



Israeli Violations of Palestinian Rights in the Occupied City of Jerusalem

October - 2013

By

**Monitoring Israeli Violations Team
Land Research Center – Arab Studies Society**



Eleventh Month of the seventh year

Israeli Violations of the Palestinian Housing and Land Rights – November, 2013:

| Aggression | Location | occurrences |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| Violations of the right to proper housing | | |
| House demolitions | Beit Hanina- Kastero's sheds | 2 |
| | Jerusalem- Bethlehem Road- Latin Patriarchate | 1 |
| | The Old City- Al Qarmi neighborhood | 1 |
| Including Self-demolitions | Sur Baher | 3 |
| Demolition threats | | |
| Residences | Al Qarmi neighborhood | 1 |
| Structures/ a school | Nabi Samuel | |
| Attacks- the right to residency | | |
| Excavations | Silsila Gate | 1 |
| | The Old City | 1 |
| Land confiscations | | |
| | Nabi Samuel | 180 dunums |
| | Al Eisawayya | 738 dunums |
| Break ins | | |
| For taxes | | 7 |
| For security reasons | | 4 |
| Closure of organizations | | |
| Closure of Salwan Cultural Club | Silwan | 1 |
| Attacks on religious sites | | |
| Colonists' attacks on Al 'Aqsa | Al 'Aqsa mosque | 16 |

The right to proper housing...Demolitions of residences and structures

1- A Jerusalemite demolishes his residence by himself due to the state municipality's arbitrary decisions:

On November 10, Samer Z'atara had to demolish his residence in Al Qarmi neighborhood by himself after the municipality forced him to do so under the pretext of unlicensed construction though it was built 18 years ago.

The house consisted of 3 bedrooms, a kitchen and lavatory. It was inhabited by Samer and his wife along with his six children (The oldest is sixteen years old and the youngest one). Samer stated to an LRC observer that:

I built the house to settle down with my family. Three years ago, I received a demolition order from the state municipality for my residence that is according to them is illegal and unlicensed. I paid a total of 7000 NIS as a fine in monthly installments of 500 NIS.

At the last court session, the court ruling was that the house be demolished before February, 2014 if I do not proceed with getting a license. Since I am unemployed and poor, I could not afford to pay for a lawyer and an architect. So, I decided to destruct my house by myself with the help of friends and neighbors and in front of my children who were crying the loss of cherished memories.



Samer Z'atara demolishing his house by himself after he was forced to do so



Z'atara's house during the demolition operation

2- Self demolition for three residential apartments in Sur Baher:

On November 30, 2013, Adel Ameera was forced to demolish three departments under construction in Deir Al 'Amoud neighborhood in Sur Baher, south of Jerusalem. Adel received a demolition order from the state municipality for his unlicensed construction which is a 150 m² single department and a duplex, 220 m² each. Ameera told an LRC observer that:

I started building three residences in 2011 on a piece of land my wife inherited from her father in order for our children and their families to settle down. During construction in 2012, crews of the state municipality came by, took photos, and hanged a stop-work order. We hired lawyer Na'el Rashed for legal follow-up and architect Abdullah Abu Qteish for technical consultation. The municipality informed us that the area of construction is not within the master plan of Sur Baher and has to be

included before obtaining a building permit. On November 24 and at the last session in the court, the court ruled that we demolish our three residences before December 1. In case we do not comply, the municipality will fine us a 100,000 NIS penalty.

On November 30, 2013, we brought two bulldozers and leveled our residences. We paid 4000 NIS for each bulldozer, let alone other losses which are estimated to be 500,000 NIS.



