Humanitarian Bulletin
occupied Palestinian territory

MARCH 2017

OCHA

HIGHLIGHTS

- Approximately 4,000 displaced families in the Gaza Strip have not been allocated any funding for the reconstruction of their homes.
- Severe access restrictions place some 2,000 Palestinians in the settlement area of Hebron city at risk of forcible transfer.
- New measures aimed at revoking the residency rights of family members of perpetrators of attacks in East Jerusalem raise concerns over collective punishment.
- Outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease, which affected over 100 livestock farms in the Gaza Strip, has been largely controlled.

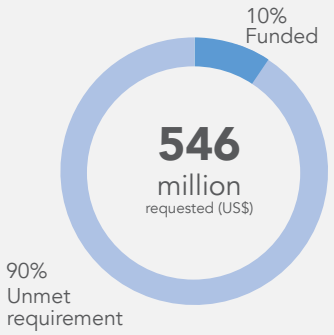
MARCH FIGURES

Palestinian killed (direct conflict)	7
Palestinian injured (direct conflict)	189
Israelis killed (direct conflict)	0
Israelis injured (direct conflict)	19
Structures demolished in the West Bank	28
People displaced in the West Bank	38

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN 2017

546 million
requested (US$)

10% funded





Displaced Palestinian girl in temporary accommodation in Gaza.

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Overview

Following the killing of a Hamas member in Gaza City on 24 March by unknown assailants, the Palestinian de facto authorities in Gaza imposed new access restrictions. Exits through the 'Arba-'Arba checkpoint - which controls access to the Erez Crossing between Gaza and Israel – were particularly affected, further reducing the already small number of Palestinians in Gaza permitted to leave through Erez due to pre-existing Israeli-imposed restrictions. Until 6 April, 102 patients who had been referred for medical treatment outside Gaza missed their appointments and operations and will have to reschedule. These restrictions occurred before the upcoming Israeli national and religious holidays when the opening hours of the Israeli-controlled passenger and goods crossings are normally reduced. On 6 April, the Ministry of Interior in Gaza announced that the restrictions imposed on the exit of people from Gaza had been removed.

The Israeli-controlled Kerem Shalom Commercial Crossing has continued to operate without disruption. This is the sole entry point operating on a regular basis for the entry of goods, including building materials needed for the reconstruction of homes affected by the 2014 hostilities. Despite significant progress in reconstruction, 7,700 Palestinian families whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged were still displaced in February 2017. An article in this month's Bulletin concerns the temporary shelter cash assistance (TSCA), which has been the primary form of assistance for eligible families while pending their return home. So far in 2017, no financial commitments have been given to support TSCA for non-refugees, and significant funding gaps exist for refugees, increasing the likelihood of debt accumulation and the adoption of negative coping mechanisms.

As part of the new access restrictions, the de facto authorities in Gaza had also prevented fishermen from going out to sea which, coinciding with the beginning of the sardine season, further undermined fishing livelihoods affected by the long-term six nautical mile access limit imposed by Israel (Israel announced

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recently that the fishing area will be expanded to 9 nautical miles in the near future). The livelihoods of Palestinian farmers in Gaza raising cattle and small ruminants have been also undermined recently due to the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease; as highlighted in this Bulletin, while the spread of the disease has slowed down, some farmers have resorted to selling their animals to reduce potential losses.

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Another article addresses a series of recent measures targeting the residents of an East Jerusalem neighbourhood, home to the perpetrator of an attack that killed four Israeli soldiers in January 2017, raising concerns of collective punishment. One such measure entails the revocation of the residency rights of some of the perpetrator's family members, which could result in their forcible transfer.

This month's Bulletin features the impact of the access restrictions imposed on Palestinians 'locked in' in the settlement area of Hebron city, which have increased since October 2015, following a rise in Palestinian attacks and alleged attacks.

In this context, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nikolay Mladenov, devoted his monthly briefing to the Council to reporting on developments since the adoption of UN Security Resolution 2334 in December 2016, which called on Israel to take steps "to cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem." "No such steps have been taken during the reporting period", the Special Coordinator reported. Instead, "the reporting period has witnessed a notable increase in statements, announcements and decisions related to settlement construction and expansion." The resolution also called for both parties to refrain from acts of provocation, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, but the Special Coordinator noted with concern that "such actions continued during the reporting period".



