

PCHR

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights LTD (non-profit)

<http://www.pchrgaza.org>



Weekly Report

On Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory



A Palestinian child standing near the debris of her family's house, which was destroyed by Israeli Occupation Forces in East Jerusalem.

23- 28 April 2009

N^o 17-2009

Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Continue Systematic Attacks against Palestinian Civilians and Property in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and Continue to Impose a Total Siege on the Gaza Strip

- 20 Palestinian civilians, including 6 children, were wounded by IOF gunfire in the West Bank.
- A number of these civilians were wounded by Israeli settlers during a joint attack with IOF.
- IOF conducted 28 incursions into Palestinian communities in the West Bank.
- IOF arrested 32 Palestinian civilians, including 6 children.
- IOF halted technical preparations related to a reception site intended for the Pope's visit.
- IOF have continued to impose a total siege on the OPT and have isolated the Gaza Strip from the outside world.
- IOF imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian Christians during Easter.
- IOF troops positioned at military checkpoints in the West Bank arrested 5 Palestinian civilians, including 3 children.
- IOF have continued measures aimed at the changing the demographic majority of east Jerusalem's population.
- IOF started to establish a new settlement neighborhood in the al-Sawahra area, southeast of Jerusalem.
- Media reports disclosed a plan to connect "Kidar" settlement with "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement and annex 12,000 donums¹ of Palestinian land.
- IOF have continued settlement activities in the West Bank and Israeli settlers have continued to attack Palestinian civilians and property.
- IOF resumed the establishment of a settler road to the south of Hebron.
- Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian farmers in the north and south of the West Bank.

¹ One donum is equal to 1,000 square meters.

Summary

Israeli violations of international law and humanitarian law escalated in the OPT during the reporting period (23 – 28 April 2009):

Shooting: During the reporting period, 20 Palestinian civilians, including 6 children, were wounded by IOF and Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

On 24 April 2009, 12 Palestinian civilians, including two children, were wounded when Israeli settlers and IOF troops attacked 'Ourif village, south of Nablus. This joint attack was the second of its kind in the West Bank this April; IOF and Israeli settlers launched a similar attack on Safa village, north of Hebron, on 08 April, in which 9 Palestinian civilians were wounded.

On 26 April 2009, an Israeli settler fired at a Palestinian child in Madama village, south of Nablus. The child was seriously wounded by a gunshot that entered the back and exited the chest.

On the same day, a Palestinian civilian was wounded when IOF moved into Rantis village, northwest of Ramallah, and opened fire indiscriminately.

Also on the same day, IOF troops positioned at Tarqoumia crossing, southwest of Hebron, fired at an old Palestinian man, wounding him.

During the reporting period, 5 Palestinian civilians, including two children, were wounded when IOF used force against peaceful demonstrations organized to protest the construction of the Annexation Wall.

Incursions: During the reporting period, IOF conducted at least 28 military incursions into Palestinian communities in the West Bank. IOF arrested 32 Palestinian civilians, including 6 children.

During the reporting period, IOF stormed the public yard opposite 'Aaida refugee camp, north of Bethlehem. The yard was being readied in advance of the Pope's intended visit. IOF forced workers to stop technical and construction preparations.

On 24 April 2009, IOF conducted a joint operation with Israeli settlers against 'Ourif village, south of Nablus. Both forces fired at Palestinian civilians, wounding 12 of them.

Restrictions on Movement: IOF have continued to impose a tightened siege on the OPT and imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem.

Gaza Strip

IOF have closed all Gaza Strip border crossings for more than two years. The IOF siege of Gaza, which has steadily tightened since June 2007, has had a disastrous impact on the humanitarian and economic situation in the Gaza Strip.

- 1.5 million people are being denied their basic rights, including freedom of movement, and their rights to appropriate living conditions, work, health and education.

