 12/29 and 12/30 rally outside the Rafah crossing, threaten to bar PA officials fr. crossing if their relative is not freed by police. **AMB mbrs.** protesting the **Fatah** party list (see 12/28) take over a West Bank hotel, demand that foreign election

observers leave. (REU, XIN, YA 12/31; IMEMC, NYT, WP 1/1; PCHR 1/5)

1 JANUARY

The **IDF** launches an air strike on a PA municipal building nr. Khan Yunis, causing heavy damage; conducts mock air raids over Gaza; patrols in al-Khadir, firing on stone-throwing youths who confront the troops; conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Arub r.c., nr. Bethlehem and Jenin; dismantles an unauthorized settlement outpost nr. Hebron. The **AMB**, **Hamas**, **Islamic Jihad**, the **PRCs** confirm that their unilateral truce is over. **Palestinians** fire 3 **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** also announces that around 3 wks. ago, the **AMB** fired a crude **rocket** fr. the n. West Bank towards, but not into, Israel, causing no damage or injuries, marking the 1st confirmed rocket fire fr. the West Bank. **Jewish settlers** attempt to bar Palestinian farmers fr. working their land nr. Qalqilya, but the **IDF** intervenes. In Khan Yunis, **armed AMB mbrs.** ambush a minibus of **EU diplomats**, kidnap 1 Italian official; PA security forces quickly identify and raid the kidnappers' hideout, free the diplomat in an exchange of fire; no injuries are reported. **Armed Palestinians** storm a UN social club in Gaza (the last public bar in Gaza, open only to foreigners) after closing, throwing 2 explosives, injuring a security guard. (HA, XIN, YA 1/1; HA, IMEMC, NYT, WP, WT 1/2; PCHR 1/5; NYT 1/31)

2 JANUARY

The **IDF** fires missiles at a car in Jabaliya r.c., assassinating **Islamic Jihad cmdr. Said Abu Jidayn**, as well as **Islamic Jihad mbrs. Akram Qaddas, Omar Obayid**, wounding 3 bystanders; fires missiles fr. F-16s at an educational center in Khan Yunis (causing serious damage but no injuries), 7 access roads to the n. Gaza no-go zone; conducts mock air raids, breaking the sound barrier over Gaza City; extends closure on the Tulkarm and Jenin areas (in place in Tulkarm since 12/15, in Jenin since shortly thereafter) to Nablus, effectively prohibiting any Palestinian travel southward towards Ramallah and sealing 800,000 Palestinians in the northern canton; detains **23 Palestinian election officials** on their way to a training session in Ramallah at a checkpoint nr. Tulkarm for 6 hrs.; arrests a **Palestinian candidate** for the 1/25 elections campaigning in Jerusalem; patrols in

Bethlehem, Ramallah; conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Arub r.c. (arresting the **campaign coordinator for the Alternative list** in the 1/25 elections), Balata r.c., Jenin town and r.c. and nr. Bethlehem, Hebron; uproots 400 Palestinian olive trees southwest of Hebron for construction of the **separation wall**. Dozens of armed **Jewish settlers** attempt to reoccupy the vacated West Bank settlement of Sanur; the **IDF** removes them. Some **200 PA policemen** rampage through PA offices, courthouses, an election office, and a municipal building in Rafah, firing in the air to protest the PA's failure to fight lawlessness in Gaza after the death of a PA policeman in clashes on 12/29. **AMB mbrs.**, **PA police** clash in Gaza; no injuries are reported. In Brazil r.c., **2 Japanese aid workers** escape a kidnapping attempt by unknown Palestinians. (HA, IMEMC, JAZ, XIN 1/2; NYT, PCHR, WP 1/3; NYT, PCHR 1/5; HA 1/13)

3 JANUARY

As the campaign period for the 1/25 Palestinian elections opens, **Israeli police** in East Jerusalem arrest **Independent Palestine candidate Mustafa Barghouti** as he campaigns, releases him after 4 hrs.; detain 7 **Fatah candidates** campaigning in the city; disperse a **Third Way** rally led by **Palestinian Council (PC) mbr. Hanan Ashrawi (Jerusalem)**; in 2 separate incidents, bars **Central Election Commission (CEC) staff mbrs.** fr. crossing a Tulkarm checkpoint to attend an election-related mtg. in nearby Dayr al-Ghusun and the Jordan Valley; blocks the transportation of election campaigning material fr. the West Bank to Gaza; sends troops into Jenin town and r.c. Meanwhile, the **IDF** opens the new **Kerem Shalom commercial crossing** on the Egypt-Gaza-Israel border; fatally shoots **wanted Palestinian Mustafa Muhammad** during an arrest raid nr. Hebron; raids a Palestinian school in Anata n. of Jerusalem, firing rubber bullets, injuring 1 teacher, 1 student and then fires on stone-throwing Palestinians who confront the troops, wounding 8; bulldozes a **Palestinian home** in Bayt Hanina; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, Jalazun r.c., Jenin town and r.c., Nablus, Qalqilya; dismantles 3 unauthorized settlement outposts nr. Bat Ayin, Efrat, Pdu'el. In response to the 1/2 assassination, **Islamic Jihad** fires at least 12 **rockets** at the Negev, the **ARB** fires a **rocket** at Sederot, causing no damage or

injuries; the **IDF** responds with artillery fire on 8 roads leading to the n. Gaza no-go zone, causing no injuries. The **AMB**, **ARB** claim joint responsibility for detonating an explosive device nr. an **IDF** bulldozer operating on Jenin r.c., seriously injuring 1 **IDF** soldier. **PA police** arrest **Gaza AMB leader Ala' al-Hams** for plotting the kidnapping of 3 Britons on 12/28. **Jewish settlers** fr. Avraham Avino break into, rob, vandalize several Palestinian shops in Hebron. (AFP, AP, BBC, HA, IMEMC, JAZ 1/3; IMEMC, PMC, WP, WT, YA 1/4; HA, NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 1/5; HA 1/6; PLO Negotiation Affairs Dept. press release 1/23)

4 JANUARY

Sharon suffers a massive stroke. Sharon, who was expected to win a 3d term in the 3/06 elections at the head of his new Kadima party, is not expected to return to politics, throwing the elections into question. Political powers are transferred to **Vice PM Ehud Olmert**, Sharon's close ally. (BBC, JTA 1/4; CSM, NYT, WP, WT 1/5; DS 1/6; CSM 1/9)

