

July - December 2012 **Field Report**

Monitoring and Documentation Department



Palestinian Civil Administration building destroyed by Israeli missiles in Tel al-Hawa, Gaza Strip, November 2012 – Al-Haq©

General Statistics

West Bank

Killings: According to Al-Haq documentation, from the outbreak of the second *Intifada* in September 2000 until the end of December 2012, **1,948** Palestinians were killed in the West Bank, of whom **381** were children and **106** female. It is estimated that **313** Palestinians were killed in targeted assassinations.

Housing Demolitions: During the same period, Al-Haq documented a total of **588** punitive house demolitions in the West Bank (**512** completely demolished, **70** partially demolished and **six** completely sealed), leading to the displacement of **3,378** 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 **1,386** houses due to the lack of a building permit; of which **373** were in East Jerusalem, leading to the displacement of **4,347** people.

The Gaza Strip

Killings: According to Al-Haq documentation, between January 2009 and the end of December 2012, **274¹** Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip by Israeli occupying forces (**147** in Gaza City, **36** in Khan Younis, **42** in Deir al-Balah and **49** in Rafah), of whom **32** were children and **five** were female. Of the **274** Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip, it is estimated that **26** were killed in targeted assassinations. During the same period, a total of **19** Palestinians (**14** in Gaza, **one** in Khan Younis, **two** in Deir al-Balah and **two** in Rafah) were killed by Hamas officials in the Gaza Strip, of whom **three** were female.

¹Excluding Palestinians killed during “Operation Cast Lead” and “Operation Pillar of Defence”.

Highlighted Trend

Military Offensive on the Gaza Strip, November 2012

Since adopting its “disengagement plan” in June 2004, in which both the Israeli military and civilians living in settlements were removed from the Gaza Strip, Israel has imposed a five-year long illegal closure on the territory. This has allowed it to control the movement of people and goods in and out of the Gaza Strip, as well as the telecommunications, water, electricity, sewage networks, airspace and coastal access.

On 27 December 2008, Israel launched “Operation Cast Lead”, a large-scale aerial offensive in the Gaza Strip, which was followed by an invasion of Israeli ground troops on the night of 3 January 2009. After 22 days of unrelenting attacks, the death toll exceeded 1,400 Palestinians, the majority of them civilians. Over 5,000 more people were wounded. In addition, there was unprecedented destruction of civilian infrastructure across the Gaza Strip including hospitals, schools, mosques, houses, police stations and United Nations compounds.

In the complete absence of accountability for these attacks, Israel benefitted from a climate of impunity conducive to further and more severe violations of human rights and international law.



A photo from the military offensive on Gaza, December 2008-January 2009.a-w-i-p.com©

During the reporting period Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in the Gaza Strip continued. On 4 November 2012, an unarmed and reportedly mentally disabled

Palestinian man was shot and killed by Israeli forces when he entered the buffer zone on land. The Buffer Zone is a no-go area that extends along the Gaza Strip’s border with Israel as well as at sea. Palestinian medics were **prevented from attending to the injured person** for more than an hour, which they claim contributed to his death. On 8 November 2012, Ahmad Abu Aqua, 13, was **fatally injured** by Israeli soldiers during an incursion into the Gaza Strip. Two days later, Israeli forces launched at least four shells on an area where Palestinians were playing football, in Khan Younis governorate. Five civilians, including two children, consequently **died**. These incidents resulted in retaliation and increased violence between Palestinian militants and Israel.

Attacks came from both sides until 13 November, when a truce was agreed. That truce was broken by Israel on 14 November with the **extra-judicial killing** of Ahmad Sa’id al-Ja’bary, one of the leaders of the military wing of Hamas. This incident was followed by the launching of the Israeli military operation code-named [‘Pillar of Defense’](#).

During the Israeli military operation in November, the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip paid a tragic price. Beyond the **173** Palestinians killed, Al-Haq recorded at least **1,221** injuries, **445** of which were inflicted on children and **207** on women. The attacks caused **severe destruction** to infrastructure in the Gaza Strip, and left

78 homes, 15 government buildings, two media offices, three cemeteries and one bank destroyed or severely damaged. Another 950 civilian buildings were partially damaged.

One tragic incident involved three children belonging to the Abu Khousa family from al-Borej refugee camp, who were the victims of an **indiscriminate** attack by the Israeli military. Iyad Yousef Abu Khousa, 18 months, his elder brother Suhaib, four, and their cousin Sarah Suleiman Khousa, three, were playing in the garden of their house when a missile fired by the Israeli military hit the wall surrounding their home. Iyad, who was the closest to the wall, was killed instantly by shrapnel that struck his head. Both Suhaib and Sarah sustained severe injuries when shrapnel hit their faces, head, abdomen and legs. Four days after this incident took place; Suhaib and Sarah were still in hospital recovering from their wounds. Consequently Al-Haq's field workers were unable to collect affidavits for this case. ([See Al-Haq Weekly Focus on Palestinian families under fire in the Gaza Strip](#)).

On 14 November, Yousef Jalal 'Arafat, 30, was returning to his home in al-Zaytoun neighbourhood. When he was 150 metres away he saw a missile dropped by an Israeli aircraft hit his house, partially destroying it and setting it on fire. Immediately afterwards, a second missile struck his brother's home, which collapsed.

While searching through the rubble of his home, Yousef saw the head of his wife, Nisrin Amin 'Arafat, 27, and managed to remove parts of the rubble to help her. His nine-year-old son, Jalal, eventually answered Yousef's calls, and he was found beneath one of the collapsed walls of the house. Jalal's sister, Ronan, five, was trapped under the rubble not too far from Jalal. Jalal was eventually rescued, but Yousef had to wait for a winch to remove the debris that had buried his daughter. Approximately 25 minutes later, Yousef was holding the dead body of Ronan, who had suffered a severe injury to the head, two broken legs and whose chest was torn by shrapnel. In the meantime, neighbours informed Yousef that they found his other daughter Maria, ten, nearby, with her aunt. Maria had been playing on a swing in the garden and her aunt was watering plants when the first missile struck the area. Both Yousef's sister and daughter had been hit and injured on their legs by shrapnel.



