



AL-HAQ

Special Focus

Advancing Annexation: Violent Settler Attacks and Arson on
Palestinian Property

Introduction

Settler violence plays an increasingly integral role in entrenching Israel's settler colonial apartheid regime in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). The gravity, scale and intensity of settler violence has grown exponentially in recent years as Israel supports, encourages and protects the perpetrators while abandoning Palestinian victims of assault, threats, intimidation, and dispossession and turning a blind eye to Palestinian communities facing routine attacks. Settler violence is not a series of individual or minor incidents, as claimed by Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,¹ but rather a widespread and systematic practice facilitated by Israel to pursue its Zionist settler colonial goal of Palestinian erasure.

Between January and mid-March 2026, eight Palestinians were killed by Israeli settlers in the OPT, which is as many as in the whole of 2025.² Six Palestinians were killed during the first three weeks of March – when the majority of Palestinians were marking the Holy month of Ramadan.³ In addition, on 19 March 2026, the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned that, in 2026, “more than 260 Palestinians [had] been injured by Israeli settlers during settler attacks, reflecting a threefold increase in the monthly average of Palestinians injured by settlers during settler attacks since 2023.”⁴ The rapid increase in settler violence, has been condemned in a joint statement issued by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of 20 countries in February 2026,⁵ and more recently by the European Union in May 2026.⁶

¹ France 24, “Netanyahu condemns settler violence by ‘extremists’ after West Bank village torched”, 17 November 2025, available at: <https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20251117-netanyahu-condemns-settler-violence-by-extremists-after-west-bank-clashes>.

² OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Report/ 19 March 2026”, 19 March 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-report-19-march-2026#west-bank>.

³ Le Monde with Association France Press, “European nations decry increasing settler terror” in West Bank”, 21 March 2026, available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/en/middle-east-crisis/article/2026/03/21/european-nations-decry-increasing-settler-terror-in-west-bank_6751672_368.html.

⁴ OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Report/ 19 March 2026”, 19 March 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-report-19-march-2026#west-bank>.

⁵ Federative Republic of Brazil, the French Republic, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Finland, Iceland, the Republic of Indonesia, Ireland, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Kingdom of Norway, the State of Palestine, the Portuguese Republic, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Slovenia, the Kingdom of Spain, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Republic of Türkiye, and the Secretary Generals of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Joint statement of Foreign Ministers of 20 countries on recent Israeli decisions extending unlawful Israeli control over the West Bank (Non-UN Document) (23 February 2026), <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/joint-statement-on-recent-israeli-decisions-extending-unlawful-israeli-control-over-the-west-bank-non-un-document/>; Security Council Report, “The Middle East, including the Palestinian Question: Briefing and Consultations”, 21 March 2026, available at: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2026/03/the-middle-east-including-the-palestinian-question-briefing-and-consultations-22.php>.

⁶ European External Action Service, “EU Statement – UN Security Council Arria-formula meeting: the West Bank, including East Jerusalem” (8 May 2026), <https://ebs.publicnow.com/view/10691FBFD82D6C7B672E667D38C253E03D33CC53>

I. Contextual Background

Serving “Israel’s strategy to dispossess and forcibly transfer Palestinians”,⁷ settler violence is a direct consequence of settlement expansion, which is increasing year-on-year. In the last two years “there has been an unparalleled spike in settlement activities, increasing the already unprecedented encroachment on Palestinian land and dramatically changing the geography of the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem”.⁸ During this period, 141 new outposts (including 12 in Area B, which are even illegal under Israel’s domestic law) were established by settlers, compared to a yearly average of eight outposts in the previous ten years.⁹ Damage of Palestinian properties, including the Israeli State policy of demolitions, and subsequent forcible displacement of the indigenous Palestinian population has equally sky rocketed. As previously highlighted by Al-Haq, approximately half of all Palestinian land, unlawfully declared by Israel as “State land” since the Oslo Accords, was declared in 2024.¹⁰

The *de facto* annexation of Palestinian territory continued into 2025, with Israel’s Minister of Finance, Bezalel Smotrich, announcing on 20 March 2025 “an annual record for approvals for housing units in Gush Etzion, and we are only in the first third of the year. We are leading a revolution in [the West Bank]- to strengthen our sovereignty”.¹¹ On 29 May 2025, Minister Smotrich, pursued this effort to *de facto* acquire more Palestinian lands in the West Bank and made public the creation of 22 further new settlements. Israel’s Minister of Defence, Israel Katz, added that the “[n]ext step is sovereignty”. The exponential rates of settlement expansion have been hailed by Katz as changing “the face of the region and shap[ing] the future of settlement for years to come.”¹² Settler violence and Israel’s *de facto* annexation of the OPT are intertwined, as shown by the consistent establishment of outposts by settlers themselves in the OPT. According to Peace Now, there were 224 illegal outposts established in the West Bank as of December 2025.¹³ While these outposts are illegal even under Israeli law, they are subsequently legalized by the Israeli authorities.

⁷ Dr. Mais Qandeel, “Settler Violence as State Wrongful Act and Third State Obligations”, *Opinio Juris*, 15 August 2025, available at: <https://opiniojuris.org/2025/08/15/settler-violence-as-state-wrongful-act-and-third-state-obligations/>.

⁸ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Israel’s discriminatory administration of the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem*, 7 January 2026, p.19, available at: https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/20260105-Thematic-Report_Israels-discriminatory-administration_formatted.pdf.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Al-Haq, Special Focus, “Consolidating Annexation of the West Bank: Israel’s Demolitions in Area B”, 2025, available at: <https://www.alhaq.org/monitoring-documentation/26151.html>.

¹¹ @bezalelsm (7:09 pm, 20 March 2025), <https://x.com/bezalelsm/status/1902799619852996893>.

¹² Le Monde, Agence France Presse (AFP), “Israel announces creation of 22 new settlements in West Bank”, 29 May 2025, available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2025/05/29/israel-announces-creation-of-22-new-settlements-in-west-bank_6741808_4.html

¹³ Peace Now, Population, available at: <https://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/population>.