The **IDF** seals the West Bank, Gaza for the 4-day Muslim holiday of Id al-Adha; conducts predawn mock air raids over Gaza, breaking the sound barrier; raids a house in East Jerusalem, breaks up a mtg. being held by **Change and Reform candidate Ahmad Attoun**; bulldozes a **Palestinian home** nr. Bethlehem; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Jenin town and r.c. (firing on stone-throwing Palestinians who confront the troops, wounding 9), in and around Bethlehem, Ramallah, Tulkarm. In continued retaliation for the 1/2 killings (see 1/3), **Islamic Jihad**, the **AMB** fire 8 **rockets** fr. Gaza towards Ashkelon, Sederot, and the **IDF** base at the Erez crossing, causing no damage or injuries. **IDF soldiers**, **Israeli police** scuffle with **Jewish settlers** when serving them with notices that they must evacuate by 1/15 Palestinian-owned buildings they have occupied in the Hebron central market; 4 policemen are injured. **Jewish settlers** fr. Kiryat Arba vandalize Palestinian homes in Hebron, bar Palestinians fr. using a road linking the settlement to the Ibrahim Mosque/Tomb of the Patriarchs; the **IDF** observes but does not intervene. About 40 **armed AMB mbrs.** occupy 4 PA government buildings in Gaza, fire on a police station to protest the 1/3 arrest of **AMB leader Hams**; other **AMB mbrs.** set burning barricades on the road to the Rafah crossing (barring all but medical cases fr. reaching the border), detonate an ex-

plosive device under the Rafah border wall (causing only minor damage). **AMB mbrs.** later steal 2 bulldozers, tear down a 15-ft stretch of the concrete Gaza border wall; as many as 1,000 **Palestinians**, some armed, overrun the **Egyptian border guards**, who fire in the air, call in reinforcements, declare the area a closed military zone, arrest around 100 **Palestinians** and injure 3; during the skirmish, some **Palestinians** set fire to an Egyptian armored vehicle, throw hand grenades and fire at the Egyptian contingent, leaving 2 **Egyptian border guards** dead and around 30 injured; **Egypt** closes the Rafah border until further notice. The **PA** says it will release **Hams** on 1/5 in response to the protests. **PA police** in Gaza City, fatally shoot a **Hamas mbr.** hanging campaign posters. Meanwhile, 5 **armed Palestinians** raid a Gaza house, attempt to kidnap the **parents of Rachel Corrie**, an American college student who was killed by the **IDF** in Gaza in 2003; the gunmen back off when the owners of the home explain who the Corries are. (IMEMC, JAZ, YA 1/4; AP, HA, IMEMC, NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 1/5; HA, NYT 1/9; *al-Abram Weekly* 1/10; PCHR 1/19; PLO Negotiation Affairs Dept. press release 1/23)

5 JANUARY

The **IDF** conducts air and artillery strikes on the n. Gaza no-go zone, also hitting a PA security post nr. Bayt Lahiya; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem and in Aida r.c., Hebron, Jenin r.c. (firing on stone-throwing Palestinians who confront the troops, wounding 6), Tulkarm. **Palestinians** fire 1 **rocket** fr. n. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. At least 1 **Jewish settler** wounds 2 **Palestinians** in a drive-by shooting nr. Nablus. **Jewish settlers** fr. Kiryat Arba attack **Palestinians**, damage property in Hebron. The **PA** releases **AMB's Hams** (see 1/4). (HA, IMEMC 1/5; BBC, WP 1/6; YA 1/9; PCHR 1/19)

6 JANUARY

Palestinians fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza at the Negev, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** responds with artillery fire on n. Gaza, damaging 3 homes in Bayt Lahiya. The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, nr. Ramallah. **Jewish settlers** fr. Ma'on uproot 150 **Palestinian** olive trees in Yatta. The **ARB**, **AMB**, **Hamas**, **Islamic Jihad**, **PRCs** hold a press

conference in Rafah calling on all Palestinian factions to halt intra-Palestinian violence in Gaza, condemning the death of 2 Egyptian border guards on 1/4. (AFP, HA, IMEMC 1/6; HA 1/8; YA 1/9; PCHR 1/19)

7 JANUARY

The **IDF** tightens restrictions on Palestinian movement around Tulkarm; bars **Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa candidates** in the 1/25 elections fr. crossing a checkpoint outside of Tubas; tears down campaign posters for **Fatah candidate and AMB mbr. Muhammad Khadir** in Kafr Sur nr. Tulkarm, as well as other campaign posters on the road leading fr. Hebron to Dura; sends troops into Jenin town and r.c., fires on stone-throwing youths who confront them, seriously wounding a 12-yr.-old boy; conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Azza r.c. nr. Bethlehem, nr. Nablus and Ramallah, in and around Hebron (occupying several homes as observation posts). **Palestinians** fire 4 **rockets** fr. n. Gaza towards Israel, 3 of which land inside Palestinian territory, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** responds with artillery fire, causing no injuries. **PA police** exchange gunfire with wanted Palestinians during an arrest raid in Dayr al-Balah, leaving 10 Palestinians wounded (including 8 policemen); 11 policemen are wounded in clashes with suspected drug smugglers during an arrest raid in Khan Yunis; 1 **Palestinian** is killed in a clash btwn. **PA police** and gunmen in Gaza City. The **AMB-Jenin faction** warns foreign election observers to leave the city immediately. (IMEMC 1/7; NYT 1/8; YA 1/9; PCHR 1/19; PLO Negotiation Affairs Dept. press release 1/23)

8 JANUARY

Egypt allows the Rafah border crossing (closed since the incidents of 1/4) to reopen. The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in Hebron and Tulkarm r.c., nr. Jenin, in and around Bethlehem. **Palestinians** fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza into the Negev, causing no damage or injuries. Some 200 **IDF soldiers** raid, shut down the offices of the **Hebrew Battalion** in Tapuach settlement after intelligence shows that it is connected with the outlawed extremist Kach movement; soldiers also confiscate 6 dogs they say settlers trained to attack Palestinians. (HA, YA 1/8; IMEMC, YA 1/9; PCHR 1/19)

