Attacks on the Press 2000: Israel and the Occupied Territories

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THE EXPLOSION OF VIOLENCE THAT BEGAN IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES on September 29 has been unsparing of journalists, reinforcing the West Bank and Gaza Strip's reputation as among the world's most hazardous beats. Reasons why included the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), Israeli security forces, and militant Jewish settlers.

While no conclusive evidence exists that the IDF intentionally shot at journalists, there was a recurring pattern of soldiers shooting reporters and photojournalists. In one particularly egregious November incident in the West Bank city of Bethlehem, an IDF soldier shot and seriously wounded Yola Monakhov, a 26-year-old free-lance photographer who was stringing for The Associated Press. Monakhov was standing near a group of young Palestinians who were gathering (and apparently throwing) stones when the soldier suddenly appeared from around a corner and opened fire with live ammunition.

The photographer sustained serious injuries to her bladder and other internal organs and her pelvis was fractured in several places. In early December, the IDF formally apologized, claiming that the soldier who fired the shot had violated IDF rules of engagement but had not intentionally targeted the journalist. The IDF statement added that both the soldier and his commanding officer would face a court martial. If carried out, these would be the first disciplinary actions ever taken, to CPJ's knowledge, by the IDF against soldiers who abused journalists.

In October and November, CPJ documented nearly two dozen other cases of journalists, most of them Palestinians, who were wounded by Israeli army gunfire or beaten by Israeli security forces while covering the political violence that erupted the day after Likud party leader Ariel Sharon's controversial September 28 visit to the Jerusalem shrine known as Temple Mount to Jews and the Noble Sanctuary (Haram al-Sharif) to Muslims.

Ten journalists were wounded by live rounds or rubber-coated steel bullets fired by Israeli troops. In three other cases, reporters on the scene blamed Israeli soldiers for shooting journalists, although the source of gunfire was unclear. There have also been numerous other unverified reports of journalists wounded by IDF gunfire or assaulted by Israeli soldiers and/or militant Jewish settlers.

This spate of wounded reporters underscored the perennial complaint of many Palestinian journalists, that Israeli soldiers not only subject them to physical abuse, but are often criminally negligent in cases where journalists are shot. Over the years, several journalists have also charged that the IDF targeted them intentionally, a claim that IDF spokesmen have repeatedly rejected. (For more information on press-freedom abuses by Israeli and PNA authorities last year, see CPJ's special briefing *Bloodied and Beleaguered* on our Web site, www.cpj.org.)

"You have a situation where a large number of people-soldiers, rioters, and reporters-are all crowded into a very narrow area, and that undoubtedly increases the chances of bystanders getting hurt," IDF spokesman Maj. Yarden Vatikai told the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* after several journalists were wounded during the fall. In its official comment on CPJ's research, the IDF contended that "on some occasions journalists were shot unintentionally because they positioned themselves in the line of fire between Palestinian gunmen and rioters and Israeli troops in order to obtain a better photograph or due to simple inexperience."

Throughout the year, CPJ repeatedly urged the IDF to launch investigations into attacks on journalists in which IDF soldiers were implicated. CPJ was aware of three cases in which the IDF said it had carried out investigations. One was the shooting of Yola Monakhov. In the other two cases, the IDF absolved itself of any wrongdoing.

CPJ also documented three cases in which working journalists were severely beaten by Israeli troops or undercover agents during street clashes in the fall. Two other journalists were arrested or summoned by Israeli authorities for questioning in response to their coverage of events. CPJ was unable to confirm several other reports of similar harassment.

Attacks on journalists from extremist Jewish settlers proceeded with seeming impunity throughout the year. In a number of cases documented by CPJ, Israeli soldiers and police stood by indifferently while settlers beat, threatened, or otherwise intimidated journalists.

In October, Israel helicopters bombed transmission towers and other technical facilities used by the Voice of Palestine (the official radio station of the Palestinian National Authority, or PNA) in Ramallah. The attack briefly knocked the station off the air, but it quickly resumed broadcasting on an FM frequency. The IDF said it had attacked the station in retaliation for allegedly inflammatory broadcasting on the PNA station Palestine TV, which IDF spokesmen claimed had provoked the mob killing of two IDF reservists in Ramallah earlier that day.

