



# ARIJ Daily Report

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## Israeli Violations' Activities in the oPt 12 February 2019

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 Army (IOA) cut down and uprooted hundreds of Palestinian-owned olive trees in the Jordan Valley area of the northern occupied West Bank. The Israeli Civil Administration staff raided the Bardala village, in the northern Jordan Valley, and bulldozers began to uproot olive trees. More than 520 olive trees were either cut down or uprooted. The olive trees were about 15 years old. The olive trees belonged to five Palestinian residents. About 250 trees

belonged to Muhammad Salah Yousef Sawafta, 160 trees belonged to Amer Sawafta, 70 trees belonged to Amer Ehmil, 40 trees belonged to Izzat al-Rashayda, and four dunams (0.98 acres) of chickpea harvest belonged to Ziyad Sawafta. (IMEMC 12 February 2019)

### **Israeli Arrests**

- Israeli undercover occupation Army (IOA), or *mista'arvim* kidnapped a Palestinian child from a shop in Jerusalem. Yusuf Dari, age 13, was detained from a shop in al-Eesawiyya neighborhood, north of occupied Jerusalem, by Israeli undercover forces. The IOA detained Dari, and waited in the store, and immediately entered, attacked and detained him. They added that the *mista'arvim* threatened the owner of the shop with a weapon. Seven vehicles belong to the Israeli occupation police stormed the village after the child was taken, in order to protect the soldiers during their exit from the village. (IMEMC 12 February 2019)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) launched a campaign of arrests in al-Eesawiyya, after storming the houses of residents, taking with them one Ali Attia, another named Saleh Obaid and the child Adham Abu Riala. (IMEMC 12 February 2019)

### **Confiscation & Razing of lands**

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) destroyed a recently-rehabilitated road that connected Khirbet Shaab al-Butum to Masafer Yatta, in the south of the West Bank. The IOA provided protection to a military bulldozer as it proceeded to destroy the road, which was used to facilitate Palestinian farmers' access to their farmlands and residential areas. The Israeli military act aims to displace Palestinians from the area to in order to build a settlement. (IMEMC 12 February 2019)

### **Other**

- The National Bureau for Defending Land and Resisting Settlements said, in its weekly report, that, according to data published by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has established, during the past decade,

7 new settlements in the occupied West Bank, including six “settlement towns” and one settlement bloc named “Modi’in,” in addition to a “settlement town” in occupied Jerusalem, all of this on top of the expansion of existing illegal settlements and outposts. Within the same context, a recent report issued by Israeli rights group B’Tselem stated that the Israeli Supreme Court is now legitimizing Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in contravention of international law. According to B’Tselem, Israel has established 2 judicial systems, i.e. a civilian system for the settlers, and a military one for the Palestinians. The report confirmed that the “supreme” administration adopts the structural schemes of the British Mandate, from 80 years ago, which does not suit the current situation. The Kerem Nebot organization stated that the Settlement Department granted housing loans, from public funds, for illegal construction, as is the case in the illegal settlement of Eli. Documents of the Israeli Land Registrar showed that, in 2010, the Histadrut branch of the Settlement Department granted a loan to a settler and his wife, although it is not allowed to give loans for illegal houses. To be sure, this is not the first time that the department has given such a loan for the purpose of building illegal settlements and outposts. It is known that, since the 1990s, the Settlement Department has helped to establish many settlement outposts throughout the occupied West Bank, including the Sakari farm, the Itamar farm, Giv’at Awalam and Amona, among others, and granted housing loans to settlers, from the public funds, as also is the case for the Itamar settlement, south of the city of Nablus. There is an additional plan to raise the number of settlers in the occupied West Bank to 2 million, and to build large settlements in all areas of the West Bank. Knesset speaker Adelstein, besides a number of ministers and members of the Knesset, signed a pledge that includes the housing of 2 million settlers, in the West Bank, a promise to work on “liberating” land in the West Bank, and to cancel the declaration of 2-state solution ahead of elections to be held next April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in order to gain the votes of Israeli settlers. Within this context, Minister of Tourism Yariv Levin affirmed that the government’s goal is to accelerate settlement construction in the in the West Bank, in order to absorb one million Jewish settlers in the near future. On the other hand, the so-called “Central Area Commander” of the Israeli army,