Ameera's house reduced into rubble



Ameera's residence after getting demolished

3- Demolishing a house that belongs to Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem:

In the early morning of November 28, 2013, bulldozers of the Israeli municipality embarked on leveling the residence of Salama Abu Tarboush after the family evacuated the place. The residence belongs to Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and was built before the Israeli occupation in 1967. The house is located at the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road. The Israeli government reduced the structure into the rubble and made Abu Tarboush homeless. The Red Cross offered the family a tent and aid. Patriarch Fuad Tiwal rushed to the site where he gave a statement to the media: "What the municipality of the Israeli government has done is considered a revengeful act that breached international laws. There are no excuses for the demolition. When the Israeli government demolishes structures and evict people, feelings of hatred intensify. We ask Israel's municipality & government to

compensate for the damage and rebuild the house. Legally speaking, the structure belongs to the Latin Patriarchate and has always been there-even before the Israeli occupation. We will go to the court to demand reconstruction." Head of the Justice and Peace Commission, Patriarch Dimwan, sent a message to the Israeli ambassador in the United States that reads: "We hope you convey our grave concern to your government and ask it to acknowledge the Patriarch's right of ownership and give full compensation for the church and the now homeless family."



Abu Tarbosh's residence after being ravaged by Israeli bulldozers

Land Research Center- LRC- confirms that the Israeli policy that is based on seizing lands, demolishing houses and evicting indigenous inhabitants by force is a racial policy that does not pay respect for international conventions and laws amongst which is the Fourth Geneva Convention. At knowing this, the international community that respects the laws should sue Israel and punish it for its crimes against Palestinians and the world at large.

4- The Israeli bulldozers demolish living sheds owned by Castero family in Beit Hanina after demolishing their residences earlier this year:

The Israeli bulldozers demolished two sheds that belong to Castero family in Beit Hanina, north of Jerusalem, after giving them a 24-hour notice. The demolition was carried out under the pretext of illegal residence. It is worth knowing that the state municipality demolished a 4-storey building for the same family in February, 2013, for unlicensed construction.



The destruction ensued by the Israeli heavy machines

The two sheds belong to:

| # | Name | # of family members | Children | Area |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|----------|------|
| 1 | Afif Castero | 8 | 6 | 65 |
| 2 | Ayman Castero | 6 | 4 | 65 |
| 3 | Salah Castero and his | 2 | -- | |

| | | | | |
|--|------|--|--|--|
| | wife | | | |
|--|------|--|--|--|

The state municipality also threatened the Castero family that they will come back to demolish another two living sheds as well as a kitchen used for living where Muhammad Salah Castero and his six-member family dwell. Ghada, Afif Castero's wife, told an LRC observer that:

In February 2013, the Israeli heavy equipment demolished the building we live in under the pretext of unlicensed construction. After we became homeless, we did not have a choice but to live in tents donated by the Red Cross. Three months of living in tents with freezing coldness and rain worn us out and made children sick. To find a solution to this dilemma, we bought tools to build sheds. We built them in resemblance to the sheds built by colonists in the nearby colonies. Each shed is 65 m² in area and consists of 3 bedrooms, a kitchen and bathroom. They cost us 100,000 NIS each. After construction, officers of the Israeli police and municipality passed by and asked to remove the sheds for their illegality. Three months ago, we assigned a lawyer to follow the case of demolishing the sheds up. The case was stuck for three months.

At 6 a.m. today in the morning, big forces of the Israeli police (horsemen and dogs) as well as officers of the municipality along with a bulldozer came to our residence. They set about leveling the sheds as soon as they arrived and finished in one hour. Upon the completion of the task, they withdrew after orally threatening to return to demolish the rest of the sheds for being against law. People of the Red Cross visited us where they handed us new tents. And here we go again, to the same cycle of suffering and homelessness.



The two living tents threatened to be demolished by the state municipality

Demolition threats for residences and structures

1- A demolition order to Abu Rajab family for amending their roof

The family of Nasri Abu Rajab had to replace their roof for it was leaking water and allowing pests and flies inside the house. After a year of repair, the family received a fine from the Municipality of Jerusalem. The court decided that the kitchen should be demolished. The court's ruling was also that the house should be demolished but the execution should be postponed until the municipality issues them a permit. The family was also asked to buy a 240000 NIS fine. Nasri Abu Rajab stated to an LRC field researcher that: "We paid the whole amount of money but then the court fined us with a second penalty of 12000 NIS and a third and a fourth, 6000 NIS each. That drained us financially."

