

Januray – June 2012 **Field Report**

Monitoring and Documentation Department



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*Palestinians and Israelis demonstrate in solidarity with the hunger-striking
Palestinian prisoners in Jaffa - May 2012, OrenZiv/Activestills©*

General Statistics

West Bank

Killings: According to Al-Haq documentation, since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000 until the end of June 2012, **1,941** Palestinians were killed in the West Bank, of whom **380** were children and **106** female. It is estimated that **313** Palestinians were killed in targeted assassinations.

House demolitions: During the same period, Al-Haq documented a total of **587** punitive house demolitions in the West Bank (**511** completely demolished, **70** partially demolished and six completely sealed), leading to the displacement of **3,372** people. Israel has also carried out a large number of house demolitions based on claims that the houses were built without the required permits (administrative house demolition). Since 2004, the Israeli authorities have demolished **1,255** houses due to the lack of a building permit; of which **353** were in East Jerusalem, leading to the displacement of **4,042** people.

The Gaza Strip

Killings: According to Al-Haq documentation, between January 2009 and the end of June 2012, **250¹** Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip by Israeli occupying forces (**133** in Gaza City, **36** in Khan Younes, **37** in Deir al-Balah and **44** in Rafah), of whom **32** were children and **five** were female. Of the **250** Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip, it is estimated that **21** were killed in targeted assassinations. During the same period, a total of 18 Palestinians (14 in Gaza, one in Khan Younes, two in Deir al-Balah and one in Rafah) were killed by Hamas government officials in the Gaza Strip, of whom three were female.

¹ Excluding Palestinians killed during 'Operation Cast Lead.'

Highlighted Trend

Human Rights Violations of Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Custody

Throughout the reporting period, Palestinian prisoners have increasingly protested against Israeli violations of their human rights. As of 1 June 2012, 4,659 Palestinian prisoners were being held in Israeli custody, including 303 administrative detainees held without formal charge or trial. The administrative detainees are held for periods of up to six months, and in some cases the detention has been renewed indefinitely by Israel. Over the past few years, Israel has held thousands of Palestinian prisoners in administrative detention (internment). The longest known administrative detention term was the case of Mazen Jamal Natsha held in administrative detention for four years, between 2005 and 2009. These detainees are held on the basis of 'secret evidence' that is not made available to them or their lawyers, thus undermining their ability to effectively challenge the detention order. Israel uses this form of detention in a widespread and systematic manner, in contravention of human rights norms and of the provisions of international humanitarian law that regulate internment.

The misuse of administrative detention has been a major cause of protest by Palestinian prisoners, but other factors including the dire conditions in the prisons and the punitive measures employed by the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) have also sparked protests. Israel's policy of collective punishment and the punitive measures, which were either introduced or intensified following the capture of Gilad Shalit in 2006 – and which continue despite his release, are another cause for protest. Such measures include the total denial of family visits to prisoners from the Gaza Strip and limited family visitations for other Palestinian prisoners; restriction on higher education for all prisoners; the excessive, abusive and unlawful employment of solitary confinement and prolonged isolation; and the forceful strip search of prisoners and their visitors. On 17 April, 1,600 prisoners from different Palestinian political factions began an **open-ended hunger strike** protesting Israeli violations. As of 15 May, the number of prisoners on hunger strikes increased to approximately 2,500 prisoners.

On 14 and 15 May, an agreement was reached between the Palestinian detainees and IPS, ultimately resulting in the end of a large number of hunger strikes. The agreement promised to allow family visits to prisoners from the Gaza Strip within one month of the end of the hunger strike and to remove restrictions for family visitors from the West Bank. According to the agreement, Israel was to end the use of long-term solitary confinement for 'security' reasons for 19 prisoners; abolish punitive measures such as night raids and restrictions on access to legal counsel and education; improve conditions of incarceration including medical care; and limit the use of administrative detention as a whole.

Despite this agreement, Israel has not changed its policy of administrative detention, family visits from the Gaza Strip have not been allowed, and punitive policies are still largely employed, including the use of solitary confinement.

On 31 May, Zuheir Rashid Lubbadah (51 years old) died one week after his release from Israeli custody. Although Zuheir was held at al-Ramla Prison medical clinic, **he was denied proper health care** during his nearly five-month long administrative detention, as the IPS decreased prisoners' access to medication as a punitive measure after the mass hunger strike of April. According to doctor Hasan Hussein Hijaz, Zuheir was diagnosed with kidney failure in 1991 and

was more recently diagnosed with Hepatitis C. Zuheir was released from jail on 24 May when his health condition deteriorated. He was admitted to Nablus National Hospital, where he fell into a coma. A few days later, Zuheir passed away. (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 7406/2012](#)).

Akram Abdullah al-Rikhawi (39 years old) is currently on a hunger strike in al-Ramla Prison medical clinic. Akram, who was born in Rafah in the Gaza Strip and suffers from a chronic respiratory illness, is serving an eight-year prison sentence. He started his hunger strike on 12 April, after he was told that his medical condition was not a valid consideration in evaluating his request for an early release from prison. Akram's protest is also against the medical negligence that he experienced in Israeli prisons, which has caused his health to deteriorate. In a sworn statement, Akram's nephew, Yousef Marwan al-Rikhawi (28 years old) stated that, despite their concerns and eagerness to visit his uncle, his family had been unable to visit him since June 2006.