- The main priority of the 1.5 million people living in the Gaza Strip is to obtain their basic needs of food, medicines, water and electricity supplies.
- IOF have prevented the entry of raw construction materials into the Gaza Strip for more than two years.
- IOF have not allowed fuel supplies into the Gaza Strip, excluding limited amounts of cooking gas, since 10 December 2008.
- The Rafah International Crossing Point has been opened for a few days for a number of patients who received medical treatment abroad and needed to return home to the Gaza Strip.
- IOF have continued to close Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing to Palestinian civilians wishing to travel to the West Bank and Israeli for medical treatment, trade or social visits.
- Poverty has reached approximately 80% and unemployment has increased to approximately 60% in the Gaza Strip.
- IOF have continued to prevent the entry of spare parts intended for water networks and sewage systems. Damages incurred to this sector are estimated at US\$ 6 million.
- IOF have imposed additional access restrictions on international diplomats, journalists and humanitarian workers to the Gaza Strip. They have prevented representatives of several international humanitarian organizations from entering the Gaza Strip.
- The Palestinian civilian population's living conditions have seriously deteriorated; levels of poverty and unemployment have sharply mounted.
- At least 900 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails have been denied family visitation for more than 17 months.
- IOF have continued to attack Palestinian fishers along the coast of the Gaza Strip.

West Bank

IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians throughout the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. Thousands of Palestinian civilians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue to be denied access to Jerusalem.

- IOF have established checkpoints in and around Jerusalem, severely restricting Palestinian access to the city. Civilians are frequently prevented from praying at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- There are approximately permanent 630 roadblocks, manned and unmanned checkpoints across the West Bank. In addition, there are some 60-80 'flying' or temporary checkpoints erected across the West Bank by IOF every week.
- When complete, the illegal Annexation Wall will stretch for 724 kilometers around the West Bank, further isolating the entire population. 350 kilometers of the Wall have already been constructed.

Approximately 99% of the Wall has been constructed inside the West Bank itself, further confiscating Palestinian land.

- At least 65% of the main roads leading to 18 Palestinian communities in the West Bank are closed or fully controlled by IOF (47 out of 72 roads).
- There are approximately 500 kilometers of restricted roads across the West Bank. In addition, approximately one third of the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, is inaccessible to Palestinians without a permit issued by the IOF. These permits are extremely difficult to obtain.
- IOF continue to harass, and assault demonstrators who hold peaceful protests against the construction of the Annexation Wall.
- Palestinian civilians continue to be harassed by IOF in Jerusalem, and across the West Bank, including being regularly stopped and searched in the streets by IOF.
- During the reporting period, IOF troops positioned at military checkpoints in the West Bank arrested 5 Palestinian civilians.

The establishment of a majority Jewish demographic in Jerusalem: IOF have escalated measures against Palestinian civilians in East Jerusalem intended to force them to leave the city. IOF started the construction of a new settlement neighborhood in Arab al-Sawahra area, southeast of Jerusalem, for nationalist Jews. The Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported on 26 February 2009 that the construction of the new settlement neighborhood started approximately one month ago on lands which the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem claim belong to it. The new settlement neighborhood will be located in a Palestinian-populated area. During the reporting period, a committee of the Israeli Ministry of Interior recommended annexing approximately 12,000 dunums of land to the "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement, east of Jerusalem, and including "Kidar" settlement – nearly 3 kilometers away from the aforementioned settlement – in its boundaries. The Israeli Military Radio reported on 25 April 2009 that this plan would increase the population of "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement to 34,500 settlers. This plan coincides with another plan revealed a few months ago, according to which 6,000 housing unit would be constructed in "Kidar" settlement and its vicinity in order to create geographical contiguity with the "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement. These plans would cut geographical contiguity between the north and south of the West Bank and would isolate Jerusalem completely from the Palestinian community, thus undermining the establishment of a viable Palestinian State on lands occupied by Israel since 1967.

Settlement Activities: IOF have continued settlement activities in the OPT in violation of international humanitarian law. Israeli settlers have continued to attack Palestinian civilians and property. On 23 April 2009, IOF resumed leveling areas of Palestinian land in Um al-Khair area near "Carme'il" settlement, south of Hebron, to establish a new settler road. The establishment of the new settler road would force 13 Palestinian families to leave the area. On the same day, Israeli settlers armed with sharp tools chased Fawzi Mousa 'Awadh, 65, from Beit Uammar village north of Hebron, and forced him to leave his land near "Kfar Etzion" settlement. 'Awadh was able to escape from the area on his tractor. Also on the same day, armed Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian farmers in Jeet village, east of Qalqilya, and prevented them from farming their land. They also attacked 5 houses in the village. IOF troops escorted the settlers and did not stop such attacks. On 26 April 2009, Israeli settlers from "Bein Ain" settlement to the north of Beit Uammar village north of Hebron, attacked two Palestinian farmers while they were farming their land. The two farmers sustained bruises and cuts.