The next month, in Gaza, Israeli helicopters bombed the offices of Palestine TV and also knocked out a transmitter shared by Palestine TV and the Voice of Palestine. The attack occurred after a bomb attack on a Jewish school bus in the occupied Gaza Strip, and came as part of a broader military strike against so-called Palestinian security sites.

Israel also continued to restrict the movement of Palestinian journalists by arbitrarily granting or withholding the press cards and security clearances that they need to enter East Jerusalem and Israel or travel between the occupied territories.

Even with the proper permissions, Palestinian journalists were denied entry into Israel at times when Israeli authorities had sealed off the Occupied Territories, as happened several times during the recent unrest. Travel between Gaza and the West Bank once again proved difficult for these journalists, except for a handful of reporters who had managed to obtain the necessary documents. Even movement between Israeli and PNA-controlled portions of the West Bank was hindered by Israeli checkpoints and blockades, a problem that worsened following the outbreak of violence in September.

The situation was particularly acute for Gazan journalists, despite the October 1999 opening of a "safe passage" route between the West Bank and Gaza. "We live in a prison. It's called Gaza Prison," remarked a reporter for the Palestinian newspaper *Al-Quds* who, like nearly all his colleagues, had no way to leave Gaza.

In February, 27 prominent U.S., European, and Israeli journalists called on Prime Minister Ehud Barak to end Israeli government restrictions on the free movement of Taher Shriteh, a veteran Gaza-based reporter for *The New York Times*, the BBC, and the Japanese daily *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

Since March 1995, the Israeli government has described Shriteh as a "security threat" and denied him permission to travel to Jerusalem and the West Bank. By year's end, the authorities had not reversed themselves; meanwhile, Shriteh moved to the United States.

Given all these restrictions, most Palestinian journalists remain cut off from Jerusalem, the center of local and international press activity. Some Western editors complained that these restrictions hindered newsgathering. "Certainly no Israeli journalist would tolerate similar treatment by Palestinian authorities," remarked a veteran American journalist who works for a Western news agency.

In Israel and East Jerusalem, the local and international press remained subject to Israeli military censorship. Under the so-called Censorship Agreement, local newspapers that are party to the agreement must "voluntarily" submit national-security-related news to the censors. The latter can bar publication of such news, although journalists have the option of a judicial appeal. Most Hebrew, Arabic, and English-language local media are able to circumvent the restrictions by attributing sensitive news to foreign news outlets. Foreign journalists generally find the enforcement erratic.

In early November, the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported that the Israeli Defense Ministry had issued an order that because Palestinians working with Western news organizations were allegedly biased, they should not receive press credentials. Subsequently, several Palestinian journalists told CPJ that Israeli authorities had refused to renew their government-issued press cards, which facilitate the movement of journalists within Israeli-controlled areas and allow easy access to government press conferences and other official events. Israeli officials apparently told these journalists that the renewals had been denied because of the Palestinian media's alleged incitement to violence against Israel.

Israeli abuses of press freedom were not confined to Israel and the occupied territories. In one shocking incident in May, Abed Takkoush, a veteran Lebanese driver for the BBC, was killed by an Israeli shell during Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon. The IDF described the incident as a "tragic mistake," but refused to acknowledge any wrongdoing on the part of its troops. It was difficult, however, to explain why the shell that killed Takkoush had been fired in the first place. Eyewitnesses reported that Israeli forces in the area were not under military threat, and that the IDF had been shelling civilians indiscriminately in the hours before Takkoush's death. "Even if the tank

unit was in some doubt about the identity of the occupants, the response was disproportionate and reckless," the BBC said in a statement issued shortly after the attack.

Following Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, there were also several reported cases of journalists wounded by Israeli gunfire during skirmishes between Lebanese protesters and the IDF along the international border. *(See also Palestinian National Authority)*

JANUARY 3
Atta Oweisat, Zoom 77
ATTACKED

Oweisat, a photographer for the Israeli photo agency Zoom 77, was assaulted by Israeli security forces while covering disturbances in East Jerusalem.

The incident occurred near the Damascus Gate in the old city of Jerusalem, during celebrations of an Islamic holiday. Some Palestinians in the crowd shot fireworks in the direction of nearby Israeli police, provoking a violent response.