Palestinian child standing in the rubble after an Israeli strike on a house in Gaza City, November 2012. Hatem Moussa/AP©

In a sworn statement, Yousef described the search for his wife and children among the rubble that had been his house.

I saw a hole that was almost seven metres deep in the first area that had been shelled by the Israeli aircraft. I saw a similar hole in the other targeted area. Also, I saw my home completely destroyed on top of my wife and children, whom I had just left while they were sitting in the guestroom. I had gone out to the opposite street to buy some stuff for my children. Later, I found my daughter Maria. She was very scared and blood gushed out of her feet. She did not say a word out of intense fear of the loud explosions. Then, I went to my destroyed home. A number of the neighbourhood residents arrived to help me search for my wife and children under the rubble of our home. When we lifted some rubble at the entrance to the house, I saw my wife buried under the rubble. Only her head was visible. She told me that my children Jalal and Ronan were under the rubble immediately behind her. We took my wife out from underneath the rubble. She sustained wounds in the head and various parts of her body. We also rescued Jalal, who was injured in the head. Then, we started to search for my daughter Ronan. We located her under the rubble about 20 minutes later. Her head and feet were smashed. I did not see any signs of life in her. Later, an ambulance arrived and transported my wife and children to the al-Shifa' hospital.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7917/2012](#). Given by Yousef Jalal 'Arafat, a resident of al-Zaytoun neighbourhood, Gaza city, Gaza governorate.

When the ambulances arrived to transfer Yousef's family to al-Shifa hospital, the Israeli military dropped a third missile on the entrance to his home. During the reporting period, Jalal was still in hospital recovering from a severe injury to his spine and was unable to move his legs. Nisrin was released a week after the attack, having received 12 stitches to close a wound on her left thigh and 14 stitches on her head. Maria and her aunt were released on the day of the incident as the hospital was struggling to deal with the large number of injuries from across the city. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7917/2012](#)).

In another incident on 17 November, Nasir 'Ayyad al-Hashash, 49, who is unemployed and lives with his wife and eight children in the al-Hashash neighbourhood of Rafah, was watching the news when he heard two loud explosions, caused by two missiles fired by the Israeli military. The ceiling of the room collapsed on him and his family and several walls of the house fell to the ground. A Red Crescent ambulance arrived to take five of Nasir's family members to the hospital. They were released several hours later as the hospital had no capacity to accept new patients.

A week earlier, Nasir's brother, 'Eid, 65, who lives with his wife and three children next to Nasir, woke up at 00:30 am after an Israeli air strike landed nearby and severely damaged his home. Four days later, Nasir's family were staying with a neighbour and his brother 'Eid and his family were living with his son. Neither of their houses is fit for habitation. Both brothers are worried about the future of their families as they are unemployed and there are no job opportunities in Rafah. In addition, they have no resources with which to re-build their homes. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7921/2012](#)).

On 14 November, Nasir Abdul-Mu'ti al-Hanajra, 30, was leaving his home in al-Nuseirat refugee camp when he heard an explosion nearby. He saw his relative Mahmoud Hammad Abu Sawawin, 61, walking across a nearby field towards the location of the explosion. Mahmoud was about 30 metres from Nasir when there was another loud explosion. Nasir was thrown to the ground and lost consciousness.

Nasir regained consciousness at the Shuhada' al-Aqsa hospital in Deir al-Balah where he was told he had suffered from bruises to his chest and left leg. As a result of the missile that landed near his house, his wife Jacqueline, 23, sustained a head injury and

her left arm was fractured. Nasir's son Muhammad, three, had severe bruises all over his body.

Mahmoud was killed instantly by the second explosion. Two of his children were injured and hospitalised. When Nasir returned home, he found that the eastern part of his house was **severely damaged**, the ceiling had collapsed and there was a crater in the field where the missiles had landed. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7922/2012](#)).

'Atiyyah 'Abdul-Raziq Abu Khoussah was at home in Gaza City on 21 November, the last day of the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip. His daughter Wafa', six, asked her brother Mahmoud, 13, to go out and buy her a pencil, as it was rumoured that there would be a ceasefire soon and she wanted to complete her homework before returning to school.

However, shortly after Mahmoud left the house, the area was shelled by Israeli aircrafts and Mahmoud consequently sustained shrapnel wounds to his head, chest and various other parts of his body. He was transported to al-Shifa' hospital, where he was later proclaimed dead. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7918/2012](#)).

In the aftermath of November's Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, Al-Haq's field researchers collected [testimonies](#) from some of those whose lives were devastated by "Operation Pillar of Defence".

Five minutes after Mahmoud had gone out I heard the sound of a very strong explosion near our home. I called my son Muhammad, 20 to go out and check on Mahmoud as I feared that he might have been hurt as he returned home. [...] I asked him again about Mahmoud, but he did not reply. It seemed as if he had seen something, but did not want to tell me about it. Leaning on my crutch, I walked along the street opposite our home. I heard some residents of the area rushing around me and saying that an aircraft had fired a drone towards the area. They said a little child was lying on the ground. [...] I ran my hands over my son Mahmoud, who lay on the ground. I felt blood gushing out heavily from his head and chest. Then, my children and some neighbourhood residents carried Mahmoud and transported him to the al-Shifa hospital. I followed them. When we arrived, doctors confirmed to me that my son Mahmoud was dead after having sustained shrapnel wounds to the head, chest and various parts of his body.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7918/2012](#).
Given by 'Atiyyah 'Abdul-Raziq Abu Khoussah, a resident of the al-Nafaq Street, Gaza city, Gaza governorate.