In the mixed Jewish-Arab city of Acre, the **New Forum for Strengthening the Jewish Community in Acre** holds a conference aimed at finding ways of achieving a permanent Jewish majority in the city. The group, which includes mbrs. of the elected local city council and is supported by the mayor, believes that Acre "has the right to exist as a mixed city only if it has a permanent Jewish majority." (HA 1/8, 1/9)

9 JANUARY

The **IDF** arrests 2 Palestinians hanging campaign posters in East Jerusalem; patrols in al-Judayda nr. Jenin; conduct arrest raids, house searches in Salfit and nr. Bethlehem, Tulkarm. The **Israeli High Court** rejects a petition against the **separation wall** route around Mod'in settlement, lifts temporary injunctions stopping construction of the wall in that area. (IMEMC, PCHR 1/19)

10 JANUARY

The **IDF** bars **Freedom and Social Justice candidate Ahmad Majdalani** fr. entering East Jerusalem to campaign although he has the proper permit to enter; patrols in Jenin town and r.c.; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Qaddura r.c., Ramallah. (PCHR 1/19)

11 JANUARY

The **IDF** bars **Third Way candidate Salah al-Masri** fr. entering Gaza to campaign although he has the proper permits; prevents 2 of the **PFLP's Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa list candidates** fr. crossing a checkpoint nr. Tulkarm; arrests 6 Palestinians hanging campaign posters for independent candidates in East Jerusalem; demolishes 3 **Palestinian homes** in al-Khadir for being constructed without permits; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Tulkarm town and r.c., nr. Ramallah, and in Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus, Qabatya. **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. n. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** also scuffles with some 300 **Jewish settlers** blocking the dismantling of an unauthorized outpost nr. Neve Daniel s. of Jerusalem. A **PA police officer** wounded in Gaza clashes on 1/7 dies. (BBC, IMEMC 1/11; HA, IMEMC, NYT 1/12; PCHR 1/19)

12 JANUARY

An **IDF undercover unit** enters Jenin, fatally shooting **Islamic Jihad mbr. Azmi Abu Khalil**, arresting a 2d, while a 3d **Islamic Jihad mbr., Ali Abu Hizma**, detonates an explosive device as troops move in, killing only himself. The **IDF** also shells the n. Gaza no-go zone, causing no injuries; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Tulkarm and nr. Bethlehem, Ramallah. The **IDF** arrests **5 Jewish settlers** who attack troops dismantling an unauthorized settlement outpost nr. Gush Etzion. **Jewish settlers** fr. Avraham Avino angry over **IDF** plans to evacuate settlers from the Hebron market and fr. the northern West Bank unauthorized outpost of Amona (established ca. 1997; 25 families) set fire to 2 Palestinian homes, damage 2 Palestinian cars in Hebron. **AMB gunmen** fire on the Ramallah home of **PA Interior M Nasr Yusuf**, the PC building; 1 body guard, 2 family mbrs., 1 attacker are wounded in the exchange. Separately, **3 AMB gunmen** conduct a drive-by shooting on the Interior Min. headquarters in Ramallah, causing no injuries; **PA** police pursue their vehicle, arrest them. (AP, HA, IMEMC, JAZ 1/12; IMEMC, NYT 1/13; HA 1/15; PCHR 1/19)

13 JANUARY

The **IDF** patrols in Bethlehem, Tubas nr. Jenin; imposes a curfew on Kafr al-Dik nr. Nablus, raiding and searching homes (an **IDF** dog attacks an 84-yr.-old Palestinian woman); conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Tulkarm and in Jenin, Yatta. The **AMB** fires **5 rockets** fr. n. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. Some **30 Jewish settler teenage girls** fr. Tal Rumayda (some wearing ski masks), angry over **IDF** plans to evacuate settlers fr. the Hebron market and the Amona unauthorized outpost, rampage through Palestinian areas of Hebron while 6 settler boys attempt to occupy a Palestinian home; the **IDF** intervenes. (IMEMC 1/13; PCHR 1/19)

14 JANUARY

The **IDF** closes the Qarni crossing, citing intelligence that Palestinians are digging a tunnel nearby; raids Dahariyya nr. Hebron, occupies positions and patrols nr. a campaign rally for candidates in the 1/25 elections; arrests **3 campaign workers for independent candidate Fadwa Khadir**,

releases them later but confiscates their campaign materials; conducts arrest raids and house searches nr. Hebron (occupying a home as an observation post), in Jenin r.c. and town (arresting senior Islamic Jihad mbr. Muhammad Tawalba). In Hebron, the **IDF** prepares to remove 15 settler families fr. 11 Palestinian stores they have occupied in the old market area since 2/94 by the DMin.'s 1/15 deadline; some **200 Jewish settlers** riot in Hebron to protest, clashing with soldiers attempting to prevent them fr. vandalizing and occupying more Palestinian shops in the market (leaving 1 **IDF** soldier injured), torching a Palestinian home; **DM Mofaz** extends the deadline for the evacuation to 1/31. Separately, **100s of Jewish settlers** fr. Avraham Avino rampage through Palestinian areas of Hebron, vandalizing buildings, slashing car tires. **Jewish settlers** fence off 150 d. of Palestinian land nr. Dura to expand the unauthorized settlement outpost of Mitzpe Lakhish nr. Nahal Negohot settlement. More than **100 armed Palestinians**, including **off-duty policemen**, block Gaza's 2 main north-south roads for several hrs., demanding retribution for the 1/11 death of a police officer fr. injuries received during a 1/7 drug raid, the resignation of **Interior M Nasr Yusuf**. (HA, IMEMC 1/14; NYT, WT 1/15; PCHR 1/19; PLO Negotiation Affairs Dept. press release 1/23; NYT 1/29)