As Oweisat began taking photos, two undercover agents ordered him to leave the area. When he refused, one of the agents grabbed his camera and smashed it, breaking the flash. Other officers beat him about the body.

FEBRUARY 15
Khaled Amayreh, *Akhbar al-Khalil*
HARASSED

An officer from Israel's District Coordination Office questioned Amayreh, editor of the Hebron weekly *Akhbar al-Khalil*, about his editorial policy.

The officer, who identified himself as "Captain Adel," asked whether the editor supported the Islamist group Hamas, and suggested that his newspaper's editorials were encouraging the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to take a tougher stand on the right of return for Palestinian refugees during its negotiations with Israel. Amayreh said he was also warned against engaging in "incitement."

Four days earlier, PNA security officials had summoned Amayreh for questioning about many of the same issues.

MAY 15
Mazen Dana, Reuters
ATTACKED

Reuters cameraman Dana was wounded in the leg by a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli troops while filming clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli forces on Shalalah Street in the West Bank city of Hebron.

According to Dana, he and several colleagues were stationed on the opposite side of the street from the stone-throwing demonstrators. He was hit at a range of about 40 meters.

After the shooting, Dana and two other colleagues took refuge behind a steel shop door, which was then struck by a barrage of bullets.

MAY 16
Shams Oudeh, Reuters
ATTACKED

Reuters cameraman Oudeh was wounded in the testicles by a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli troops while covering clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli soldiers near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip.

Oudeh was standing with a group of other journalists, apart from the demonstrators and the Israeli troops, when he was hit. The journalist was wearing a flak jacket with the word "Press" written on it. After the incident, he was taken to a nearby clinic for treatment.

MAY 17
Talal Abu Rahma, France 2
ATTACKED

Abu Rahma, a cameraman for the French television channel France 2, was hit in the right hand by a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli troops. He was covering clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli troops near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim, in the Gaza Strip, when he was wounded. The bullet broke one of his fingers and caused a second-degree burn.

Abu Rahma was standing about twenty yards (22 meters) away from the demonstrators, with his soundman and a few Palestinian police officers, when he was hit.

JULY 15
Amer Jabari, ABC News
ATTACKED
Mazen Dana, Reuters
ATTACKED
Nasser Shyioukhi, The Associated Press
ATTACKED
Naji Dana, TF1
ATTACKED

ABC News cameraman Jabari, Reuters cameraman Mazen Dana, Associated Press photographer Shyioukhi, and Naji Dana, a cameraman for the French television station TF1, were among a group of Palestinian journalists who were attacked and beaten by Jewish settlers around the West Bank city of Hebron.

The attacks came amid street clashes between settlers and Palestinians near the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba, just east of the Hebron city limits. The violence was sparked by settler unrest over allegations that a Jewish girl had been sexually assaulted by a Palestinian man.

When the journalists reached Kiryat Arba they were assaulted by a large group of settlers, who started punching and kicking them and trying to smash their cameras. The journalists said that Israeli soldiers and police at the scene did little to halt the attacks, and that at one point soldiers held Jabari down while the crowd beat him.

Shyioukhi said he was chased by several dozen settlers until he took shelter in a nearby police station.

After Mazen Dana left the area and headed for Hebron's Al-Haram Street, he encountered more angry settlers smashing cars and shops. According to Dana, a nearby Israeli soldier failed to intervene when he was attacked and beaten unconscious while shooting video of settlers wrecking cars.

JULY 16
Mazen Dana, Reuters
ATTACKED

An Israeli police officer slammed the rear door of an ambulance on the head of Reuters cameraman Dana, who was filming the evacuation of a wounded Palestinian youth on Sahle Street in the West Bank city of

Hebron when the attack occurred. "I was filming the youth on the ground and I was being pushed," said Dana. "They put him in the ambulance and then an officer from the police pulled the door down on my head."

According to Dana, the officer then ordered his arrest, but it was never carried out.

SEPTEMBER 29
Khaled Abu Aker, France 2, *The New York Times*
ATTACKED

Abu Aker, a correspondent with the French television station France 2 and the West Bank stringer for *The New York Times*, was beaten by Israeli police at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque. The attack occurred after Abu Aker refused to comply with a police officer who demanded that the journalist hand over a rubber bullet that he had picked up off the ground.

