



ARIJ Daily Report

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Israeli Violations' Activities in the oPt 12 February 2017

The daily report highlights the violations behind Israeli home demolitions and demolition threats in the occupied Palestinian territory, the confiscation and razing of lands, the uprooting and destruction of fruit trees, the expansion of settlements and erection of outposts, the brutality of the Israeli Occupation Army, the Israeli settlers violence against Palestinian civilians and properties, the erection of checkpoints, the construction of the Israeli segregation wall and the issuance of military orders for the various Israeli purposes.

The Violations are based on reports provided by field workers and/or news sources.

The text is not quoted directly from the sources but is edited for clarity.

The daily report does not necessarily reflect ARIJ's opinion.

Brutality of the Israeli Occupation Army

- The Israeli occupation authorities seized a Palestinian-owned vehicle and water hoses used for irrigation in al-Baqiaa south of Tubas in the northern Jordan Valley region of the occupied West Bank. The IOA Seized a vehicle belonging to a resident of the nearby town of Tammun, in addition to seizing 400-meter-long water hoses used by locals for irrigation. (Maannews 12 February 2017).

- Israeli navy gunboats opened heavy machinegun fire at Palestinian fishing boats while sailing off Beit Lahiya's coast in the northern Gaza Strip. No injuries were reported. (PALINFO 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli army announced the launch of large-scale military maneuvers in 1948 occupied territories and the West Bank. The military maneuvers are expected to run throughout the week, starting Sunday, in Negev, to the south of the 1948 occupied territories, and in the southern West Bank province of al-Khalil. Sounds of heavy blasts and bullet fire are slated to be spotted across the maneuver scene. (PALINFO 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli occupation Army (IOA) sealed off the Hawara and Zaatara military checkpoints in southern Nablus province. The IOA closed off the checkpoints without prior notifications, blocking Palestinians' access out of and into southern Nablus. Palestinian vehicles and passengers reportedly lined up in streets as they could not reach their homes and workplaces. (PALINFO 12 February 2017)

Israeli Arrests

- An Israeli magistrate court sentenced a Palestinian teenager to 12 years in prison over charges of attempting to carry out a stabbing attack in Jerusalem more than a year earlier. Huthaifa Ishaq Taha, a 17-year-old resident of the occupied East Jerusalem neighborhood of Kafr Aqab, was sentenced for reportedly attempting to stab an Israeli in Jerusalem in January 2016. (Maannews 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) raided the town of Beit Ummar north of Hebron and detained 14-year-old Qusay Muhammad Kamil Abu Maria. large numbers of Israeli troops stormed the town and ransacked several homes. At the home of Abd al-Hamid Zaaqiq, Israeli soldiers rounded up all of the family members in one room as they inspected the house, confiscating photos of Omar Zaaqiq, who was killed by Israeli forces in 2015. (Maannews 12 February 2017)
- In the Bethlehem district, The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) detained three young men identified by locals as Bassam Masad from Beit Sahour, and Ikrima Odeh al-Umour and Mahmoud Yousif al-Umour from Tuqu east of Bethlehem. (Maannews 12 February 2017)
- Israeli border police detained a Palestinian teenage girl at a military checkpoint near the Ibrahimi mosque in the southern occupied West Bank city of Hebron claiming she was in possession of a knife and intended to carry out a stabbing attack. The arrestee was identified as the 17-year-old Israa Samih Jaber, who lives near the southern side of the Ibrahimi mosque. (Maannews 12 February 2017)