In June 2025, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway and the United Kingdom made a joint statement announcing “sanctions and other measures targeting Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich for inciting violence against Palestinians in the West Bank”, stating:

*Settler violence has led to the deaths of Palestinian civilians and the displacement of whole communities. Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich have incited extremist violence and serious abuses of Palestinian human rights. Extremist rhetoric advocating the forced displacement of Palestinians and the creation of new Israeli settlements is appalling and dangerous. These actions are not acceptable. We have engaged the Israeli Government on this issue extensively, yet violent perpetrators continue to act with encouragement and impunity. This is why we have taken this action now – to hold those responsible to account.*¹⁴

Undeterred, in August 2025, the settlement subcommittee of the Civil Administration approved the construction of the E1 settlement plan in an alarming development that gravely undermines the territorial contiguity of the West Bank and consolidates Israel’s long-standing efforts to eradicate the prospect of a sovereign Palestinian State, and with it its indigenous Palestinian population.¹⁵ The “E1 area” encompasses a 12 km² narrow land corridor in the central West Bank and serves as an essential passage connecting the northern and southern parts of the unlawfully occupied West Bank, including Jerusalem. This decision, which includes the construction of over 3,800 housing units for illegally transferred in settlers on occupied Palestinian land,¹⁶ was presented by Smotrich, as a move which “buries the idea of a Palestinian State” further stating there will simply be “nothing to recognise and no one left to recognise”.¹⁷

Following on from Israel’s approval of the E1 settlement plan, and emboldened by continued impunity, on 8 February 2026, the Israeli Security Cabinet adopted a series of measures, described by Israeli media as the most significant changes to the West Bank’s legal status since 1967, that will “dramatically” change land registration and unlawful property acquisition procedures in the West Bank, allowing the purchasing of Palestinian land and properties by Jewish settlers (from Israel and abroad) without government oversight and with minimal limitations.¹⁸ In addition, the Cabinet expanded Israeli civilian authority in areas A

¹⁴ Gov. UK., “Foreign ministers’ joint statement on measures targeting Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich”, 10 June 2025”, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-ministers-joint-statement-on-measures-targeting-itamar-ben-gvir-and-bezalel-smotrich>.

¹⁵ See Al-Haq, “Al-Haq Condemns Israel’s Steps towards Unprecedented Annexation, Warns of the Catastrophic Consequences of the E1 Settlement Plan”, 21 October 2025, available at: <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/26709.html>.

¹⁶ Middle East Eye, “Israel approves E1 settlement to ‘erase’ Palestinian state with ‘actions not slogans’”, 20 August 2025, available at: <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-approves-e1-settlement-smotrich-says-palestinian-state-being-erased>.

¹⁷ Al Jazeera (Instagram), August 2025, available at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DNVagSqN52J/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.

¹⁸ The Times of Israel, “Security cabinet okays ‘dramatic’ West Bank policy overhaul, deepening Israeli control”, 8 February 2026, available at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/security-cabinet-okays-dramatic-west-bank-policy-overhaul-deepening-israeli-control/.

and B further consolidating its annexation of Palestinian territory. Upon announcing the measures, Israel's Minister of Defence, Israel Katz, stated:

*We are committed to removing barriers, creating legal and civil certainty, and allowing settlers to live, build and develop on equal footing with every citizen of Israel.*¹⁹

Finance Minister Smotrich confirmed the settler-colonial aim of the most recent measures, saying the move is “normalizing life in the West Bank” and promises to “continue to kill the idea of a Palestinian state.”²⁰

As a result of unlawful settlement expansion, Palestinians are surrounded by Israeli settlements and outposts. The strategic positioning of said developments allows for recurrent attacks by Israeli settlers, creating a coercive environment aimed at the destruction and expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland. As highlighted by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), these attacks take place amongst Israel's intensified steps to annex the OPT:

*Ongoing attacks by illegal Israeli settlers, often supported and joined by Israeli security forces, continue to instil fear, destroy homes and livelihoods, and force Palestinians out of their lands in the occupied West Bank. These actions advance Israel's stated policy to consolidate annexation in clear violation of international law.*²¹

From 1 January 2024 to 30 November 2025, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) documented over 3,139 settler attacks that resulted in casualties and/or property damage as of 17 December 2025.²² This is an average of five incidents per day.²³ This sharp escalation was observed mainly in Area C of the West Bank, which amounts to 60 per cent thereof. Recently, Area B has also witnessed an increase in settler attacks since the establishment of a new outpost in August 2025 in “the eastern outskirts of Atara village in Ramallah governorate”.²⁴

Palestinian complaints of settler violence mirrored this increase. According to the Israeli police, 427 complaints were filed during the first half of 2025, while 680 complaints were recorded in the whole year of 2024. However, it is important to stress that these figures are not reflective of the incident rate of endemic settler violence. For instance, Colonization and

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ UN, The Question of Palestine, “Israeli settler attacks surging: displacement and steps to annex intensify in the occupied West Bank”, 27 October 2025, available at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/ohchr-press-release-27oct25/>.

²² UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 350 / West Bank”, 23 December 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-350-west-bank>.

²³

²⁴ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 356 / West Bank”, 5 February 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-356-west-bank>.

Wall Resistance Commission, an organisation monitoring attacks by illegally transferred in settlers, recorded 766 attacks in October 2025 alone.²⁵

Settler violence continues unabated in 2026, with over 150 incidents documented by UN OCHA from 6 January to 27 March that resulted in casualties or property damage.²⁶ As a result, “nearly 700 Palestinians in nine communities have been displaced due to settler attacks so far in 2026, including 600 displaced from Ras Ein Al Auja Bedouin community in Jericho governorate.”²⁷ The total number of displaced Palestinians rose to 1,697 on 27 March 2026, “surpassing the whole of 2025”.²⁸

II. Attacks against Palestinian property

In January 2026, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a statement stressing that:

*State-backed settler violence has become a key driver of forced displacement, chipping away at Palestinian presence in strategic locations. Such settler-driven displacement, particularly in Bedouin and herding communities, usually follows the same pattern: an illegal outpost is erected near or inside a herding community, settlers restrict Palestinians’ access to water and grazing space, settlers repeatedly attack communities, destroy property, infrastructure and livestock.*²⁹

The following sections provide a non-exhaustive, but illustrative, overview of attacks by Israeli settlers resulting in property damage and/or demolitions, documented by Al-Haq or the UN.