Israeli Violations Documented during the Reporting Period (23 – 28 April 2009)

1. Incursions into Palestinian Areas and Attacks on Palestinian Civilians and Property in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip

Thursday, 23 April 2009

- At approximately 00:30, IOF moved into Yatta village, south of Hebron. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested Mohammed 'Abdul Kamel Abu Zahra, 36.
- Also at approximately 00:30, IOF moved into al-Sammou' village, south of Hebron. They raided and searched a number of houses. No arrests were reported.
- At approximately 00:45, IOF moved nearly 600 meters into al-Shoubaki area in the north of Beit Hanoun town in the northern Gaza Strip. They leveled areas of Palestinian land. The land had been razed during previous incursions. IOF withdrew from the area at approximately 04:00.
- Approximately 01:00, IOF moved into Taqqou' village, southeast of Bethlehem. They raided and searched a house belonging to Mousa Khalaf Jebril, 50, and arrested him together with his two sons: Tariq, 24, and Sabri, 21. The IOF arrested Jebril's daughter, 16-year-old Maymouna, on the preceding day near Oufar Prison, claiming that she was carrying a knife.
- At approximately 02:00, IOF moved into Tulkarm. They raided and searched a number of buildings where university students live. They questioned a number of students. No arrests were reported.
- In the morning, IOF stormed the public yard opposite to 'Aaida refugee camp, north of Bethlehem, where the Pope will be received during his visit. According to Munjed Jadu, Media Officer of the Reception Committee for the Pope, IOF troops forced workers to stop technical and construction preparations. They also informed Ibrahim Abu Sorour, Director of 'Aaida refugee camp, that any activity in the area must obtain permission from IOF, claiming that the area is classified as a "C" area according to the Oslo Accords (under complete IOF control).

Friday, 17 April 2009

- At approximately 01:00, IOF moved into Tulkarm. They raided and searched a house belonging to Qutaiba 'Ammar Badawi. No arrests were reported.
- At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into Beit Leed village, east of Tulkarm. They raided and searched a house belonging to Nasser 'Abdul Latif Salama. No arrests were reported.
- At approximately 15:00, IOF moved into Faqqou'a village, east of Jenin. They arrested 3 Palestinian workers who were working on a construction site approximately 200-300 meters away from the Annexation Wall:
 1. 'Abdul Karim Mahmoud 'Athamna, 47;
 2. Yasser Mohammed 'Athamna, 24; and
 3. 'Abdullah Ahmed Sarhan, 20.

- At approximate 17:00, at least 20 Israeli settlers from "Yits'har" settlement, south of Nablus, escorted by 3 IOF soldiers, attacked the eastern part of 'Ourif village (also south of Nablus). Dozens of Palestinian civilians gathered and threw stones at the settlers and IOF soldiers to prevent them from entering the village. IOF sent backup forces to the area and fired at Palestinian civilians, wounding 12 of them, including two children:
 1. Ibrahim Radi Sabbah, 23, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head;
 2. Nour al-Din Mustafa al-Safadi, 22, wounded by a gunshot to the left foot;
 3. Maher Ghassan al-Safadi, 19, wounded by a gunshot to the right shoulder;
 4. Mahmoud 'Abdul Rahim al-Safadi, 16, wounded by a gunshot to the right foot;
 5. 'Issam Najeh al-Safadi, 32, wounded by a gunshot to the right thigh;
 6. Mustafa Mohammed al-Safadi, 15, wounded by two rubber-coated metal bullets to the left foot;
 7. Hussam Rajeh Sabbah, 23, hit by a tear gas canister in the right shoulder;
 8. Saddam 'Abdul Karim al-Safadi, 19, wounded by shrapnel from a gunshot to the left ear;
 9. Ahmed Najeh Shihada, 22, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right shoulder;
 10. Nejem Farhan Shihada, 19, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left hand;
 11. Ahmed 'Abdul Karim al-Safadi, 18, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right thigh; and
 12. 'Aadel Nabeel Shihada, 26, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left hand.