Abu Aker was hit in the shoulder with a truncheon and punched in the face. His shirt was ripped and his eyeglasses stomped on in the ensuing melee, which another officer joined.

Hazem Bader, The Associated Press
ATTACKED

Bader, a cameraman stringing for The Associated Press, was wounded in his right hand by a rubber-coated metal bullet while covering clashes between Israeli troops and Palestinian demonstrators at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque. The bullet was fired by an Israeli soldier from an estimated range of 15 yards (16 meters), according to Bader and another eyewitness.

Bader and a few other photographers and cameramen had been filming Israeli soldiers shooting at demonstrators near the Magharbeh Gate, which overlooks the Western Wall. The journalists were stationed behind a stone column about 15 yards (16 meters) away from the soldiers. Bader claimed he was hit on purpose. "It was a clear shot at us," he said. "We were far from the demonstrators."

The bullet broke three bones in Bader's hand. The journalist later had two metal plates inserted in his hand. At year's end, he still had no movement in two of his fingers and had been unable to work since the attack.

Mahfouz Abu Turk, Reuters
ATTACKED

Reuters photographer Abu Turk was hit in the left thigh with a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli troops. He had been covering the clashes at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque and was taking cover behind a large stone column. He retreated after being wounded but still kept filming while heading in the direction of the mosque.

Shortly thereafter, Abu Turk was hit in the right foot by another rubber bullet. He was taken to Al-Makased Hospital for treatment and released the same day.

Khaled Zeghari, Reuters
ATTACKED

Israeli soldiers beat Reuters cameraman Zeghari and shot him in the leg with a rubber-coated metal bullet while he was covering clashes at the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. The attack took place about five minutes after Associated Press cameraman Hazem Bader was shot.

"I was filming the crowd during Friday prayers and when the clashes took place by the Magharbeh Gate. I took refuge behind a large rock [stone column] in the courtyard of the Islamic Museum," Zeghari said, adding that after 10 minutes or so a group of Israeli soldiers stormed the courtyard and opened fire.

"At that time I was filming the event while lying down on the ground. All of a sudden the soldiers approached me and began beating me with bats and sticks on my head and shoulders," Zeghari said. "Trying to protect my head against their fierce beating I ran toward Magharbeh Gate and from there I was [taken], bleeding from my head and right leg, to Hadassah Hospital in Ein Karem for treatment."

Zeghari did not realize that a rubber-coated metal bullet was lodged in his leg until doctors examined him at the hospital. The bullet was apparently fired at close range.

In addition to the bullet wound, Zeghari suffered a cut and several bruises on his head as well as bruises on his back, right shoulder, and left hand. He lost his camera during the melee.

OCTOBER 1
Amer Jabari, ABC News
ATTACKED

Jabari, a Hebron-based cameraman for ABC News, was wounded in the head by an unidentified object, thought to be either an Israeli rubber-coated metal bullet or a rock thrown by a Palestinian demonstrator, while covering clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli troops in Hebron.

OCTOBER 2
Mazen Dana, Reuters
ATTACKED

Israeli forces firing live ammunition shot Dana, a Hebron-based Reuters cameraman, in the left foot and leg while he was covering clashes on Hebron's Shalalah Street.

It was Dana's second combat wound in two days. The day before, he was hit in the same leg by an Israeli rubber-coated metal bullet.

Loay Abu Haykel, Reuters
ATTACKED

Reuters photographer Abu Haykel was hit in the leg by a rubber-coated metal bullet while covering clashes between Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank city of Hebron.

OCTOBER 4
Atta Oweisat, Zoom 77
ATTACKED

Owiesat, a photographer for the Israeli press agency Zoom 77, was assaulted by a group of undercover Israeli security agents while covering the funeral of a Palestinian in Jabel Moukaber, a neighborhood of Jerusalem. He was standing with other Israeli journalists when undercover Israeli security agents arrived and began arresting Palestinian youths.

"When I began to take pictures, seven of [the Israeli agents] attacked me, threw me to the ground, and started beating me and stepping on me, trying hard to pull the cameras away from me," Oweisat recalled. "I was holding the camera-which was hanging from my neck-tight. Then a Border Patrol soldier came and held me by the neck and one of the

[agents] stepped on my stomach." Oweisat was knocked unconscious and woke up in the hospital. His bulletproof vest prevented serious injuries, he said.

