

Arab Studies Society
Scientific – Cultural
Land Research Center
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مركز أبحاث الأراضي
القدس

The Monthly Report on the
***Israeli Violations of Palestinian Rights in
the Occupied City of Jerusalem***

January - 2014

By

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First Month of the Eighth Year

Israeli Violations of the Palestinian Housing and Land Rights – January, 2014:

Aggression	location	occurrence	
		houses	structures
Violations of the right of housing			
Demolitions by the state municipality	Al Eisawayya	2	4
	Beit Hanina	3	
Self demolition	Umm Toba	1	
Demolition threats			
Demolition threats for houses	Silwan	4	
	'Anata	1	
Demolition threats for structures	Silwan	4	
Opening roads			
Opening roads in	Shu'fat road no. 21	1	
	Beit Safafa no. 4	1	
Judaizing plans			
Building a religious school	Sheikh Jarrah	1	
Excavations			
Done by the colonial Al'ad group	Silwan	1	
Attacks on religious sites			
Break-ins and provocations	Al Aqsa Mosque	7	

1. The state municipality carries out a ferocious attack on Palestinian residences in the Occupied City of Jerusalem

At dawn on Friday, January 24, the state municipality carried out a demolition operation to five houses, 3 inhabited in Al A'shqariyya neighborhood in Beit Hanina where its inhabitants (27 people including 13 children) had to be evacuated before the demolition.

2. The state municipality demolishes a residential building in Al Eisawaya

At 4:30 a.m. on Monday, January 27, forces of the Israeli occupation army and border guards accompanied by two diggers and a bulldozer raided Al Eisawaya. They closed the area and denied everyone access and embarked on leveling the 3-storey building.



A picture of the building reduced to rubble in Al Eisawaya

Abdul Hai Dari, 55 years old, stated to an LRC observer that:
[At 6:30 a.m., I received a call from the neighbors informing me that Israeli bulldozers were leveling my building. I rushed to the site but could not reach the building since tents of the Israeli forces closed the way. I called Ziyad Qa'war and Muhammad Al Safadi, my two lawyers. They were shocked since we did not receive a demolition order from the municipality.]

Abdul Hai added,

"I started building 6 months ago for a commercial reason; I

decided to sell the departments in the building and I did. 2 bought warehouses and I kept one department for myself. The bulldozers demolished them in addition to destroying five cubes of wood that were on the roof of the building."

Abdul Muhsin Abu Dawood, 45, said the following:

I bought two departments in order for my 9-member family to settle in but I was shocked by the municipality's resolution to demolish the building. No one knew or received any order before. We were only surprised to see the bulldozers of the municipality reducing the building to rubble.

3. The municipality demolishes two departments in Beit Hanina

On Monday, January 27, Twenty workers and three bulldozers of the state municipality under the protection of 200 armed soldiers demolished a building under the pretext of unlicensed construction. The building is two departments. The first is property of Idris family and the second is Al Dab'i's. The two families were evacuated from their residence in A'shqariyya neighborhood- Beit Hanina.



A picture of the demolition of two residential units

Azzam Idris, 46, told an LRC observer that:

I built the two departments two years ago- one is inhabited by my 9-member family. After six months, we were asked to pay a 130,000 NIS fine in installments of 2500 every month for 17 years. I paid 70,000 so far.

I was taken by surprise when I knew that the municipality's bulldozers leveled the building at 9 o'clock without any prior warning. The Israeli occupation forces evicted the place and workers took some furniture out and throw it in the air rendering them unusable. Our loss is estimated to be 70,000 NIS and 150 grams of gold (worth 22000 NIS).

Mai Al Dab'i' stated to an LRC observer that:

My husband, four children and I have been living in our department for a year and a half. The soldiers broke in to our house while we were in our pajamas. They kicked my little daughters and me out violently though I am pregnant. The workers took some furniture out while I was not allowed to grab anything with me. They demolished the house with the rest of the furniture in. We lost 400 grams of gold (my dowry) and 10,000 NIS. The army also detained my husband and so he was not present when the house was demolished.

4. The state municipality demolishes Al Kaswani's residence for a second time in Beit Hanina

The state municipality destroyed the house of Hanadi Al Kaswani, wife of Ibrahim Al Kaswani, which is located in A'shqariyya on Monday, January 27, 2014. The house consists of two departments and was demolished on the pretext of unlicensed construction.

That was the second house Al Kaswani built to shelter their 7-member family including 5 children. The first house of theirs was demolished under the same pretext on 05/02/2013. The family build a veranda without obtaining a building permit though the procedure of getting one was under way.