Saturday, 25 April 2009

- At approximately 01:00, IOF moved into Jafna village, north of Ramallah. They raided and searched a restaurant in the village and arrested 4 workers:
 1. 'Imad Jom'a 'Ayash, 20;
 2. Shadi 'Abdullah Safi, 26;
 3. Yousef Abu Saber, 26; and
 4. Fares al-Sous, 24.
- At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into Yatta village, south of Hebron. They raided and searched a house belonging to the family of Hassan 'Abdullah Shawaheen, and summoned him for interrogation.

Sunday, 26 April 2009

- At approximately 02:00, IOF moved into al-Fundoq village, northeast of Qalqilya. They raided a house belonging to Jameel Ahmed Jab'eiti, claiming that the Israeli police wanted to question his son Mohammed, who is mentally disabled. When the owner's daughter, 26-year-old Sahar, protested, IOF troops violently beat her. She was seriously injured to the foot. IOF troops also damaged the contents of the house and cut a copy of the Holy Qura'an.
- Also at approximately 02:00, IOF moved into Hijja village, northeast of Qalqilya. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested two Palestinian civilians:
 1. Ahmed 'Abdul Hadi Tayoun, 24; and
 2. Ahmed Basheer al-Rabe', 20.
- At approximately 04:00, IOF moved into al-Zawia village, southwest of Salfit. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 6 Palestinian civilians, including 5 children:

1. Saddam Hatem Yousef, 15;
 2. Ahmed Na'im Yousef, 14;
 3. 'Abbouda Saleh Abu Nab'a, 16;
 4. 'Othman Dirar Shuqair, 20;
 5. Eihab Yasser Abu Qahha, 17; and
 6. Ahmed Ameen Rafiq, 15.
- At approximately 17:30, IOF moved into Rantis village, northwest of Ramallah. They patrolled in the streets and opened fire indiscriminately. As a result, Nash'at Jamal Housha, 26, was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the back.
 - At approximately 18:00, IOF troops positioned at Tarqoumia crossing, southwest of Hebron, fired at 'Azzam Mohammed 'Abu 'Assab, 62, from Hebron, when he was passing through the crossing. He was wounded by two gunshots to the feet. IOF claimed that he did not obey orders to stop.
 - At approximately 20:00, IOF moved into al-Mukabber village, southwest of Jerusalem. They demolished a monument established by residents of the village in commemoration of Eyad 'Owaisat who was killed by IOF last month in Sour Baher village.

Monday, 27 April 2009

- At approximately 01:00, IOF moved into Bethlehem. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested Ahmed Khader Masalma, 22.
- At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into Dura village, southwest of Hebron. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 5 Palestinian civilians, including a child:
 1. Midhat Ibrahim al-Shawahin, 24;
 2. Saber Mohammed al-Bustanji, 18;
 3. Mohammed Isma'il Abu 'Arqoub, 17;
 4. Raja'ei Taleb 'Arqoub, 26; and
 5. 'Aayesh Rawashda, 30.
- At approximately 02:00, IOF moved into 'Ourif village, south of Nablus. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested 'Issam Najeh al-Safadi, 32, and his brother As'ad, 42. 'Issam had been wounded on 24 April 2009 when Israeli settlers and IOF stormed the village.
- At approximately 02:30, IOF moved into Safa village, northwest of Hebron. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested Mohammed Sami 'Aadi, 23.
- At approximately 13:00, IOF moved into al-Mukabber village, southwest of Jerusalem. They raided a house belonging to the family of Hussam Dwayat – previously killed by IOF – which had been partially demolished last month. The claimed that the family rebuilt the part of the house that had been demolished. During this house raid, IOF troops violently beat members of the family and attempted to arrest Dwayat's father when he protested against the attacks.

Tuesday, 28 April 2009

- At approximately 01:30, IOF moved into 'Azmout village, east of Nablus. They raided and searched a number of houses and arrested Khaled Murad 'Aamer, 23.
- At approximately 19:00, IOF moved into Qabatya village, southeast of Jenin. They patrolled in the streets and fired sound bombs. They withdrew from the village later. No casualties or arrests were reported.
- Also at approximately 19:00, IOF moved into Marka village, southeast of Jenin. They patrolled in the streets and fired sound bombs. They withdrew from the village later. No casualties or arrests were reported.
- At approximately 19:30, IOF moved into 'Arraba village, south of Jenin. They patrolled in the streets and fired sound bombs. They withdrew from the village later. No casualties or arrests were reported.
- Also at approximately 19:30, IOF moved into Fahma village, south of Jenin. They patrolled in the streets and fired sound bombs. They withdrew from the village later. No casualties or arrests were reported.