© Photo by OCHA, Jan 2016.

Destroyed house from 2014 hostilities, Gaza.

Funding gaps increase uncertainty and hardship for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gaza

This section was contributed by the Shelter Cluster

Some 40,000 people still displaced from the 2014 escalation of hostilities

Despite significant progress in reconstruction, 7,700 Palestinian families, or about 40,000 people whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged during the 2014 hostilities, were still displaced in February 2017, down from over 16,000 families at the start of 2015. The greatest concern is for approximately 4,000 of these families who have not been allocated any funding for reconstruction and see no end in sight to their displacement.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gaza face a range of challenges and protection concerns. These were reflected in a comprehensive survey carried out by humanitarian partners, under OCHA coordination, in the second half of 2015. Concerns include overcrowding and lack of privacy, limited access to basic services, a decline in the quantity and diversity of food consumed, risk of gender-based violence, and exposure to weather extremes and unexploded ordnance. These factors exacerbate the vulnerability of certain groups, particularly female-headed households, children and persons with disabilities.

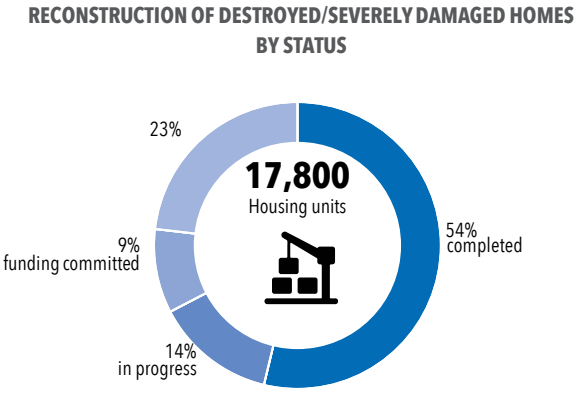
Over 60 per cent of IDP households currently stay in rented accommodation, according to a Shelter Cluster assessment; given the limited housing stock, it is believed that some of these families are in fact renting space in the homes of extended family. The remaining families reside in their damaged homes, with relatives, in pre-fabricated units, in makeshift shelters, or have other arrangements.

About 4,000 out of the remaining 7,700 displaced families in Gaza whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged during 2014 hostilities are still displaced and have no funding for reconstructing their homes.

Temporary shelter cash assistance: a lifeline under threat

Temporary shelter cash assistance (TSCA) has been the primary form of assistance provided to eligible families to enable them to find accommodation until their homes are reconstructed or rehabilitated. The monthly TSCA provided since the end of the 2014 hostilities has been between US$200 and $250 per family, a substantially higher amount than in previous conflicts (approximately $150), as a result of the high demand and pressures on available housing.

The current TSCA caseload is estimated at 6,500-7,000 families, with UNRWA providing for refugee households (over 70 per cent of all IDPs) and UNDP for the rest; a small number are being supported in 2017 by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PCRS) through the Turkish Red Crescent.



This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

Uncertainty generated by funding gaps has a psychological toll, and IDPs report anxiety and fear of being forced to relocate.

Despite some delays, all refugee beneficiaries and approximately half of non-refugee beneficiaries received their full TSCA payments in 2016, while the other half of non-refugees received partial payments. By contrast, so far in 2017, no financial commitments have been given to support TSCA for non-refugees and less than a quarter of the required funds have been pledged for refugees to date.[1]

Beneficiaries have described TSCA as a lifeline enabling them to access accommodation that would be otherwise unaffordable and securing basic living conditions (see case study). An interruption in this assistance would increase the likelihood of debt accumulation and the adoption of negative coping mechanisms, including a return to damaged or unfinished homes and the subsequent negative impact on safety and living conditions.

The uncertainty generated by funding gaps has a psychological toll and IDPs report anxiety and fear about being forced to relocate, not for the first time for the majority of IDPs. The survey referred to above documented that by the second half of 2015, the average IDP family had already moved 2.4 times since their initial displacement, while one quarter of families had moved four or more times.