Abu Rajab also added that: "At noon on Friday, a number of policemen surrounded our dwelling. I wondered the reason of their break in only to find out that they came to arrest me because- according to them- I was late for paying a 18600 NIS fine. I told them I was sick and was in an Israeli hospital. After calls between my lawyer- who is also my son- and the municipality, my detention was delayed until Sunday. On the set day, police officers showed up with an order to detain me for 52 days and make pay a 18600 NIS penalty. I explained to them my health status and showed them medical reports. The police corresponded with the municipality. The latter agreed to let me go but on the condition that I pay 6000 NIS on the spot and the rest of the amount in installments." Abu Rajab pointed out the bad condition of the structure of his house.

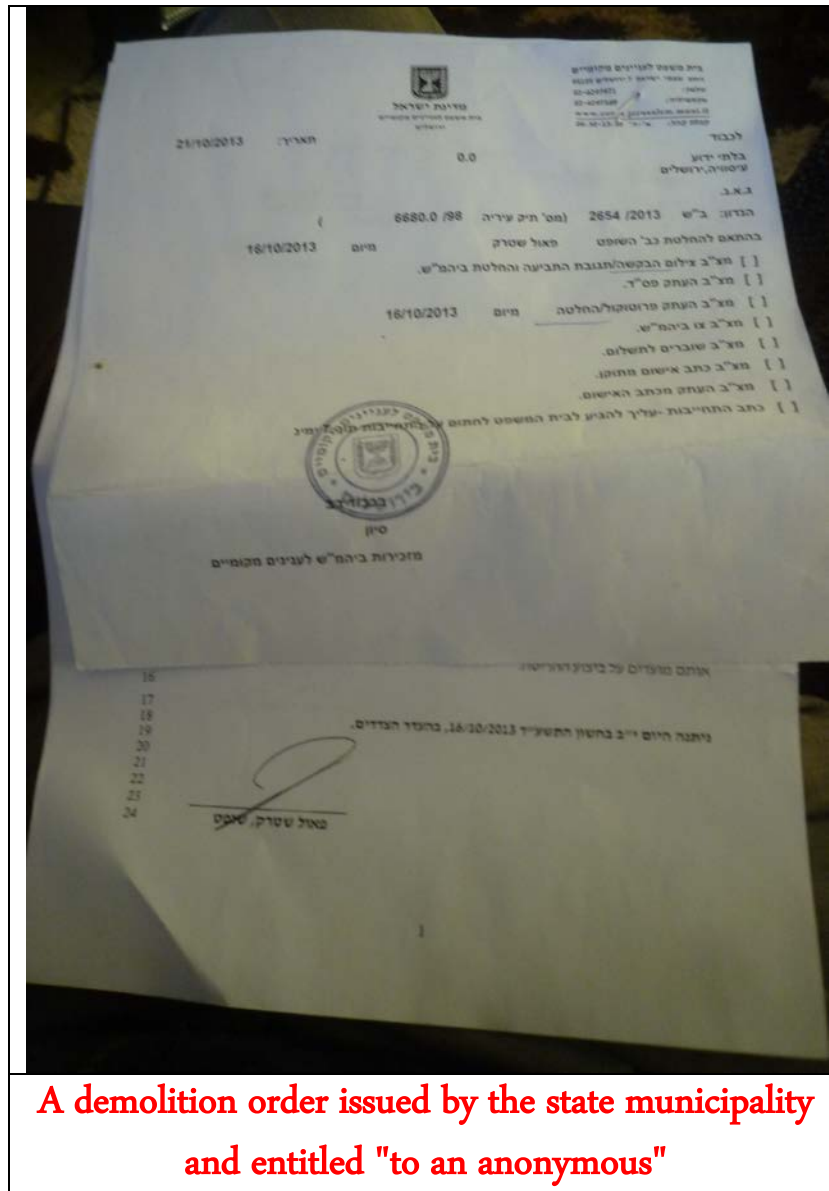
2- The Israeli authorities order the removal and closure of two classrooms in Nabi Samuel school:

The Israeli military authorities in Beit El, the West Bank, sent a threat of removal and confiscation of a container to the school of Nabi Samuel. The container was presented to the school as part of Queen Rania's educational program. Used as classrooms, the container was part of a solution to the overcrowded classrooms in Nabi Samuel school- only one classroom for each of the first four grades. Since the beginning of the nineties, the Israeli occupation authorities have been refusing to allow the school to build an extra classroom which is a necessity for the students. It should be known that the Israeli occupation authorities forced the school to remove a tent used as a classroom that was presented by the Ministry of Local Government /the Palestinian Authority.

3- The state municipality distributes anonymous administrative

demolition orders:

The state municipality has been distributing administrative demolition orders for any Palestinian construction project in East Jerusalem. Some are sent to anonymous recipients and with anonymous dates.



**A demolition order issued by the state municipality
and entitled "to an anonymous"**

Officers of the state municipality, under the protection of border guards and Special Forces, roam about Jerusalem and its suburbs almost every day in the week. They distribute administrative demolition orders among

others. Field researchers and Palestinian civilian residents Provided us with some information about some of the models of the orders handed out. Some of the orders are hanged on the walls of a house while some are thrown on the ground so recipients may not receive them. Some information stated in some orders do not match the real characteristics of some buildings and sometimes the pictures of the buildings in the orders do not match the ones on ground. That only confirms that the objective of the Municipality of Jerusalem is demolition and nothing else. That explains the distribution of hundreds and sometimes thousands of demolition orders.

Excavations and their threats

1- Cracks and collapses in houses of families in the Old City of Jerusalem:

"There are cracks in the walls and collapses in the alleys, not to mention the constant noises of excavators at night," this is how Muhammad Zaghlol described the situation caused by the nonstop Israeli excavations in Hush Osila. The latest result of that action was a serious crack in the roof of the kitchen.



Cracks in the walls of Zaghlol's residence due to the Israeli excavations

During the past ten years, cracks have been more obvious and increasing. Lately, collapses in the alleys in Hush Osila took place. Four months ago, the family reconditioned the walls in an attempt to get rid of the cracks only to have them reappear again. This is a dangerous status since we are at the doorstep of the winter season. That means that the cracks will soon be leaking water and might cause the collapse of the residence."

2- Cracks in a carpentry shop in Al Qarmi neighborhood:

Sa'di Abu 'Asab, 75, has been working for over 40 years old in his carpentry shop in al Qarmi neighborhood. Now his shop is in serious danger of falling apart due to the constant excavations led by the Israeli occupation authorities beneath the area.



The cracks in the carpentry shop

Abu 'Asab stated to an LRC observer that:

There has never been any cracks nor collapses in the place except for the few past years when cracks first appeared and kept expanding. There are cracks on the roof and walls as well as in the floor. The problem is I cannot take the heavy machines out of the shop. They are stationary. They may complicate the situation if they are disassembled.

I know Jerusalem and its history as I was born and raised here. I have been living in Jerusalem all my life... I studied and opened this shop where I designed the doors and windows of Al Aqsa Mosque and Church of the Holy Sepulcher. I am worried about the Old City because it is part of me. You cannot imagine the agony I feel at seeing all these cracks appear and threaten a place I wholeheartedly cherish.

