

## Report on the Attacks of the Israeli Occupation Forces and Settlers on the Palestinian Agricultural Sector in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

December \ 2020

The attacks of the occupation forces and settlers during the month of December in the Palestinian territories led to dozens of shooting cases on farmers, fishermen and agricultural lands in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition to the confiscation and eviction of farmers from their lands: this included uprooting and destroying trees and agricultural properties. In this report, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) and its agricultural committees monitored the attacks during December 2020.

The legal, humanitarian, and human rights aspects of this report are constructed on international declarations, conventions, and covenants of human rights, in specific; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Fourth Geneva Convention (GCIV) Related to the Protection of Civilian Person in the Time of War, the Third, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Fourth, International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the fifth, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) and related articles of the Palestinian Basic Law.<sup>1</sup>



Source: UAWC Agricultural Committees December 2020, Occupation forces close the Sakout spring in the Jordan Valley with an iron gate

### A: Peaceful assembly and bodily integrity rights :

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<sup>1</sup> Basic legal articles in relation to peasants' and frames' rights:

- 1- The international definition of the "Peasants" as defined in article 1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), states the following, " a peasant is any person who engages or who seeks to engage alone, or in association with others or as a community, in small-scale agricultural production for subsistence and/or for the market, and who relies significantly, though not necessarily exclusively, on family or household labour and other non-monetized ways of organizing labour, and who has a special dependency on and attachment to the land" (p 4, 2018).
- 2- The protected persons according to paragraph one of article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states" Persons protected by the Convention are those who at a given moment and in any manner whatsoever, find themselves, in case of a conflict or occupation, in the hands of persons a Party to the conflict or Occupying Power of which they are not nationals"(p 8, 1994). It's important to clarify that all of the violation cases in this report are representing violations of article 3 of the UDHR, which states that "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person" (p2, 1948).
- 3- The Palestinian Basic Law: [https://www.elections.ps/Portals/0/pdf/The\\_amended\\_Basic\\_Law\\_of\\_2005\\_EN.pdf](https://www.elections.ps/Portals/0/pdf/The_amended_Basic_Law_of_2005_EN.pdf)

Similar cases of Israeli violations are recurring in Palestinian cities, villages, towns and camp, in explicit violation to human rights principles in general and peasants' rights in particular. All the following violations in this section are in a clear violation to the Right to Life - which is an integral part of most human rights and international law conventions and declarations. The first paragraph of article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states that "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life" (p4,1966). Threatening Palestinian peasants and civilians right to life is violating article 6 of the UNDROP, which states "Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person" (p7, 2018). Palestinian peasants are suffering from violations to their right to Peaceful assembly and bodily integrity; they can't practice their right of peaceful activities to protect their rights to sovereignty over land and natural resources. On the other hand, Israeli occupying forces are violating article 21 of the Palestinian Basic Law, which emphasizes the rights of freedom of movement and residence; which also means that the Israeli occupying forces are violating article 64 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which stipulates that the occupying power must adhere to the partial legislation of the land it occupies. Furthermore, attacking peaceful activities of farmers is violating Article 21 of the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights, as the article states that "The right to peaceful assembly is recognized. It is not permissible to place any restrictions upon exercising this right except those that are broken in accordance with the law.

Furthermore, all the following violations are violating article 8 of the UNDROP emphasizes peasant's right to peaceful assembly by saying: "Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right, individually and/or collectively, in association with others or as a community, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (p7, 2018). The Israeli occupation continues its brutal attacks on peasants and their children, this month the occupation forces killed an 11 years old Palestinian child who was participating in a peaceful assembly against land confiscation.



Martyr Ali Abu Alia "Number 13"

#### A-1: Offenses of shooting and physical assaults:

- 1- On December 4, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces killed a Palestinian 14 year's old child, Ali Ayman Nasr Abu Alia and wounded other 4 civilians, during the suppression of a peaceful march towards the lands threatened with confiscation and against the establishment of a new illegal settlement in Ras al-Tin, near the eastern entrance of Mughayir village.
- 2- On December 4, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces injured a number of citizens in Al Ras village in Salfit governorate during the suppression of a peaceful demonstration against land confiscation in favor of a new settlement projects.
- 3- On December 10, 2020, the occupation forces injured 9 civilians during a peaceful demonstration against land confiscation and construction of a settlement outpost in Al Mughayer village in Ramallah governorate.
- 4- On December 18, 2020, a number of civilians suffered of suffocation when the occupation forces suppressed a peaceful demonstration against land confiscation in Beit Dajan village in Nablus governorate.
- 5- On December 18, 2020, dozens citizens suffered from suffocation as a result to the occupation forces' suppression of a peaceful demonstration against lands confiscation, and the establishment of a settlement outpost in the village of Mughayer in Ramallah governorate.
- 6- On December 25, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces injured 3 civilians, and caused suffocation cases. This was due to the suppression of a peaceful demonstration against lands confiscation and against the establishment of a settlement outpost on the lands of the villages of Kufur Malek and Deir Jarir in the Ramallah governorate.