2. Continued Siege on the OPT

IOF have continued to impose a tightened siege on the OPT and imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Occupied East Jerusalem.

Gaza Strip

IOF have continued to close all border crossings to the Gaza Strip for more than two years. The IOF siege of Gaza, which has steadily tightened since June 2007, has had a disastrous impact on the humanitarian and economic situation in the Gaza Strip.

- 1.5 million people are being denied their basic rights, including freedom of movement, and their rights to appropriate living conditions, work, health and education.
- The main concern of 1.5 million people living in the Gaza Strip is to obtain their basic needs of food, medicines, water and electricity supplies.
- IOF have prevented the entry of raw construction materials into the Gaza Strip for more than two years.
- IOF have not allowed fuel supplies into the Gaza Strip, excluding limited amounts of cooking gas, since 10 December 2008.
- The Rafah International Crossing Point has been opened for a few days for a number of patients who received medical treatment abroad and needed to return home to the Gaza Strip.
- IOF have continued to close Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing to Palestinian civilians wishing to travel to the West Bank and Israeli for medical treatment, trade or social visits.
- Poverty has risen to approximately 80% and unemployment has reached approximately 60% in the Gaza Strip.

- IOF have continued to prevent the entry of spare parts form water networks and sewage systems. Damages to this sector are estimated at US\$ 6 million.
- IOF have imposed additional access restrictions on international diplomats, journalists and humanitarian workers seeking to enter the Gaza Strip. They have prevented representatives of several international humanitarian organizations from entering the Gaza Strip.
- The Palestinian civilian population's living conditions have seriously deteriorated; levels of poverty and unemployment have sharply mounted.
- At least 900 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails have been denied family visitation rights for more than 17 months.
- IOF have continued to attack Palestinian fishers along the Gaza Strip coast.

The West Bank

IOF have imposed a tightened siege on the West Bank. During the reporting period, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians.

- Jerusalem: IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the city. Thousands of Palestinian civilians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have been denied access to the city. IOF have established many checkpoints around and inside the city. Restrictions of the movement of Palestinian civilians often escalate on Fridays to prevent them from praying at the al-Aqsa Mosque. IOF often violently beat Palestinian civilians who attempt to bypass checkpoints and enter the city. IOF impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians on Fridays to restrict their access to the al-Aqsa Mosque.
- Nablus: IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. Although IOF dismantled Beit Eiba checkpoint, west of Nablus, IOF troops stationed at an iron gate established on the Nablus-Tulkarm road, west of Nablus, often stopped and searched Palestinian civilian vehicles, particularly at times of heavy traffic. In the same context, IOF troops positioned at Hawara checkpoint, south of Nablus, often conduct prolonged and complicated checks on Palestinian civilians. Additionally, IOF have continued to erect checkpoints on roads leading to the city. On Monday morning, 27 April 2009, IOF troops positioned at Beit Fourik checkpoint, east of Nablus, imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. They conducted prolonged checks on civilians.

At approximately 09:00 on Friday, 24 April 2009, an IOF soldier positioned at Hawara checkpoint, south of Nablus, stole 4,000 NIS (approximately US\$ 950) from Mohammed Rafeeq 'Abdul Rahman, 22, from Brouqin village west of Salfit. The soldier held 'Abdul Rahman at the checkpoint for approximately 4 hours and threatened to shoot him when he complaint about stealing the money. 'Abdul Rahman submitted a complaint to IOF, but they claimed that they could not help him. He then attempted to submit a complaint at an IOF police station in Ariel settlement, but IOF troops guarding the settlement prevented him.

- Bethlehem: At approximately 19:00 on Sunday, 25 April 2009, IOF troops patrolling near the Annexation Wall arrested Munther Lutfi 'Abdullah, 17, from 'Aaida refugee camp north of Bethlehem.

- Hebron: On Saturday, 25 April 2009, IOF troops patrolling near Kherbat al-Tawani village, south of Hebron, arrested Kamel Salama Khamamra, 23, when he was grazing animals near "Ma'oun" settlement.