In addition to abuses of human rights and international law in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli military acted in violation of the right to life in their suppression of demonstrations in the West Bank held in protest against "Operation Pillar of Defence". The Israeli military resorted to **excessive use of force against protestors**, including the use of live fire on several occasions. Two Palestinians **died** of wounds sustained at demonstrations: Rusdhi Mahmoud al-Tamimi,31, who was shot twice by rubber bullets and hit by live ammunition in his abdomen; and Hamdi Muhammad Falah,22, who was shot four times with live fire directed at his head and stomach by Israeli soldiers in Hebron. In addition, the Israeli military arrested approximately 55 people in the West Bank in 48 hours during the military offensive on the Gaza Strip. ([See Al-Haq Weekly Focus on Palestinian Families under Fire in the Gaza Strip](#)).

The Occupying Power

West Bank

Violations by the Occupying Power in the West Bank during the reporting period included killings, soldier brutality, demolitions, settler violence and home raids. These incidents 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](#).

One of the most serious violations of human rights by the Occupying Power during this reporting period took place on Sunday, 29 July when 14 Palestinian workers attempted to cross illegally into Israel through al-Za'yyam checkpoint, east of Jerusalem, in order to work and were subsequently **fired upon with live ammunition** by Israeli soldiers. One of the workers died following a gunshot wound to his head and three others were also hit. Most of these workers, who are the main supporters of their families, cannot find jobs in the West Bank and have no other choice but to work illegally in Israel.

When the workers' car was 30 meters from the checkpoint, the driver of the first car phoned the driver of the workers' car and warned him that he needed to turn back because the Israeli soldiers at the checkpoint were checking identity cards.

We ran out of the car, the shooting had stopped by then, and we dispersed into the hills. I still did not know that I was injured. I also did not know that someone had died and another person was injured. I was not aware of any of this. I ran for about 300 metres and then fell to the ground when I felt my injury. I was with Muhammad, the son of (martyr) Akram, who asked me about his father. I told him he could be behind us. Muhammad is only 19 years old and he worked with his father. Then I looked at my right arm and discovered blood, which made me realise that Akram could have been injured too.[...] We returned to the place where the accident had taken place and saw that they had put an injured person in the Israeli ambulance. It was Akram, who at that point was still alive. I saw that he was breathing and that a bandage had been put around his head because it was bleeding. He died when the ambulance arrived at al-Za'yyam checkpoint.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7592/2012](#). Given by Khalid 'Imad Ziadah, a resident of Bettilo, Ramallah governorate.

Sub'hi Muhammad Ghaythan, 20, saw several Israeli soldiers approaching the workers' car. As the soldiers got closer, the driver turned the car, passed the soldiers and drove quickly into al-Za'yyam village to the east. Sub'hi recalls that there was a lot of shooting at the car from behind and to the left side of the car.

Some of the workers managed to jump out of the car and run towards al-Za'yyam village. Sub'hi later went to hospital to get treatment for a cut behind his left ear. At the hospital, he learned that a worker named Hasan, also known as Akram who was with them in the car,

had been shot and killed. ([See Al-Haq affidavit No. 7590/2012](#)).

During the reporting period there were numerous incidents of Israeli forces using excessive force against unarmed Palestinians, including children. On Friday, 5 October clashes between Palestinian worshipers and Israeli police officers took place when Israeli extremists **broke into** the Dome of the Rock compound in the Old City of Jerusalem. The Israeli forces used tear gas, rubber-coated metal bullets and sound bombs against the protestors.



Hasan 'Afifi was severely beaten by Israeli border police officers in the Old City of Jerusalem, October 2012 – Al-Haq©

During the clashes, a Palestinian boy was **beaten until unconscious** by Israeli officers. On the Friday in question, Hasan 'Afif 'Afifi, 16, was sitting with his family outside his home next to the Dome of the Rock compound when he heard sound bombs and firing coming from the direction of the compound. Hasan walked towards al-Hadid gate (the western entrance to the Dome of the Rock compound), which is only two metres from his home, and saw Israeli officers in black uniforms chasing Palestinian worshippers.

Shortly afterwards, more than a dozen Israeli police officers appeared at the front door of Hasan's house and began to punch and kick his father, 'Afif Hasan 'Afifi, 41, and then dragged Hasan outside, pushed him to the ground and kicked him repeatedly, including in the genitals. When 'Afif and his wife Ranya tried to rescue their son, 'Afif was beaten on the legs and genitals with batons. Both 'Afif and his wife were then pepper-sprayed and forced back inside the house. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7744/2012](#)).

After regaining consciousness and being **mocked, insulted** and **spat on** by Israeli police officers, Hasan was taken to the Russian compound police station in West Jerusalem for three hours, and then to Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Centre, where he undertook treatment and was subsequently left shackled to his hospital bed until 11:30 pm. He was then taken back to the Russian compound police station, where he was strip-searched and held in a cell overnight.

The following day, Hasan was interrogated and then taken to court, where the Israeli judge extended his detention until Tuesday, 9 October to allow further investigation. On 9 October, the Israeli judge decided to release Hasan but placed him under house arrest for 14 days. Hasan was fined approximately 1,300 USD with an additional 2,600 USD sentence suspended in case he violated the terms of his release during next six months. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7743](#)).