Since the beginning of his hunger strike, my uncle [Akram] lost 20 kilograms. His weight dropped from 68 to 48 kilograms. My uncle also suffered from serious complications in his health, including a swollen body, weaker immune system, and an optic atrophy. During the period of his detention, my uncle also had a surgical operation to remove white water in his left eye. In addition to problems in his kidneys, my uncle suffered from diabetes and high cholesterol levels. On 5 June 2012, the [Israeli] Court of Appeal convened to examine the decision entered by the "Court of One Third" (a court that examines prisoners' cases after they serve one third of their sentences) and decided to postpone adjudication of my uncle's case until it obtained approval of the Israeli Intelligence agency. As a result of the court's decision, my uncle decided to refrain from drinking water and taking medication. He is still on hunger strike. His health condition is deteriorating day by day. I would like to note that we have not been able to visit my uncle since June 2006. After members of the Palestinian resistance detained the Israeli soldier Gil'ad Shalit, Israel has not allowed families from the Gaza Strip to visit their relatives in Israeli jails. Furthermore, the Israeli authorities do not allow us to contact my uncle by telephone.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7556/2012](#). Given by Yousef Marwan al-Rikhawi, a resident of Rafah, Rafah governorate, Gaza Strip.

The case of Mahmoud Kamel Sarsak (25 years old) shows the debilitating effect of the hunger strike on a healthy and young athlete. Mahmoud is from Rafah and is a professional football player, who has been placed in an Israeli prison under administrative detention since 22 July 2009. On 19 March he began a hunger strike against his ongoing detention without charge under Israel's Unlawful Combatants Law. This law violates the standards upheld by international law, and allows for arbitrary detention of persons from the Gaza Strip for unlimited periods, while providing no avenues for a fair trial. According to Mahmoud's mother, Khaldiyyah Ahmad Sarsak (64 years old), Mahmoud demands immediate release, as no charges have been brought against him. On 30 June, Mahmoud entered the 103rd day of his hunger strike.

On 31 May 2012, the Addameer lawyer visited my son. Advocate Jabarin, who was in touch with the Addameer lawyer, told us that my son was still on hunger strike and that his health was deteriorating further. He also said that Mahmoud suffered from daily fainting spells, severe weakness in the heart muscle, intestinal problems, blood disorders, and deteriorating vision and hearing. He also lost 30 kilograms. His weight fell from 70 to 40 kilograms. Mahmoud rejected a verbal offer from the Israeli Prisons Authority to release him. He wanted a written document on his release from the Prisons Authority. My son is still on his open-ended hunger strike. Since he declared hunger strike, I have been worried for his life. We have submitted many appeals to media outlets as well as to the ICRC and all international human rights organisations. I still appeal to all competent bodies to intervene immediately and place pressure on the Israeli occupying authority to release my son and save his life.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7557/2012](#). Given by Khaldiyyah Ahmad Sarsak, a resident of Rafah, Rafah governorate, Gaza Strip.



Women protest in solidarity with Mahmoud Kamel Sarsak - June 2012, Oren Ziv/Activestills©

According to Khaldiyyah, Mahmoud was offered a deal for his release on 1 July but he refused when the Israeli authority failed to provide a written agreement.

Khader 'Adnan Khader (33 years old), another prisoner who had gone on a prolonged hunger strike, was eventually released due to international pressure. Khader began his hunger strike on 17 December 2011, in protest against his administrative detention and ill-treatment at the hands of the IPS. According to Khader's wife, Randa Jihad Mousa (33 years old), Israeli soldiers **arbitrarily arrested** Khader on 17 December and since then he has refused to take in any food or water. During his court hearing, 12 days after his arrest, Randa heard her husband speaking to the military judge.

My husband reported to the judge that he had been beaten, insulted and subjected to harsh interrogation at the al-Jalama Prison. Soldiers deliberately uttered blasphemous expressions about God and the Prophet Muhammad. My husband also told the judge, who was in the military uniform, that he refrained from eating and drinking since he had been arrested. He stated that he was subjected to Shabeh (Shabeh is a method of torture in which the subject is blindfolded and the body placed in awkward positions for prolonged periods) every day. With his hands and feet in shackles, he was forced to sit on a chair and had his body bent over for a period of seven hours. He would be allowed rest for one hour only, and then be subjected to Shabeh again. Meantime, he was threatened and subjected to psychological torture to force him to make confessions. My husband also said that soldiers uttered obscene expressions about his wife and daughters. He said that Israeli interrogators ripped hair from his beard, causing him severe pain.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7136/2012](#). Given by Randa Jihad Mousa, a resident of Jenin City, Jenin governorate, West Bank.

After 60 days of his hunger strike had passed, Khader's case raised concerns among the international community, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk. He was eventually released on 21 February upon signing an agreement with Israel.