#### A-2: Assaults on fishermen and agricultural lands in Gaza:

- 1- On, December 1, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces, opened fire at the border area of Beit Hanoun in Gaza Strip, which led to panic among shepherds and farmers working in the fields, no injuries were reported.
- 2- On December 1, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces stationed on the border strip between Khan Yunis and Israel, Shots were fired at agricultural lands and bird hunters, no injuries were reported.
- 3- On December 1, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces pursued the Palestinian fishermen boats, which were located at a distance of about 3 nautical miles, the Israeli gunboats stationed at sea off Al-Waha in Beit Lahia in Gaza Strip. Israeli gunboats firs opened extensively around fishermen. This caused fear and panic among fishermen who were forced to flee, but no injuries were reported.
- 4- On December 3, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces pursued Palestinian fishermen's boats, which were located at a distance of about 3 nautical miles, through Israeli gunboats stationed at the sea opposite the Al-Waha area in the in Gaza Strip. Israeli gunboats firs opened extensively around fishermen. This caused fear and panic among fishermen who were forced to flee, but no injuries were reported.

- 5- On December 4, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces stationed inside Beit Hanoun crossing "Erez" opened fire at the border area spreading fear and panic among farmers near their agricultural lands, no injuries were reported.
- 6- On December 4, 2020. The Israeli occupation's gunboats at sea off Sudania area in the northern Gaza Strip, pursued Palestinian fishermen's boats, which were located 4 nautical miles away. Israeli gunboats fire was opened extensively around Palestinian fishermen's boats, this caused fear and panic among the fishermen, who were forced to flee, but no injuries were reported.
- 7- On December 5, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces chased Palestinian fishermen's boats, which were located at a distance of about 3 nautical miles. Israeli's gunboats stationed at sea in front of the Al-Waha area, northwest of Beit Lahiya, north of the Gaza Strip. Israeli gunboats fire opened intermittently around fishermen, this caused fear and panic among the fishermen, who were forced to flee, but no injuries were reported.
- 8- On December 6, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces stationed to the east of Khan Yunis, opened fire agricultural lands east of Khuza'a without reporting any casualties.
- 9- On December 12, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces chased Palestinian fishermen's boats which were at about 3 nautical miles' distance, where gunboats stationed at the sea of Al-Waha area- in Beit Lahiya, opened its fire causing panic among the fishermen, who were forced to flee, no injuries were reported.
- 10- On December, 2020. The Israeli occupation soldiers stationed inside the border strip with Israel, east of Khan Yunis, fired shots at agricultural land east of Al-Fokhari town, no injuries were reported.
- 11- On December 13, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces, stationed in Site 16, in Beit Hanoun opened fire with their machine guns at a group of shepherds. This caused fear and panic forcing them to flee the area, no injuries or damages were reported.
- 12- On December 17, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces, stationed at the border of Khan Yunis, fired shots at a group of journalists, farmers and a crew from the Ministry of Agriculture who were in the village of Al-Fakhari following up on the incursion of the Israeli occupation forces, to document the warnings that was placed for farmers in the area . The agriculture Ministry crew and the farmers as a result of the shooting were forced to withdraw from the area, no injuries were reported.
- 13- On December 14, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces stationed inside the border strip northeast of Deir El-Balah, in the Central Governorate, opened fire with their machine guns and tear gas at the shepherds in the adjacent area, no Injuries were reported.
- 14- On December 21, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces pursued the Palestinian fishermen boats, which were at a distance, through the gunboats stationed at sea opposite the Al-Waha area, northwest of Beit Lahia, in the northern Gaza Strip. It is estimated at about 3 nautical miles, and it opened fire with its machine guns at the density of its surroundings. This operation continued from time to time until about 7:30 in the morning of the same day, which caused fear and panic among the fishermen, who were forced to flee, no injuries were reported.
- 15- On December 22, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces, stationed on the separation fence, east of Abu Safiya area, northeast of Jabalia, in the northern Gaza Strip. They

opened fire with their automatic weapons at the border area adjacent to the borderline, no injuries or damages were reported.