Testimony gathered by UNDP

A LEAP OF FAITH: CASH ASSISTANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION



Afnan's daughters Remas (8) and Nour (6)

Afnan Al Ghofary, aged 29, lives in the Al Tofah area of Gaza City. A housewife and mother of three girls and a boy, Afnan used to live with her husband Mohammed in an apartment in his family's building until it was completely destroyed during the 2014 hostilities.

Afnan's husband, Mohammad, has no steady income. He sometimes gets temporary work in job creation programmes or private businesses. It has been difficult for the family to cover their basic living costs, especially now that they also have to pay for the house they are renting.

"Our rent was covered by UNDP support for two years. Now we need NIS 700 every month to cover our rent. This has been going on since June 2016 when the funding stopped," Afnan explains. "I am aware of the political situation and delays in funding, but it is becoming much more difficult to meet the needs of my children and my family.

"Our rented home is not ideal. It lacks many basic amenities and it is not healthy for my children. We have to pay to repair things because the landlord is refusing to pay. I feel bad for my children; my daughters had two rooms in our old home, they were beautiful and full of colour, but now they all sleep together in one room. Every month when we pay the rent I pray it will be the last time. But the months go by with no change. I feel sorry for myself and for my husband who is doing his best to get a job so that we can have a dignified life, and for my children who have to walk a long distance to get to their school," Afnan said.

The isolation of Palestinians in the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron city continues

1997-2017: TWENTY YEARS SINCE THE DIVISION OF HEBRON

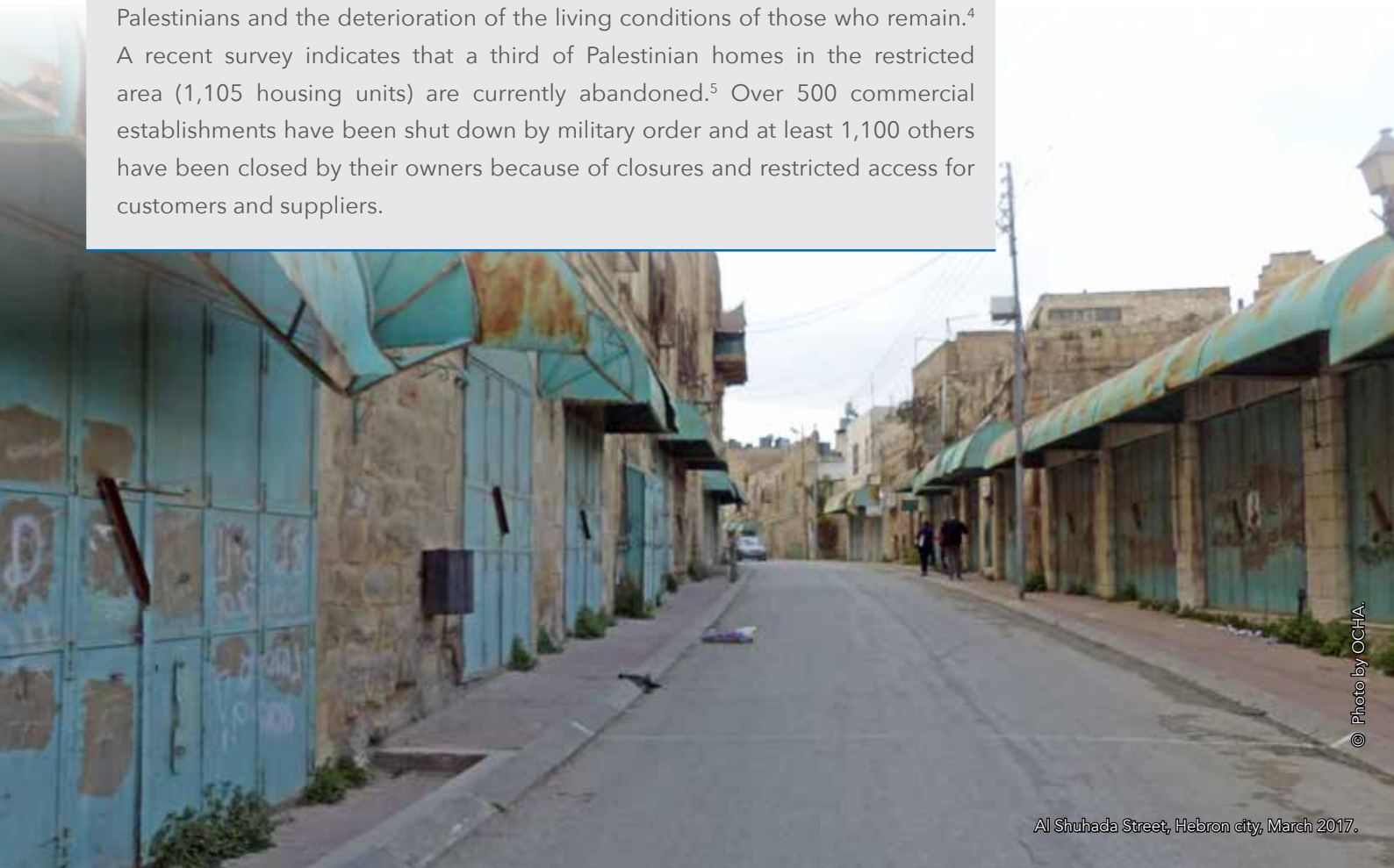
In January 1997, Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) signed the Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron. In the agreement, Israel handed over control of 80 per cent of Hebron city (18 km² known as H1) to the Palestinian Authority, while keeping full control over the remaining 20 per cent (known as H2). H2 includes four Israeli settlement compounds, home to a few hundred Israeli settlers and a population of over 40,000 Palestinians.[2]

