

URGENT ACTION

BEDOUIN COMMUNITY AT IMMINENT RISK OF EXPULSION

The Israeli army has issued an expulsion order which will forcibly evict 58 Palestinian Bedouin families in the area of Jabal al-Baba, east of Jerusalem. The expulsion order has to be rescinded immediately.

On 16 November, the Israeli army issued a military order that would displace the entire **Jabal al-Baba Bedouin community**, belonging to the Jahalin tribe, from their current location in Area C of the West Bank, east of Jerusalem. Jabal al Baba is one of 46 Bedouin communities at risk of forcible transfer. The community consists of 58 families, which count approximately 290 people, 151 of whom are children.

The military order, issued on 1 November, instructs all members of the community to leave their homes and take their personal belongings with them within eight days of its issuance. The community was only informed about the order on 16 November, while the deadline for residents to leave the area expired on 23 November. The eviction order was issued on the grounds of "lacking title over the land" and "illegal construction and zoning". The community's lawyer petitioned the order on 22 November, but the appeal was rejected on 6 December. While the Israeli military has not implemented the order yet, the order would uproot one of the poorest communities in the West Bank and amount to the war crime of forcible transfer if carried out.

The Israeli Civil Administration, the military-run governing body in the occupied West Bank, plans to relocate the community to a site about 300m away from the former Jerusalem municipal garbage dump, near the Palestinian town of Abu Dis. Residents told Amnesty International that since the eviction order has been issued, they have been living in a constant state of fear and anxiety, with children being the most affected. The repeated destruction of homes and of the community's livelihoods, which aims to pressure the community to relocate, violates international humanitarian and human rights law.

Please write immediately in Hebrew, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Israeli authorities to immediately cancel the eviction order and any other plans that would forcibly transfer the Jabal al-Baba Bedouin community;
- Calling on them to immediately stop all demolitions in the Jabal al-Baba Bedouin community and other vulnerable communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), including in Area C and East Jerusalem, and transfer responsibility for planning and building policies and regulations in the OPT from the Israeli authorities to the local Palestinian communities;
- Calling on them to immediately stop the construction of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the OPT as a first step towards removing Israeli civilians living in such settlements.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 JANUARY 2018 TO:

Prime Minister
Benjamin Netanyahu
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan St, PO Box 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91950, Israel
Email: pm_eng@pmo.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Commander of the IDF – West Bank
Major-General Roni Numa GOC Central
Command
Military Post 02367, Battalion 877 Israel
Defence Forces, Israel
Fax: +972 2 530 5741, +972 2 530 5724
Salutation: Dear Major-General Roni Numa

And copies to:
Minister of Defence
Avigdor Liberman
Ministry of Defence
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryat Tel Aviv
61909, Israel
Email: minister@mod.gov.il
pniot@mod.gov.il
Fax: +972 3 691 6940

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR MARK REGEV, Embassy of Israel, 2 Palace Green, Kensington, W8 4QB, 020 7957 9500, info@london.mfa.gov.il

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

BEDOUIN COMMUNITY AT IMMINENT RISK OF EXPULSION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the 1950s, Israeli authorities displaced the Jahalin tribe from the Tel Arad area, in the Negev, to the West Bank. Following Israel's occupation of the West Bank in 1967, the Israeli military restricted vast expanses of the Jahalin grazing land by declaring them military zones or nature reserves, confiscating land for building settlements and prohibited the Bedouin from using them. As a result, the Jahalin's seasonal movement and traditional way of life became impossible and they were forced to settle in permanent small encampments in the area of East Jerusalem.

The Jahalin Bedouin community in Jabal al-Baba has settled on state land and on land privately owned by residents of Al-Ezariya town, east of Jerusalem, with the agreement of the owners. The land is located in the area designated as Area C under the Oslo Accords signed in 1993 between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). In these areas, which make up more than 60 percent of the occupied West Bank, the Israeli army retains complete control over security, and the Israeli Civil Administration, a military body, controls planning and zoning. The Israeli authorities have not allowed Palestinians to build and develop their land in Area C. The area of Jabal al-Baba is surrounded by the fence/wall, drastically reducing the community's freedom of movement and access to grazing areas. As a result, families have been forced to reduce their flock size and many in the Jabal al-Baba community have become increasingly dependent on humanitarian assistance.

For decades, the Jabal al-Baba community has been struggling to hold onto their homes in the face of land expropriations, house demolition, and forced eviction by the Israeli authorities. Residents told Amnesty International that the Israeli Civil Administration regularly comes into the community to report whether any new structures have been installed, as well as regularly monitoring the area with drones. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Local Government, the Israeli army has destroyed 50 structures including 34 houses and one kindergarten between 2009 and 2017. Twenty-five of these structures were funded by international donors and the most recent demolition took place in November of this year; a further 126 houses in the Jabal al-Baba community are at risk of being demolished. Since the beginning of 2017, the Israeli military has demolished 220 Palestinian-owned structures in Area C of the West Bank, and displaced 298 people, according to data collected by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Residents of Jabal al-Baba told Amnesty International that these demolitions have had a huge emotional toll on them, and have particularly affected children. One woman interviewed by Amnesty International said that her six-year-old son experiences nightmares ever since the eviction order has been issued, asking her in his sleep: "Is the army here, have they come?"

The Israeli army recently declared new plans to demolish villages of Ein al-Hilweh and Umm Jamal in the Jordan Valley, Khan al-Ahmar, east of Jerusalem, and one-fifth of the buildings in the Palestinian village of Susiya, located in the South Hebron Hills. The lawyer representing the Bedouin communities of Jabal al-Baba, Ein al-Hilweh and Umm Jamal has filed a legal petition against the orders, but it was rejected on 6 December.

Israel's unlawful transfer of Palestinians in the OPT and the extensive and wanton destruction and appropriation of Palestinians' property are grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and hence war crimes. Israel's actions also violates international human rights law, particularly the right to adequate housing.

UA: 267/17 Index: MDE 15/7569/2017 Issue Date: 07 December 2017