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) invaded Tequ village east of the West Bank city of Bethlehem, searched homes, and abducted two young Palestinian men, in addition to summing another for interrogation. The IOA abducted Ekrema Odah al-Amour, 20, and Mahmoud Yousef al-'Amour, 21, and took them to an unknown destination. The invasion led to clashes between the soldiers, and many local youngsters, who hurled stones and empty bottles on the military vehicles, while the army fired gas bombs, concussion grenades and rubber-coated metal bullets. (IMEMC 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) Invaded the al-Baida area, in Beit Sahour, east of Bethlehem, and violently searched the home of Bashir Mas'ad. (IMEMC 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) arrested a Palestinian father, his seven sons, and the wife of one of his sons, in the Sammoa' town, south of the southern West Bank city of Hebron, and confiscated military uniforms and ammunition. The abducted Palestinians have been identified as Mohammad Mousa Bheiss, his sons, Mousa, Emad, Rami, Jihad, Ra'fat, Ali and Ra'ed, in addition to the wife of one of his sons. The nine Palestinians were cuffed and blindfolded before being moved to an interrogation facility. (IMEMC 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli Occupation Authority (IOA) extended the administrative detention orders against four Palestinian detainees for the fifth time. The Israeli authorities extended the illegal detention orders against each of Anas Qaqour, 31, from Jenin and Jamal Barham, 56, from Ramin town in Tulkarem, to three months each. As for the two other prisoners, the IOA extended the administrative detention orders against both Shaher al-Raei, 47, from the West Bank city of Qalqilya and Maher al-Qadi, 27, from Ramallah city to four months each. (PALINFO 12 February 2017)
- The District Court decided the prison sentence against Sheikh Omar Abu Sara (51) from 8 months to 14 months on charges of incitement in a religious lecture he gave inside Al-Aqsa Mosque. Abu Sara was arrested at the beginning of 2015 from his home in "Um Al-Sharayet" north of Jerusalem and was interrogated regarding the lecture he gave on 28/11/2015 at Al-Aqsa Mosque entitled "Jews Characters from the Holy Qur'an". (SILWANIC 12 February 2017)

Israeli Settler Violence

- A group of Israeli settlers stormed the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque, from Mughrabi gate, under heavy guard of Israeli police. Police closed the gate at ten o'clock in the morning, after the of settlers stormed the holy site. Around 30 settlers have stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque since morning, staging provocative tours in its courtyards. (IMEMC 12 February 2017)

Home Demolition & Demolition threats

- Israeli authorities issued stop-work orders for 16 Palestinian-owned structures in the northern Jordan Valley village of Khirbet Humsa al-Fuqa in the occupied West Bank. Inspectors from the Israeli Civil Administration's planning and construction department stormed Khirbet Humsa al-Fuqa and delivered stop-work orders to 16 structures that belong to seven Palestinian families. The warrants said the families had until Feb. 26 to heed the order. The orders were delivered to Ali Freij Abu al-Kibash, Hakam Ali Freij Abu al-Kibash, Yasser Mahmoud Abu al-Kibash, Abdullah Muhammad Abu al-Kibash, Taysir Mahmoud Abu al-Kibash, Nasser Mahmoud Abu al-Kibash, and Sanad Yasser Abu al-Kibash. (Maannews 12 February 2017)

Other

- If his latest statements are any indication, U.S. President Donald Trump may be having second thoughts about how unhelpful Israel's West Bank settlement project is to the peace process. In an interview published on Friday with the Israeli daily Israel Hayom, Trump described himself as "not someone who believes that advancing settlements is good for peace," and urged the government to "act reasonably." "There is limited remaining territory," Trump said. "Every time you take land for a settlement, less territory remains." In a statement issued through the White House a week earlier, he said that although settlements per se were not an impediment to peace, "the construction of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements beyond their current borders may not be helpful in achieving that goal." America's unpredictable new president may be a bit more forthcoming about where he draws the line when he meets with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday. Meanwhile, his statements have been interpreted as a green light for Israel to