I noticed a short boy dressed in civilian clothing amongst members of the Special Forces. Most of his shirt was up over his head and the Special Forces members were throwing him around and punching him. I could not take photos because the soldiers were blocking my view. I also had to leave because they were threatening me. [...] The sound of a boy screaming out in pain drew my attention. I put my camera on video mode and tried to walk between the soldiers to reach the location of the scream. Then I saw that three members of the Special Forces were holding the same boy by the neck and dragging him [...] When I was two metres away, I saw a Special Forces member holding the boy by his head while another one was pulling him by his right hand, and a third one kicked him in the genitals. They then threw him to the ground, and two of them continued to hold him down while the third one threatened me, saying "go away from here."

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7745/2012](#). Given by Amjad Taher 'Arafa, a resident of Ras al-'Amoud, Jerusalem governorate.

Between July and December 2012, there were numerous incidents of Israeli forces causing property destruction across the West Bank, including the destruction of about 25

water structures.

In 2000, 'Umar Salih 'Abed, 43, drilled an artesian water well which cost around 25,000 Jordanian Dinars (approximately USD 35,000). 'Umar relied on the water supplied by the well for agricultural and domestic purposes and employed 13 workers on his land.

On 24 October, 'Umar saw that an Israeli patrol on his land, along with a bulldozer that was destroying his water well. When 'Umar approached one of the soldiers and asked for an explanation for the demolition of his well, the soldier began beating 'Umar with a baton, striking him on his right hand and shoulder, and ordering him not to approach the Israeli military. As a consequence of the well's **demolition**, 'Umar's livelihood and ability to provide for his family will be



'Umar demolished well, Jenin governorate, October 2012 – Al-Haq©

dramatically impacted. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7800/2012](#)).

Further to the demolition of water structures, Al-Haq has documented the confiscation and demolition of humanitarian aid projects in Palestinian communities.

Muhammad Bonya Ka'abna, 69, bought land in Beit Hanina, Jerusalem governorate about five years ago. While he was building houses for his family on the land the Israeli Civil Administration handed him a demolition order, which was implemented in November 2011. For a couple of months, 22 members of Muhammad's family, including ten children, had to sleep outdoors with no shelter. In light of the difficult living conditions of Muhammad's family, an international organisation offered to help them to install three mobile homes.

Two days after the international organisation had completed the installation of the mobile homes, a large Israeli military unit with officers from the Israeli Civil Administration came to the area and handed Mansour an **order of house demolition**. He was given three days to appeal against the demolition order. After filing an appeal, Muhammad was given 14 extra days to remove the caravans. In this time, the international organisation moved the caravans to Muhammad's brother's land, 40 metres away, in order to buy more time to submit an application for a house permit.

However, on 9 July, after having issued a new demolition order, which was supposed to be implemented on 15 July, a large force from the Israeli army, accompanied with bulldozers and cranes, raided the new location and forced Muhammad's family out of their mobile homes.

In a sworn statement Muhammad described the confiscation of the caravans by the Israeli authorities.

Mansour's wife and her children were sleeping in their caravan, almost 40 metres from our location. An [Israeli regional planning unit] and a large force of the occupying army raided the site. As we gathered at the site, we saw a winch, three trucks and a bulldozer. We were prevented from approaching the caravans. I could not tell what types of machines (brand) were being used. I told officer Micha that there were people sleeping in the caravan. The officer allowed me to evacuate Mansour's wife and children. Soldiers then began to remove the furniture. They kept us in our tent and the children were screaming because of the high tension. The soldiers confiscated all three caravans and left at 1:45 am.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7558/2012](#). Given by Muhammad Bonya Ka'abna, a resident of Beit Hanina, Jerusalem governorate.

Throughout the West Bank, the Israeli forces continued their policy of **land confiscation**, Israeli settlers from 'Ro'i' settlement, in the north of the Jordan Valley, took possession of Palestinian land near the settlement after the land had been requisitioned by the Israeli army for [military trainings](#). On 6 November, the Israeli army distributed numerous evacuation orders to Palestinian families living in different communities situated in the north of the Jordan Valley (east of Toubas). The families were ordered to leave their homes that are located in closed military zones for **military training** on 11 November.



Israeli sign stating that entry to al-Maleh is not permitted as it is a firing-zone, al-Maleh, Toubas governorate, November 2012 – Al-Haq©

The orders affected 170 Palestinians living in the area, including 90 children and 36 women.

So far, no one has evacuated the area, but we will do so tomorrow morning, Sunday 11 November 2012. The Israeli occupying army has already started to deploy tanks, armoured vehicles and armoured personnel carriers. It has also erected training targets, including cardboard figures, metal barrels and old cars. The targets to be used in the military training exercises have been placed near residential areas in al-Maleh. All of this indicates that the Israeli army intends to carry out exercises using live ammunition. Therefore, the military training exercise will pose a grave danger to the lives of residents if they do not leave the area. It should be noted that the Israeli army will also erect a military barrier, denying access to the area.[...]This is the first time the al-Maleh area will see such a large-scale, extensive military training exercise.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7846/2012](#). Given by 'Ayid Salman Zawahri, resident of al-Maleh area, Toubas governorate.

On 11 November, at about 6:00 am, 'Ayid Salman Zawahri's family, along with another 33 families from al-Maleh, evacuated their homes and walked about half a kilometre in the rain to the nearby 'Ain al-Hilwa area. A few hours later, other families from areas

nearby al-Maleh joined them, fleeing from the live ammunition, which was being used in the training.

'Ayid's family and two other families decided to go back to their homes at approximately 6:00 pm that day. When they reached the area, they found several military jeeps and tanks positioned on hilltops. The Israeli army allowed them to stay the night in their homes; however, they were not allowed to leave their tents. That night, 'Ayid heard shooting nearby. Early the following day, the shooting stopped and the rest of the Palestinian families returned to their homes. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7846/2012](#)).