A. Attacks on tents, homes, buildings and household furniture

Hassan Mahmoud Ibrahim Al-Sada, 28, stated to Al-Haq that at approximately 7:30 p.m. on 15 August 2024, he learned through social media that Israeli settlers were setting fire to olive trees in the Al-Bayada area in the south-eastern part of the village of Jit. Subsequently, at around 7:50 p.m., he went to the area that the settlers had burned and “saw that the settlers

²⁵ Al-Haq, “Israeli Settler Terrorism as a Tool of Demographic Engineering in Occupied Palestinian Territory”, 10 November 2025, available at: <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/26732.html>.

26

UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Report | 27 March 2026”, 27 March 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-report-27-march-2026>.

²⁷UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 356 / West Bank”, 5 February 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-356-west-bank>.

²⁸ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Report | 27 March 2026”, 27 March 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-report-27-march-2026>.

²⁹ UN OHCHR, “Settler violence drives forced displacement in the West Bank”, 28 January 2026, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/settler-violence-drives-forced-displacement-west-bank-enar>.

had burned the house of Rabah Hassan Arman, the house of Dr. Ibrahim Al-Sada, the house of Hani Musa Arman, and the house of Ali Ata Al-Sada, all of which are located in the aforementioned Al-Bayada area”:

There were more than 100 Israeli settlers who attacked the area, all wearing black clothes and masks covering their faces, with a white eagle emblem on their clothes. Rashid, myself, and other villagers began trying to extinguish the fires set by the settlers. It should be noted that the settlers were armed with small firearms and M16 combat weapons. At around 8:30 p.m. that same day, after dark, while Rashid and I were trying to extinguish the fires in the area, a large group of settlers approached, one of them carrying a weapon with a laser sight attached to it. He was several metres away from us, and when I saw him firing live ammunition, Rashid and I hid behind a pile of bricks to avoid being hit. At that moment, I was shocked to see Rashid, who was a metre away from me, lying on the ground next to me. I realised that my cousin Rashid had been injured (...) It is worth noting that about 15 minutes later, Israeli occupation forces arrived in the Al-Bayada area in three military patrols and dismounted. Israeli settlers were still burning and attacking the property of citizens in the village.³⁰

Shahira Issa Mutlaq Hamoud recounted a separate attack on 19 October 2024 that she and others were subjected to:

I saw about 15-20 Israeli settlers in civilian clothing, their faces covered with masks, carrying sticks and stones, attacking the houses surrounding my home. (...) I heard the sound of glass breaking. I realised that the settlers had reached the front of the house and had started breaking the windows on the eastern and northern sides. I then realised that the settlers had surrounded the house (...) I looked towards my house and saw thick black smoke coming out of the eastern side. I realised that the Israeli settlers had set my house on fire because of the black smoke coming out of it (...) The settlers also burned the house of Faisal Issam Ahmad Hamoud, 47 years old.

About an hour after the attack on my house and the houses of neighbours and relatives in the residential neighbourhood where I live by Israeli settlers, I left Hashem's house and headed towards my house. When I arrived, I saw that the fire set by the settlers had completely burned the eastern bedroom and kitchen of my house, and black smoke was spreading throughout the house. The residents and neighbours had worked to extinguish the fire in my house before I arrived. I knew that the Israeli settlers who attacked my house and the houses in the village were protected and guarded by Israeli occupation soldiers and had come from the settlement outpost called 'Esh Godeish,' which means 'holy fire' in Arabic, located east of our village at a distance of approximately 3 km. This is the first time that Israeli settlers have burned and attacked

³⁰ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Hassan Mahmoud Ibrahim Al-Sada, 28, resident of Jit village (29 October 2024), on file with Al-Haq, 2024-08-350-QA-K-A1-IL-SET.

*my house, but they usually attack the houses in the village and assault private and public property.*³¹



Copyright @Al-Haq, Jalud, 22 October 2024

In the early hours of 9 October 2025, Israeli settlers threw Molotov cocktails and destroyed a residential tent in Al Jwaya village in southern Hebron, displacing a family of five.³² On 24 December 2025, in Al Mazraa ash Sharqia in Ramallah governorate, Israeli settlers set fire to a Palestinian-owned residential building under construction, damaging its staircase, doors and façade, and sprayed slogans in Hebrew on the walls.

Similar attacks continue to be witnessed in 2026. On 3 January 2026, Israeli settlers broke into and vandalized a secondary residence on the northern outskirts of Sinjil village in Ramallah governorate, destroying furniture and household property.³³ On 27 January 2026, about 300 Israeli settlers raided four communities in Masafer Yatta, attacked the Palestinian

³¹ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Shahira Issa Mutlaq Hamoud, 67, resident of Jaloud village (22 October 2024), on file with Al-Haq, 2024-10-076-NA-F-A1-IL-SET.

³² UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 332 / West Bank”, 16 October 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-332-west-bank>.

