



المقدسي لتنمية المجتمع
Al-Maqdese for Society Development (MSD)



HOUSES DEMOLITION IN EAST JERUSALEM REPORT 2018

The policy of house demolition in the occupied city of Jerusalem ... Where to?

Perhaps this is the question we have asked again and again. Perhaps the answer is represented by the persistence of the Israeli authorities to continue its racist policy towards the Palestinians in the city of Jerusalem. The occupation authorities are working with all their strength and arrogance to Judaize the city and to tighten the siege on the Palestinians in their city by demolishing their homes and facilities for feeble pretexts that violate all international norms and laws as [article 17 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) states that "Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property."

The Fourth Geneva Convention explicitly prohibits the exposure to private properties, the demolition of houses, the deportation of residents and all arbitrary measures. According to international law, the unlicensed construction argument, which is claimed by the Israeli army, does not constitute sufficient grounds for demolishing houses in the absence of "compelling military reasons" for demolition, which the Israeli occupation army has not mentioned.

It should be noted that many of the international covenants signed by Israel, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, stipulate that the demolition, the deportation and the retention of indigenous homes without shelter is illegal, and violates international human rights treaties and international humanitarian law which applies in the occupied territories.

What is even more outrageous is the continued uninterrupted settlement construction in the occupied city. The Israeli occupation council in Jerusalem has approved the construction of 3,000 new settlement units in the area between the Gilo settlement and the southern suburbs of the city. The land on which the new settlement units will be built is about 280 dunums, most of which are private land. "Today is a historic day for the city of Jerusalem, which lacks land," said the deputy mayor of Jerusalem, as head of the local planning committee. "We have approved thousands of settlement units in Gilo. This means more young couples in the city. The biggest push in recent years." There is no doubt that the occupation continues to do so. Especially under the unprecedented US support. US President, Donald Trump, has declared Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and his decision to move his country's embassy there and to support all the occupation authorities' actions towards the Palestinian people and targeting Jerusalem in particular. The Israeli Knesset approved the "unified Jerusalem" law in the second and third readings, which prevents any Israeli government from negotiating over any part of Jerusalem only after the approval of an exceptional parliamentary majority.

1. Demolitions carried out by the occupation authorities in the city of East Jerusalem for the year 2018

Al-Maqdese Data Bank puts in your hands the demolition statistics carried out by the occupation authorities for the year 2018. The occupation authorities, represented by the occupation municipality, the Ministry of the Interior, the Nature Authority and the Civil Administration, demolished 141 residential and non-residential buildings (including shops, barks, and fences)

The demolitions resulted in the displacement of more than 251 people, including 143 children. No area in the city of Jerusalem was exempt from house demolitions. Not to mention the arrests by Israeli security forces and police of homeowners. It is not enough to demolish houses, but also to beat and arrest their owners.

Region	Type of Building		# of Persons Displaced		Implementing Party	
	No. of residential units	No. of nonresidential structures Area	Adults	Children	Self-Demolition	Demolition by Israeli Authorities
Al-Isawiyeh	6	21	15	9	1	5
Beit Hanina	11	7	37	48	3	9
Beit Safafa	0	2	0	0	0	1
Jabal Al-Mukaber	7	14	13	22	2	8
Shu'fat	16	20	14	20	0	6
Silwan	8	10	14	24	7	8
Sur Baher	2	2	4	8	1	1
Anata	3	1	6	5	0	3
Abu Gosh	2	0	5	4	0	1
Al-Tur	1	0	2	3	0	1
Hizma	1	7	0	0	0	1
Total	57	84	110	143	14	44



A picture of a demolition carried out by the Israeli occupation authorities for a building in al-Issawiya 7/11/2018

From the previous table, we see that the most targeted Jerusalem areas were Shu'fat, Silwan, Issawiya and Beit Hanina. . The demolitions resulted in the demolition of 6 apartments, 21 non-residential establishments, leaving 24 people homeless, including 7 children. The largest demolition in Al-Issawiya was the demolition of a building owned by J.A by the occupation bulldozers. The owner of the house was in a state of fainting and she was taken by ambulance for treatment. Also the Journalist Wa'el al-Salaymah was also wounded by a rubber bullet in the leg during his monitoring of the demolition. The building consists of 3 floors, the first floor contains commercial shops, and the other two floors consisting of 4 apartments were completely demolished, resulting in the displacement of 17 people, including 7 children.