Hana Ya'hya Shalabi (30 years old) also ended her hunger strike after the Israeli authorities consented to her conditional release. On 29 March she agreed with them to relocate to the Gaza Strip in exchange for her release. She had been on a 42-day-long hunger strike in protest against her administrative detention.

The Occupying Power

West Bank

Violations by the Occupying Power in the West Bank during the reporting period included killings, the excessive use of force, restrictions on the freedom of movement, demolitions and home raids. These incidences are a familiar occurrence for Palestinians, who have been subjected to such recurring violations over many years, as noted also in previous Monitoring and Documentation reports by [Al-Haq](#).



Location where the Shawakha brothers were shot, Rammoun – 27 March, Al-Haq©

One of the most serious incidents during this reporting period took place in the early hours of 27 March, when Rashad Theeb Shawakha (28 years old) was **killed** by live fire from the Israeli military. His two brothers, Anwar Theeb Shawakha (38 years old) and Akram Theeb Shawakha (36 years old), were also **severely injured** during the shooting. The brothers saw two men loitering near their house and when they left their house to check if the men were thieves, they were **shot** multiple times by Israeli soldiers and agents in disguise. The Israeli army transferred the brothers to a hospital in Jerusalem after a delay of several hours. Rashad died a few days later due to the severity of his wounds ([see Al-Haq weekly focus on Shawakha case](#)).

Another incident of soldier brutality by the security forces took place on 2 February, when Israeli border police **physically assaulted** ten-year-old Karim 'Awad Zalloum as he was walking back from school on his way to his house in Al-Ghrous Valley, east of Hebron. The border police were positioned, as usual, in a cabin located nearby his house.

Following the incident, Karim's father, 'Awad, went back with his son to speak with the border police officers and demanded to see the officer in charge. The officer gave 'Awad only the name of the border police officer who assaulted Karim – called *Shay*.

I was on my way back from school together with my cousins Ahmad Fayez Zalloum (ten years old) and Jamil 'Umar Zalloum (12 years old). I reached the border police's cabin at around 1:30 pm. After my cousins passed the cabin, two border police officers, who were standing nearby, blocked my way. One of them kicked me on my left leg and punched me in the face twice. I felt dizzy, fell to the ground, threw up, and started to cry. The other border police officer stopped in front of me and held me so that his colleague could beat me. The police officer who beat me had blonde hair and a light beard. He was of strong build and in his early twenties. The other border police officer, who blocked my way, was a little fat, almost as tall as his colleague, about the same age. He was of a white complexion and had black hair. After I had fallen to the ground, the border police officers left me. My cousin Ahmed came and helped me stand on my feet and walk to my home. When I reached my home, I threw up once again. My leg and head hurt.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No.7265/2012](#). Given by Karim 'Awad Zalloum, a resident of Hebron City, Hebron governorate, West Bank.

Karim and his father filed a complaint at the police station near Kiryat Arba'a settlement. No further action has been taken and no response has been received from the police station.

On 13 March 2012, another case of **physical assault** took place when Israeli soldiers **raided** the Masalha family's apartment building in Hajja village near Qalqilya, in order to arbitrarily arrest Usama Ma'zouz Masalha (39 years old). At around 1:00 am, Usama's sister, Sababa (33 years old) was surprised to see ten Israeli military jeeps surrounding the building. The soldiers raided Usama's apartment and immediately handcuffed and blindfolded him before taking him to a military jeep outside the building. Sababa was then informed by an officer that the house was going to be searched. The soldiers, some of whom were masked, also had two dogs with them. One of the dogs attacked Usama's brother (27 years old), who responded by kicking the dog back, but was then **beaten** all over his body and head by approximately 20 soldiers with rifles. Muhammad was left bleeding from his forehead and was then handcuffed and blindfolded while still lying on the floor. The officer denied Sababa's request to bandage Muhammad's injury and provide him with first aid. Sababa was also physically attacked when she yelled at the soldiers in an attempt to stop them beating Muhammad. The soldiers released sound bombs and gas canisters in the house and one soldier fired seven live gunshots in the air to stop the family members from helping Muhammad. Usama's brothers Rasem (37 years old) and Sa'ed (30 years old) were also blindfolded and arrested. Khader (22 years old) was filming the assault, and was arrested as well. His phone with the recording was confiscated. Afterwards, approximately 50 soldiers with two dogs **raided** the rest of the building. The soldiers thoroughly searched the building and Usama's apartment, breaking the furniture in the process. They also threw clothes around and broke kitchen appliances and other supplies. Throughout the raid, the women and children of the apartment building (27 people; six women and 21 children) were held in a 16 square metre room on the second floor. The raid continued for nearly three hours and at around 3:40 am, the military jeeps and patrol vehicles withdrew from the scene. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7207/2012](#)).