On Tuesday morning, 28 April 2009, IOF troops positioned near the Ibrahimi Mosque in the old town of Hebron arrested two Palestinian children: Muhannad Qaffisha, 15; and Ameen Skafi, 17.

- Jenin: At approximately 07:30 on Monday, 27 April 2009, IOF troops positioned at the western Toura gate on the Annexation Wall, southwest of Jenin, arrested Sa'id Saleh al-Khatib, 30, a teacher from Zaher al-Maleh village, when he attempted to release two school children who were held by IOF. An IOF soldier claimed that the teacher attempted to attack him.

3. Construction of the Annexation Wall

IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall inside West Bank territory. During the reporting period, IOF used force against peaceful demonstrations organized by Palestinian civilians and international and Israeli human rights defenders protesting the Wall's construction.

- Following the Friday Prayer on 24 April 2009, dozens of Palestinian civilians and international and Israeli human rights defenders gathered in the center of Ni'lin village, west of Ramallah. They moved towards the area where IOF were razing land in order to construct a section of the Wall in the village. Immediately, IOF troops fired at the demonstrators. As a result, 5 Palestinian civilians, including two children, were wounded:

1. Mohammed Hussein Sorour, 19, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the head;
2. Mo'men 'Abdul Rahman al-Khawaja, 17, hit by a tear gas canister in the right eye;
3. Mohammed Ziad al-Khawaja, 14, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the right leg;
4. Mohammed Rateb 'Amira, 28, hit by a tear gas canister in the back; and
5. Sa'adat Ibrahim 'Amira, 21, wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet to the left leg.

- Also following the Friday Prayer on 24 April 2009, scores of Palestinian civilians and a number of international human rights defenders organized a peaceful demonstration against the construction of the Wall in al-Ma'sara village, south of Bethlehem. The demonstrators moved towards the Wall, but IOF troops intercepted them at the entrance to the village. IOF troops fired tear gas canisters at the demonstrators. Dozens of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation. IOF troops also violently beat a number of demonstrators, injuring 4 of them, including a child:

1. Ahmed Taqatqa, 22;
2. Mahmoud Hayan, 18;
3. Mahmoud 'Abed Zawahra, 21; and
4. Mohammed Ahmed 'Alaa' al-Din, 14.

4. The Establishment of a majority Jewish demographic in Jerusalem

IOF has recently escalated arbitrary measures against Palestinian civilians in East Jerusalem in order to force them to leave the city. PCHR has devoted this section in the Weekly Report to highlight violations of human rights perpetrated by IOF against Palestinian civilians in East Jerusalem.

- IOF started the construction of a new settlement neighborhood in Arab al-Sawahra area, southeast of Jerusalem, for nationalist Jews. The Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported on 26 February 2009 that the

construction of the new settlement neighborhood started approximately one month ago on lands which the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem claim belong to it. The new settlement neighborhood will be located in a Palestinian-populated area. According to the same newspaper, 62-66 housing units will be built on a 3.5-donum area of land. The spokesman of the Municipality of Jerusalem stated that this new settlement project is a part of the plan of Tabyout neighborhood and claimed that the construction licenses and plans are legal. The Israeli Mayor of Jerusalem claimed that "construction within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem is not a settlement activity, the same as construction in Tel Aviv is not considered a settlement activity." Attorney Dani Zeidman, Judicial Advisor of Ir Amim for an Equitable and Stable Jerusalem with an Agreed Political Future, stated that the land on which the new housing units will be established are part of a Palestinian community and had never been confiscated. Zeidman added that the intended construction also exceeds the construction regulations in the area, as determined by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem.

- During the reporting period, a committee of the Israeli Ministry of Interior recommended annexing approximately 12,000 donums of land to "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement, east of Jerusalem, and annexing "Kidar" settlement, nearly 3 kilometers away from the aforementioned settlement, to its boundaries. The Israeli Military Radio reported on 25 April 2009 that this plan would increase the population of "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement to 34,500 settlers. This plan coincides with another project revealed a few months ago, according to which 6,000 housing unit will be constructed in "Kidar" settlement and its vicinity in order to create geographical contiguity with "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement. Such plans would cut geographical contiguity between the north and south West Bank and would isolate Jerusalem completely from the Palestinian community, thus undermining the establishment of a viable Palestinian state on lands occupied by Israel since 1967.