Land confiscations

1- The Israeli occupation threatens to confiscate more than 180

dunums from the lands of Nabi Samuel village

November 25, 2013:

The Department of Planning in the Civil Administration- Military Authority- decided to take over more than 180 dunums from the village of Nabi Samuel, north west Jerusalem. The purpose of the confiscation is to expand Ramon Allon colony and the National Gardens. Israel's racial policy continues to deny others to the extent that the Planning Department's architect in the C.A. replied to the people of Nabi Samuel who came to Beit El to protest the scheme of the National Garden by saying: There is no such thing as Nabi Samuel village!!! The meeting took place on November 23, 2013 between officers of the C.A. and representatives of Nabi Samuel.

The vanity of Israel's colonial and apartheid system in Palestine is represented by the architect's opinion. People of Nabi Samuel left the meeting disappointed and outraged.



Nabi Samuel lands Israel is planning to take over

The village of Nabi Samuel is 3500 dunums in area and most of its population that is more than 10,000 people live outside the village. Most of the lands were confiscated for the benefit of Ramot and Har Shmuel colonies. More than 200 houses were demolished in 1967. Up to present, people of Nabi Samuel have been suffering from the occupation; they need permits to enter Israel since most of them are green ID holders. They also suffer from restrictions on expansion and movement. They are not allowed to construct even a siege around their houses. The Israeli occupation seeks to demolish the residences of Nabi Samuel people because Nabi Samuel is considered a "nature reserve" to Israel. The latter does not acknowledge Nabi Samuel and has changed its name into "Navi Shmuel".

2- The District Committee ratifies a scheme to build a National

Garden on a 738–dunum land from As Sawiya and at Tur:

On The District Committee for Planning and Construction ratified a scheme of building a "National Garden" on a 738 dunum piece of land from at Tur and As Sawiya towns- which the Israeli occupation considers neighborhoods of Jerusalem. The two towns are considered the east gate of Jerusalem that connects East Jerusalem with the rest of the West Bank cities after every other way is blocked by bypass roads, the Apartheid Wall and colonies. In 2005, the state municipality proposed a scheme number 11092 to build a garden on 738 dunums from As Sawiya and at Tur lands. And in September 2009, the same authority proposed the scheme to the Planning Department but after excluding the lands of the Hebrew University- which are also As Sawiya and at Tur lands. On April 05,2011, the Local Committee for Planning and Construction agreed on the project. In 2012, the Israeli police issued an order to seize 738 dunums against which people of As Sawiya and at Tur protested.

In 2009, one of the official spokesmen revealed that the plan to build a garden does not have any religious implications but is meant to stop Palestinian construction. On October 02, 2013, Minister of Environmental Protection, Amir Peretz, give instructions to freeze the scheme that holds the number of "TIBS 110920" while on October 29, both the Prime Minister and Minister of Internal affairs announced their determination to implement the project.

On November 14, 2013, the scheme was ratified by the Planning Department despite Palestinian civilian residents' objections and protestations because the small area of lands is all that is left to them.

Land Research Centre- LRC- sees the scheme that is meant to link E1 area to Maale Adummim colony aims to isolate Jerusalem from its

eastern extension in the West Bank. LRC asks the International community to make Israel abide by international laws and conventions, starting with the Fourth Geneva Convention that prohibits confiscating the occupied people's lands, property, and assets.

Break ins

1- Israel's security service raids shops, detains and confiscates:

In the mid of November, Israel's security officers ranging from border guards and Special forces to intelligence officers raided computer shops in Jerusalem and its surroundings where they searched used computers in a provocative manner. Eyewitnesses and shop owners testified that in some cases the inspection went for more than 7 hours. At the end, the security officers confiscated devices and spare parts. They also detained some shop owners and sent some to investigations that lasted for two weeks. Some of the shop owners were released while the confiscated items were not. Some shops had to be shut down due to the absence of its owners which harmed the families depending on the shops as a source of living.