A week earlier, Oweisat had filmed a group of Israeli undercover agents in Jerusalem's Shufat refugee camp. He believes this might have motivated the attack.

OCTOBER 9
Luc Delahaye, Magnum, *Newsweek*
ATTACKED

A rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli forces hit the camera lens of Delahaye, a free-lance photographer with the Magnum photo agency and *Newsweek* magazine. At the time, the journalist was shooting clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian demonstrators in the town of Ramallah. Delahaye estimated that he was shot at a distance of 40 yards (44 meters). His camera was destroyed.

While working at the same location the next day, his head was grazed by another rubber bullet. One week later, he was hit on the forehead by a third rubber bullet while photographing a Palestinian protester who had just been hit in the head by a live round.

"In the three incidents I was definitely targeted by the soldiers, but I cannot say if I was targeted as a human being or as a journalist," Delahaye told CPJ, adding that he was wearing only a T-shirt and not a flak jacket. "It is impossible to say."

OCTOBER 11
Atta Oweisat, Zoom 77
LEGAL ACTION

Israeli police called in Oweisat, a photographer for the Israeli press agency Zoom 77, for questioning in Jerusalem. The journalist thought he was being summoned in reference to a complaint he filed about his beating at the hands of an undercover Israeli security unit in Jerusalem on October 4 (see case above).

Instead, Oweisat was charged with insulting the police, injuring an officer, and preventing the police from arresting demonstrators. Oweisat vigorously denied the charges. "My presence as a photojournalist has been a nuisance for [Israeli undercover agents] who infiltrate among the local Palestinians during demonstrations and who are strongly opposed to their identities being exposed," he argued.

The journalist was released on bail of 5000 shekels (US\$ 1250). The charges against him were still pending at year's end.

OCTOBER 12
Voice of Palestine
ATTACKED

At around 5 p.m., Israeli attack helicopters opened fire on two transmission towers and other technical facilities used by the Voice of Palestine in the West Bank city of Ramallah. The attack briefly knocked the Palestinian National Authority radio station off the air, but it quickly resumed broadcasting on an FM frequency.

The Israeli army acknowledged that it had deliberately targeted the radio towers. A military spokesman justified the attack by charging that the station had incited Palestinians to commit violence. Maj. Gen. Giora Eiland, head of the Israeli army's operations branch, told Reuters that Palestinian state television broadcasts of Palestinians dragging an effigy of an Israeli soldier had incited a mob attack in Ramallah earlier that day, in which two Israeli soldiers were killed.

CPJ protested the attack in an October 18 letter to Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak.

OCTOBER 17
Mahfouz Abu Turk, Reuters
ATTACKED

Reuters photographer Abu Turk was wounded in the hand by a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli troops while he was covering clashes that erupted between Palestinians and Israeli forces in Bethlehem after the funeral of a Palestinian boy.

Just before the attack, Abu Turk was photographing the clashes from behind a cement block. He was taken to the hospital in Beit Jala, where he received four stitches for the wound.

Abu Turk claimed that his camera equipment clearly identified him as a journalist.

OCTOBER 18
Riccardo Cristiano, RAI
HARASSED, CENSORED

Israel's Government Press Office revoked the accreditation of Cristiano, a journalist with the Italian state television network RAI, after a Palestinian newspaper published a controversial open letter in which he stated that RAI had not filmed the mob killing of two Israeli soldiers in Ramallah on October 12. (The incident was captured on film by another Italian TV station.)

The letter, which was published in the Palestinian newspaper *Al-Hayat* al-Jadida, stated that RAI would not have filmed such an incident, even given the opportunity. Cristiano also pledged that both he and RAI would abide by PNA regulations for the media. Many interpreted this to mean that the journalist was biased in favor of the PNA.

Shortly after Israeli authorities revoked Cristiano's accreditation, RAI recalled the journalist to Rome and closed down its Jerusalem bureau, citing security concerns.

OCTOBER 18
Patrick Baz, Agence France-Presse
ATTACKED

An Israeli soldier shot Baz in the finger with a rubber-coated metal bullet while the photographer was covering clashes between Israeli forces and stone-throwing Palestinian protesters in Ramallah. Baz was standing with another photographer at the time.