16- On December 25, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces stationed inside the border strip east of Deir Al-Balah in the Central Governorate, they opened fire with their machine guns at the adjacent farmers' lands, and no injuries were reported.

17- On December 26, 2020. Israeli occupation soldiers stationed inside the border strip east of Deir Al-Balah in the Central Governorate, they opened fire with their machine guns at the shepherds in the adjacent lands, forcing them to leave the place, no injuries were reported.

18- On December 28, 2020. The Israeli occupation forces pursued Palestinian fishermen's boats, which were at about 3 nautical miles' distance, through the gunboats stationed at sea off the Al-Waha area, northwest of Beit Lahia, in the northern Gaza Strip. Israeli gunboats opened heavy machine guns' fire in its vicinity. This caused fear and panic among the fishermen, which forced them to flee, with no injuries reported.



Demolition of housing and barracks in the Khalidiya area in Hebron

#### B: Military orders as human rights violation:

This policy of destruction and shoveling of land is violating article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which states” Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or co-operative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations” (p 25, 1994). In addition, destruction policy is depriving Palestinian of their rights of self-determination and economic growth; paragraph three of article 1 from ICESCR states” The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations” (p1,1966). At the same time Israeli occupation is depriving Palestinian from their right of self-determination over their cultivated lands; for instance, Soba area, west of Hebron was subjected to sweep of 9 dunums of 20-year-old almond trees, 7 dunums planted with 20-year-old olive trees, and 3 dunums planted with 10-year-old cactus trees, claiming that these lands classified as Area C. Additionally, such cases are violating paragraph 2 of article 17 of the UDHR that states” No one shall be arbitrarily

deprived of his property” (p 5, 1948). Moreover, these cases of violation are contradicted peasants right of being protected from unlawful displacement; according to paragraph 4 of article 17 of the UNDRP:” Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to be protected against arbitrary and unlawful displacement from their land or place of habitual residence, or from other natural resources used in their activities and necessary for the enjoyment of adequate living conditions. States shall prohibit arbitrary and unlawful forced eviction, the destruction of agricultural areas and the confiscation or expropriation of land and other natural resources, including as a punitive measure or as a means or method of war” (p 12,2018). And a final important point to be raised is that Israeli occupation’s destruction policy is violating article 21 of the Palestinian Basic Law, especially paragraph 2, 3, and 4 that protect freedom of economic development, private property and land ownership.



Demolitions in Khirbet al-Simiya in Hebron Governorate

B-1: Military Orders, Confiscations, and Demolition of Facilities: Including the Uprooting of Trees and the Leveling of Lands:

- 1- On November 30, 2020, the occupation forces demolished a 100 m<sup>3</sup> water well in Halhul city, in the Hebron governorate, for the claim of illegal construction.
- 2- On December 1, 2020, the occupation forces demolished a cave and a tin-roofed room of 8 square meters, for a Palestinian citizen and his six brothers in Yatta city in Hebron governorate, the total property is 20-donum planted with trees and vegetables, the family was using the cave as a warehouse for fertilizers and agricultural tools.
- 3- On December 1, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces demolished three agriculture houses in Sebastia, each house is 20 square meters and destroyed; the fence surrounding one dunum of agricultural land, water tanks and solar lighting units. In addition to destroying plastic shrubs next to the three houses owned by three citizens of Nablus and its villages. The facilities were demolished under the pretext of unlicensed construction.