33

UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 352 / West Bank”, 7 January 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-352-west-bank>.

residents and burned approximately three tons of firewood.³⁴ Also in January 2026, Israeli settlers torched and destroyed homes belonging to the Bedouin residents of Mukhmas. On 1 February 2026, in what appears to be a coordinated move, the IOF intervened and prevented the affected communities from rebuilding their homes, arguing that the area was a “closed military zone”.³⁵

On 10 February 2026, a large group of Israeli settlers invaded the Wasteih area in Al-Duyuk Al-Tahta, near Jericho, where they arrived with vehicles, including dozens of tractors, motorcycles and a bulldozer. They attacked the Palestinian residents of the Shati community, forcing them to flee. The bulldozer then destroyed 12 Palestinian homes until 8 pm on the same day, including the homes of **Yusuf Aliyan Muhammad Ka'abneh, Rashid Youssef Alian Kaabneh, Bassem Muhammad Alian Kaabneh, Mohammed Alian Mohammed Kaabneh, Mustafa Alian Muhammad Kaabneh, Mar'i Mustafa Alian Ka'abna, Muayad Fayez Musa Kaabneh, Fayez Musa Muhammad Kaabna, Iyad Fayez Musa Kaabna, Mustafa Fayez Musa Kaabneh, and Musa Fayez Musa Kaabna**. As a result, twelve families were displaced from their homes, escaping towards the city of Jericho without housing or shelter.

Our field researchers did not rule out the possibility “that the attack was planned in advance, given that this number of settlers, vehicles and bulldozers had been gathered from neighbouring outposts and settlements.” The demolition was carried out by settlers accompanied by soldiers in military uniforms, who, according to residents interviewed by Al-Haq, “were settlers in military uniforms and not regular soldiers.”

Al-Haq’s investigation confirmed that the demolitions that occurred on 10 February 2026 also affected the walls and homes of Palestinians from Jerusalem in the Sateh area, an area from which Palestinians continue to be forcibly displaced. This serious incident signals that illegally transferred in settlers have the “power to demolish an entire neighbourhood without any hindrance or obstruction”. This practice may subsequently continue in other areas, particularly those in strategic locations close to infrastructure and other illegal settlements and outposts, where Israeli settlers intend to displace Palestinian owners, affecting villages, towns or suburbs, as occurred in the neighbourhood of Jericho.³⁶

This incident echoes the escalation of violent displacement of Palestinians conducted by “‘regional defence’ settler units” - reserve units armed with sniper rifles and “drawn from

³⁴ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 356 / West Bank”, 5 February 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-356-west-bank>; UN OHCHR, “Settler violence drives forced displacement in the West Bank”, 28 January 2026, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/settler-violence-drives-forced-displacement-west-bank-enar>.

³⁵ Matan Golan, “IDF Blocks Palestinian Bedouins From Rebuilding Their West Bank Homes Burned by Israeli Settlers”, Haaretz, 2 February 2026, available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israel-security/2026-02-02/ty-article/.premium/idf-blocks-palestinian-bedouins-from-rebuilding-their-west-bank-homes-burned-by-settlers/0000019c-1ab6-d6ab-a7df-bbfe1ddd0000>.

³⁶ Al-Haq, Report on the destruction and demolition of residential and non-residential structures by settlers in the Wasteih area in Al-Duyuk Al-Tahta, west of Jericho, on 10 February 2026, on file with Al-Haq.

settlements functioning as vigilante militias, according to Israeli soldiers and activists, and the United Nations”.³⁷ These units, called “Hagmar”, were set up across the West Bank during Israel’s genocidal campaign in the Gaza Strip in October 2023. Israel provides weapons, authority, as well as salaries to thousands of settlers who subsequently formed military units whose conduct remains unregulated. Israel pays Hagmar salaries, but in effect they operate in parallel to regular battalions.”³⁸ A former Israeli reservist said that these units are responsible for the “vandalism of houses, trees, fruit, and agricultural produce, theft of livestock, intimidation and careless weapons handling.”³⁹

Similarly, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) noted that the marked escalation in settler violence has continued unabated “with Israeli authorities playing the central role in directing, participating in or enabling this conduct” through formal and informal support of the militarization of the settler movement, including by providing arms, equipment and training to “settler-soldiers”.⁴⁰

B. Attacks on water and electricity networks

In 2025, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) documented “at least 10 attacks in which settlers infiltrated the spring area in Ein Samiya, damaged surveillance cameras, stole equipment belonging to the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) and assaulted maintenance staff who arrived to carry out repairs.”⁴¹

In Hebron governorate, on 14 September 2025, during ongoing bulldozing works carried out by settlers near the Bedouin community of Khirbet Umm al Kheir, the community’s water and electricity networks were destroyed. As a result, 35 families comprising about 200 people were left without access to water and electricity for five days.⁴² In another herding community, Umm At Tiran near Khirbet Zanuta, on 22 September 2025, an Israeli settler cut

³⁷ Yesh Din, Settlers in Uniform Violence Against Palestinians by Israelis in Military Uniforms (December 2025), <https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files.yesh-din.org/Settlers+in+Uniform/Settlers+in+Uniform+ENG.pdf>; Emma Graham-Harrison and Quique Kierszenbaum, “Settlers-only units functioning as ‘vigilante militias’ in West Bank”, The Guardian, 30 January 2026, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/30/settler-only-idf-units-functioning-as-vigilante-militias-in-west-bank>.

³⁸ Emma Graham-Harrison and Quique Kierszenbaum, “Settlers-only units functioning as ‘vigilante militias’ in West Bank”, The Guardian, 30 January 2026, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/30/settler-only-idf-units-functioning-as-vigilante-militias-in-west-bank>.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ UN Human Rights Council, A/HRC/61/70, para. 29, 4 February 2026, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session61/advance-version/a-hrc-61-70-aev.pdf>

⁴¹ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 346 / West Bank”, 4 December 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-346-west-bank>.