15 JANUARY

The **IDF** reopens Gaza's Erez crossing (closed on 12/16); fatally shoots an **armed Palestinian** in Nablus who reportedly was guarding his home after recent clashes with other Palestinians, also killing **1 Palestinian** inside the home and wounding 5; detains **3 of Hamas's Change and Reform candidates** in East Jerusalem; bars several candidates running in the Hebron district fr. entering al-Ramadin village to campaign; raids offices in East Jerusalem allegedly linked to **Change and Reform** campaigning; sends troops into Kafr Dan west of Jenin, fires on stone-throwing youths who confront the troops, wounding 3; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Alar, Jalazun r.c., Qalqilya, al-Til. **Israeli police** break up a **Change and Reform** campaign rally in East Jerusalem, detaining 3 candidates, 3 other Palestinians. **Jewish settlers** fr. Avraham Avino set fire to 6 Palestinian shops in the Hebron cloth market. (IMEMC, JP, PCHR 1/15; NYT, WP, WT 1/16; PCHR 1/19; PLO Negotiation Affairs Dept. press release 1/23)

16 JANUARY

The **IDF** raids the **Alternative** campaign offices in East Jerusalem, confiscates campaign posters and leaflets, arrests at least 5 workers, claiming they have ties to terrorism because the Alternative coalition includes the **Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)**; bulldozes 2 **Palestinian homes** in Bayt Hanina and Silwan on the outskirts of East Jerusalem; smashes the windshields of at least 10 Palestinian taxis traveling a road leading north out of Nablus; conducts arrest raids in al-Arub r.c. nr. Nablus, Qalqilya and in and around Jenin, Ramallah. The **IDF** also declares the Jewish section of Hebron a closed military zone, banning all nonresidents, seizing buildings and rooftops, welding shut Palestinian stores raided by settlers after 5 days of settler rioting sparked by plans to evict Israeli squatters who have occupied the market area. Late in the evening, **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** responds with artillery fire on the n. Gaza no-go zone, causing no injuries. (HA, IMEMC, YA 1/16; NYT, WP 1/17; IMEMC 1/18; PCHR 1/19)

17 JANUARY

The **IDF** assassinates **senior Hamas military cmdr. Thabit Ayadi**, fatally shooting him in a raid on Tulkarm, also arresting 3 Palestinians, raiding 10s of homes; demolishes 2 **Palestinian homes** nr. Bethlehem, 1 nr. Nablus; conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Fawwar r.c., Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah. In retaliation, **PRC mbrs.** fire 2 **rockets** at the Sufa crossing into Gaza, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** also sends 100s of reinforcements to Hebron, where confrontations continue with **Jewish settlers** protesting their planned eviction fr. the Hebron market; several settlers are arrested. (AFP, HA, IMEMC, YA 1/17; IMEMC, NYT 1/18; PCHR 1/19)

Israeli authorities bulldoze 7 **Palestinian buildings** in unrecognized villages in the Negev for being built without permits, present bedouin with orders to demolish another 40 structures, including a mosque. (Palestine News Agency [Wafa] 1/18)

18 JANUARY

Responding to the 1/17 Ayadi assassination, an **AMB gunman** fires across the Gaza border nr. Bayt Hanun, fatally shooting an

IDF soldier inside Israel. In response, the **IDF** recloses Gaza's Erez crossing (reopened on 1/16 after 1 mo.) and Sufa commercial crossing. The **IDF** also arrests 7 **Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa list candidates** in Jerusalem as they prepare to hold a press conference on the upcoming elections; raids Jenin town and r.c., exchanges fire with wanted Palestinians, leaving 2 soldiers, 3 Palestinians wounded; also conducts arrest raids, house searches in 'Ayn al-Bayda nr. Jenin, Amara r.c., Dura, Qalqilya and nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus, Qabatya, Tulkarm. **Palestinians** fire 3 **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; one lands inside Gaza. **Israeli police** in East Jerusalem arrest **Palestinian candidates** (including **Change and Reform, Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa**) slated to speak at an election rally, accusing them of belonging to outlawed groups and forcing the cancellation of the rally. (IMEMC, JP, YA 1/18; HA, NYT, PCHR, REU, YA 1/19; PCHR 1/26)

19 JANUARY

An **Islamic Jihad suicide bomber** fr. Nablus detonates a device in a Tel Aviv restaurant, killing only himself, wounding 24 Israelis (1 critically). The **PA** accuses Islamic Jihad of trying to derail the 1/25 elections. The **IDF** fatally shoots a **Palestinian** throwing a Molotov cocktail at troops in Hebron; arrests **Fatah candidate fr. Jerusalem Ahmad 'Abd al-Rahim** at a campaign rally in Shu'fat, East Jerusalem; raids, seals an office in East Jerusalem linked to **Change and Reform** campaigning, confiscating computers, documents; demolishes 3 **Palestinian homes** nr. Jenin for construction of the separation wall; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and nr. Hebron, nr. Ramallah, and in Bethlehem, Jenin, Nablus, Tubas. **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. n. Gaza towards Israel, but it lands in Bayt Lahiya, damaging a Palestinian home, lightly injuring a 7-yr-old girl. (AP, IMEMC, JTA 1/19; HA, NYT, IMEMC, WP, WT 1/20; WT 1/21; PCHR 1/26)

20 JANUARY

The **IDF** raids Yatta, detains several candidates in the 1/25 elections after they conclude a rally; bars **Fatah candidates** fr. crossing a checkpoint nr. Qalqilya to attend a campaign rally in Azun Itma village; raids a Fatah campaign rally in East Jerusalem, detaining **Fatah candidate Uthman Abu Gharbiyya**; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Dura (occupying 3 Palestinian

homes as observation posts), Jenin and in Bethlehem, Hebron, Yatta. **IDF troops** stationed on the central Gaza border detain 7 Palestinian teenagers (ages 13–15) fr. Nussayrat r.c. attempting to sneak into Israel to find work. Some **3,000 Palestinian, Israeli, and international protesters** led by several Palestinian candidates to the 1/25 elections take part in the weekly nonviolent march against the **separation wall** in Bil'in; the **IDF** fires tear gas to disperse the crowd. A **Jewish settler** moderately injures a Palestinian in a hit-and-run nr. Nablus. (IMEMC 1/20; Gush Shalom press release, JAZ 1/21; PLO Negotiation Affairs Dept. press release 1/23; PCHR 1/26)

21 JANUARY

The **IDF** fires on 3 unarmed Palestinians approaching the n. Gaza border fence, killing **1 Palestinian**, wounding 2; bars several **Change and Reform candidates** fr. crossing a Jenin checkpoint to attend campaign rallies in nearby villages; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Tulkarm. (HA 1/22; PCHR 1/26)