- 4- On December 2, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces reinforced with several military vehicles, stormed the village of Bireen, in Hebron governorate. The forces arrested a citizen from the village and prevented him from working on his land, under the pretext that the land was “State Property”. The soldiers confiscated a digger; it was transferred to an army camp in “Asfar” settlement, which is built on the village’s lands.
- 5- On December 3, 2020, the occupation forces removed and demolished; two tents in Deir Dabwan village in Ramallah governorate, a 90-square-meter of curtain of stock, a 40-square-meter tent used to store fodder, and 200-square-meter barn. This came under the pretext of unlicensed construction.
- 6- On December 6, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces stormed the Atouf Plain, in Tubas, confiscated two excavators while they were working on reclaiming an agricultural road under the supervision of the village council, the confiscation came under the pretext of illegal work in Area C.
- 7- On December 7, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces uprooted hundreds of olive and grape seedlings in the town of Al-Khader, in Bethlehem Governorate. Al-Khader Municipality reported that the occupation forces uprooted more than 30 olive seedlings. It also bulldozed a 6-donum area of land in the Al-Abbasiya area of the town, which led to the uprooting of 100 olive trees and 50 grape seedlings. It is noteworthy that the occupation forces had previously bulldozed this land twice, in order to force Palestinian farmers to leave their land.
- 8- On December 8, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces with several military vehicles, stormed the Qaboun area – a residence of Bedouin community since twenty years- east of Al-Mughayer village, in Ramallah governorate. The occupation authorities brought workers from Israeli private companies; they dismantled and confiscated a 90-square-meter barn used for raising cattle and sheep. This was under the pretext of unauthorized construction in an area classified as Area C.
- 9- On December 8, 2020. the Israeli occupation forces with several military vehicles stormed into the Al-Qaboun area, northeast of Ramallah Governorate, where a Bedouin community has lived in the area for twenty years. The occupation authorities brought workers from Israeli private companies, disassembled and confiscated barracks made of iron. These barracks used for raising livestock and sheep, confiscation was under the pretext of unlicensed construction in an area classified as Area C.
- 10- On December 8, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces with several military vehicles stormed the Shalal al-Auja gathering area in the northern part of the Jericho governorate. These forces besieged the area, brought workers from Israeli private companies who confiscated 7 uninhabited barracks made of iron. One of the barracks used to store the barley and wheat crops for feeding livestock. The bulldozer confiscated the crop materials, this came under the claim of building in areas classified as c.
- 11- On December 8, 2020, The Israeli occupation forces accompanied with vehicle stormed Khirbet al-Simiya, in of Hebron governorate. Soldiers were deployed in the area, and began dismantling a 100-square-meter tin- roofed barracks used for raising livestock.
- 12- On December 9, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces with a military vehicle stormed into Khirbet al-Jawaya, in Hebron governorate, disseminating stop work orders at houses and

barns claiming that they were unlicensed constructions, giving them evacuation notifications until December 30, 2020.

- 13- On December 13, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces with a military vehicle, stormed Khirbet Zanuta, in Hebron governorate. It began distributing (14) stop work orders claiming that housing and barns were unlicensed constructions in an area classified C.
- 14- On December 13, 2020, while peasants were working on their land, the Israeli occupation forces, stormed the Umm al-Qaba area in the northern of Jordan Valley and confiscated a tractor owned by the village council
- 15- On December 15, 2020, the occupation forces stormed Soba area of Hebron governorate; the occupation forces demolished 500 square meters retaining walls, beside bulldozing 9 dunums planted with 20-year-old almond trees, 7 dunums of 20 years old olive trees, 3 dunums of cultivated land with 10 years old cactus trees. The sweeping and demolition operation was claimed to be operating in an area classified as C.
- 16- On December 16, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces with several military vehicles, stormed the village of Zubeidat in the central Jordan Valley, north of Jericho. they confiscated two tractors and suspended citizens from working on their land claiming that the land was “State Property”, the soldiers confiscated two tractors.
- 17- On December 20, 2020, a Palestinian citizen forcibly demolished his own barracks in Silwan in Jerusalem, as result of a decision of demolition from the occupation’s municipality of Jerusalem for the claim of illegal construction, and due to municipality’s decision to forbid raising animals near human residents.
- 18- On December 20, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces stormed Khirbet al-Simiya, in Hebron governorate, soldiers were deployed in the area, and vehicles began demolishing barracks and a water well.
- 19- On December 21, 2020, the occupation forces closed the Sakout spring in the Jordan Valley with gates.
- 20- On December 22, 2020, an Israeli occupation army with a military vehicle stormed Khirbet Zanuta, east of the town of Dhahriya in Hebron governorate. Soldiers were deployed at the entrance to the town, they confiscated hand digging equipment, a generator, and a vehicle, in addition to placing a stop work order.
- 21- On December 27, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces stormed the West Valley area of Khallat al-Tal, in Jenin, placing a stop work notice under the pretext of illegal construction in Area C.
- 22- On December 29, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces stormed al-Hafira area in the Silat al-Harithiya in Jenin governorate, notifying an agricultural engineer from the aforementioned town to demolish his greenhouse- planted with squash crops, with an area of 250 square meters- under the pretext of archaeological area and land that is located in Area C.
- 23- On December 30, 2020, the Israeli occupation forces uprooted hundreds of olive trees and bulldozed large lands in the village of Al-Jab'a in Bethlehem governorate.