⁴² UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 325 / West Bank”, 24 September 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-325-west-bank>.

water pipes and destroyed wires and part of the solar panel system. As of the time of reporting, two families remained disconnected from water and electricity supply.⁴³

On 30 November 2025, settlers raided the water spring area and “damaged the connection cables linking the well to the main monitoring and supply system, which serves some 100,000 Palestinians in 20 villages”.⁴⁴ The JWU reported repeated daily settler incursions targeting the facility, posing serious risks to the continuity and security of the water supply and the staff. Similarly, in January 2026, Israeli settlers carried out three attacks on the same water infrastructure, including on 25 January, when “settlers broke into the Ein Samiya wells site and destroyed key components of the water network, including the control panel and connecting cables belonging to the [JWU], forcing maintenance staff who attempted to carry out repairs to leave the site following threats and intimidation”.⁴⁵ The repair team returned to the site the day after and was attacked by the settlers. The water supply was cut for three days, affecting the whole community relying on it.⁴⁶

Settlers further targeted farmers, destroying their equipment, which is often accompanied by attacks on their water tanks.

C. Attacks on agricultural equipment and olive trees

Agriculture holds deep cultural, economic, and historical meaning in Palestine, and olive trees are at the heart of the Palestinian connection to their land. Olive cultivation represents both the enduring relationship between Palestinians and their land and a powerful symbol of heritage and perseverance. It is likely for this very reason, that ancient Palestinian olive groves are routinely attacked by violent gangs of Israeli settlers.

Over the past two years, the Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF) involvement in such attacks has been widely reported. **Mohammed Sa'ada Saleh Rabi**, 48, testified about an attack committed by settlers, under the protection of the IOF, on 6 July 2024:

At around 1 p.m., about 50 settlers attacked the plain east of the village of Turmusaya and set fire to the olive groves in that area. The residents rushed to the area to try to extinguish the fires, but Israeli occupation soldiers who were protecting the settlers prevented them from doing so. As the settlers retreated towards the settlement, they stormed the area where my land is located. They carried out several arson attacks at four locations where there were agricultural rooms, including my own agricultural room. According to security cameras, three masked settlers set it on fire at 5:26 p.m. that day, throwing flammable material inside it, which caused it to burn from the

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 346 / West Bank”, 4 December 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-346-west-bank>.

⁴⁵ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 346 / West Bank”, 4 December 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-346-west-bank>.

⁴⁶ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 356 / West Bank”, 5 February 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-356-west-bank>.

inside. They also gathered the outdoor furniture and set it on fire. The outdoor furniture consisted of a sofa set, a plastic table and 12 plastic chairs.

During this time, I learned from people that my room had been burned down... The next day, I went to the room to find it burned down ... On 7 July 2024, three masked settlers arrived and removed the remaining iron bars from the room's windows. They threw flammable material inside to finish burning it and also broke the last two cameras on the pole... It should be noted that this year I will not be able to go to my land to harvest olives during the olive harvest season, which began on 1 October 2024, due to the continued presence of settlers on the hill opposite my land, where there have been several attacks by settlers on farmers trying to reach their land. I used to produce about 14 tanks of oil from that location, but now I will not be able to harvest the olives.⁴⁷

Saber Muhammad Saber Asaliya, 27, testified to another settler attack that occurred on 12 November 2024:

Shortly after 1:30 p.m. (...) I saw about ten settlers walking along a dirt road and burning other olive trees. They burned about four more olive trees. At first, when I saw them, they were about 300 metres away from the garage, coming from the west, where I know there are several remote pastoral settlement outposts on the land of the village of Burqa, about 1 km west of the built-up part of the village.

I am certain that they are settlers because they have carried out many attacks in the area before, in addition to the fact that the area is no longer inhabited by citizens due to their attacks. The settlers continued to advance until they reached an agricultural room located below our garage, on a low hill about 200 metres away from our garage, in an area called Al-Balad or 'Al-Jartou', located west of our garage. I saw them setting fire to that agricultural room and the sheep pen next to it. As far as I know, the room and the sheep pen are empty, as their owner, Ahmad Mufleh, 'Abu Nidal', a resident of Burqa, has not been going there or using them for months, due to repeated attacks by settlers on villagers who go to that area...

I also saw that they had two dogs with them. The settlers were carrying car tyres, which they set alight in the room and the barn, causing a fierce fire to break out, especially as the barn was made of plastic sheeting, which is highly flammable. They continued burning the room and the barn for a few minutes, then moved to another location north of where I was, which I could not see from where I was standing. It should be noted that while the settlers were there, none of the villagers attempted to prevent them from burning the olive trees, the room and the barn, for fear that they might be armed, in addition to the presence of the two dogs with them, as I mentioned.

⁴⁷ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Mohammed Sa'ada Saleh Rabi, 48, resident of Turmusaya (29 October 2024) on file with Al-Haq, 2024-10-115-RB-F-A1-IL-SET.

Saber then recalled to Al-Haq the IOF's inaction against, and consequently tacit support for, the settler attacks in this area:

*About ten minutes after the settlers left, and no one had yet gone down to extinguish the fire for fear of going to that place, a force from the Israeli occupation army arrived, consisting of two military vehicles that came from the direction of the village. A number of soldiers got out and watched the burning fire without doing anything to extinguish it and without asking any of us about the cause of the fire. The occupation soldiers remained for about 15 minutes, then left the area. The fire continued to burn in the area, and no one dared to approach it for fear that settlers were nearby or hiding nearby, until it went out on its own after about six to seven hours. It should be noted that the settlers have carried out several acts of arson in the area, including four to five times on scrap cars that we use for parts from our garage. These four or five incidents took place last year and this year, and on all of these occasions we were unable to prevent the settlers from carrying out their attacks because they were armed and the occupation soldiers were there to protect them.*⁴⁸

The owner of the agricultural room, **Ahmed Mufleh Faleh Afana**, added that, in the aftermath of the establishment of two outposts surrounding his land, he has not been able to use the room for months “because settlers who are shepherds have been coming to graze their sheep on my land and entering the room. The settlers also started driving their tractors around the shed and its surroundings, so I became afraid to go to the shed or to my land in that area, and I stopped taking my sheep to the pen next to the shed”. He heard that these settlers attacked his property on 12 November 2024:

*On 13 November 2024, at around 2:15 p.m., ... I went to an area overlooking the agricultural room and saw the flames burning fiercely in it and in the barn and around them, destroying my agricultural possessions. No one dared to approach the room to extinguish the fire for fear that the settlers might be present or hiding nearby. ...The fire continued until around 5 p.m. ... When I went there, I found that the lock on the gate had been broken, the room had been entered and burned, and the simple furniture inside, consisting of a bed, plastic chairs, and teapots and cups for tea and coffee, had been burned. The barn was completely burned down, and a plastic tarpaulin that was inside the barn, about 300 metres long, was also burned.*⁴⁹

⁴⁸Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Saber Muhammad Saber Asaliya, 27, resident of Burqa, (13 November 2024), on file with Al-Haq, 2024-11-118-RB-F-A2-IL-SET.