22 JANUARY

The **IDF** reopens the Erez and Sufa crossings into Gaza (closed on 1/18); launches missiles at a car in Gaza City, assassinating **PRC mbr. Mahmud 'Abd al-A'al**, wounding 2 other PRC mbrs. and 3 bystanders; fires on 3 Palestinian teenagers approaching the Gaza border fence nr. Bureij r.c., wounding 1; fires shells fr. naval vessels at the Rafah shore, causing no damage or injuries; arrests **Change and Reform candidate Muhammad Totah** campaigning in East Jerusalem; bars an **Alternative candidate** fr. entering Jerusalem to attend a campaign rally; raids the East Jerusalem campaign offices of **independent candidate 'Abd al-Latif Ghaith** and 9 campaign workers; conducts patrols in Rujib nr. Nablus, Zabbuba nr. Jenin (firing on residential areas); conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Jenin, Ramallah and in Nur al-Shams r.c., Tulkarm, Qalqilya, Qitna n. of Jerusalem. (AFP, HA, JP 1/22; NYT, WP 1/23; PCHR 1/26)

23 JANUARY

The **IDF** announces that it is suspending all military operations in the Palestinian areas until after the 1/25 elections, will act

only in response to immediate threats; will allow PA security forces to patrol armed in Palestinian cities during elections; will ease restrictions on Palestinian movement to facilitate voting. The **IDF** fires on 4 Palestinian children playing nr. Ramallah, thinking they are militants laying a roadside bomb, killing a **13-yr.-old Palestinian boy**, wounding 2; arrests **independent Jerusalem candidate Said Yaqin** while campaigning in East Jerusalem; arrests **Palestinian News Network (PNN) correspondent Mustafa Sabri** in his Qalqilya home; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Bethlehem, Hebron, Qabatya, Qalqilya, Ramallah, Tulkarm town and r.c. and nr. Jenin. **Palestinians** fire on an IDF patrol in the n. West Bank, wounding 1 soldier; fire 3 **rockets** fr. Gaza towards Sederot, causing no damage or injuries. (HA, IMEMC, YA 1/23; HA, IMEMC 1/24; HA 1/25; PCHR 1/26; PNN press release 1/28)

A **Tel Aviv court** issues a landmark ruling that **Israel** cannot use the 1950 Absentee Property Law to seize West Bank lands abandoned by Palestinians during the 1967 war. Coming fr. a lower court, the ruling constitutes a directive to other district courts and is not binding, as it would be had the High Court issued the ruling. (HA 1/24)

24 JANUARY

The **IDF** bars **CEC officials** fr. transporting election boxes through a Tulkarm checkpoint to 21 al-Sha'rawiyya polling stations; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Jenin. The **Shin Bet** summons **PNN correspondent Mais Abu Ghazaleh** for questioning, releases her with an "offer" to "consider cooperating with them to inform them on her future work with PNN." **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into the Negev, causing no damage or injuries. **Israel's Jerusalem Municipality** fines **Fatah, Hamas, the PFLP** \$100,000 each for hanging campaign posters in East Jerusalem. **Fatah gunmen** in Nablus fatally shoot **Fatah election official Yusif Hassuna** after he tells them to stop shooting at campaign posters for Ghassan Shaka'a (opposed by some Fatah mbrs.) on his house; 1,000 Palestinians later march to Nablus's main police station to protest the killing, the police's failure to end lawlessness. Some **40 Islamic Jihad mbrs.** march in Tulkarm, demanding the release of prisoners fr. Palestinian jails, calling for an election boycott, firing on a PA police station (causing no injuries); **PA police** disperse the crowd. (AP,

HA, IMEMC, PCHR, YA 1/24; PCHR 1/26; PNN press release 1/28)

25 JANUARY

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Tulkarm, nr. Hebron (occupying 1 house as an observation post), and in Bethlehem, Nablus. (IMEMC 1/25; PCHR 1/26, 2/2)

PA legislative elections are held. **Hamas's** Change and Reform party wins a surprise majority, taking 74 seats. **Fatah** wins 45 seats, **PFLP's** Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa wins 3, **Independent Palestine** wins 2, **Third Way** wins 2, **Alternative** wins 2; and **independent candidates** allied with Hamas win 4 seats. **Hamas** says it will meet with **Abbas**, as head of Fatah, and the smaller parties in several days to discuss formation of a unity government. (CSM, IMEMC, JT 1/25; AP, BBC, CSM, DS, HA, JAZ, NYT, PCHR, REU, WP, WT, XIN, YA 1/26; AP, CSM, DS, *Financial Times*, JT, JTA, NYT, WP, WT 1/27; *al-Ayyam*, VOI 1/27 in WNC 1/28; XIN 1/29; NYT, Palestine Center press release 1/30; see also Palestine Center information brief no. 125 12/14) (see Quarterly Update for details)

26 JANUARY

The **IDF** fires on a "suspicious figure" nr. the Gaza border with Israel nr. Khan Yunis, killing a **9-yr.-old Palestinian girl**; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron. **Jewish settlers** fr. Karnei Shomron nr. Qalqilya throw stones at Palestinians, vandalize homes in nearby Kafr Laqif. **Hamas**, **Fatah mbrs.** scuffle in Ramallah over Hamas's big election win there. (IMEMC, YA 1/26; HA, IMEMC, NYT, WP, WT 1/27; Voice of Palestine 1/27 in WNC 1/28; WP 1/29; PCHR 2/2)

27 JANUARY

The **IDF** conducts late night arrest raids, house searches in Hebron. In retaliation for the killing of a Palestinian girl on 1/26, the **AMB**, **PRCs** fire **4 rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Jewish settlers** fr. Kiryat Arba vandalize Palestinian homes in Hebron. Across Gaza, **1,000s of Hamas supporters** hold peaceful rallies after midday prayers to celebrate Hamas's election victory. Meanwhile, some **15,000 Fatah mbrs.** carry out angry marches across Gaza, burning cars, firing in the air, demand-

ing that the party's leadership resign over the party's failure in the 1/25 elections; more than **1,000 armed Fatah mbrs.** protest outside **Abbas's** Gaza residence alone (he is in Ramallah); in Khan Yunis, **Hamas mbrs.** trade fire with **Fatah mbrs.** tearing down Hamas campaign protesters and **PA security forces** in 2 incidents, leaving 6 Palestinians (including 1 Hamas mbr., 2 PA security officers) wounded. (IMEMC, NYT, REU, YA 1/27; NYT, WP, WT 1/28; PCHR 2/2)