About 30 per cent of the Palestinians living in the H2 area (approximately 12,000)[3] reside in neighbourhoods adjacent to the settlement compounds and are affected by strict access restrictions. These restrictions have been imposed by the Israeli authorities to protect the settlers, who are exposed to Palestinian violence, and allow them to lead a normal life.

Approximately 12,000 reside in neighbourhoods adjacent to the settlement compounds and are affected by strict access restrictions.

Currently, there are over 100 physical obstacles, including 18 permanently-staffed checkpoints and 14 partial checkpoints that separate the settlement area from the rest of the city. Several streets within this area are designated for the exclusive use of settlers, and are access restricted for Palestinian traffic and, in some streets, Palestinian pedestrians are banned.

The coercive environment generated by access restrictions, along with systematic harassment by Israeli settlers, has resulted in the forcible transfer of thousands of Palestinians and the deterioration of the living conditions of those who remain.[4] A recent survey indicates that a third of Palestinian homes in the restricted area (1,105 housing units) are currently abandoned.[5] Over 500 commercial establishments have been shut down by military order and at least 1,100 others have been closed by their owners because of closures and restricted access for customers and suppliers.



© Photo by OCHA.

Al Shuhada Street, Hebron city, March 2017.

Palestinians in Tel Rumeida neighbourhood and Al Shuhada Street at risk of forcible transfer

Since October 2015, the Israeli authorities have further tightened the access restriction regime in the settlement area of Hebron city. The additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinians were imposed in the context of a rise in Palestinian attacks and alleged attacks (mostly stabbing) against Israeli forces and settlers in the city, which resulted in the killing of one Israeli and 25 Palestinian suspected perpetrators.



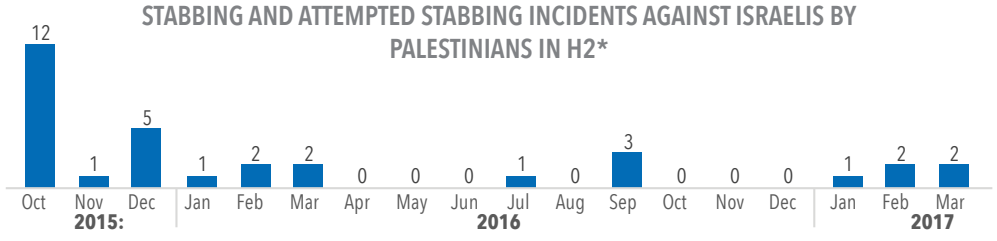
Hand-written number on ID cover of a Tel Rumeida resident, Hebron, March 2017.