⁴⁹ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Ahmed Mufleh Faleh Afana, 67, resident of Burqa (13 November 2024), on file with Al-Haq, 2024-11-118-RB-F-A1-IL-SET.



The burnt agricultural room, Copyright @ Al-Haq, Burqa, 13 November 2024

Since the establishment of a new Israeli settlement outpost in Area B on the outskirts of Atara village in early August 2025, Israeli settler attacks causing casualties or property damage have sharply increased.⁵⁰ Only two weeks after the outpost's establishment, illegally transferred in settlers assaulted Palestinian residents, damaged at least six agricultural structures and nine vehicles, destroyed furniture and equipment, and grazed their livestock on cultivated Palestinian lands, causing damage to dozens of olive and fruit trees.⁵¹ On 27 September 2025, settlers raided a fodder store in Khirbet al Fakheit, where they physically assaulted and injured a Palestinian woman as well as two international activists, broke their phones and destroyed 40 sacks of fodder.⁵²

Similarly, settler violence has significantly risen since the establishment of an outpost in Rantis village (Ramallah governorate). For instance, on 25 November 2025, settlers destroyed about 20 olive saplings and damaged two water tanks serving the community. On 28

⁵⁰UN OCHA have documented 30 of such attacks between January 2025 and January 2026, *see* UN OCHA, "Humanitarian Situation Update # 352 / West Bank", 7 January 2026, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-352-west-bank>.

⁵¹UN OCHA, "Humanitarian Situation Update # 332 / West Bank", 16 October 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-332-west-bank>.

⁵²UN OCHA, "Humanitarian Situation Update # 328 / West Bank", 2 October 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-328-west-bank>.

November, in the same area, settlers destroyed dozens of olive saplings and damaged the agricultural water network.⁵³

In Eid ad Duyk al Fauqa village (Jericho governorate), illegally transferred in settlers have also escalated their destructive, and often lethal, attacks following the establishment of an outpost in August 2024. They notably broke down the door of a house hosting activists providing support in the face of settler violence, physically assaulted and injured them, stoned the house and smashed windows and solar panels.⁵⁴

D. Attacks on vehicles

On 6 September 2024, settlers burnt one vehicle and attempted to burn two other cars in and near the Wadi Ammar area. The burnt car belonged to Mohammed Jamil Atta Shoman, a Palestinian-Brazilian resident who told Al-Haq that he was woken from his sleep at approximately 3:00 am when he heard footsteps followed by three explosions:

I realised that the sound was caused by the car I had parked next to the house (...) I rushed outside to find the car engulfed in flames (...) Due to the intensity of the fire (...) the car was completely charred, including the exterior, interior, seats, tyres and engine.

Mohammed then searched the car and found three small incendiary bombs, as well as a large stone, which led him to conclude:

It was clear that whoever set the car on fire had broken the car window with the stone and then thrown the bombs inside. While we were at the scene, we noticed a slogan written in Hebrew on the wall of the house of Jari Abdel Rahim Najib, about 20 metres from the car. The slogan translates as 'organised revenge' and next to it was a black Star of David. This slogan and the burning of the car made it certain that the settlers were responsible for this act, especially since recently, about a month ago, we began to notice settler activity in the area in the form of tractor tours in the Wadi Ammar area, which is about a five-minute walk from my house. This valley is located between the villages of Abu Falah and Turmusaya, whose lands are dotted with settlements and outposts. A number of residents of the area told me on the morning of the same day that they had seen a gathering of settlers, numbering between 15 and 20, on a hill between us and the village of Turmusaya, at around 7:00 a.m.⁵⁵

⁵³ UN OCHA, "Humanitarian Situation Update # 346 / West Bank", 4 December 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-346-west-bank>.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Mohammed Jamil Atta Shoman, 30, resident of Abu Falah (7 September 2024) on file with Al-Haq, 2024-09-065-RB-F-A1-IL-SET.



Mohammed's burnt car, Copyright @Al-Haq, Abu Falah village, 7 September 2024

On 10 October 2025, groups of Israeli settlers launched a series of attacks against Palestinian communities living in the town of Beita. The violent attacks featured physical assaults on the farmers in the area and the burning of their vehicles. **Mayser Musa Barham BaniShamsah**, (67) recounted to Al-Haq the first attack which took place around 9:00 am:

During the incident, the settlers burned a white 2008 Land Rover Defender after smashing it and throwing highly flammable materials into it. It was completely burned. This vehicle belonged to my son, Jihad Faleh Bani Shamsah. About half an hour after burning the Land Rover, the settlers burned another vehicle that was about 1 km away,... The settlers burned it completely. The settlers' attack on me and my family and their burning of the vehicles took place in full view of the Israeli occupation.⁵⁶

Around 11:00 am, another settler attack occurred in the Abu al-Hamra area of Beita. **Sharaf al-Din Omar Abd al-Latif Bani Shamsah** (28), a Palestinian farmer, described the incident to Al-Haq:

⁵⁶ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Mayser Musa Barham Bani Shamsah, 67, resident of Beita (11 October 2025), on file with Al-Haq, 2025-10-151-NA-F-A5-IL-SET.