28 JANUARY

The **IDF** halts and blows up a Palestinian vehicle nr. Qalqilya, without giving a reason; conducts arrest raids in and around Hebron (occupying 1 home as an observation post), nr. Bethlehem, Jenin, and Ramallah, and in Aida r.c., Nur al-Shams r.c. (firing on residential areas), Tulkarm (firing on residential areas). Some **20,000 Fatah mbrs.** angry over their election defeat stage marches, rallies across Gaza; **Fatah mbrs.** also temporarily take over the PC buildings in Gaza City, Ramallah calling for the Fatah leadership to resign; some **2,000 Fatah mbrs.**, some armed, march through Nablus, 500 march in Hebron, and 100s rally outside the Muqata in Ramallah, making the same demand. **Hamas gunmen** ambush, wound 2 **PA policemen** in Khan Yunis, apparently in retaliation for a clash that left a Hamas mbr. wounded on 1/27. **Palestinian farmers** in Gaza dump rotting produce at the Qarni crossing to protest **Israel's** closing of the export point despite its pledge to the U.S. to keep it open on "an urgent basis." (Israel sealed the crossing on 1/14 citing intelligence reports that a tunnel was being dug nearby; PA security forces have been looking for a tunnel without success, and Israel won't say where intelligence indicates the tunnel may be.) Palestinians export tens of millions of dollars of produce through Qarni during this time of yr. (HA 1/28; NYT, WP, WT 1/29; PCHR 2/2)

29 JANUARY

The **IDF** bulldozes 150 d. of Palestinian orchards and olive groves nr. Hebron to construct a new road leading to an unauthorized settlement outpost, begin installing electricity generators; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron and in al-Azza r.c., Hebron, Nablus, Qalandia r.c. The local **Fatah leadership in Rafah** announces its resignation fr. the movement, citing the

1/25 election defeat. (AFP, IMEMC, XIN 1/29; PCHR 2/2)

30 JANUARY

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Nablus, nr. Jenin and Salfit, and in Dura, Tubas, Yatta. **PA security officers** take control of the PA parliament building in Gaza to declare their refusal to be put under **Hamas's** authority. (WT 1/31; PCHR 2/2)

31 JANUARY

IDF undercover units raid Jenin, assassinate **West Bank head of Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigades Nidal al-Sadi, his aide Ahmad Tubasi** in a shootout that leaves 1 IDF soldier wounded; also open fire on angry Palestinians who gather to throw stones at the troops, wounding 11. The **IDF** reinforces troops in Hebron's old city; demolishes 2 **Palestinian homes** nr. Bethlehem for being built without permits and being too close to the separation wall; bulldozes 2 d. of agricultural land adjacent to a settler bypass road nr. al-Khadir; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Aida r.c. and nr. Hebron (occupying a home as an observation post), Nablus, Tulkarm. **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries. **Jewish settlers** angry over the plans to evacuate Amona outpost bar Palestinians fr. traveling a stretch of the Nablus-Ramallah road nr. Shilo settlement. Also in protest of the Amona evacuation, **100s of Jewish settlers** storm an **IDF** base at the nearby Ofra settlement. Meanwhile, **Jewish settler families** who have been squatting in Palestinian stores in the Hebron market leave voluntarily in exchange for the **Israeli government's** promise to look into speeding up legal proceedings to expropriate the market and allow Jewish settlers to rent it. (NYT 1/31; NYT, WP 2/1; PCHR, WP 2/2; see also HA 1/18)

1 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Tulkarm, nr. Bethlehem, Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah and in al-Arub r.c., al-Fawwar r.c., Jenin r.c. and town. Some **6,000 Israeli troops and riot police** evacuate the unauthorized Amona outpost and demolish 9 settler homes there (leaving 12 mobile homes intact), scuffling with **100s of Jewish settlers** who come

to defend the site; settlers pelt police with rocks, sand, paint and police respond with batons, water cannons, leaving a total of 219 injured, including at least 80 officers, some 140 settlers, 2 right-wing MKs. **Hamas mbrs.** fire a **rocket** at the home of **PA security forces cmdr. Sulayman Abu Mutlik** and towards the PA security forces cmdr. in Dayr al-Balah; no injuries are reported. **Armed AMB mbrs.** raid the offices of Palestinian Satellite Channel in Ramallah to protest the PA's failure to pay the salaries of some 65 employees of PA controlled media outlets. (NYT, PCHR, WP, WT 2/2; HA 2/5; PCHR 2/9)

2 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** issues a military order restricting Palestinians entering Israel to using 11 West Bank border crossings, citing the need for "increased security"; the order also bars Israelis fr. escorting Palestinians through other checkpoints into Israel. The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem (firing on residential areas) and in Nablus, Qabatya. Nr. Hebron, **2 armed Jewish settlers** in a car intercept and board a Palestinian school bus, threaten the driver, beat several students, injuring 5; **IDF soldiers** fr. a post 100 m. away observe but only intervene after 40 mins. when the settlers call them to come arrest 1 Palestinian boy for throwing a stone at their car; the soldiers comply. In Gaza City, **20 Palestinian gunmen** seal an **EU** office, demanding an apology for derogatory cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad run in the Danish press, then republished in Norwegian, French, and other European newspapers. Also in Gaza, the **AMB** releases a video statement warning that it plans to kidnap more foreigners in reaction to the cartoons, prompting European diplomats, aid workers to begin leaving the West Bank, Gaza. In Nablus, **Palestinian gunmen** kidnap a **German teacher**, thinking he is Danish or French; quickly turn him over to PA police once they realize their mistake. **Fatah, Hamas** denounce the targeting of foreigners. A **Hamas mbr.** is shot, wounded in Khan Yunis, possibly in retaliation for Hamas attacks on PA security force targets on 2/1. (IMEMC 2/2; NYT 2/3; HA 2/5; PCHR 2/9; HA 2/23)