Since November 2015, Tel Rumeida neighborhood and Al Shuhada Street, where approximately 2,000 Palestinians live, have been declared a closed military area. Only Palestinian residents of the two areas who were registered with the army and allocated a number hand written on the cover of their IDs[6] are allowed through the two checkpoints (Bab Az Zawiya and Gilbert) which control access to their homes.[7] One of these checkpoints (checkpoint 56 or Bab Az Zawiya), located on the main access point to this area from H1, was turned into a multilayered "fortress" with high metal fences and doors, automated metal turnstiles, metal detectors and a military lookout point. During religious celebrations by Israeli settlers and their visitors, the area is hermetically sealed off to Palestinians, leaving some locked in their homes and others unable to return home on time.[8]

Since November 2015, Tel Rumeida and Al Shuhada Street have been declared a closed military area. Only Palestinian residents of the two areas who were registered with the army and were allocated a hand-written number on their IDs can pass through the two checkpoints that control entry into the area.

The numbering system and the entrenchment of the checkpoint infrastructure have had a severe impact on the living conditions of Palestinians, further isolating residents and separating families. People who had moved out of the area before the numbering system was introduced, can no longer visit their families, neither can relatives or friends who live outside the two areas. Children's friendship circles and marriage opportunities have become limited. Over the past year, some families left the area so that their daughters could marry and so did young men whose future parents-in-law refused to allow their daughters to move to an isolated area: in Palestinian society, the bride traditionally follows her husband.

The provision of emergency services such as ambulances remains the same as before October 2015. However, delays are inevitable due to the coordination system in place, which requires the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) to coordinate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which in turn coordinates with the Israeli District Coordination Liaison office (DCL).[9] To reduce the risk of delayed



* resulting in injuries or fatalities, including of the perpetrators or alleged perpetrators

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arrival of fire brigades, an international organization has supplied residents with fire extinguishers.[10]

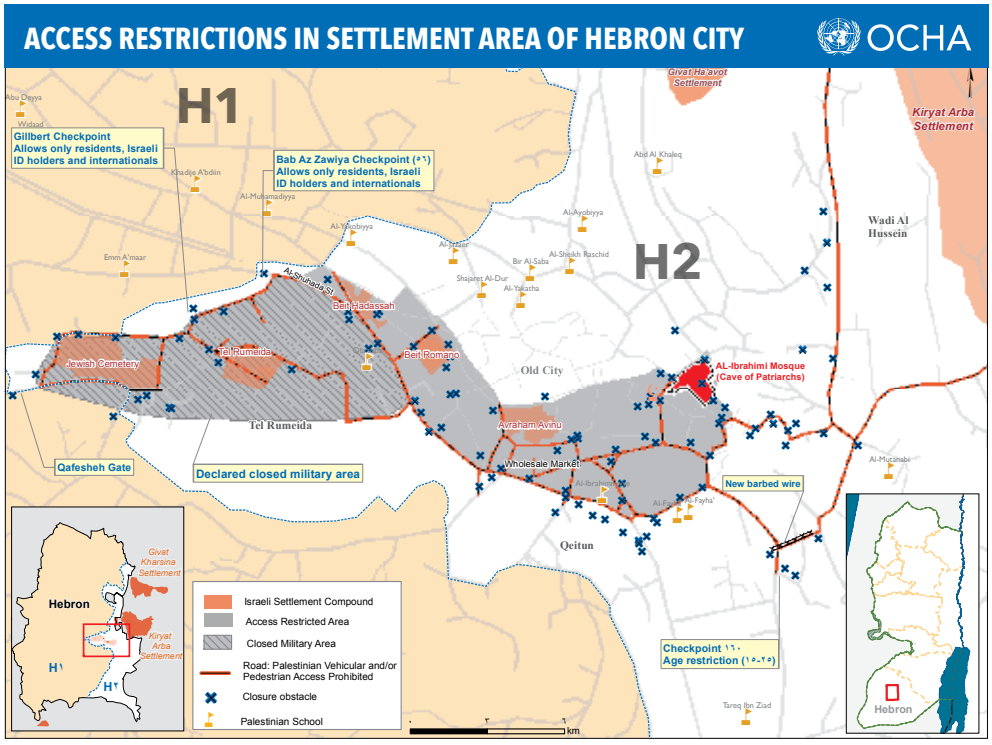
Access to other services has also been affected. "The sewage cesspit in my house has been overflowing for three years, but I have not been able to bring in pumping machines, and the municipality has been unable to connect us to the sewage network," a Tel Rumeida resident reported. There are at least 15 households in the area which are also not connected to the sewage network. According to the Hebron Municipality, the Israeli authorities have agreed in principle to connect households to the sewage network but are still restricting the entry of workers and machinery, citing logistical reasons.