In the Shu'fat area, the Israeli forces demolished 16 apartments and 20 non-residential structures, where this demolition resulted in displacement of 34 people, mostly children. The Israeli forces demolished full housing in the Shu'fat refugee camp, where 12 housing units were completely demolished, displacing the entire population and leaving them homeless. The Israeli forces demolished 19 shops in the Shu'fat refugee camp, including the demolition of 3 gas stations and 16 shops. The police and border guards stormed the camp, closed the road and allowed for shop owners only 10 hours to empty their shops. Then they begun the demolition, resulting in material losses estimated at hundreds of thousands of shekels.



photograph of Palestinian families demolishing their own house before it was owned by the settlers in Beit Hanina, 19/7/2018

As for the area of Beit Hanina, it was not easy for the families of Abu Rmeileh and Shawamra to demolish their four houses. But it came after a long conflict with the courts of the occupation which decided to grant the land to the settlers claiming their ownership. Thus, demolishing their houses is easier rather than see Israeli Settlers take over their houses. Members of the Shawamra and Abu Rmeileh families all stood watching bulldozers demolish their houses in Beit Hanina, north of Jerusalem. These houses have embraced them for 17 years and despite the difficulty of demolition, they were proud of not handing them over to the settlers. They set up two tents a few meters from the rubble of the demolished houses to be their new address after they were displaced and left homeless. The two families said: "we will stay in these tents near the destroyed houses near the trees we planted and nurtured for years ago, there is no other shelter for us. In recent weeks, we have emptied all the contents of the houses and put furniture in the homes of our relatives and neighbors to carry out the demolition.

They explained that the settler "Arieh King" claimed in 2006 ownership of the land on which their homes were built and informed them orally. Soon after, he handed them a paper from his lawyer to claim the land and pay a rent to use it. The court then decided to close the case to prove ownership of the land to the Palestinians living in the house. About two years later, the settler returned a case of eviction but the Magistrate's Court closed the file. In 2013, the settler appealed to the Central Court and highlighted documents of a patrol agency and a taboo stating that the settlers owned the land. The court then approved the ownership of the land for the settlers and the Supreme Court's decision to eviction land.

The two families added that the Israeli Supreme Court decided that the land should be handed over to the settlers and given them until August 1st to evacuate the houses, but the families informed the court judges that they would demolish the two houses rather than turning them into a settlement outpost despite the financial temptations offered to them to keep the four houses. The area of the land, claimed by the settler "Arieh King" ownership, is estimated around 3 dunums. Note that the municipality of the occupation imposed financial violations against Shawamra family worth 120 thousand shekels, and against Abu Rmeileh 75 thousand shekels under the pretext of building without a license.

2. Self-demolitions during 2018.



Self-demolition of a facility in Silwan 27/4/2018

Self-demolitions meaning that the occupation authorities force the Palestinian citizen to demolish his house with his own hand to avoid paying large fines such as the cost of demolition carried out by the occupation forces, which is very expensive. The municipality of Jerusalem gives the citizen a certain period to carry out the demolition. In the year 2018, 14 citizens carried out self-demolitions. Silwan is the area with the most self demolitions. Seven residents of the Silwan area demolished their houses. The occupation authorities do not care about the psychological damage that the owner of the house and all members of the family face. It is like destroying a dream in his hand. The municipality's refusal to provide building permits is forcing the residents to build. If this is not enough for the occupation municipality, it also forces them to destroy their houses with their hands.

Mr. Ramadan said that the Israeli municipality issued a decision to demolition of his car garage about three months ago, on the pretext of building without a permit and he tried to postpone and license the facility to no avail. Israeli police raided the garage a few times and insisted it must be demolished before Sunday April 29, 2018 or else the Ramadan would be forced to pay the municipality a 60,000 shekel demolition fee.