3 FEBRUARY

Palestinians fire 3 **rockets** fr. Gaza into Israel, 1 of which hits a mobile home,

injuring 3 Israelis, including a 7 mo. old, 2 of which hit an industrial park, damaging a desalination complex. **IDF** fires some 50 artillery shells the n. Gaza no-go zone in response, causing no damage or injuries. The **IDF** also enters Dahaysha r.c. and fires on residential areas; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, Nablus. **Jewish settlers** fr. Teena nr. Hebron chase away 2 Palestinian shepherds grazing nearby, fire on their sheep, killing 3. **Jewish settlers** fr. Bnei Heifer nr. Hebron beat a Palestinian grazing cattle nearby. Unidentified **Palestinian gunmen** (suspected to be PA security officers) kidnap a **Hamas mbr.** in Khan Yunis (see 2/2). (WP 2/4; HA 2/5; PCHR 2/9)

4 FEBRUARY

IDF war planes fire 3 missiles at a building and a car in Gaza City, assassinating 3 **senior AMB mbrs.**, wounding 3 bystanders; fire 7 missiles at the entrance to Bayt Hanun in n. Gaza, destroying a bridge and damaging several homes. The **IDF** also confiscates 279 d. of Palestinian land nr. Qalqilya for construction of the separation wall; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Hebron, Nablus, Tulkarm. Nr. Hebron, 4 **rock-wielding Jewish settlers** beat an 11-yr.-old Palestinian boy. **Palestinians** continue to protest the Danish cartoons (see 2/2), burning tires outside and throwing rocks at **EU** offices in Gaza. In ongoing Hamas-PA disputes in Gaza (see 2/1–3), suspected **Hamas gunmen** kidnap **Force 17 officer Walid Kanaan** and his wife, quickly releasing the wife. (AFP, IMEMC 2/4; HA, IMEMC, WP, WT 2/5; PCHR 2/9)

5 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** reopens the Qarni crossing (closed on 1/14); conducts an air strike on 2 cars driving in Gaza City, assassinating **Islamic Jihad mbrs. Adnan Bustan, Jihad al-Sawafiri**; patrols in and around Jenin (firing on residential areas, wounding 2 Palestinians) and in al-Khadir; conducts arrest raids, house searches in al-Azza r.c., Balata r.c., Bethlehem, Silwad; begins work on the **separation wall** extension around Ariel settlement. **IDF undercover units** also attempt to ambush **Islamic Jihad's Nablus military cmdr. Ahmad Raddad** nr. Balata r.c. in an apparent failed assassination attempt; Raddad escapes unharmed. A **Palestinian** fatally stabs an **Israeli** woman, wounds 4 on a shared taxi nr. Tel Aviv.

(IMEMC 2/5; VOI 2/5 in WNC 2/6; NYT, PCHR 2/6; NYT, PCHR 2/9)

6 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** conducts an air strike on a car in n. Gaza, assassinating **AMB mbrs. Hassan Asfur and Rami Hanun**, injuring 2 **AMB mbrs.**; fires a missile at a school in Bayt Lahiya in n. Gaza, wounding a Palestinian inside her nearby home; launches 4 missiles at a bridge nr. Bayt Hanun, destroying it; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin. (HA, NYT 2/7; PCHR 2/9)

7 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** fires missiles at a car in Gaza City, assassinating **AMB mbrs. 'Atiya Abu Shari'a and Suhail Bakir**, wounding 3 bystanders; fires several missiles at roads around Bayt Lahiya, rendering them impassable. **IDF undercover units**, a bulldozer and some 25 vehicles enter Nablus, targeting and assassinating **Islamic Jihad's Nablus military cmdr. Raddad** (targeted on 2/5) in an exchange of gunfire that also leaves 2 **IDF** soldiers wounded; hrs. later **Palestinians** gather at the scene and throw stones at **IDF** troops, who fire rubber-coated steel bullets at the youths, injuring 11. The **IDF** fires on stone-throwing **Palestinians** nr. Jenin; conducts arrest raids and searches shops in Qalandia r.c., firing on residential areas and wounding a Palestinian woman and 2 children; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Nablus and nr. Hebron; confiscates 129 d. of agricultural land in Bayt Hanina n. of Jerusalem for construction of the **separation wall**. **Palestinians** fire several **rockets** fr. Gaza towards Sederot, damaging 1 house, causing no injuries. (HA, WP 2/8; PCHR 2/9)

8 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** demolishes 5 **Palestinian homes** in Ramallah, 3 in Jenin, a 3-story building in Bayt Hanina; conducts arrest raids, house searches in Qalqilya and nr. Hebron, Tulkarm. An **IDF undercover unit** driving a car with Palestinian plates enters Aida r.c., arrests 2 **Palestinians**. A **Palestinian** bystander wounded in the 2/4 **IDF** assassination of 3 **AMB mbrs.** in Gaza City dies. (PMC 2/8; PCHR 2/9, 2/16)

The **Israel Lands Authority (ILA)** bulldozes 2,500 d. of **bedouin** crops (classified as state lands) nr. Beersheba to dissuade the **bedouin** fr. staying in the area. In previous years, the **ILA** sprayed the land with

pesticides but the Israeli High Court ruled against that practice in 2004. The ILA has offered to rent the land back to the bedouin for the duration of the growing season at a nominal fee, but the bedouin have refused, saying a lease would give legal backing to Israel's claim that the land does not belong to the bedouin. (HA 2/9)

9 FEBRUARY

In Gaza, **1 AMB mbr.**, **1 PRC mbr.** are fatally shot when they jointly attack the **IDF** post at the Erez crossing with gunfire and grenades, causing no injuries; the **IDF** shuts the Erez crossing in response. The **IDF** also fatally shoots a **Palestinian** laying a roadside bomb nr. the n. Gaza border fence; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Bethlehem, in Nablus, in and around Hebron. In Gaza City, **unidentified Palestinian gunmen** ambush, kidnap **Egyptian military attaché Hussam al-Musali**; no group claims responsibility or issues demands; **Hamas** denounces the action. The **PA** releases **39 Islamic Jihad prisoners**, **7 AMB mbrs.** held in its Jericho jail since arrest sweeps following the 12/5/05 Islamic Jihad suicide bombing in Netanya. (IMEMC, XIN 2/9; NYT 2/10; PCHR 2/16; AFP 2/22)