As was the case prior to the imposition of the numbering regime, children from Tel Rumeida and Al Shuhada Street are forced to use detours to reach their schools, which are also in the H2 area. "Twice a day I have to go through Bab Az Zawiya checkpoint to reach my school and return home again. It takes me longer than it would if Al Shuhada Street was open to us. During Jewish holidays and when the security situation is tense, I also get searched at the checkpoint. Soldiers ask me to empty my bag and show them the books I have," a 13-year-old girl from Tel Rumeida explained.

The numbering system and the entrenchment of the checkpoint infrastructure have had a severe impact on the living conditions of Palestinians, further isolating residents and separating families.

Due to the revolving doors and metal detectors installed at Bab Az Zawiya and Gilbert checkpoints,[11] large items such as electric appliances or furniture are only permitted through a normally-closed gate (Qafesheh), about two kilometres away from the Bab Az Zawiya-end of Al Shuhada Street. The entry of such items requires prior coordination with the DCL. As Palestinians are not allowed to drive their cars inside the area, the items have to be transferred on small carts.

Access restrictions to the Ibrahimi Mosque/Cave of the Patriarchs area have also been tightened since October 2015. Although the sweeping ban on the entry of all Palestinians aged 16-30 was lifted during the second half of 2016, those in this age group are still frequently denied access, especially on Fridays, Saturdays and during Jewish holidays.



LATEST DEVELOPMENTS:

On 28 March 2017 the Israeli authorities issued two land requisition orders to allow for the expansion of Gilbert checkpoint, and one of the gates blocking access to the closed area.

This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

A FAMILY TORN APART: THE CASE OF JAMILA AL SHALALDIH


© Photo by OCHA.

The house of Jamila al Shalaldih in Al Shuhada Street is sandwiched between two checkpoints: Bab Az Zawiya and 55. Its once open-aired and naturally-let patio is covered with a metal safety net ceiling, installed in 2005 to protect Jamila and her family from settlers throwing stones and rubbish at them. The southern side of the patio borders the Tel Rumeida Palestinian kindergarten, inaugurated in 2015, and a site of regular settler harassment. Before the kindergarten was opened, Jamila said settlers used to come and sit on the wall to harass her and her family, forcing the family to extend the wall vertically to stop this activity.

Jamila, aged 55, has been living in Al Shuhada Street for thirty years and has been detained in Israeli jails 25 times for confronting settlers and soldiers. She spoke of her experience of settler harassment and violence, and military closures.

I am a sick woman with asthma and can no longer take the humiliation of soldiers or checkpoints: the scanning, the searches and the delays.

"I have not left the house for over a month now. I am a sick woman with asthma and can no longer take the humiliation of soldiers or checkpoints: the scanning, the searches and the delays.[12] I've even stopped going to see the doctor. I've stopped taking medication and only use the inhaler which my son bought for me. Since October 2015, none of my family members, who all live outside the old city, can visit me. During the Eid Muslim holiday we made cookies and prepared ourselves, but no one was allowed in. I only get to see my neighbour and recently some internationals came to show their solidarity. I often stay at home for days without seeing anyone but walls. I cannot even look upwards to see the sky without being reminded of settler harassment.

The neighbourhood is almost empty of people. About 80 families left during the second intifada. I was among the very few, one or two households, who remained. I paid a high price for that. My husband divorced me in 2006 because I refused to move out after soldiers unleashed their dogs to attack him. His tailoring business, which is just outside the house, was also shut down. He had four shops, now all closed. I stayed here with my son and two daughters, who are married now. One of my daughters just got married two months ago. A few months earlier when she was coming home from college, I received a phone call from her telling me that the soldier at Bab Az Zawiya checkpoint was asking her to take off her jilbab – a long and loose-fit clothing – as it kept buzzing every time she passed through the metal detection barrier. I dashed to the checkpoint. I blocked the road and did not let settlers pass. I demanded that the army officer get there and reprimand the soldier. After the incident, my daughter became ill and depressed. Life in Al Shuhada Street is a nightmare. There is no humanity. There is no accountability. We're at the whim of the settlers and soldiers," said Jamila.