*After arriving at Rafidia Government Hospital, I learned from the residents that dozens of injured people had been transferred from our town of Beita for treatment in hospitals as a result of an attack by settlers on farmers and residents during the olive harvest season. The settlers also burned several vehicles and smashed others. These settlers came from the new settlement outpost that the settlers established in the Jabal Qamas area about three months ago.*⁵⁷

Around 11:30 am, **Ibrahim Rashdan Hamdallah Aqtsh** (19) and her friends were picking olives when a group of Israeli settlers approached the olive groves they were in, broke the windows of a car and set it on fire. After the settlers left, another group of settlers (around 40 in number) attacked the Palestinian residents and farmers, injuring 35 persons and burning 15 civilian vehicles belonging to Palestinians— again, mostly farmers.⁵⁸

This later attack was further detailed, and corroborated, by OCHA:

*On 10 October, Israeli settlers, reportedly from a nearby settlement outpost and accompanied by Israeli forces, attacked Palestinian farmers and international activists harvesting olives on Qamas Mount area ... Israeli forces opened fire and used tear gas after farmers refused to leave, while settlers threw stones and physically assaulted several people, including three journalists. Sixty Palestinians were injured, including: one by live ammunition, two by stones, at least eight due to physical assault, and the rest (including a paramedic) received medical treatment due to tear gas inhalation. Settlers also burned 12 vehicles, damaged seven others and seized harvesting tools belonging to about 10 farmers.*⁵⁹

At approximately 12:00 pm, **Jafar Zahid Hussein Ashta** (57), a journalist, witnessed Palestinian farmers being attacked while harvesting olives by a group of over 20 Israeli settlers. They attacked a white jeep that was parked among olive trees, smashed its windows, threw flammable material inside, and set it on fire.⁶⁰

III. Legal Analysis

Settler attacks against Palestinian homes, property, agricultural equipment and infrastructure, such as water and energy structures, testify to a clear attempt to make life impossible. Successive Israeli governments have, through their rhetoric, policies and practices, clearly evinced their intent to destroy the Palestinian people as they pursue their Zionist agenda. Said genocidal, settler-colonial agenda is largely supported by the Israeli public – in particular

⁵⁷ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Sharaf al-Din Omar Abd al-Latif Bani Shamsah, 28, resident of Beita (11 October 2025) on file with Al-Haq, 2025-10-151-NA-F-A4-IL-SET.

⁵⁸ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken from Ibrahim Rashdan Hamdallah Aqtsh, 19, resident of Beita (11 October 2025) on file with Al-Haq, 2025-10-151-NA-F-A1-IL-SET.

⁵⁹ UN OCHA, “Humanitarian Situation Update # 332/ West Bank”, 16 October 2025, available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-332-west-bank>.

⁶⁰ Al-Haq, Affidavit taken Jafar Zahid Hussein Ashta, 57, resident of Salem (11 October 2025) on file with Al-Haq, 2025-10-151-NA-F-A3-IL-SET.

illegally transferred in settlers living in the unlawfully occupied West Bank, rendering the aforementioned attacks genocidal acts under international law. In particular, the infliction of severe bodily or mental harm and creation of conditions of life have been deliberately calculated to bring about the destruction of the Palestinian people.⁶¹ The incidence and rate of attacks by Israeli settlers, combined with their widespread and systematic commission and the large number of settlers involved, reveal a strategic, organised means of effectuating Israel's long-held goal of Palestinian erasure. Moreover, the support shown by the IOF – which facilitates and protects the perpetrators of such violent, criminal attacks – showcases the extent to which illegally transferred in settlers are operating at the behest of, and in line with, the Israeli government.

Settler attacks have forced thousands of Palestinians to flee from their homes in hopes of mere survival elsewhere, and consequently amount to the crime of forcible displacement, prohibited under Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and constituting a grave breach thereof,⁶² as well as a war crime⁶³ and a crime against humanity⁶⁴ under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). In July 2024, the International Court of Justice found that Israel's policies and practices of forcible evictions, extensive house demolitions and restrictions on residence and movement “indicate that [these] measures are not temporary in character and therefore cannot be considered as permissible evacuations,” and amount to forcible transfer.⁶⁵

As described above, settler attacks on Palestinian homes and property – strictly prohibited by international law⁶⁶– inflict intense fear on individual communities at a societal level–breaching rights to freedom of movement, and the right to earn a livelihood and sustain families. In particular, Israel's differing treatment of Palestinians from Israeli settlers without proper justification, constitutes discrimination in violation of Article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.⁶⁷

Equally important is the extent to which these coordinated and relentless attacks directly infringe on the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, as well as the corollary right to development. Self-determination, a *jus cogens* norm of international law, includes the right to territorial integrity. This has been violated for decades as Israel progresses with its genocidal, settler-colonial agenda. The right to self-determination further includes the right to economic and social development as well as the right to permanent sovereignty over natural resources, further denied by Israeli settlers as they target critical agricultural and water infrastructure.

⁶¹ Article II, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; Article 6, Rome Statute.

⁶² Article 147, Fourth Geneva Convention.

⁶³ Article 8(2)(a)(vii), Rome Statute.

⁶⁴ Article 7(d), Rome Statute.

⁶⁵ ICJ, *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, 19 July 2024, para. 147.

⁶⁶ Article 52 (2) Hague Regulations (1907); Article 52, Fourth Geneva Convention (1949); ICRC, IHL Database, Customary IHL, Rule 8, available at: https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul/.

⁶⁷ ICJ, *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, 19 July 2024, para. 222.

The cumulative effects of attacks by Israeli settlers makes life unbearable for Palestinians living across the West Bank, stripping them of essentials for survival and gravely violating their rights to adequate housing⁶⁸ and privacy,⁶⁹ the right to adequate water as enshrined in the right to an adequate standard of living,⁷⁰ the right to sustainable development,⁷¹ as well as their freedom of movement⁷² and the right to not be subjected to inhumane and degrading treatment.⁷³

These violations represent a significant departure from Israel's obligations as an Occupying Power to "ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety",⁷⁴ and thus to protect the local population of the occupied territory and their property. Israel's obligations under the law of occupation are reinforced by the fact that it fully controls Area C of the West Bank, where "settler violence has increasingly been used as a tool of demographic engineering".⁷⁵ Therefore, rather than functioning as the temporary administrator of the occupied territory, vested with limited powers, Israel's overt support and encouragement of illegal settlement and accompanying conduct "displays an intent to exercise permanent control over the occupied territory".⁷⁶ This is further prohibited as an unlawful territorial acquisition resulting from the use of force under Article 2, paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter.