During the reporting period the Israeli army has conducted **indiscriminate** and **arbitrary** attacks against the residents of the Palestinian village of 'Awarta, Nablus, in retribution for the appalling murder of five members of an Israeli family from the nearby 'Itamar' settlement on 11 March 2011. Two Palestinian residents of 'Awarta were subsequently convicted of the crime. ([See Al-Haq case study Collective Punishment in 'Awarta – Israel's Response to the Killing in 'Itamar' Settlement](#))



Mazin's living room ransacked by the Israeli army, 'Awarta village, Nablus governorate, September 2012 – Al-Haq©

On 4 September 2012, Mazin Niyaz 'Awwad, 45, the father of one of the two Palestinians convicted of the murders, returned to his home to find it surrounded by Israeli soldiers who then pointed their weapons at him. Mazin also saw his son George, 22, handcuffed and in the custody of two soldiers.

The previous week, after being asked to report to 'Huwara military base, Mazin had been handcuffed, blindfolded, insulted and questioned for more than 15 hours about his son George and about Hakim's involvement in the killing of the settler family. After having been released the next day, Mazin had seen other villagers from 'Awarta being taken in for interrogation. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7710/2012](#)).

Mazin described what followed in a sworn statement.

About two minutes later, the soldiers allowed me to enter a room on the ground floor, where my children and wife were being detained. In the meantime, the occupying soldiers had dispersed around the house. I stayed with my children and wife for ten minutes. Then, an Israeli officer and soldiers searched the room where we were detained. Through the north-facing window, I saw bright lights and heard the sound of military patrols arriving. An Israeli soldier took me to the living room. There, I saw my son George and two Israeli Intelligence officers, including Officer Mazin. I sat down on a chair. Barefoot and with his hands tied behind his back, my son George was also sitting on a chair in the same room. Officer Mazin held a knife in his hand and stood at the door. Another Intelligence officer damaged some pots, pictures and chairs. Later, my wife was brought into the room and the door was shut. My son George, my wife, two Israeli officers, the two soldiers who were guarding us, and I were in the room. Officer Mazin held the knife against my neck. [...] Using the knife, Officer Mazin tore apart our pillows and sofas. My wife protested and shouted at them. The officer told me to shut my wife up or they would arrest my daughter Julia and me. [...] At around 11:40 pm, the patrols and occupying soldiers withdrew from the area. They took my son George, barefoot, in a patrol car and prevented me from catching up with them. Then, I went to the room where my children and wife had been detained. They cried and were so frightened. My wife and I calmed them down.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7710/2012](#). Given by Mazin Niyaz 'Awwad, a resident of 'Awarta village, Nablus governorate.

There were continued incidents of Israeli **settler violence** against Palestinians throughout the reporting period. On 16 August, an Israeli settler threw a **Molotov cocktail** into a Palestinian taxi, severely injuring the Ghayatha family who was travelling near 'Gush Etzion', a cluster of Israeli settlements located south-west of Bethlehem. Al-Haq field researchers briefly interviewed the victims of the attack, but were unable to obtain sworn statements, as at the time the victims were still hospitalised in Jerusalem and some were in a critical condition.

When the settler involved threw the Molotov cocktail into the car it immediately set alight. The driver, Basem Ghayatha, 49, lost control of the car, which subsequently crashed against a safety barrier on the side of the road. The passengers remained trapped for several minutes inside the car, which was engulfed in flames.

Jamila Ghayatha, 31, who was struggling to leave the car because her plastic shoes had **melted** to the floor, was the first person to escape and was followed by her daughter Iman, 4. Afterwards, Basem and the remaining passengers also managed to leave the burning taxi. The driver of a passing car called an ambulance, which arrived soon afterwards and took all the members of the Ghayatha family to the Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital in Jerusalem.



The Palestinian taxi engulfed in flames, Bethlehem governorate, August 2012– Maan News Agency©

All those involved in the incident sustained severe burns. Ayman Ghayatha's condition was the most critical and he was transferred to the intensive care unit of Hadassah hospital. Ayman's son, Hasan, 27, was hospitalised in the burns department. Six-year-old Muhammad sustained burns on 35 per cent of his hands and back and Basem sustained second degree burns on his face and third degree burns on his hands. Only

Iman was discharged the day after the assault. ([See Al-Haq Weekly Focus Escalation in Settler Violence: Molotov Cocktail Severely Injures Palestinian Family](#)).

In another incident of settler violence, Khalid Samih Daraghmah, 45, his wife Taghrid Taha Daraghmah, 31, and their son Jalal, 17, were in front of their house on 28 August when they saw eight yellow-plated cars approaching the area and parking to the west of the house. More than 40 settlers wearing Jewish Orthodox clothing stepped out of the cars and surrounded the house. The settlers, two of whom were holding guns, started throwing stones at the family and **attacked** Khalid and Jalal with **wooden and iron batons**. Ten settlers then tried to break into a room, where Taghrid had hidden with her younger sons. Once the settlers were inside the room, they hit Taghrid's son Mo'men, 15, and knocked Nour al-Din, 11, to the ground. When Taghrid tried to stop the settlers from assaulting her sons, a settler hit her with his wooden baton on her arm, chest and legs.

In the meantime, Khalid and Jalal were trying to stop other settlers from destroying the furniture of the house and to keep them out of the room where Taghrid was with her sons. When the room was empty of settlers, Taghrid closed the door and started calling for help. From the window of the room, she saw her husband and son running to the east with a group of settlers chasing them. About 20 minutes later, Khalid and Jalal returned to the house and told Taghrid that the Israeli settlers had left the area. When Taghrid opened the door, she saw four Israeli soldiers accompanied by one settler talking to her husband. Several minutes later, multiple Israeli military jeeps, including police and intelligence cars arrived and the Israeli military locked the members of the family in one of the rooms of the house. The Israeli units departed 15 minutes later after arresting and handcuffing Khalid and Jalal. In addition to the physical assault on the family, the Israeli settlers broke the windows of the family's car and vandalised the furniture of the house.