5. Settlement Activities and Attacks by Settlers against Palestinian Civilians and Property

IOF have continued settlement activities in the OPT in violation of international humanitarian law, and Israeli settlers have continued to attack Palestinian civilians and property.

- On Thursday morning, 23 April 2009, IOF resumed leveling areas of Palestinian land in the Um al-Khair area near "Carme'il" settlement, south of Hebron, in order to establish a new settler road. When IOF bulldozers got close to Palestinian houses, dozens of Palestinian civilians and international human rights defenders gathered and stood in front of the bulldozer protesting such actions. IOF troops violently beat them. As a result, 3 Palestinian civilians were injured: 'Eid Suleiman Hathalin, 23; Bilal Salem Hathalin, 20; and Mohammed Salem Hathalin, 35. The establishment of the new settler road would force 13 Palestinian families to leave the area.
- On Thursday noon, at least 20 Israeli settlers armed with sharp tools chased Fawzi Mousa 'Awadh, 65, from Beit Uammar village north of Hebron, and forced him to leave his land near "Kfar Etzion" settlement. 'Awadh was able to escape from the area on his tractor.
- On Thursday evening, armed Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian farmers in Jeet village, east of Qalqilya, and prevented them from farming their land. They also attacked 5 houses in the village. IOF troops escorted the settlers and did not stop such attacks.
- At approximately 13:00 on Sunday, 26 April 2009, an Israeli settler fired at Mohammed Na'im Ahmed Faraj, 15, from Madama village south of Nablus, when he was cultivating almonds in al-Ma'ani area. The child was seriously wounded by a gunshot that entered the back and exited the chest. Nevertheless, he

was able to run towards Madama Mosque where he was evacuated in a civilian vehicle to Rafidya Hospital in Nablus.

- At approximately 15:00 on Sunday, at least 15 Israeli settlers from "Bein Ain" settlement to the north of Beit Uammar village north of Hebron, attacked 'Abdullah 'Abdul Hamid Slaibi, 62, and his brother Mohammed, 69, with stones, while they were farming their land. The two farmers sustained bruises and cuts.

.....

Recommendations to the International Community

1. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal and moral obligations under Article 1 of the Convention to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. PCHR believes that the conspiracy of silence practiced by the international community has encouraged Israel to act as if it is above the law and encourages Israel continue to violate international human rights and humanitarian law.
2. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to convene a conference to take effective steps to ensure Israel's respect of the Convention in the OPT and to provide immediate protection for Palestinian civilians.
3. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to comply with its legal obligations detailed in Article 146 of the Convention to search for and prosecute those responsible for grave breaches, namely war crimes.
4. PCHR calls for the immediately implementation of the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice, which considers the construction of the Annexation Wall inside the West Bank illegal.
5. PCHR recommends international civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, bar associations and NGOs to participate in the process of exposing those accused of grave breaches of international law and to urge their governments to bring these people to justice.
6. PCHR calls upon the European Union to activate Article 2 of the Euro-Israel Association Agreement, which provides that Israel must respect human rights as a precondition for economic cooperation between the EU states and Israel. PCHR further calls upon the EU states to prohibit import of goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the OPT.
7. PCHR calls on the international community to recognize the Gaza disengagement plan, which was implemented in September 2005, for what it is - not an end to occupation but a compounding of the occupation and the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.
8. In recognition of ICRC as the guardian of the Fourth Geneva Convention, PCHR calls upon the ICRC to increase its staff and activities in the OPT, including the facilitation of family visitations to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
9. PCHR appreciates the efforts of international civil society, including human rights organizations, bar associations, unions and NGOs, and urges them to continue their role in pressuring their governments to secure Israel's respect for human rights in the OPT and to end its attacks on Palestinian civilians.
10. PCHR calls upon the international community to pressure Israel to lift the severe access restrictions imposed by the Israeli government and its occupation forces on international organizations.
11. PCHR reiterates that any political settlement not based on international human rights law and humanitarian law cannot lead to a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian question. Rather, such an arrangement can only lead to further suffering and instability in the region. Any peace agreement or

process must be based on respect for international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.

.....

Public Document

For further information please visit our website (<http://www.pchrgaza.org>) or contact PCHR's office in Gaza City, Gaza Strip by email (pchr@pchrgaza.org) or telephone (+972 (0)8 2824776 – 2825893).