On another occasion, on 2 April at around 12:12 pm, Israeli police officers **raided** the launch ceremony of Huna Al-Quds Network for Community Media in East Jerusalem. The ceremony was planned by Al-Quds University and was to be broadcast via Skype to Huna Al-Quds's Ramallah office, since many of their colleagues in Ramallah are unable to visit Jerusalem due to their West Bank IDs. After a week of preparations, with three minutes until the start of the ceremony and an audience of 40 people, approximately 20 Israeli police forcibly entered the hall and pushed the people at the door aside, while ten border police officers lined the entrance to the hall. According to Rasha 'Umar Barakat (29 years old), the police were armed and wearing civilian clothing, which created a lot of confusion. The security guard at the Network's office, Muhannad Izhiman, inquired about the identity of the police in disguise, but they attacked him and confiscated his ID. The police did not provide any search warrant or other documents. One policeman banned photographers from taking photos and videos of the ongoing events and also from using their phones. A policeman then examined the attendance list and the brochures and folders on display.

The police took the IDs of 20 attendees who were inside the hall, and demanded their mobile phone numbers. The transcript of Rasha's speech, which was on the podium, noted that the event was sponsored by the Palestinian Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad, and that the Governor of Jerusalem was to speak on his behalf. The transcript was confiscated by a policeman. 'Adel Rwaished, Managing Director of Al-Quds University, tried to explain that the event and network are not associated with the Palestinian Authority but with Al-Quds University, but his attempts were futile. Twenty minutes later, an Israeli police officer ordered everyone to leave the hall. The guests were given their IDs back at the door, after police had taken down their information.

Afterwards, the Israeli police put up a Cancellation Order in Hebrew and Arabic at the entrance to the network's office. The order claimed that the event was sponsored by the Palestinian Authority and it involved communication and wireless connections between Jerusalem and the West Bank. The order was signed by Israel's Interior Security Minister, Yitzchak Aharonovich, but Rasha notes that this order was not presented until 20 minutes into the raid. According to the order, the event was to be shut down and the office was to be closed for that day. Afterwards, the police arrested 'Adel and Muhannad (the security guards at the office) for interrogation. Muhannad was released around an hour later whereas 'Adel went through nine hours of questioning and interrogation. The ceremony took place the following day, after consulting the university's lawyer, Muhammad Dahla. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7260/2012](#)).

Violations of the **rights to freedom of association and expression**, such as those documented in the aforementioned incident, are among the many reoccurring human rights abuses suffered by Palestinians living in occupied East Jerusalem. The **denial of freedom of movement** is yet another reoccurring violation. On 4 March at around 9:40 am, Israeli soldiers refused to allow Ahmad Mustafa Laban (33 years old) to cross Qalandiya checkpoint because he was carrying a trash bag with him. Ahmad is a resident of Kufr 'Aqab (Jerusalem governorate) but works in another area in East Jerusalem, on the Western side of Qalandiya checkpoint. He was on his way to work with his wife and son, and had taken a trash bag to dump on the other side. Kufr 'Aqab, according to Ahmad, has garbage bins that are never emptied and are surrounded by scattered trash bags. Ahmad was finally allowed to cross Qalandiya after the Israeli police and soldiers agreed that Ahmad should return to Kufr 'Aqab on foot, throw the trash bag away and return to his car to cross the checkpoint. Ahmad explained that the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality has a responsibility to maintain a clean environment and carry out efficient disposal of waste in the Jerusalem area of Kufr 'Aqab but consistently fails to do so. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7278/2012](#)).

Another violation of the freedom of movement took place on 17 May when the Israeli authority renewed a **travel ban** against 'Amer Hussein al-Mahariq (25 years old), who had been refused permission to travel by the Israeli authorities since 20 July 2010. Since 2012, 'Amer had been requesting permission to travel from the Israeli District Coordination Office but to no avail. 'Amer is still unable to travel.

On 15 February 2012, I tried to cross the Allenby Bridge in order to travel abroad, but I was banned from travelling once again. I was directed to report to the Israeli Intelligence agency in Gosh Etzion. On 27 February 2012, an officer called Nir interviewed me. During the interview, he proposed that I may travel only if I agree to be deported from my homeland for a period of three years but I refused. He then offered that I be deported for a period of six months, but I rejected this proposal as well. To allow me to travel, officer Nir demanded that I reveal my position in the Hamas movement. I denied that I had any affiliation with Hamas. I told him that if he has a certain charge against me, then he should file a case and deal with me through the judiciary. I meant that he could arrest and bring me to court instead of dealing with me in this arbitrary manner. [...] Towards the end of the interview, officer Nir threatened to come to my house and arrest and interview me once more. I stated that I would not agree to be interviewed by him in the manner in which he proposed. On 13 March 2012, I filed another application form based on HaMoked's recommendation. On 17 May 2012, the application was rejected, allegedly for security reasons.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7512/2012](#). Given by 'Amer Hussein al-Mahariq, a resident of Al-Samu' town, Hebron governorate, West Bank.

In one case of destruction of land, on 16 April, Israeli soldiers **levelled** Muhammad 'Afif Ahmad's

land in Kufr al-Dik village (Salfit governorate). Ahmad was awarded funds by the Dutch Representative office in the West Bank to re-cultivate his inherited land a year earlier. He was unaware that Israeli authorities would reprimand him for not acquiring a permit to restore his own land with the help of an international representative. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7509/2012](#)).