IMAD ABU SHAMSIYYI: LIVING IN A CAGE AND FEELING LIKE A PRISONER

Imad is a resident of Tel Rumeida and an activist with Human Rights Defenders, documenting human rights violations with his video camera. He is married and has five children. Imad's house located between Bab Az Zawiya and Gilbert checkpoints, each a two minute walk from his house. On 24 March 2016, Imad filmed the killing by an Israeli soldier of Abed al-Fatah Al Shareef, an incapacitated Palestinian assailant who had already been shot and injured after stabbing a soldier at Gilbert checkpoint. On 21 February 2017, the soldier was convicted of manslaughter for shooting dead Al Shareef and was sentenced to one and a half years' imprisonment.[13]

Reaching Imad's house was like entering a cage. The main entrance to the house is blocked by a concrete wall, slabs, erected during the second intifada and running for about 50 metres with only one opening that is less than a metre wide. The Gilbert-checkpoint end of the wall has a military watch tower which was put in place after the filming of the Al Shareef incident. Across the road, a CCTV camera faces Imad's house; this camera was also introduced after the March 2016 incident. The house itself is surrounded by metal net fences and the outdoor patio has a net ceiling that was introduced following intense settler attacks, including the throwing of firebombs and large stones. Imad spoke of the ordeal of life under closures.

"Since filming the extra-judicial killing of Al Shareef, life has been unsafe and the family has been torn apart. We've been subject to settler violence and threats, as well as harassment from the army. For four months, the army, citing safety reasons, prevented us from using the main entrance to enter or exit the house. Molotov firebombs were thrown at my house and we had to sleep outside of the city for a few nights. Fearing for my older sons' lives, I had to send them to Al 'Ezarriyih. They're only 15 and 17 years old.

My daughter got engaged and married recently. Contrary to the local tradition of having the future in-laws come to ask for the daughter's hand in her parents' house, we had to do it at a relative's house in H1. Her wedding also took place outside of our house as relatives and friends, including the groom and his family, do not have the special numbered IDs and cannot pass the checkpoint. Her husband is still unable to visit us for the same reason. "The numbering system" is the same as the Israeli prison system. We're prisoners with no release date. Closures have put an end to any normal life," said Imad.



© Photo by OCHA

Abu Shamsiyyi standing by the wall outside his house in Tel Rumeida, Hebron, March 2017.

"Since filming the extra-judicial killing of Al Shareef, life has been unsafe and the family has been torn apart. We've been subject to settler violence and threats, as well as harassment from the army."

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This article was contributed by Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights.

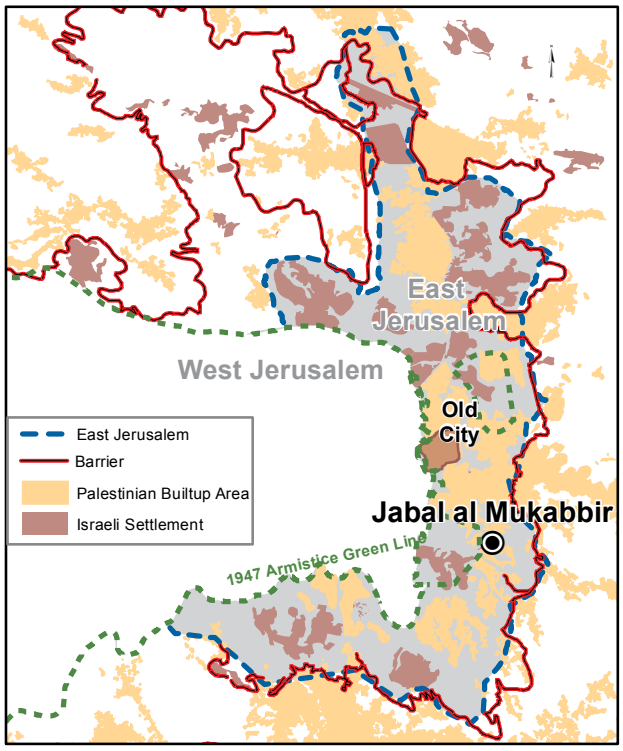
Concern about collective punishment: new measures targeting the residency rights of East Jerusalem Palestinians

