



Palestine Situation Report

April 7, 2023

Background

Information about the current period of ongoing violence in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem is summarized in Anera's [timeline of crises in Palestine](#).

Recent Escalations

During Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, Muslims across the world fast from sunrise to sunset and break their fasts over shared iftar meals. It is a time of celebration and joy for those who observe. In Palestine, Ramadan is often marked with increased violence and tension, especially in Jerusalem, which is home to Al Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam.

On Wednesday, April 5, Israeli police forces stormed Al Aqsa Mosque before dawn in response to alleged rioting. The police attacked dozens of Palestinian worshippers, using batons, tear gas, and sound bombs.¹ Videos of the raid also depict police using clubs and rifles to assault worshippers.² According to the Palestinian Red Crescent, 12 people sustained injuries. Israeli forces blocked medics from reaching the mosque. Amnesty International reports that they did so by firing rubber bullets at approaching ambulances.

The raid resulted in the arrest of at least 450 Palestinians, around 50 of whom had not been released as of April 6. Of those who left Atarot Detention Center after their release

¹ [What's behind the Ramadan raids at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque? | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

² [Israel attacks Gaza after Al-Aqsa Mosque raid | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

on Wednesday, many were seen barefoot and appearing beaten and bruised. According to a lawyer present, many of those detained, including children, faced interrogations and beatings. Released detainees are not allowed to enter the Old City of Jerusalem, and thus pray at Al Aqsa, for one week.³

In response to the raid, four missiles were fired toward Israel from Gaza. Israel responded by striking multiple sites in Gaza, including an alleged military site and a location in Nuseirat Refugee Camp. There were no immediate reports of casualties.⁴ On April 6, police stormed Al Aqsa Mosque once again following international condemnations of the first attack. At around 10:30 pm, after evening prayers, Israeli forces raided the mosque, firing stun grenades⁵ and rubber bullets⁶ and beating Palestinians with rifle butts.⁷ The Palestinian Red Crescent reported six injuries.⁸

According to the mosque's director of reconstruction projects, the two raids badly damaged parts of Al Aqsa compound, including the prayer room and the clinic. The clinic had to close for the first time since its opening in 1990, with the interior completely destroyed. Israeli forces broke three windows in the prayer hall, each of which were made by hand in a process that takes six months to complete. Forces also broke two main doors and damaged the carpeting.⁹

After the second raid on Al Aqsa, 34 rockets were fired from Lebanon toward Israel, 25 of which were intercepted. Although no group took responsibility, most of the blame is being directed toward Hamas and Hezbollah. Israel focused its counterattack on Hamas, launching air raids first on Gaza and then on Lebanon. No casualties were immediately reported. According to a reporter for Al Jazeera, Israeli air strikes on Gaza focused on both Hamas sites and agricultural lands. They also damaged homes and a children's hospital.¹⁰

The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory condemned the attack, saying, "As Palestinian Muslims gathered for Ramadan prayers exercising their right to worship in Al Aqsa Mosque, Israeli authorities used blatantly excessive and unjustified force against them." She went on to say, "These actions have led to a spiraling situation of rocket fire into Israel and missiles launched into Gaza, endangering civilians on both sides of the Green Line. I am alarmed by the

³ [Israel/OPT: Second night of horror at al-Aqsa mosque | Amnesty International](#)

⁴ [Israel attacks Gaza after Al-Aqsa Mosque raid | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁵ [Israel/OPT: Second night of horror at al-Aqsa mosque | Amnesty International](#)

⁶ [Israeli forces attack Palestinians in Al-Aqsa for second time | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁷ [Israel/OPT: Second night of horror at al-Aqsa mosque | Amnesty International](#)

⁸ [Israeli forces attack Palestinians in Al-Aqsa for second time | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁹ [Israeli attack causes serious damages to Al-Aqsa Mosque | PL English](#)

¹⁰ [Israel launches air raids on Gaza, Lebanon | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

escalation of violence, particularly because of the further devastation it will bring to Palestinians in Gaza, who have been trapped by an inescapable siege since 2007.”¹¹

Prior to the recent raids on Al Aqsa and air strikes in Gaza, tensions had been building for months and throughout the first weeks of Ramadan, making it the deadliest start to a year since 2000 in the West Bank.¹² (See Anera’s [timeline of crises in Palestine](#).)

Throughout Ramadan, which ends April 21, violence and escalations are likely to continue in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, increasing the need for medical supplies and medication; food, shelter, and hygiene supplies for displaced persons; and mental health and psychosocial support for those affected.

Anera’s Response

Anera’s emergency response comes in addition to our ongoing programming, not at its expense. Our staff is monitoring the recent escalations in Palestine closely and is mobilizing to provide emergency relief for those who are most affected. Anera has decades of experience in delivering aid in response to fast-moving developments in the region, and our team in Palestine can act quickly because they come from the affected communities.

Our emergency response measures include distributing medicines and healthcare supplies for emergency medical services through Anera’s long-standing medical donations program. We are currently sending medical donations to the northern part of the West Bank and gathering lists of medicines and medical supplies from our network of healthcare facilities in order to begin procuring needed items such as blood bags, testing equipment, and antibiotics.

Anera will provide food, clothing, and hygiene vouchers to communities affected by the violence and disruptions as needed, to enable families to maintain their dignity and meet their food security and nutrition needs despite movement restrictions and other access challenges. Anera will also leverage its experience providing psychosocial support to affected communities as needed. Finally, we are prepared to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure, such as water and sanitation facilities as well as homes.

¹¹ [Israel: UN expert condemns brutal attacks on Palestinians at Al-Aqsa Mosque | UN OHCHR](#)

¹² [Raid on al-Aqsa mosque escalates into rocket fire, airstrikes in Gaza | La Prensa Latina](#)