Mahmoud Sharif Abdul Razeq (51 years old) also fell victim to Israeli demolitions. On 7 June at around 10:00 am, Israeli forces **demolished** his water-well located in Area B, in Deir Abu D'ief village, east of Jenin. The demolition took place a few hours after Israeli forces demolished five other water-wells around the village. According to Mahmoud, ten military jeeps and two military bulldozers were accompanying a white jeep belonging to the Israeli Civil Administration. When Mahmoud protested against the demolition of his water-well, especially since he was issued no prior warning, he was **physically assaulted** by the soldiers. Mahmoud's water-well was a



The demolished water-well of Mahmoud Abdul Razeq – June 2012, Al-Haq©

source of living for him and his family, providing them with water to irrigate crops in their nearby agricultural land. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7485/2012](#) and [weekly focus on this case](#)).

On 15 March 2012 at midday, seven Israeli military patrol vehicles, three vehicles from the Planning and Construction Department of the Israeli Civil Administration, and an Israeli bulldozer, **demolished** the home of Rafe' Abdul Ghani Bani Jaber (33 years old), along with his sheep shed. The home was located in the small village of al-Tawil (Nablus governorate). Moments prior to the demolition, an Israeli commander informed Rafe' that his home, made up of two tents, was located on a closed military zone, where civilian presence and residence is prohibited. Subsequently, the tents were removed by the Israeli forces and the sheep shed demolished. Rafe' notes that the confiscation and the bulldozing occurred without a formal notice or prior warning. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7213/2012](#)).

In light of the continuing demolitions, many other residents now live in constant fear of losing their homes. At around 10:00 am on 14 February 2012, Israeli police and officers from the Israeli Interior Ministry, in four military cars, raided Assal'a area in Jabal Al-Mukaber in Jerusalem. The officers entered the home of Riyadh Jamil Ju'bas (56 years old), took photographs and inquired about the persons living in the house, without presenting a search warrant. Riyadh fears the imminent demolition of his house, since these measures - photography and questioning, usually precede house demolitions by the Israeli authorities in Jerusalem. If this is the case, the family will have nowhere else to go for shelter. This would be Riyadh's second house demolition, as the Israeli Interior ministry demolished his previous house in 1998 because it had been built without the necessary building permit. When building his current house, Riyadh and his neighbours filed for building permits in an attempt to change the categorisation of the area they live in from green land (where construction is not allowed) to yellow land (where construction is permitted). Seven years later, neither Riyadh nor his neighbours have received a response from the Israeli municipality in Jerusalem. Instead, Riyadh continues to pay off a NIS 48,000 (around USD 12,900) fine imposed by the Israeli Court of Local Affairs in 1999 with monthly payments of NIS 800 (around USD 215), for building his now demolished house without a permit. (See [Al-Haq](#)

[Affidavit No. 7164/2012](#)).

The Israeli repression of peaceful protests has continued throughout the reporting period. On 11 May at around 1:00 pm, an Israeli soldier **shot** Abdul Karim 'Izzat Dar Jabr (20 years old) six times with rubber bullets while he was participating in a peaceful demonstration near the village of 'Aboud (Ramallah governorate). The soldier was standing less than five metres away from Abdul Karim, when he fired at him. Following the shooting, Abdul Karim fell to the ground and was then surrounded by four soldiers, who attempted to arrest him but failed because a group of young men pulled him away quickly. He was transferred to Ramallah Governmental Hospital, where he was treated for his wounds and is currently still recovering. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7506/2012](#)).

Serious human rights violations have also been committed by Israeli settlers, who remain a constant threat to the safety, livelihoods and property of Palestinians in the West Bank. **Settler attacks** are increasingly motivated by the so-called 'Price Tag' policy, whereby violations against Palestinians or their property are carried out in response to actions taken by the Israeli authorities that adversely affect the settler communities in the West Bank.



Armed settlers attacking Palestinians, Nablus governorate – May 2012, Al-Haq©

One such instance of settler attacks occurred in Fara'ta village (Nablus governorate), one kilometre away from 'Hfad Gil'ad' settlement. At around 12:00 pm on 28 February 2012, Israeli settlers **attacked** the home and family of Muhammad 'Awwad al-Tawil (39 years old). Approximately 30 settlers – some masked and others carrying sticks, shovels and sharp objects – made their way to Muhammad's house. They stood a few metres away and started throwing rocks at the house. Muhammad then ran up to the roof and, along with his brother, started throwing the same rocks back at the settlers in an attempt to drive them away. Approximately ten minutes later, Israeli military patrol vehicles arrived at the scene and about

30 Israeli soldiers started **firing gas canisters** and **sound bombs** to disperse a group of Palestinian youths nearby, who had joined in throwing rocks back at the settlers. The Israeli soldiers then raided Muhammad's house and attacked his mother, Tamam Muhammad Al-Tawil, and his aunt, Muna Abdul Rahman Tawil, who had attempted to stop the soldiers from arresting Muhammad. Muhammad, along with his three brothers, Tawfiq (22 years old), Fadi (24 years old) and Shaher (45 years old) were arrested and taken for interrogation. They were questioned about allegations of involvement in a fire set off in 'Hfad Gil'ad' settlement using fireworks. Muhammad was detained until the following day and then released in the afternoon of 29 February 2012. The other three arrestees, however, remained in detention. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7165/2012](#)).