As previously highlighted, a culture of impunity prevails in Israel for acts of violence committed against Palestinians – as illustrated by the decision of Israel's Minister of Defense, Israel Katz, not to detain settlers involved in acts of terrorism.⁷⁷ Despite their highly organised, widespread and systematic nature, and the gravity of harm inflicted, the thousands of perpetrators across the West Bank continue to operate with total impunity. This is evident in the obstacles faced by Palestinian complainants including the Israeli police practice of recording settler attacks as committed by "unknown perpetrators", despite taking place in the presence of Israeli soldiers.⁷⁸ This culture of impunity is a vicious circle further encouraging settler attacks and discouraging Palestinians from seeking justice. It is also worth noting that such a policy amounts to "shielding the person concerned from criminal responsibility for crimes within the jurisdiction of ICC", one of the grounds laid down by the Rome Statue to

⁶⁸ Article 11(1), [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR).

⁶⁹ Article 17(1), ICESCR.

⁷⁰ Article 11, ICESCR.

⁷¹ UN OHCHR, Declaration on the Right to Development (4 December 1986),

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-development>

⁷² Article 12(1), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

⁷³ Article 7, ICCPR.

⁷⁴ Article 43, The Hague Regulations.

⁷⁵ Al-Haq, "Israeli Settler Terrorism as a Tool of Demographic Engineering in Occupied Palestinian Territory", 10 November 2025, available at: <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/26732.html>.

⁷⁶ ICJ, *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, 19 July 2024, para. 159.

⁷⁷ Middle East Monitor, "Israel DM rejects administrative detention of settler suspected of terrorism", 31 January 2025, available at: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250131-israel-dm-rejects-administrative-detention-of-settler-suspected-of-terrorism/>.

⁷⁸ Al-Haq, "Israeli Settler Terrorism as a Tool of Demographic Engineering in Occupied Palestinian Territory", 10 November 2025, available at: <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/26732.html>.

establish that a State is “unwilling ... genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution”, which entails the ICC’s jurisdiction on the matter.⁷⁹

As previously highlighted, a culture of impunity prevails in Israel for acts of violence committed against Palestinians, as illustrated and upheld by Israel’s Minister of Defense, Israel Katz, who decided not to detain settlers involved in acts of terrorism.⁸⁰ Despite their frequency and seriousness, the settlers who perpetrated these attacks traditionally enjoy an impunity that is applicable to all Israelis committing a violation against Palestinians. This is evident in the obstacles faced by Palestinians complainants along with the occupation police’s practice of recording settler attacks as committed by “unknown perpetrators”, despite taking place in the presence of Israeli soldiers.⁸¹ This culture of impunity is a vicious circle further encouraging settler attacks and discouraging Palestinians from seeking justice in Israel. This Israeli policy amounts to “shielding the person concerned from criminal responsibility for crimes within the jurisdiction of ICC”, one of the grounds laid down by the Rome Statute to establish that a State is “unwilling ... genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution”, which entails the ICC’s jurisdiction on the matter.⁸²

It is therefore incumbent on Third States to both understand and tackle settler violence as a strategic State policy intended to terrorise, dispossess and displace Palestinian communities across the unlawfully occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Settler violence forms part and parcel of Israel’s ongoing genocidal settler colonial apartheid regime, by killing, inflicting serious bodily and mental harm, and conditions of life calculated to destroy the Palestinian people.⁸³ This triggers States’ obligation to take decisive and concrete measures aimed at preventing and punishing said acts of genocide, as well as their duty to ensure respect for international law. States must use every means at their disposal to compel Israel to respect international law.

Al-Haq calls on States, the EU and corporations to:

- Enact legislation prohibiting the trade of all goods and services with Israeli settlements, and to sanction companies within their jurisdiction that have failed to divest from or cease to cooperate with Israel’s settlement enterprise;
- As Israel’s largest trading partner, the European Union must act jointly to cancel immediately the EU-Israel Association Agreement;
- Adopt an embargo on arms bound to Israel, bar arms transfers to Israel transiting through their territory and use their universal jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of the above breach who cross their territory, including airspace;

⁷⁹ Article 17(2)(a), Rome Statute of the ICC.

⁸⁰ Middle East Monitor, “Israel DM rejects administrative detention of settler suspected of terrorism”. 31 January 2025, available at: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20250131-israel-dm-rejects-administrative-detention-of-settler-suspected-of-terrorism/>.

⁸¹ Al-Haq, “Israeli Settler Terrorism as a Tool of Demographic Engineering in Occupied Palestinian Territory”, 10 November 2025, available at: <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/26732.html>.

⁸² Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Article 17(2)(a).

⁸³ Al-Haq, International Workers Day Focus: Continuous Denial of Palestinians’ Right to Livelihood (1 May 2026), <https://www.alhaq.org/monitoring-documentation/27603.html>

- Adopt motions and resolutions recognising the illegality of the situation created by Israel's breach of peremptory norms of international law, including its apartheid policies and practices on both sides of the Green Line;
- States must further act to sanction individual settlers and settler organisations, taking action, including legislative action to penalise settler organizations, businesses, and sporting associations which contribute to the maintenance of Israel's unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), commencing with State or public officials, unlawfully present in the OPT;
- Revoke the status of settler charities and related illegal entities;
- For companies to perform enhanced due diligence duties and withdraw from activities in the OPT which involve gross human rights violations and unlawfully contribute to the maintenance of the unlawful occupation.