Jalal was subsequently detained in 'Ofer' prison before a hearing on 16 September. Khalid was released on 2 September after paying a fine of 2,000 NIS (about \$500). ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7671/2012](#)).

In a further case of settler violence, on Tuesday 28 August, Muhammad 'Ayyash Froukh, 47, a resident of Sa'ir, Hebron governorate, was awoken by a noise outside his house. From the window of his bedroom, Muhammad saw about 30 young Israeli settlers accompanied by five Israeli soldiers in front of his cousin's house. One of the settlers was writing in Hebrew on his cousin's wall, while others were holding small torches to provide some light. Muhammad then saw settlers pouring liquid onto his cousin's car before **setting it alight**. The settlers also broke the windows of Muhammad's car before throwing two bottles inside and setting it alight. As the settlers were leaving the area Muhammad saw one of them firing live ammunition into the air.

When Muhammad and his cousin went to extinguish the fires, they discovered that the settlers had set fire to a third car, also belonging to Muhammad's cousin. Muhammad then learned that the settlers had blocked the water pipe, to which the hose was connected. As a result, the Froukh family had to carry buckets of water from the house in order to extinguish the fire. Muhammad's car was completely destroyed, while the other two cars were partially damaged. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7674/2012](#)).

The 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, a fisherman on board the vessel, he and his three cousins were fishing in international waters when the attack occurred.

In September an incident took place in which the Israeli military opened fire on a group of more than 30 Palestinian fishermen near the border in the north of the Gaza governorate, resulting in the death of one fisherman and the injury of another.

Yousef Salih Abu Riyash, 20, and his brother Fahmy, 23, were fishing roughly 20 metres from the border when Yousef saw several Israeli soldiers standing on a dune on the opposite side of the border, shouting in Hebrew. The soldiers then opened fire on the group of fishermen, who immediately ran for cover behind the dunes. Yousef and Fahmy were the closest men



to the border and when they ran from the water, Fahmy was shot in his left thigh. The soldiers continued shooting when Yousef stopped to help his brother and he was hit in the left hand.

Yousef Abu-Riyash after having received medical treatment to his left hand – Al-Haq©

When Fahmy managed to get up and tried to move away, he was hit by a second bullet in the left side of the abdomen and fell once more to the ground. When the soldiers eventually stopped shooting, Fahmy was bleeding profusely.

Shortly afterwards, Fahmy was transferred by ambulance to the Kamal 'Adwan hospital. At around 1:30 pm Yousef received medical treatment for a gunshot wound to his hand, before being informed that he would have to return for surgery in a few days. Fahmy's condition was more severe and at around 3:00 pm he was taken to the operating room. Later that night, he was declared dead as a consequence of his gunshot wounds. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7742/2012](#)).

I went to the roof to dry the laundry in the sun. While I was doing so, I suddenly felt pain in my right arm. I looked at my arm and saw that I was bleeding, and realised I was injured. I felt dizzy and shaky. I started shouting to my sons saying "I'm injured, I'm injured". I was asking them to help me. I tried to go downstairs but when I reached the entrance of the stairs, I fell to the ground out of sheer pain.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7740/2012](#). Given by Turkiya Muhammad al-Hasanat, a resident of al-Buraij refugee camp, the Middle Area governorate, the Gaza Strip.

In another incident of **arbitrary attack** by the Israeli military, Turkiya Muhammad al-Hasanat, 50, of al-Buraij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, was doing the laundry on her rooftop when she was shot by Israeli soldiers during an incursion in the area. The bullet punctured her right hand and she was left with bullet fragments in her arm. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7740/2012](#)).

In November the Israeli military dropped numerous leaflets in Arabic on the Gaza Strip. The leaflets included two maps of the Gaza Strip with warnings for the population not to approach the border with Israel and about the danger posed by the Palestinian militants operating in the Gaza Strip.

On 29 October, at approximately 6:00 am, Muhammad 'Atallah Abdul-Sheikh, 48, was at home when he heard the sound of Israeli aircrafts, followed by an explosion. Approximately ten minutes later, Muhammad heard children shouting outside saying that the Israeli forces had dropped leaflets.

Some text and a map were printed on each side of the paper. One map showed the northern part of the Middle Area governorate and the governorates of the Gaza and the North Gaza. On the other side of the leaflet, another map showed the southern part of the Middle area governorate and the governorates of Khan Younis and Rafah. The text of the leaflets warned the population of the Gaza Strip of the threats posed by Palestinian militants operating in the area. The Israeli military demanded that the population take measures in order to prevent any future danger resulting from the presence of the Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip. The leaflet referred to the firing of rockets in the proximity of residential areas in the Gaza Strip and warned the population not to approach the Israeli border at a distance of 300 meters. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7839/2012](#)).



Unofficial Translation: To the people of the Strip (sic!): The Israeli army are warning not to approach the border within 300 metres of the border. The Israeli army will take necessary measures to eliminate those who would put themselves at risk, including shooting fire when necessary. You are warned!

Shortly after the ceasefire that brought the latest escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip, between 8 and 21 November, to a close, Al-Haq documented numerous cases of farmers being targeted by the Israeli military while working on land located in the proximity of the buffer zone along the border of the Gaza Strip. The vague terms of the agreement, which did not specify what territory or water farmers and fishermen are permitted to access, put the lives of Palestinian civilians at **risk**.