10 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Jenin town and r.c. (firing on residential areas) and nr. Hebron (occupying 7 Palestinian homes as observation posts). **Palestinians** fire a **rocket** fr. Gaza into Israel, causing no damage or injuries; the **IDF** shells the n. Gaza no-go zone in response, causing no injuries. **Palestinians** throw an explosive device at an **IDF** patrol nr. Nablus, causing no damage or injuries. As protests against the Danish cartoons continue across the Muslim world, some **2,000 Palestinian** march in protest at the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem; large crowds protest after Friday prayers in Gaza. (HA, WP 2/11; PCHR 2/16)

11 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** fires 3 missiles at a car in Dayr al-Balah, but the targets of the apparent assassination escape unharmed; fires live ammunition at stone-throwing Palestinians nr. Qalqilya, wounding 4; fires on residential areas nr. Hebron, wounding 2 Palestinian boys (ages 14 and 15); conducts arrest raids, house

searches in Dura (occupying 1 Palestinian home as an observation post) and Nablus, in and around Jenin (seriously wounding a local **Islamic Jihad** cmdr.). **Jewish settlers** fr. Ramat Yishai vandalize Palestinian homes, attack Palestinians in Hebron. A **Palestinian** is killed, 1 is wounded in a tunnel under the Rafah border apparently when Egypt takes measures to collapse it. **Egyptian military attaché Hussam al-Musali** (kidnapped on 2/9) is released in Gaza City; a previously unknown group named **Brigades of the Free** (thought to be connected to the **AMB**) claims responsibility. (HA, IMEMC, WP, WT XN 2/11; NYT 2/12; Middle East News Agency 2/12 in WNC 12/13; PCHR 2/16)

12 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** conducts mock air raids over the Gaza Strip, breaking the sound barrier; imposes a curfew on, sends troops into al-Shayukh and Sa'ir nr. Hebron based on false reports that an Israeli pilot had landed a glider in the area, fires percussion grenades, tear gas, and live ammunition at residents to keep them in their homes during the search, causing no injuries; conducts arrest raids, house searches in and around Hebron, nr. Jenin and Tulkarm, and in Aida r.c., al-Azza r.c., Bethlehem, Dahaysha r.c. **Jewish settlers** write slogans in Hebrew defaming the Prophet on the walls of a mosque in Nabi Elias nr. Qalqilya. (PCHR 2/16)

13 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** reopens the Erez crossing (shut on 2/9); fatally shoots a **Palestinian** shepherdess grazing sheep outside Wadi al-Silqa in central Gaza after she strays too close to the border fence; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Tulkarm and in al-Azza r.c., Askar r.c., Balata r.c., al-Bireh, Hebron, Nablus. **Israel** extends the administrative detention order of **jailed Change and Reform PC mbr. Omar 'Abd al-Razzaq** for 8 days; he was detained in 12/05. **Jewish settlers** fr. Karnei Shomron prevent Palestinians fr. traveling the Hebron-Qalqilya road. **Jewish settlers** fr. Tekoa settlement nr. Bethlehem chase off Palestinian farmers working their land nearby. (JAZ 2/13; IMEMC 2/15, PCHR 2/16)

14 FEBRUARY

Palestinians fire 2 **rockets** fr. Gaza towards Ashkelon, damaging a building; in

response, **IDF** artillery shells n. Gaza, hitting an apartment building, causing damage but no injuries; the **IDF** closes the Sufa commercial crossing into Gaza for the day. The **IDF** demolishes 2 **Palestinian homes** in and just southeast of Jerusalem; conducts arrest raids nr. Bethlehem, Qalqilya and in Askar r.c., Bayt Jala, Qabatya (occupying 2 homes as observation posts), Tulkarm. Nr. al-Arub r.c., **IDF soldiers** stop and search a Palestinian school bus; when a student on the bus allegedly opens a window without permission, a soldier shoots him in the face, seriously wounding him. **Jewish settlers** fr. Elon Moreh nr. Nablus vandalize Palestinian homes in nearby Bayt Furik; the **IDF** intervenes, removes the settlers. **AMB Nablus cmdr. Nasir Abu Aziz** says the Nablus faction will take steps to foil the success of

the **Hamas**-led government, saying “we would continue opening fire until they [Hamas] fail in their cabinet as they foiled Fatah.” (IMEMC, XIN 2/14; HA, PCHR 2/16)

15 FEBRUARY

The **IDF** reinforces troops in Hebron; fatally shoots a mentally handicapped **Palestinian teenager** during an arrest raid in Qalqilya when he emerges fr. a group of stone-throwing youths carrying a toy gun; conducts arrest raids, house searches nr. Jenin, Qalqilya. **Israel** releases **jailed Change and Reform PC mbr. Ahmad al-Haj (Nablus)**, who was placed in administrative detention for 4 mos. on 9/24/05. (IMEMC 2/15; PCHR, WP 2/16; PCHR 2/23)

CHRONOLOGY SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	(Agence France-Presse, Paris)
AP	(Associated Press [Internet])
BBC	(British Broadcasting Corporation World Service [Internet])
CSM	(<i>Christian Science Monitor</i> , Boston)
DS	(<i>Daily Star</i> , Beirut)
HA	(<i>Ha'Aretz</i> [Internet], Tel Aviv)
IMEMC	(International Middle East Media Center, Bayt Sahur)
JAZ	(al-Jazeera Satellite Channel Television, Doha)
JP	(<i>Jerusalem Post</i> [Internet], Jerusalem)
JT	(<i>Jordan Times</i> , Amman)
JTA	(Jewish Telegraphic Agency [Internet])
NYT	(<i>New York Times</i> , New York)
PCHR	(Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Gaza)
PCRS	(Palestine Red Crescent Society, al-Bireh)
PM	(Palestine Monitor [Internet])
PMC	(Palestine Media Center [Internet])
PNN	(Palestine News Network, Ramallah)
REU	(Reuters [Internet])
VOI	(Voice of Israel, Jerusalem)
WNC	(World News Connection [Internet], Washington)
WP	(<i>Washington Post</i> , Washington)
WT	(<i>Washington Times</i> , Washington)
XIN	(Xinhua-New China News Agency, Beijing)
YA	(<i>Yedi'ot Abarot</i> , Tel Aviv)