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The damage ensued by the bulldozers after demolition



Some of Al Kaswani's furniture that was salvaged

Al Kaswani told an LRC observer that: [the Israeli occupation forces broke the main door and prohibited a neighbor of ours not to take furniture out as we were not home at the time they came.]

Al Kaswani also added that after having their first house demolished, they had to build another shelter that could provide warmth to my wife and our newborn baby.

The bulldozers totally leveled my residence on February 5, 2013 because I built a veranda without obtaining a building permit. They demolished the whole house and not only the veranda and before the court session.]

Al Kaswani still pays a 6800 fine on his first house though it is but rubble now.

5. A Jerusalemite is forced to demolish his house by himself

Hamza Abu Ter had to demolish his house in Umm Tuba village, south of Jerusalem, after the municipality issued an order forcing him to do so for unlicensed construction.



Abu Ter's house after being demolished

Abu Ter stated to an LRC observer that:

In 1997, I built two rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom on a 40 m² piece of land that belongs to my grandfather. I did not apply for a building permit since the piece of land is categorized "green area" which the municipality does not allow using for construction. In 1999, officers of the municipality passed by and took pictures. Shortly after, I received a stop-work order. I abided by that.

He also added:

After two years, that is 2001, I decided to marry so I carried on building and I added a 30 m² room. I went to lawyer Min'im Thabet to find a way to turn the land from green to yellow. It was not long before I received a demolition order. The lawyer succeeded in delaying the date of demolition more than once. Meanwhile, I received a 150 NIS fine of which only 20,000 NIS left.

In 2012, the court ruling was that I should work for free in the cleaning business for 3 months for violating the construction laws in addition to a 20,000 NIS fine. I worked daily from 7 to 3 for three months. Then I worked as a taxi driver to make a living and provide money for the lawyer and pay the fines.

In July 2013, the court ruled that I should demolish my residence by myself. I did demolish part of it but the municipality insisted that all the building should be leveled. And in case I do not oblige, the municipality would demolish it in condition that I pay the costs which could reach up to 70,000 NIS.

On January 4, 2014, I demolished my housing using a bulldozer after I sent my children away to my parents'. We are now homeless.



Hamza Abu Ter and in the background there is the rubble of his demolished house

Abu Ter's loss is estimated to be 200,000 NIS. It is strange that while the house is considered illegal according to the municipality, it still orders Abu Ter to pay Arnona (income) tax.

1. The state municipality distributes demolition orders for a number of houses, structures and a playing field

Officers of the state municipality accompanied by large forces of the police and border guards distributed a number of demolition orders for houses and structures in Ein Al Looza and Wad Yasool and Be'er Yacoub as well as for a playing field in Wad Hilweh. The orders were sent to 4 houses, 3 structures and a playing field. The latter was ravaged and destroyed by the Israeli occupation two years ago.

2. Demolition threats for houses

Officers of the state municipality hanged four demolition orders on the walls of four houses in Be'er Yacoub and Ein Al Looza. They were addressed to "anonymous" without mentioning the names of the owners. And this is an allusive way the municipality uses to confuse people so that the last thing they know is seeing bulldozers leveling their houses in front of their surprising eyes. Sometimes the municipality sends demolition orders to houses that are legal and licensed.

3. Threatening to demolish three automobile repair shops

The officers of the state municipality also sent demolition orders

for three garages used to repair cars in Ein Al Looza that belong to Saeed Nassar. The shops were built in the nineties, each is 100 m². 10 workers who are breadwinners to their families work in these shops.

Saeed Nassar told an LRC observer that:

These shops have been here for about 20 years. The municipality made me pay fines that reached up to 150, 000 NIS under the pretext of unlicensed construction. The shops provide a source of income to more than one family. Their demolition will inflict harm to those families.

4. Threatening to demolish a playing field

Officers of the state municipality pasted a demolition order on the entrance of a playing field in Wad Hilweh. The area of the field is 850 m² and the municipality ravaged it two years ago for being unlicensed. The municipality seeks to confiscate the playground and turn it into a parking lot for the colonists coming to a colonial post known as "Ir David" in Wad Hilweh.

The playing field is a yard people of the neighborhood turned into a playground to prevent it from being confiscated. The playground has four stables for horses and it used to have a café but the municipality destroyed it when ravaging the playing field two years ago.

5. A demolition order for a house for the second time

On January 09, 2014, Ahmad Hilweh, 50, received a demolition order issued by the military authority- the Civil Administration - in Beit El, West Bank. The order asked Hilweh to evict and demolish his house whose area is 75 m² for being unlicensed and located in an area classified "C" where Israel maintains full security and administrative control according to Oslo Accords.