On 30 November, at approximately 4:30 pm, Israeli soldiers stationed on the Gaza Strip side of the border near Rafah, opened fire at a group of residents walking towards the border. A civilian, Mahmoud 'Ala Jarghoun, 21, was hit in his pelvis by a live bullet and, after being transferred to Abu Yousef al-Najjar hospital in Rafah and then to the intensive care unit of Gaza European hospital in Khan Younis, died as a result of the injuries he sustained. [\(See Al-Haq Weekly Focus on Palestinians under Israeli fire in the Buffer Zone\)](#).

The Palestinian Authority

West Bank

Following the political split between the authorities in the Gaza Strip and those in the West Bank in 2006, the Palestinian people have suffered from a wave of human rights abuses related to the political stalemate, including the oppression of political opponents.

In October 2012, [local elections](#) were held in the West Bank under the supervision and responsibility of the Central Elections Commission (CEC). While the general local election took place on 20 October 2012, police and security personnel participated in an early voting day on 18 October 2012. Supplementary elections, initially postponed due to the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012, took place on 22 December 2012.

Al-Haq monitored the elections and concluded that overall the local elections were impartial and transparent. However, violations were committed during and in connection with the elections. *Inter alia*, during the pre-election phase, beginning 18 September 2012, Palestinian security services carried out a large-scale detention campaign across the West Bank. Detainees were questioned about their position towards the local elections, election trends, and their relationship with candidates. Moreover, during the early voting day for the security services, some security officers were seemingly tasked with checking the voters against a list of members of security agencies, verifying the voters' identification cards, and striking their names off the list before they went to vote. The security officers in charge of these lists would also call those who did not vote on the phone and request them to do so. Similarly, during the general election, candidates and their proponents remained adjacent to the polling centres and carried lists to check and register voters' names. Finally, Al-Haq received complaints that money and pre-paid mobile phone cards had been distributed during the elections in exchange for votes. Al-Haq also received complaints indicating that **bribes** had been offered within certain elected councils of local bodies with the aim of influencing the choice of chairpersons of these local bodies.

Furthermore, during the reporting period Al-Haq's fieldworkers documented violations of the right to **freedom of association** by the Palestinian Authority (PA). In September the Palestinian Intelligence and Preventive Security Forces **arrested** more than 130 persons throughout the West Bank, specifically in Toulkarem, Qalqiliya, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Salfit. Among those arrested for their alleged affiliation with Hamas were human rights defenders, politicians, journalists, school teachers and university students. Many of these had only recently been released from Israel prisons.

On 18 September, four Palestinian officers from the Preventive Security Forces and another person in civil clothing arrived at the home of Riyadh Rashid Walwil, 50, in Qalqiliya. Riyadh was taken by military jeep to the Preventive Security headquarters, east of Qalqiliya, without being given any explanation.

In a sworn statement Riyadh explained what happened when he arrived at the Preventive Security headquarters.

[T]he interrogator wanted to know my position and I told him that I am not interested in the elections and that they (referring to the political parties) did not talk to me about who is running for the elections. [...]I told the interrogator that until Election Day, Allah will help us. The interrogator asked me about my trip to Hebron with some Da'wa (preaching) men to preach there, and if Hamas had a role in supporting the Da'wa men. I denied that Hamas had a role in supporting the Da'wa men. He also asked me if I was giving lessons at the mosque and I said yes.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7732/2012](#). Given by Riyadh Rashid Walwil, a resident of Qalqiliya, Qalqiliya governorate.

The following day, at approximately 11:00 am, Riyadh was interrogated further by another investigator and was asked about his alleged affiliation to Hamas and Hamas' position in the elections. Afterwards, he was brought before the Director of the Interrogation Department, who accused Riyadh of being affiliated with Hamas and **threatened** him with repeated arrest if he suspected Riyadh's involvement in any Hamas-related activities. At approximately 12:15 pm, the Preventive Security Forces released Riyadh. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No.7732/2012](#)).

In another case of arbitrary arrest, the Palestinian Preventive Security Forces arrested As'ad Muhammad Abu Ghosh, a Palestinian who had been released from an Israeli prison on 2 September 2012. On the night of 2 September, a Preventive Security patrol arrived at As'ad's home in the Balata refugee camp, Nablus governorate, and provided him with a summons ordering that he appear at the Preventive Security Forces headquarters on 8 September 2012.

On the set day, As'ad reported to the headquarters and, after being arrested, he was transferred to the al-Junaid Palestinian prison, Nablus governorate, where he was denied any family visits until he was released on 17 September. While in detention, he was questioned about his imprisonment in Israeli jails and was threatened with prolonged detention if he did not reveal what information he had provided to Israeli interrogators.

On 18 September, the Preventive Security Forces arrived at As'ad's home and arrested him once more. The following day, As'ad was transferred again to the al-Junaid prison, where he began a **hunger strike** in protest against his detention without charge and the denial of family visits. He has been in detention since that date and two days later As'ad was still on hunger strike. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7733/2012](#)).

During the reporting period Muhammad 'Abdul-Muttaleb al-Zaqzouq, 20, a prisoner in custody at the al-Qarara police station was declared dead at the Nasir hospital in Khan Younis, after having been detained for less than one day. Muhammad's family members blame al-Qarara police officers for Muhammad's death. The police officers, however, reported that Muhammad had committed suicide while he was held in **solitary confinement**, and that they immediately took him to the hospital when they realised that the man was in grave danger.

At approximately 6:30 pm on the day that Muhammad was arrested his father, Sa'id 'Abdul-Muttaleb al-Zaqzouq, received a phone call from a man who introduced himself as a police officer from the Khan Younis police station and informed him that his son Muhammad had been transferred to Nasir hospital in Khan Younis in critical condition, after he had attempted **suicide** by hanging. Sa'id told the man that he had already been informed by someone else working at the same hospital that his son had died. Subsequently, the police officer confirmed Muhammad's death.