continue building within the settlement blocs, though not beyond them. Settlement blocs refer to the larger Jewish population centers located in the West Bank, many of which are close to the Green Line, or the borders of the 1949 armistice agreement. Many of them fall on the Israeli side of the incomplete separation barrier Israel began building nearly 15 years ago during the second Palestinian uprising. An estimated 450,000-500,000 Israelis live across the Green Line including the Jewish neighborhoods of East Jerusalem. A widespread consensus has emerged that any future agreement on a two-state solution should include some of the settlement blocs (anywhere from 2 to 5 percent of the area beyond the Green Line) within Israel's permanent border. Some past and present Israeli officials cite security rationale, while others say that uprooting so many people from their homes is not a viable option. Israel, in exchange, would agree to swap a more-or-less equivalent amount of its own land with a future Palestinian state. In 2004, President George W. Bush sent a letter to Israel saying it would be "unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949." Many interpreted that as a green light for Israel to build in the settlement blocs, as they do Trump's recent statement. The Obama administration, by contrast, did not distinguish between the big blocs and the isolated settlements, and as far as it was concerned, all settlement construction was equally bad. 80% of settlers live in the settlement blocs. So what are we talking about when we talk about the settlement blocs? Here's where it gets tricky. When people talk about the settlement blocs, they usually mean those areas that are expected to become part of Israel under a two-state agreement. Unfortunately, though, there is little consensus about what those areas are or should be. As Netanyahu once famously said: "My blocs aren't the blocs of the left." About 80 percent of the settlers live in the following eight major settlement blocs seen as candidates for Israeli annexation: Gush Etzion, Givat Ze'ev, Modi'in Ilit, Western Samaria, Ma'aleh Adumim, Ariel, Shaked and Kedumim. Altogether, they comprise about four percent of the West Bank. Some hold that only settlement blocs situated right near the Green Line, whose incorporation into Israel would not affect the viability and contiguity of a Palestinian state, should be annexed. Others believe the main consideration should be minimizing the number of settlers who would have to vacate their homes. That is why they support annexing settlement blocs that stretch deep into the West Bank, even if parts of the new Palestinian state would be cut off from one another as result. Which settlement blocs is there consensus about? The Geneva Initiative of 2003, a civil society effort of prominent Israelis and Palestinians, provides a good indication. According to the basic principles of that

agreement, which included land swaps of 2.2 percent, the settlement blocs of Gush Etzion (excluding Efrat), Ma'aleh Adumim (excluding the controversial adjacent area known as "E1"), Modi'in Ilit and Givat Ze'ev would become part of Israel. Another indication of where consensus lies is in the proposals exchanged by former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas five years later, as part of the Annapolis plan. Olmert proposed annexing all the major settlement blocs (about 5.9 percent of the West Bank territory), in exchange for 5.2 percent of Israeli territory. In his counteroffer, Abbas proposed giving Israel 1.6 percent of the West Bank in exchange for 2 percent of Israeli territory. Abbas was not willing to include Ma'aleh Adumim or Givat Ze'ev in that 1.6 percent, but he did agree to Modi'in Ilit and Gush Etzion (though not Efrat). It is noteworthy that Abbas was willing to give Israel the two largest settlements in the West Bank, both of which are ultra-Orthodox: Betar Illit (part of Gush Etzion) and Modi'in Ilit. Roughly one-third of all the settlers live in these two settlements today. So does that mean the city of Ariel isn't part of the consensus? Correct. Even though Israel recently built a big university there, there is not widespread agreement that Ariel should be included in Israel in a future two-state agreement. Olmert proposed including Ariel for the same reason many Israelis believe it belongs inside: It's one of the biggest settlements, with close to 20,000 residents. But Ariel stretches 13 miles deep into the West Bank, and its annexation would cut right into the heart of the Palestinian state. The fact that there is not widespread consensus about Ariel has not prevented the government, however, from approving many new housing units there in recent years. But certainly Ma'aleh Adumim and Efrat are part of the consensus. It's true that both Ma'aleh Adumim and Efrat are big settlements and located pretty close the Green Line. But there is not widespread consensus about them – at least on the Palestinian side – because it is feared their annexation could threaten the contiguity of a future Palestinian state. Ma'aleh Adumim includes the area known as E1, which connects the settlement to Jerusalem. Palestinians fear its annexation would partly cut off the northern West Bank from the southern part. Unlike most of the other settlements in Gush Etzion, Efrat is situated on the eastern side of Route 60 – the only major north-south highway in the West Bank. There are concerns it would encroach on the development of the Palestinian city of Bethlehem. For that reason, it was not included in the Geneva Initiative. Would it be fair to assume that most of the settlement construction activity of recent years has taken place in the big settlement blocs? Not at all. According to Haaretz contributor Shaul Arieli, one of Israel's leading experts on the demarcation of the future border, 50 percent of the new homes built in

