

occupied Palestinian territory: Israeli Settler Violence in the West Bank Fact Sheet, November 2011

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FAST FACTS

- The weekly average of settler attacks resulting in Palestinian casualties and property damage has increased by 40% in 2011 compared to 2010, and by over 165% compared to 2009.
- In 2011, three Palestinians have been killed and 167 injured by Israeli settlers. In addition, one Palestinian has been killed, and 101 others injured, by Israeli soldiers during clashes between Israeli settlers and Palestinians.
- Eight Israeli settlers have been killed and 30 others injured by Palestinians in 2011, compared to five killed and 43 injured, during the same period in 2010.
- In 2011, nearly 10,000 Palestinian-owned trees, primarily olive trees, have been damaged or destroyed by Israeli settlers, significantly undermining the livelihoods of hundreds of families.
- In July 2011, a community of 127 people was displaced en masse due to repeated settler attacks, with some affected families re-locating to Areas A and B.
- Over 90% of monitored complaints regarding settler violence filed by Palestinians with the Israeli police in recent years have been closed without indictment.
- OCHA has identified over 80 communities with a combined population of nearly 250,000 Palestinians vulnerable to settler violence, including 76,000 who are at high-risk.

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs:

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ISRAELI SETTLER VIOLENCE IN THE WEST BANK

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- 1. Violence by Israeli settlers undermines the physical security and livelihoods of Palestinians living under Israel's prolonged military occupation.** This violence includes physical assaults, harassment, takeover of and damage to private property, obstructed access to grazing and agricultural land, and attacks on livestock and agricultural land, among others.
- 2. In recent years, many attacks have been carried out by settlers living in settlement "outposts," small satellite settlements built without official authorization, many on privately-owned Palestinian land.** Since 2008, settlers have attacked Palestinians and their property as a means of discouraging the Israeli authorities from dismantling these outposts (the so-called "price tag" strategy).
- 3. The root cause of the settler violence phenomenon is Israel's decades-long policy of illegally facilitating the settling of its citizens inside occupied Palestinian territory.** This activity has resulted in the progressive takeover of Palestinian land, resources and transportation routes and has created two separate systems of rights and privileges, favoring Israeli citizens at the expense of the over 2.5 million Palestinian residents of the West Bank. **Recent official efforts to retroactively legalize settler takeover of privately-owned Palestinian land actively promotes a culture of impunity that contributes to continued violence.**
- 4. The Israeli authorities repeatedly fail to enforce the rule of law in response to Israeli settlers' acts of violence against Palestinians.** Israeli forces often fail to stop attacks and follow-up afterwards is inadequate or poorly conducted. Measures of the current system, including requiring Palestinians to file complaints at police stations located inside Israeli settlements, actively work against the rule of law by discouraging Palestinians from filling complaints.
- 5. The risk of displacement of vulnerable families as a result of settler violence is an issue of increasing concern.** Settler violence creates pressure and constant hardship on some Palestinian communities, particularly when combined with other difficulties, such as access and movement restrictions and house demolitions. Displacement has serious immediate and longer-term physical, socio-economic and emotional impacts on Palestinian families and communities.
- 6. Under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, Israel is obligated to prevent attacks against civilians or their property and ensure that all incidents of settler violence are investigated in a thorough, impartial and independent manner.**