Muhammad Hasan Bazzar is a 68 year old man, and has only one hand. He was therefore totally unable to defend himself when he was attacked by settlers while he was grazing his sheep. At around 4:00 pm on 19 February, Muhammad was **physically assaulted** by a group of five Israeli settlers, between 15 and 20 years of age. Muhammad had been grazing his sheep on the eastern side of Betillo village, one kilometre away from the settlement in the area. The settlers, wearing masks, continued to beat Muhammad all over his body and kick him for half an

hour. One of the settlers then attacked Muhammad with pepper-spray as they were leaving. Muhammad saw the settlers heading towards 'Nihla'il' settlement. With the aid of a walking stick, Muhammad walked to his house, half a kilometre away and was then taken to a hospital by his brother. At Ramallah Government Hospital, Muhammad was examined and diagnosed with damage to his left kidney and spleen as well as a minor fracture of his left ribs. Muhammad was hospitalised for three days under observation and then discharged on Sunday afternoon. He continues to receive medication for the injuries suffered at home. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7170/2012](#)).



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A Palestinian shepherd tends his flocks-Ryan Rodrick Beiler/Activestills©

Israeli Air Force strikes in Gaza continue to cause civilian casualties. On 11 March, the Israeli Air Force **killed** Ayyoub Ahmad 'Asaliyya (13 years old) and **injured** Wafi Shawqi 'Asaliyya (six years old), when a missile was fired in the town of Jabalya in northern Gaza. At around 7:00 am, Ayyoub left his house for seventh grade tutoring lessons at a charitable organisation - Ajyal for Creativity and Development, near his home (eight metres away from Al-Sharafi Orchard). Five minutes later, Ayyoub's mother, 'Adila Ahmad 'Asaliyya (45 years old), heard a loud explosion and rushed to the scene to find smoke coming from Al-Sharafi orchard. She then saw a boy lying on the ground and started crying for help. She identified the boy as Wafi, her nephew. The paramedics arrived fifteen minutes later and confirmed that Wafi had shrapnel wounds to the left shoulder and left foot. An ambulance then took him to hospital. A few minutes later one of the paramedics found 'Adila's son, Ayyoub, lying in the orchard. His body was torn apart. Ayyoub was taken to the hospital accompanied by his father and brother, Sayf. Ayyoub was buried that afternoon in Beit Lahiya graveyard. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7240/2012](#)).

We started to fish on international waters, escaping from Israeli vessels that pursue us almost every day within the permissible fishing zone on the Gaza Sea and force us to abandon fishing. The area, where we were fishing was abundant with fish. At around 10:30 am, while we were fishing, I saw a large Israeli warship sailing north to south at a great speed towards us. I heard the sound of intense gunfire launched towards us by Israeli navy officers onboard the Israeli warship. When it was about ten metres away from us, I heard a navy officer ordering us, through a megaphone, to turn off the boat engine, take off our clothes, jump into the water, and swim to the Israeli warship. Otherwise, the Israeli navy officers would continue to open fire on us. We obeyed the navy officers' orders because we were afraid for our lives. We stripped to our underwear, jumped into the water, and swam to the Israeli warship. The water was so cold and deep that we felt frightened for our lives.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7125/2012](#). Given by Rani Sami Bakr, a resident of al-Shati' refugee camp, Gaza governorate, Gaza Strip.

From January to June 2012, Al-Haq documented 25 incidents involving arbitrary arrests and attacks on **Palestinian fishermen**, as well as the confiscation of their fishing vessels by Israeli Navy forces in the Gaza Sea. In one incident on 7 January at around 10:30 am, Israeli Navy forces **shot** at a fishing boat that had passed Egyptian sea borders with the consent of the Egyptian border guards. According to Rani Sami Bakr (31 years old) a fisherman on board the vessel, he and his three cousins were fishing in international waters when the attack occurred.

The Israeli Naval officers tied up and blindfolded Rani and his cousins, and escorted them to Ashdod port. They were questioned for a few hours after which the Israeli forces took their

photographs. Rani was asked about members of the Palestinian police force working in Gaza Port and whether he had information about the Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements. Rani explained he was merely a fisherman and had no information in this regard. Rani and his cousins were released at around 1:00 am on 8 January. Their fishing vessel, costing around JD 10,000 (about USD 14,000), was confiscated by the Israeli forces. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7125/2012](#)).

The Israeli army has also used excessive force against people approaching the buffer zone, which is a no-go area extending along the Gaza Strip's border with Israel as well as at sea. At around 12:30 pm on 11 February 2012, an Israeli military jeep **opened fire** on a farm belonging to Abdul Latif Suleiman al-Samiri (55 years old) located in al-Qarara village northeast Khan Younis governorate. The shooting continued for approximately 15 minutes but fortunately

neither Abdul Latif nor his two sons; 'Ala' (22 years old) and Ra'fat (24 years old) were injured. They had been grazing their camels in the area, when the shooting began. Two camels, each valued at USD 1,500, were killed and one of the walls to Abdul Latif's house was hit by several bullets as a result of the shooting. Abdul Latif and his family own 300 *dunums* (one *dunum* equals 1,000 m²) of land, most of which is enclosed in the buffer zone and access to this area is prohibited. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7169/2012](#)).