Although armed Palestinians at the scene later engaged in gunfire with the Israeli forces, Baz said this happened after he was hit.

"It was obvious [we were journalists]. We were wearing white helmets and flak jackets," Baz told CPJ. "I got it on my finger while [the finger] was on my camera…I can't say it was a stray bullet.

"I would not complain if I was in the middle of the demonstration…[but] we were on the side between demonstrators and soldiers and in an empty field, really," he continued. "You could call it a no-man's land."

OCTOBER 21
Jacques-Marie Bourget, *Paris-Match*
ATTACKED

Bourget, a reporter for the French magazine *Paris-Match*, was struck in the chest by a live bullet and seriously injured while covering clashes between stone-throwing Palestinians and Israeli troops in Ramallah. He

was hospitalized in Ramallah and then flown to Paris for treatment 24
hours later.

At the time of the incident, Bourget was standing along a wall with a
group of journalists and other bystanders. They were near, but not
among, a group of demonstrators, *Paris-Match* reported and other
eyewitnesses confirmed. A bullet then struck Bourget in the chest,
entering his lung.

A *Paris-Match* editor in Paris told CPJ that the magazine was not sure
who fired the round that hit Bourget, and that the magazine did not
believe he was targeted intentionally. However, another *Paris-Match*
journalist had a different view.

"From where he was standing, only those in front of him could have hit
him. And those in front of him were Israeli soldiers," *Paris-Match* deputy
editor Patrick Jarnoux told *The Toronto Star*. "He was nowhere near the
clashes, standing alone with a photographer," Jarnoux added. "And a 57-
year-old man can't easily be mistaken for a 15-year-old rock thrower."

Bruno Stephens, *Libération, Stern*
ATTACKED

Stephens, a free-lance photographer working with the French newspaper
Libération and the German magazine *Stern*, was grazed in the throat by a
live bullet while covering clashes between Israelis and Palestinians in
Ramallah. At the time, Stephens was standing with several other
journalists, well away from Palestinian demonstrators.

Stephens told CPJ that the bullet, which he believed was fired by Israeli
troops, passed over the head of a British free-lance photographer and
then ricocheted off a wall before grazing his throat. He suffered a minor
burn.

The incident took place just minutes after the shooting of *Paris-Match*'s
Jacques-Marie Bourget, who was part of the same group of journalists.

OCTOBER 23
Nasser Shiyoukhi, The Associated Press
HARASSED

Israeli soldiers prevented Shiyoukhi, a reporter and photographer for The
Associated Press, from entering the West Bank village of Sumoua, near
Hebron. His Israeli government press card was also confiscated.

At the time of the incident, Shiyoukhi was returning to Sumoua, having left in order to help a number of foreign reporters who were having difficulty gaining access to the town. When he arrived at the checkpoint, the soldiers told him he could not reenter Sumoua, and then took his press card.

OCTOBER 31
Ben Wedeman, CNN
ATTACKED

Wedeman, CNN's Cairo bureau chief, was hit in the lower back by a live round at the Karni border crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

Wedeman told CPJ that he had gone to the Karni crossing following reports of clashes there earlier in the day. He and his crew initially stationed themselves across the street from a group of Palestinians whom he presumed had been among the protesters earlier.

"[They] were on one side of the street and a handful of journalists [were] on the other side," Wedeman said. He described the situation as tense but relatively stable at first, although there was sporadic gunfire. Journalists at the scene were wearing flak jackets and helmets.

As Wedeman and CNN cameraman Muhammad Assad walked down the road toward an olive grove, a burst of gunfire erupted. "Within minutes there was shooting. Intense shooting," he said. "I heard bullets over my head. We realized we were not in a good position." He added that what appeared to be a shell landed 15 to 20 yards (16 to 22 meters) away.

About five minutes later, while Wedeman was taking down his tripod and preparing to leave the area during a lull in the firing, he was struck in the back. The bullet passed through Wedeman's flak jacket. He could not determine the source of the shot, but did say that his back was to the Israeli position, between 400 yards (437 meters) and one mile (1.62 kilometer) away.