General Fadan, toured the settlement council of “Beit El,” in the West Bank, and, during the visit, surveyed the most important threats and security challenges facing the settlers, there, and the requirements needed to provide them with security. The so-called “Planning and Building Committee” of the municipality of occupied Jerusalem approved a plan to build 13 new settlement units west of Sheikh Jarrah, thus green-lighting the seizure of more than 1,000 dunams of agricultural land, including olive trees and Palestinian homes in Khallet Abed, to the southeast of Jerusalem. In the Nablus governorate, the archaeological site of Khirbat al-Qasr, located to the south of Jalod village, in the south of Nablus, has been attacked repeatedly by settlers, which led to the alteration of archaeological features in basin 18 of the village. Photos showed settlers uprooting dozens of olive, fig and almond trees planted in Khirbet-Qasr 100 years ago, and razing areas to celebrate, there. The “Khirbet-Qasr” is surrounded by three settlement outposts which include a number of caves and ancient water wells. The Khirbet-Qasr area is about 50 dunams in total area, in addition to hundreds of agricultural lands which surround it, and belongs to Ahmad Mah’d Salman Abbad. The occupation has prevented citizens from reaching this area since 2001, under the pretext that it is closed to the outposts. In the Salfit Governorate, a plan was uncovered to bulldoze hundreds of dunams of agricultural land, in the villages and towns, in order to expand settlements. The municipality of Kafel Hares received a plan to construct a sewage line that would pass through land belonging to a number of citizens north of Salfit, and to include the destruction of some 22 dunams of Palestinian land planted with olive trees. (NBPRS 11 February 2019)

- Top companies face UN blacklist over operations in settlements: A number of prominent Israeli and international companies – among them Coca Cola and Teva – have been threatened with inclusion on a United Nations blacklist over their operations in Israeli settlements. One of the Israeli companies warned of its potential inclusion has appealed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for government intervention. The UN Human Rights Council says it intends to release an updated blacklist of corporations operating directly or indirectly in West Bank settlements, East Jerusalem and on the Golan Heights.

Major corporations including Africa Israel, Bank Hapoalim, Bank Leumi, Bezeq and Bezeq International, Coca Cola, Africa Israel, Teva, Egged, Mekorot and Elbit Systems have been informed they could be on the new list. Despite Israeli and American efforts to prevent it, the list is apparently set to be published at the 40th UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva in March. In 2016, the council approved a resolution to gather a blacklist of Israeli and international companies operating in the settlements. The list is updated annually. In January, senior officials from the Hot Telecommunication Systems Ltd. received letters from the Council stating that the cable company would be included in the blacklist since it provides its services beyond the Green Line. Hot CEO Tal Granot-Goldstein sent an urgent letter appealing to Netanyahu and Foreign Ministry Director-General Yuval Rotem in an effort to prevent Hot's inclusion on the list. "We believe the inclusion of Israeli companies in the UN Human Rights Council's blacklist might expose those companies to legal procedures, prompting international corporations to pull out of their investments in Israel. Therefore, we request that the Israeli government and the Foreign Ministry intervene to prevent the publication of this list. Handling this matter is a national interest of the utmost importance," Granot-Goldstein wrote. "To the best of our knowledge, additional Israeli companies have received similar warning letters. It is clear to us that by publishing its blacklist, the UN Human Rights Council aims to apply economic pressure on Israeli companies, while attempting to hurt their image and profits by shaming and threatening to expose them to legal procedures," she wrote. Since former Chilean president Verónica Michelle Bachelet Jeria was appointed as the UN Human Rights Commissioner in 2018, efforts to produce the list have been intensified. The UNHRC has long been accused of an anti-Israel bias, and the US ended its membership last year over this issue. Israel is the only country in the world whose rights record comes up for discussion at every council session, under "Item 7" on the agenda. Item 7 on "Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories" has been part of the council's regular business almost as long as it has existed. The United States has opted to stay out of the Human Rights Council before: The George W. Bush administration opted against seeking membership when the council was created in