In another incident on 24 January, Israeli forces shot bullets and gas canisters towards a group of peaceful demonstrators near the buffer zone area in Beit Hanoun, northern Gaza. There were about 60 demonstrators, who marched towards the Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing north of the Beit Hanoun town to protest against the confiscation of Palestinian lands situated in the buffer zone. The Israeli soldiers positioned on the watchtowers and on the Israeli side of the border fence **shot live ammunition** and **gas canisters** from close ranges. Several demonstrators sustained injuries as a result of gas inhalation. The Israeli occupying authorities have imposed the buffer zone in the aftermath of the war on Gaza (Operation Cast Lead). (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7123/2012](#)).

The buffer zone has been enlarged over the years by the Israeli authorities without properly informing the occupied Palestinian population about its extension, and its current size and depth remain uncertain due to the fact that they are not physically demarcated. At present, it is estimated that the buffer zone restricts access to land up to 1,500 metres from the Israeli border. This area also extends over 17 per cent of the territory of the Gaza Strip, including 35 per cent of its total agricultural land, severely weakening the potential for economic and agricultural development in the Gaza Strip. (For more information about Israel's enforcement of the Buffer Zone see Al-Haq's report [Shifting Paradigms – Israel Enforcement of the Buffer Zone in the Gaza Strip](#) and [virtual field visit](#)).

In a state of panic, we tried to rescue some participants in the demonstration who had sustained injuries as a result of tear gas inhalation. Then, protestors marched for 150 metres along the eastern border fence. To escape the tear gas, we went to the old dumpsite. Having rested for several minutes, protestors began chanting slogans against the buffer zone and held up flags of Palestine and of friendly foreign countries. Meantime, a number of Israeli occupying soldiers came down from a watchtower opposite the area where we gathered and opened fire. I saw bullets hit the sand around us. We had to get back southwards in fear that participants might be injured. We continued to walk eastwards until we reached the area opposite the Israeli military transmitters. When we stopped at a distance of almost 200 metres from the border fence, I saw a number of Israeli military jeeps behind the border. A large number of soldiers got out of these jeeps and opened fire with their machine guns towards us. Everybody ran away from the area.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7123/2012](#). Given by Saber Mousa al-Za'nin, a resident of Beit Hanoun town, North Gaza governorate, Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Authority

West Bank

On 27 February 2012, Maysoun Muhsen al-Abd (43 years old) received a letter from the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education informing her that, while she was the top candidate for a librarian vacancy, she was not offered the job as she was not approved by the Palestinian Security Agencies. The letter further informed Maysoun that she could follow up on her case with the relevant security agencies to request that they remove the **security restriction**. Maysoun, who graduated from Al-Najah National University with a Diploma in Library and Documentation Studies in 1993, applied for a librarian job in Beit Iba village in May 2010. In late December 2011 she met with an officer from the Palestinian Intelligence Agency, who explained that she was not offered the job due to her age. He denied that it was due to a security issue and suggested that she speak with the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Maysoun did not receive reasoning about the security restriction or the body, who imposed it. She was overlooked despite her qualifications and her being the top candidate for the job. (See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7176/2012).

The **intimidation of journalists** in the West Bank has also raised concerns during the reporting period. At 10:00 am on 31 January 2012, Yousef Husam al-Shayeb (37 years old), a correspondent of the Jordanian Daily al-Ghad, was called to the Palestinian Intelligence Agency's headquarters in Ramallah for **questioning** about an article he published the previous day entitled "Charging the Palestinian Diplomatic Mission in France with Espionage." The report talked about some employees of the Mission who placed pressure on Palestinian students and citizens to spy on one another as well as on Palestinian, Arab and Islamic associations and organisations. Yousef arrived at the headquarters at 11:00 am. Before going to the meeting he informed his wife, Palestinian and Jordanian officials, as well as the editor-in-chief of al-Ghad newspaper and the president of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate about the meeting. Yousef met with the director of the Intelligence Agency, who identified himself as Abu Shaker. After exchanging casual conversation with the officer, Yousef was interrogated about the abovementioned report.

Abu Shaker claimed that, because the report distorts the image of Palestine and affects Palestinian national security, there was reason to investigate. Yousef was asked to cooperate by revealing his sources. Abu Shaker's rhetoric varied over the course of the interrogation as he **threatened**, at times, that Yousef could be personally **harmed** if he were to refuse to cooperate. Yousef refused to reveal any of his sources unless he was brought to court. The interrogation ended at 12:30 pm, after which Yousef was transferred to the head of the Investigation Department, Ghassan Abu al Rub, who worded Yousef's account into a testimony.

Yousef was seated in a waiting area at 2:00 pm, after which he learned that the agency was waiting on a decision from an unnamed agent about his release. Yousef grew worried and called his newspaper and the Jordanian Embassy by virtue of his Jordanian citizenship. Yousef was held at the headquarters until around 7:15 pm. During this time he was treated humanely, but was not able to leave and was not allowed to call a lawyer. An hour before his release, Yousef learned – from sources at al-Ghad – that Salam Fayyad had promised his release. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7202/2012](#)).