In less than three weeks, on 29 of the same month, Hilweh received another eviction and demolition order by the same authority and for the same reason. Hilweh told an LRC observer that: "The military authority demolished our house 4 years ago. That prompted us to build another house and seek shelter."

1. The state municipality opens road no. 21 in Shu'fat without license



Road no. 21 in Shu'fat

The state municipality embarked on opening road no. 21 in 2012. It confiscated Palestinian people's lands without responding to their objections. The road is meant to link colonies together, namely Pisgat Zeev and Ramat Shlomo. According to the municipality's claims, the road is but part of the master plan endorsed in 1972.

The affected citizens assigned two lawyers named Husni Abu Hussein and Sami Irshid on 30/01/2012 to project their protestations and calls for stopping the confiscation of lands.

However, all their efforts were futile as the municipality turned a deaf ear to them. The municipality's attitude is similar to a mafia's and not that of a governmental organization whose reason of existence is to provide services to citizens who pay taxes without any discrimination whatsoever.

2. The Israeli Supreme Court rejects people's protests against executing "Begin", the highway project

The Supreme Court has ratified the "legality" of opening a road that comes cross Beit Safafa and devours hundreds of dunums in order to link the city's entrance with Josh Etzion and Har Homa colonies.



Opening "Begin" or road no. 4 on Beit Safafa lands

Despite people's object to the highway plan that will split the town from the half, the Israeli Supreme Court rejected the objection- Though according to the international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention, the project is illegal since it is a road that separates Palestinian lands to serve colonists only. That is not different from other colonial activities carried out by the Israeli occupation state.

The state municipality is one of the responsible authorities in executing the project in addition to Morea for Jerusalem Development and the contractor is D. Y. Barazani Ltd. in addition to the Ministry of Transport and Road Safety.

The ratification of the road comes at a time the Israeli occupation state is trying to connect the colonies together via a road network to gain more control.

A colonial plan to build a religious school

The state municipality is examining a project presented by a religious institution to build a religious school consisting of 9 floors on a two-dunum land located at the truce line- the prohibited area- that Israel took over on June 05, 1956. The eastern part of the land belongs to Abdul Rahman Abu Ghosh who used to live there before a Jewish religious group seized it through an order from the Central Court three years ago.



The piece of land allocated for building a religious school

Al'ad gang confiscates land and uses it for construction

Al'ad religious gang is carrying out a project to build a 7-floor service center on Palestinian lands that are property of people living near the Dung Gate- Silwan- south of Al Aqsa Mosque.



The excavations carried out by Al'ad

Four years ago, the Authority of Antiquities started off an excavation operation in Wad Hilew and Silwan funded by Al'ad whose mission to seize Palestinian lands and estates. Two years ago, Al'ad embarked on building a service center after it managed to confiscate lands. The center consists of a kindergarten, library, restaurant and counseling and media center in addition to a

parking lot to the visitors and Jewish pilgrims heading to the Wailing Wall. There is a two-way tunnel from and to the building and the Wailing Wall.

The targeted land chosen for the plan belongs to a number of Palestinian families. The landowners objected the project by hiring a lawyer named Sami Irshid. It is worth mentioning that the state municipality refuses to deal with any project, plan or objection unless it is attached with tabo (legal papers that prove one's possession of property). The municipality depends on this strategy to demolish thousands of residences and structures and reject hundreds of building permit applications.

Attacks on religious sites

Jewish radical organizations carry on breaking in to Al Aqsa Mosque. Hundreds of extreme colonists flock to Al Aqsa Mosque squares under the protection of the Israeli police and the intelligence agency (Shabak). The most important of which are:

- On January 05, tenths of colonists broke into Al Aqsa squares accompanying the Israeli police.
- On January 07, Israeli forces closed all the roads leading to Al Aqsa and set up checkpoints at its entrance prohibiting Palestinian citizens from reaching it while tenths of colonists were allowed access.
- On January 09, 20 extremists wandered around Al Aqsa squares with a tourist guide.
- On January 12, 32 colonists along with a rabbi named Youda Gelik performed prayers at the roof of the Dome of the Rock.
- On January 14, tenths of colonists in company with officers of the Israeli police roamed Al Aqsa squares where the police detained some worshippers.
- On January 16, 25 radicals accompanying rabbis took a tour around Al Aqsa squares and the Dome of the Rock

- On January 21, the Israeli police allowed to tenths of colonists to enter via the Dung Gate and wander in Al Aqsa squares.