2006. The US only rejoined the body in 2009 under President Barack Obama. ([YNETNEWS](#) 12 February 2019)

- The Council for Higher Education in Judea and Samaria is expected to approve Wednesday the establishment of a medical school at Ariel University in the West Bank, a day before the council dissolves and returns its mandate to the Council for Higher Education in Israel. Last Thursday the national council's Planning and Budgeting Committee voted to reject the plan. During this tight time line, Attorney General Avichai Mendelblit must decide whether the West Bank council has the authority to make the decision and how to relate to the decision by the Planning and Budgeting Committee, which is responsible for funding higher education. The deans of Israel's five existing medical schools said Monday that if the Ariel medical school does not open, they will increase their enrollment to accommodate the 70 students who were to study at Ariel. Fifty will study at Tel Aviv University, and the other 20 at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, subject to the allocation of the appropriate resources. Education Minister Naftali Bennett and Ariel University are claiming that the establishment of a faculty at Ariel is the only response to the serious shortage of doctors in Israel. But the deans, in a statement issued Sunday, said they had asked two years ago, before the discussions about Ariel began, whether there would be funding to increase the number of medical students by 100. They never received a response. "A number of months afterward, under pressure from various sources, the discussions about Ariel University's request to open a medical school began," the deans said. "Because the Planning and Budgeting Committee didn't allocate the necessary funds, and did not order the allocation of hospital slots to train additional students, the deans were forced to freeze the plan to increase the number of students." Ariel University argues that the deans of the five faculties did not fight hard enough to increase the number of new students. On Monday, the university said, "We are pleased that following Ariel's plan to launch medical studies in October 2019, the older medical schools have woken up and are prepared now to increase the number of students, after years during which it was explained why they couldn't do so by the Health Ministry, the state comptroller and the Planning and Budgeting

Committee.” Last Thursday the Planning and Budgeting Committee voted 3-2 to reject Ariel University’s request to open a medical school, reversing a decision from July. The committee held a second vote after it was determined that one council member, Rivka Wadmany Shauman, was vying for a professorship at the university when she voted to support plans for the med school. The conflict of interest was first reported by Haaretz. In response to the decision Bennett said he would not give up and that would fight “the university cartel” until the medical school was opened. This battle apparently includes the effort to push the decision through the Council for Higher Education in Judea and Samaria, which has consistently supported Ariel University and most of whose members are right-wing. Prof. Amos Altshuler, chairman of the Council for Higher Education in Judea and Samaria, said Monday that a decision by the body under his leadership could override the decision by the Planning and Budgeting Committee. “We have to take it into account, but we have the power to decide. The Planning and Budgeting Committee decision is merely a recommendation.” While it would be unreasonable for the Council for Higher Education in Israel to make a decision that contradicts a Planning and Budgeting Committee vote, that’s not the case for the territories council, which operates under orders from the army’s Central Command commander. The territories council dissolves on Thursday under a law that was advanced by Bennett himself, which is presumably why there is pressure to have that council make the decision immediately. Sources familiar with the details say that transferring the final decision to the Council for Higher Education in Judea and Samaria would be puzzling. “Where were the supporters of this when the Planning and Budgeting Committee approved the establishment of the medical school?” said one. “Why didn’t they think then that the approval of the Council for Higher Education in Judea and Samaria was necessary?” They said that the chairwoman of the Planning and Budgeting Committee, Prof. Yaffa Zilbershats, “is meant to be a gatekeeper and prevent her role from being emptied of significance.” The Council for Higher Education in Israel said, “The issue has been turned over to the Justice Ministry and we will follow its instructions.” ([Haaretz](#) 12 February 2019)