Intimidation of journalists has also been reported in the Gaza Strip. On 18 June, Hamas Internal Security agents **arbitrarily detained** and **ill-treated** journalist Yi'hya Ibrahim al-Madhoun (33 years old) after he published an article that criticised the division between the Hamas and Fatah factions. Yi'hya was called in for questioning but upon arriving at the Internal Security office, his ID was confiscated. He was placed in a small cell with a foul smell and no ventilation or air circulation for four hours. He was then released without being questioned and told to return the following day. On 19 June, Yi'hya went once more to the Internal Security office and was again placed in a small cell. Two hours later, an officer in civilian clothing entered the cell and questioned him for two more hours about the article he published. The officer warned Yi'hya not to continue writing such articles and then left Yi'hya in the cell for an additional two hours. Eventually, the Internal Security was forced to release Yi'hya after an intervention by the Journalist Association. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7555/2012](#)).

Similar acts of intimidation have been displayed toward persons organising events criticising Hamas. On 5 May, Hamas security forces **raided** the Palestinian Literature Festival east of Gaza City, organised by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic Boycott of Israel. According to Iman Diyab al-Haj (23 years old), the security personnel dispersed approximately 200 attendees, thereby ending the event.

Doctor Sweif was introducing the speakers at the event. Then Doctor Amro 'Izzat spoke about the geographical borders of the Arab world, the Israeli Siege on the Gaza Strip and about how the Hamas government violates the rights of its people. He said "those who suppress their people cannot liberate their country" and the people engaged in rapturous applause. It was then that I saw a large number of Hamas security officers in civilian clothing taking photographs of the attendees. Professor 'Ala' Abdul Fattah then spoke about borders and his personal experience crossing Erez checkpoint with his son and then he spoke about freedoms and rights in the Gaza Strip and how they are not respected by the Hamas government, especially due to the ongoing Arab Spring. It was then that the members of the Hamas Security force cut the electricity and spread among the attendees forcing them to leave and ending the event. The visiting delegations and the organisers then began arguing with the security personnel about the inappropriate behaviour towards the attendees despite the fact that the event had been organised with the approval of the Hamas government.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7465/2012](#). Given by Iman Diyab al-Haj, a resident of al-Nuseirat refugee camp, Middle Area governorate, Gaza Strip.

Iman also reported seeing security personnel **confiscate** a young woman's camera as she tried to document the incident. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7465/2012](#)).

On 15 May, Hamas Internal Security agents handed Fida' Salem Sarhan (21 years old) and her father a **summons** for questioning regarding her involvement as a coordinator for a mixed-gender educational trip. The trip was sponsored by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) Student Union at al-Aqsa University in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip. After members of the PFLP spoke to the Hamas Internal Security forces, the summonses were cancelled and Fida' was informed that the trip was postponed. On 17 May, Fida' found out that the trip would be taking place and headed towards al-Aqsa University. Around 9:00 am, members of the Hamas Internal Security forces were searching for Fida' and forcefully prohibited the female students from joining the educational trip. The security forces did not take Fida' in for questioning. However, on 20 May at around 9:00 am, Fida's father was called in for

questioning by the Internal Security office. He was scolded for his daughter's unethical behaviour, as she organised a trip with both male and female attendees. (See [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7332/2012](#)).

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT
1 JAN – 30 JUNE 2012
STATISTICS

THE WESTBANK

KILLINGS BY THE OCCUPYING POWER

Total number of killings	7
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Types of Killings

Extra judicial Killing	0
Other Circumstances	7

Victims

Women	0
Children	3
Men	4

Killings by District

Bethlehem	0
Hebron	5
Jenin	0
Jericho	0
Jerusalem	0
Nablus	0
Toulkarem	0
Ramallah	2
Total	7

Killings by Age Group

12 or younger	2
13-17	1
18-25	1
26-35	3
36-50	0
Over 50	0
Total	7

Situation during Killing

Normal/calm	6
Demonstration	1
Total	7

Methods of Killing

Live bullet	5
Sharp Instrument	0
Mine	2
Tear gas	0
Total	7

HOUSE DEMOLITIONS BY DISTRICT

House Demolitions for Lack of Licence

Bethlehem	26
Hebron	43
Jenin	40
Jericho	24
Jerusalem	23
Nablus	33
Ramallah	38
Toulkarem	18
Total	245

THE GAZA STRIP

KILLINGS BY THE OCCUPYING POWER

Total of Killings	45
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Types of Killings

Extra judicial Killing	10
Targeted assassination	8
Other Circumstances	27

Victims

Women	1
Children	6
Men	38

Killings by District

Gaza	32
Rafah	2
Khan Younes	7
Deir al-Balah	4
Total	45

Killings by Age Groups

12 or younger	2
13-17	4
18-25	24
26-35	7
36-50	3
Over 50	5
Total	45

Situation during Killing

Normal/calm	44
Shelling	0
Demonstration	1
Invading	0
Total	45

Methods of Killing

Live bullet	4
Shrapnel	31
Explosives	1
Missile	9
Total	45