Agence France-Presse reported that journalists, including the CNN crew, were fired on by Israeli forces. An official at CNN told CPJ that there was "no reason to believe whoever fired upon Wedeman knew he was a journalist."

CPJ released a news alert about the attack on the afternoon of October 31.

Suleiman al-Shafei, Channel 2
HARASSED

Israeli soldiers detained al-Shafei, a reporter and cameraman for the Israeli television station Channel 2, when the journalist tried to reenter Israel from the Gaza Strip via the Erez checkpoint. The soldiers told al-Shafei that he was violating an order prohibiting Israeli citizens from entering the occupied territories.

After al-Shafei identified himself as a Channel 2 reporter (and an Israeli citizen), the soldiers called in Israeli police, who took the journalist to a nearby police station and questioned him for four hours. He was asked why he had gone to Gaza, whom he had met with, and what he had seen. Al-Shafei refused to answer the questions and protested his detention.

The police officers then tried to make al-Shafei sign a written pledge that he would not enter Gaza for 90 days. He refused and was eventually released on 5000 shekels (US$1250) bail, but the soldiers confiscated his footage of the aftermath of Israel's bombing of Palestinian National Authority offices in Gaza the night before.

In a virtually identical incident on November 2, Israeli soldiers again stopped al-Shafei at the Erez checkpoint for violating the ban on entry into the occupied territories and transferred him to police custody. After another interrogation, he was released on bail of 15,000 shekels (US$3750).

NOVEMBER 11
Yola Monakhov, The Associated Press
ATTACKED

Monakhov, a 26-year-old free-lance photographer working with The Associated Press, was struck in the lower abdomen by a live round fired by an Israeli soldier in the West Bank town of Bethlehem. She sustained a fractured pelvis and serious injuries to her bladder and other internal organs.

According to the AP, Monakhov was with a small group of Palestinian youths, some of whom had been hurling stones toward an Israeli outpost near Rachel's Tomb, when an Israeli soldier appeared from around a corner and took aim at the group from a distance of about 50 yards (55 meters). Monakhov fled along with the youths to take shelter behind a closed gate.

"There was maybe one youth pressed in the doorway with me," she told the AP, explaining that her backpack prevented her from entering the area. "I was waiting for the shot. And a second later I collapsed."

After initial denials, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) acknowledged on November 17 that one of its troops had shot the journalist. The IDF announced that it was conducting an investigation into the incident.

In December, the IDF formally apologized to Monakhov and said that the soldier who fired the shot violated IDF regulations. The IDF also promised that the soldier as well as his commanding officer would face a court martial. To CPJ's knowledge, the disciplinary actions, if carried out, would be the first such action taken by the IDF against soldiers who abused journalists.

NOVEMBER 12
Mazen Dana, Reuters
ATTACKED, HARASSED

Israeli soldiers stopped Reuters cameraman Dana at the Khallet Khadour checkpoint, near the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba, and prevented him from entering the old city of Hebron. Dana was traveling with Mary Robinson, the U.N. high commissioner for human rights.

The soldiers claimed that all journalists were prohibited from entering the old city. After Robinson protested, Dana told CPJ, he was finally allowed to proceed.

After they passed through the checkpoint, a group of Jewish settlers attacked Dana's car with stones and metal bars. Afterwards, the journalist was taken to the local police station and questioned for one and a half hours.

Abdel Rahim Qusini, Reuters
ATTACKED
Nasser Ishtayyeh, Reuters
ATTACKED

Jewish settlers attacked a car carrying Reuters photographers Qusini and Ishtayyeh, who were traveling from Jerusalem toward the West Bank city of Nablus to investigate news that a settler had been killed that day.

As the journalists approached a bus station at the Za'tara intersection on the main road to Nablus, they saw some five Israeli soldiers standing with a handful of settlers. Suddenly, about a dozen settlers walked from behind a concrete barrier and started hurling stones at their car. A separate group of about 30 settlers then began throwing stones and pieces of cement. One stone broke the glass of the left window and struck Qusini in the shoulder.

Israeli soldiers witnessed the incident but did not intervene, according to the two journalists, even though their car displayed a "Press" sticker and had Israeli license plates. Qusini was taken to Rafidia Hospital in Nablus for treatment and was released later in the day.

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