### C: Settlers' attacks as human rights violation:

Such attacks represent a violation of the International Environmental Law (IEL), which is a branch of public international law. According to the United Nations IEL “is a foundation for environmental sustainability and the full realization of its objectives is ever more urgent vis-à-vis growing environmental pressures. Violations of environmental law undermine the achievement of all dimensions of sustainable development and environmental sustainability”. Besides that, settler’s attacks violate article 12 of the UDHR that states” No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, or attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks” (p4, 1948) Furthermore, cutting the olives trees deprives peasants of sustainable enjoyment of their lands and trees, which are natural resources; this means violating paragraph 1 of article 19 of the UNDROP, and it states” (d) The right to save, use, exchange and sell their farm-saved seed or propagating material” (p13,2018). All of these inhuman actions are threatening the environment. the following documented violations reflects settler’s violations not only to the above mentioned laws but also to article 33 of the Palestinian Basic Law that states” the cleaned and balanced environment is a human right. Environment protection for the current and the future generations is a national responsibility” (p 9,2003).



Confiscation of agricultural tractors in the Jordan Valley.

### C-1: Settlers' attacks on farmers: uprooting trees, attacking farmers and their properties:

- 1- On November 27, 2020, a group of settlers from “Shilo” settlement -which is established on the lands of Turmus Aya village in Ramallah governorate – attacked the lands of the Palestinian farmers of Turmus Aya, they have assaulted farmers and their properties, uprooted about 150 grape trees -aged 1 to 3 years- destroyed 3 health facilities, and cut down the branches of five olive trees about five years old.
- 2- On November 29, 2020, settlers began establishing a new outpost in the areas of Al-Ras and Al-Mahajar and began to destroy the land starting with razing 50 dunums of the western area of the city of Salfit ending with shoveling about 2000 dunums, the purpose of this damage is to establish for a new settlement outpost that will connect all the settlement in the entire area, which is the industrial zone of "Ariel" settlement and "Ariel residential" area, and between "Taffuh and Ariel settlement". Additionally, work is currently underway

to connect the settlement blocs to each other from the city of Kufur Qasim, to the Zaatarah area, east of the city of Salfit. The settlers installed caravans and established sheep farms in the parts that were bulldozed and razed.

- 3- On December 3, 2020, a group of settlers from Tafouh settlement, which is built on a part of the village of Yasouf, east of Salfit uprooted 42 olive trees, in the eastern Karm area in Yasuf village.
- 4- On December 5, 2020, a group of settlers from Rahalim settlement, which is built on a part of the lands of Yasuf village in Salfit governorate, the settlers uprooted 38 olive trees in the al-Mahwar area, using a hand saw.
- 5- On December 7, 2020, a group of settlers from Rafafa settlement, which is built on part of the lands of Haris village in Salfit governorate, uprooted 10 olive and fig trees, in the area of Khallet Abu Al-Ela.
- 6- On December 11, 2020, a group of settlers built a hut made of bricks and wood, on the citizens' lands, located in the Baqaa area, east of Hebron, and near the "Kiryat Arba" settlement built on confiscated citizens' lands east of Hebron. The settlers' attacks came in an attempt to control the lands of the citizens of the Jaber family in the hill opposite "Kiryat Arba" settlement, where Palestinian citizens are prohibited from rehabilitating these lands on the pretext that it is an area classified as Area C.
- 7- On December 13, 2020, a group of settlers from "Kiryat Arba" settlement, east of Hebron, tried to attack the homes of citizens in the Al-Adaisah area. Citizens were on the land near their homes. In an attempt to control the lands there, and they insulted the residents and threatened them with burning their homes.
- 8- On December 17, 2020, Israeli settlers uprooted 250 trees, in the village of Kisan, east of Bethlehem. It is noteworthy that the recent escalating attacks by settlers aim to seize the lands of the citizens of Kisan, with the aim of annexing it to their settlement.
- 9- On December 17, 2020, a group of settlers infiltrated from "Adi Ad" settlement, which is built on the lands of Al Mughayir village in Ramallah governorate, uprooted about 30 olive tree seedlings, ages 5 to 6, owned by a Palestinian citizen.
- 10- On December 20, 2020, a group of settlers, who called themselves "paying the price" groups, attacked from the "Ahyaah" settlement outpost the lands of Jaloud village, southeast of Nablus, they uprooted 50 olive seedlings that were planted days ago in the eastern region of the village.
- 11- On December 24, 2020, a group of settlers from the settlement outpost of "Hafat Ma'on," -built on the confiscated lands of Tawana in Hebron governorate- uprooted 34 olive seedlings of 5-years old and stole them from the land of Al-Harini family in the Al-Khillah area, which is about 100 meters from the aforementioned outpost.

End of accumulative violations report, December 2020

UAWC

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