the West Bank in recent years were outside the settlement blocs, even though 75 percent of the population growth was inside the settlement blocs. This is no coincidence, he says. Rather, it is part of a deliberate government policy to spread out the Jewish population in the West Bank so that the two-state solution becomes less viable. The government recently approved 2,500 new housing starts in the West Bank. Were they in the settlement blocs? Most of them were, so Trump would probably be pleased. But the approvals also included a group of 100 housing units in the settlement of Beit El, which is not part of any of the big blocs. The American president is not likely to complain about that anytime soon: After all, his ambassador-designate, David Friedman, heads the organization that raises money for Beit El in the United States, and Trump himself has written a \$10,000 check for the benefit of this particular settlement. ([Haaretz](#) 12 February 2017)

- New plan calls for construction of 2.6 million homes by 2040: Finance Minister Kahlon to present "unprecedented strategic blueprint" for government's efforts to meet market demands, fight soaring housing prices to the Housing Cabinet later this week • Number of households in Israel expected to increase 247% by 2040. Finance Minister Moshe Kahlon plans to unveil a new plan for tackling rising housing costs at a meeting of the Housing Cabinet scheduled to be held later this week. The plan, a joint project of the National Economic Council, the National Zoning and Planning Committee, and the Housing Forum, the executive arm of the Housing Cabinet, has been described as an "unprecedented strategic blueprint" in the Government's efforts to meet market demands and fight soaring housing prices. It calls for the planning and marketing of 2.6 million apartments in the next 24 years, to offset demand. According to projections, the number of households in Israel is expected to increase by 247%, from 2.3 million to 3.8 million, by 2040. According to the plan, 19,500 apartments will be built for the ultra-Orthodox sector, 10,000 of which Interior Minister Aryeh Deri has agreed to construct in a new haredi neighborhood to be established near the southern town of Kiryat Gat. The plan also includes the construction of tens of thousands of apartments for the Arab sector. To meet the plan's objectives, 104,000 apartments will need to be built in the next two years, and 208,000 apartments will need to be built by 2020. The goal is to build 52,000 apartments every year for the next four years, and to later increase construction, so that 67,000 apartments are built each year between 2036 and 2040, which would result in a nationwide construction boom. ([IsraelHayom](#) 12 February 2017)
- The Israeli e Ministerial Committee for Legislation approved on Sunday a revised version of a bill prohibiting the use of loudspeakers

in houses of prayer in the overnight hours, clearing the proposed legislation for an initial vote before the Knesset plenum. The new version of the so-called muezzin bill prohibits the use of loudspeakers for religious purposes from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. Violators of the proposed legislation will be fined NIS 10,000 (\$2,600), according to a copy of the legislation. If the bill passes its initial reading in the Knesset, expected to take place on Wednesday, it will be sent back to committee, after which it will again come before the plenum for its second and third readings prior to becoming law. The backing by the ministerial committee gives the bill coalition support. Critics of the bill argue that the measure unfairly targets mosques, whose muezzins use loudspeakers to announce the call to prayer five times a day, including during the very early morning hours before dawn. Other critics of the bill argue that it is superfluous, as the problem can be tackled using existing noise pollution laws. Jewish residents of East Jerusalem and other areas of Israel have long complained about what they say is the excessive noise coming from mosque loudspeakers, as they say it wakes them up in the middle of the night. Sponsors of the bill were forced to withdraw it for further revisions after it was first proposed in November, as ultra-Orthodox lawmakers feared the original bill's complete prohibition on the use of loudspeakers for religious purposes would outlaw the Shabbat siren, which is heard in cities with large Jewish populations Friday evenings to mark the start of Judaism's day of rest. Despite the revision prohibiting the use of loudspeakers only between the hours of 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., the bill was shelved in December, even though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had voiced support for the proposed measure. ([TimesofIsrael](#) 12 February 2017)