2- Break ins and daily fines in the Occupied City of Jerusalem:

Since April 1967, Israel has been breaking international laws and conventions by imposing taxes that are illegal and illegitimate on Palestinians living under the occupation. The Israeli occupation has been militarizing taxes by all means: By collecting taxes by force for spending them on military purposes. That contradicts the principle that allows an authority to exact taxes which is "No taxes without services."

Officers of the Tax Department, under the protection of a number of police officers and Special Forces, break into shops, factories, houses and

workshops in the Old City of Jerusalem on a daily basis. That baffles the shop owners who get embarrassed in front of their customers and need to cut out any activity on the spot. The Officers often impose fines that could cost the shop owners up to tenths of thousands of shekels depending on the mood of the officers as well as orders to head into the Tax Department along with the accountant of the shop to clarify the financial status and reach for a "settlement" with the Department (that often means paying up to hundreds of thousands of shekels).

Here are some examples of break ins and fines that were recorded by field researchers in LRC- Arab Studies Society in Jerusalem. "They fight us even on our source of living!" according to one of the affected citizens. Human rights organizations and newspapers reported such breaches but they still take place:

- A tax officer along with five border guards and Special Forces raided Al Zain, a grocery shop in Ras al Amud. According to an eyewitness, the shop owner is expected to pay no less than 70000 NIS.
- Tax officers also raided a slaughterhouse in the same location. The owner had to close his shop that day as a result of the shock.
- They broke into a shoe shop and a grocery shop in Shu'fat.
- In a field trip, opinions were asked. People said:
- "Not a single road or market was spared from the tax campaigns. Many merchants complain about the deteriorating economic situation especially that prices and unemployment rates are rising.

Closure of Jerusalemite institutions

1- Israel's Minister of Security orders the closure of Silwan Club to prevent Commemorating late Yasser Arafat:

On November 11, 2013, forces of the Israeli occupation raided Silwan Sports Club to prohibit commemorating the 9th death anniversary of President Yasser Arafat. Police officers, border guards and Special Forces broke into the club in compliance with an administrative order signed by Minister of Internal Security. They closed the club for 24 hours. The forces kicked out the audience, men and women, from the hall in a provocative manner. That led to clashes between the people and the Israeli forces. The latter used tear bombs and batons.

Attacks on religious sites:

Colonists continue to attack Al Aqsa Mosque:

Al- Aqsa Mosque was not spared from the Israeli attacks during November. In the contrary, attacks increased as Israel is trying to create facts on the ground. The Israeli government is planning to split Al-Aqsa between the Jews and Muslims as it did with the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. **The most infamous attacks during November, 2013:**

- 1 November: Tenth of colonists broke into Al Aqsa squares accompanying intelligence officers under the protection of the Israeli police. Worshipers stood against the break in and as a result some of them were detained.
- 3 November: Colonists broke into Al Aqsa squares accompanying intelligence officers. They raised the Israeli flag.
- 5 November: More than 20 colonists broke into Al- Aqsa squares.
- 6 November: The Israeli police prohibited worshippers from entering Al Aqsa and took their IDs while they allowed colonists to enter.
- 10 November: More than 25 colonists roamed Al Aqsa squares.
- 14 November: A group of radical colonists broke into the mosque

squares from the Dung Gate.

- 15 November: The police hindered worshippers' access to Al-Aqsa to perform Friday prayers.
- 17 November: More than 30 colonists broke into Al Aqsa squares under the protection of the Israeli police that denied Palestinians access to the mosque.
- 24 November: Colonists broke into Al Aqsa squares and the police detained 3 scholars from the mosque because they defied the radical colonists. They are: Hanadi Al Halwani, Zeina Amr, and Ala' Abul Haija'.
- 27 November: The Israeli occupation police detained 3 civilian residents at Al Aqsa gates. They are: Ammar Al Fakhori, Ibtisam Mostafa and Dalal Al Hashlamon.

According to article 53 of the First Geneva Protocol in 1977, all attacks against religious sites are prohibited since they constitute the cultural and spiritual heritage of people.