In a sworn statement Sa'id described what happened when he and his relatives went to Nasir hospital, upon receiving news of Muhammad's death.

Along with the head of the family, Nathmi al-Zaqzouq, and some other men from my extended family, I went to Nasir hospital. When we arrived at the hospital, police officers refused to allow us to visit the mortuary to see my son's body. As they quarrelled, police officers assaulted and insulted the head of the family. They prevented us from seeing Muhammad's corpse. About an hour and a half later, a police force arrived with a committee from Gaza city that had been established by The Ministry of Interior to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of my son Muhammad. Representatives of human rights organisations accompanied the Police force and the committee. Then, they allowed us to see Muhammad's body. Contrary to the Police's claim that he hanged himself with a blanket, I did not notice any evidence of hanging on Muhammad's neck.

Extract from [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7792/2012](#). Given by Sa'id 'Abdul-Muttaleb al-Zaqzouq, a resident of al-Qarara town, Khan Yunis governorate.

Afterwards, the body was transferred to al-Shifa' hospital in Gaza to allow for the autopsy to be carried out to ascertain the cause of Muhammad's death. The forensic doctor finally informed Sa'id that he would write the autopsy report, and submit it to the Palestinian Attorney General of the Gaza Strip. The father then took Muhammad's body back to his home for the funeral. ([See Al-Haq Affidavit No. 7792/2012](#)).

Al-Haq field researchers were able to gather additional information from an eyewitness, Mahmoud Yousef Zu'rob, 21, who was also being held in custody at the Khan Younis police station when the incident took place. Mahmoud Zu'rob reported that he saw Muhammad shouting at and insulting the officers when he arrived at the police headquarters. The policemen then forced him into the same jail where the eyewitness was held.

Later the same day, Mahmoud was allowed to leave the cell to prepare meals for the other detainees; at that point, he saw Muhammad outside the interrogation room, in the

corridor in his underwear, soiling the wall with his excrement. The policemen stopped him and poured water on the detainee. Subsequently, the eyewitness saw the police officers repeatedly whipping the soles of Muhammad's feet with plastic sticks (using a torture technique called 'falaka'). Afterwards, the soldiers handcuffed him and forced him into the solitary confinement cell. The eyewitness then heard Muhammad screaming in the cell and saying that he would kill himself if they kept him in that cell. The police officers then removed the shackles from his hands and feet but left the detainee in the same cell. Muhammad continued screaming, demanding to be taken out of the cell and saying that he was suffocating. Mahmoud heard Muhammad shouting until late in the afternoon, when he was ordered to distribute dinner among the detainees. When the eyewitness approached the solitary confinement cell, he saw, through the little window on the door, that a torn blanket was tied from the window's cell to Muhammad's neck. Immediately, the eyewitness informed the policemen who headed towards the cell. When they cut the blanket, Muhammad fell to the ground without moving. One of the detainees, who is as a nurse, was brought to the cell and tried to rescue Muhammad but to no avail. Ten minutes later, an ambulance transferred the unconscious man to Nasir hospital.

A medical report from Nasir hospital in Khan Younis revealed that Muhammad arrived at the hospital at 7:30 pm **unconscious**, with no pulse and with a bruise on the front of his neck. Medical personnel tried cardiopulmonary resuscitation for 30 minutes without results. According to the medical accounts, it had been reported that Muhammad had committed suicide. Doctors declared Muhammad **deceased** at 8:30 pm the same day.

More than a week after the incident, investigations had still not shed any light on the circumstances leading to Muhammad's death. The family had not received the autopsy report, which could clarify important aspects of this case. Last year, Al-Haq reported a similar case of a detainee, 'Adil Salah Riziq, 52, dying of unknown causes under the Gaza authority. ([See Al-Haq Weekly Focus 52-Year-Old Palestinian Dies in Prison in the Gaza Strip](#))

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT
1 JULY – 31 DECEMBER 2012
STATISTICS

THE WESTBANK

KILLINGS BY THE OCCUPYING POWER

Total number of killings	7
---------------------------------	----------

Types of Killings

Extra Judicial Killing	0
Other Circumstances	7

Victims

Women	0
Children	1
Men	6

Killings by District

Bethlehem	1
Hebron	2
Jenin	0
Jericho	0
Jerusalem	0
Nablus	0
Toulkarem	3
Ramallah	1
Total	7

Killings by Age Group

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

Situation During Killing

Normal/calm	5
Demonstration	2
Total	7

Methods of Killing

Live bullet	6
Beating	1
Total	7

HOUSE DEMOLITIONS BY DISTRICT

House Demolitions for Lack of Licence

Bethlehem	22
Hebron	34
Jenin	34
Jericho	1
Jerusalem	20
Nablus	5
Ramallah	9
Toulkarem	6
Total	131

THE GAZA STRIP

KILLINGS BY THE OCCUPYING POWER

Total of Killings	24
--------------------------	-----------

Types of Killings

Extra Judicial Killing	0
Targeted Assassination	5
Other Circumstances	19

Victims

Women	0
Children	0
Men	24

Killings by District

Gaza	14
Rafah	5
Khan Younis	0
Deir al-Balah	5
Total	24

Death Penalty

Killed Inside Prison	3
Killed Outside of Prison	7

Killings by Age Groups

12 or younger	0
13-17	0
18-25	13
26-35	8
36-50	3
Over 50	0
Total	24

Situation During Killing

Normal/Calm	24
Shelling	0
Demonstration	0
Invading	0
Total	24

Methods of Killing

Live bullet	5
Shrapnel	16
Frag.Bullet	1
Missile	2
Total	24

Killed During the Military Operation on The Gaza Strip 2012

	Men	Women	Children	Total
Civilian	68	14	39	121
Combatant				57
Total				178