Following a rise in Palestinian attacks since October 2015, and citing the need for deterrence and prevention, the Israeli authorities have implemented measures that penalize Palestinians for acts that they did not commit and for which they are not criminally responsible. These measures include the destruction of the family homes of Palestinians who carried out an attack or are suspected of carrying out or planning attacks, and the closure of localities where some of these suspects lived.[14] These practices raise concerns about collective punishment, which is prohibited under Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In recent months, the Israeli authorities have been targeting the residency rights of family members of suspected perpetrators who live in East Jerusalem, placing these family members at risk of forcible transfer as a result.

Measures that penalize Palestinians for acts that they did not commit and for which they are not criminally responsible raise concerns about collective punishment.

On 8 January 2017, a Palestinian man from the Jabal al Mukkaber neighbourhood of East Jerusalem carried out a ramming attack near his home, killing four Israeli soldiers and injuring another 15 participating in an educational tour; the perpetrator was shot and killed during the attack. The next day, thirteen members of his family (the Al Qunbar family) received notices of proceedings to revoke their residency in East Jerusalem, including residency permits received as part of a "family unification" process.[15] Announcing the decision to the media, the Israeli Minister of Interior said: "Let it be known to all who are considering carrying out an attack that their families will pay a heavy price for their actions and the consequences will be severe and far-reaching."[16]



Eleven of the family members had their residency status in East Jerusalem revoked on 25 January 2017 under Section 11(a)(2) of the Entry into Israel Law. Two were spared, apparently because they are children. Although the stated rationale for the revocation was suspicion of connections with ISIS and involvement in terror activity,[17] the timing of the action and the statement of the Minister raise concerns that this may be a measure of collective punishment.

This report was prepared by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

Eleven other members of the Al Qunbar extended family fear that the renewal of their "military family unification permits" has been delayed due to the attack. These documents, which allow them to live in Jerusalem, expired on 5 March 2017 and had not been extended over two weeks later when they met with the UN OHCHR. The immediate family of the attacker – his wife and four children – were also subjected to collective punishment and forced eviction when their family home was punitively sealed on 22 March.[18]

Residents of Jabal al Mukabber (total population about 24,000) have experienced six punitive demolitions and house sealing since 2015, which displaced 10 households: 53 Palestinians, including 30 children.[19] These demolitions were carried out in connection to five attacks perpetrated by residents of the neighbourhood in which 14 Israelis (including four soldiers and one policeman) were killed and 40 Israelis were injured (including 15 soldiers and one policeman).[20]

Since 2015, Residents of Jabal al Mukabber have experienced six punitive demolitions and house sealing, which displaced 10 households: 53 displaced, including 30 children.

The scope of the measures adopted following the January 2017 attack appear to be broader than in the past and affect a large number of extended family members and neighbours. Between 9 and 16 January, approximately 240 households living in 80 buildings received notices from the Jerusalem Municipality for planning and zoning violations that put them at risk of demolitions and forced evictions.[21] OCHA also documented twelve non-residential structures demolished on the grounds of the lack of a building permit. Although this is not the first time that municipal authorities have taken such action in the neighbourhood, the intensity and extent of the measures surprised the residents. Seen in the context of the January attack and the municipality's action, it raises concerns that these were meant to punish the broader population.

The Israeli Supreme Court has previously permitted punitive demolitions but has not yet ruled on the constitutionality of punitive residency revocations. These punitive measures remain under challenge in the Court since 2006.[22] Regardless of the position under Israeli law, all forms of collective punishment are unlawful under international humanitarian law (IHL) and also violate a range of human rights, including the right to equal protection before the law and the presumption of innocence.[23] The specific practice of residency revocation may further result in violation of the prohibition on forcible transfers under Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

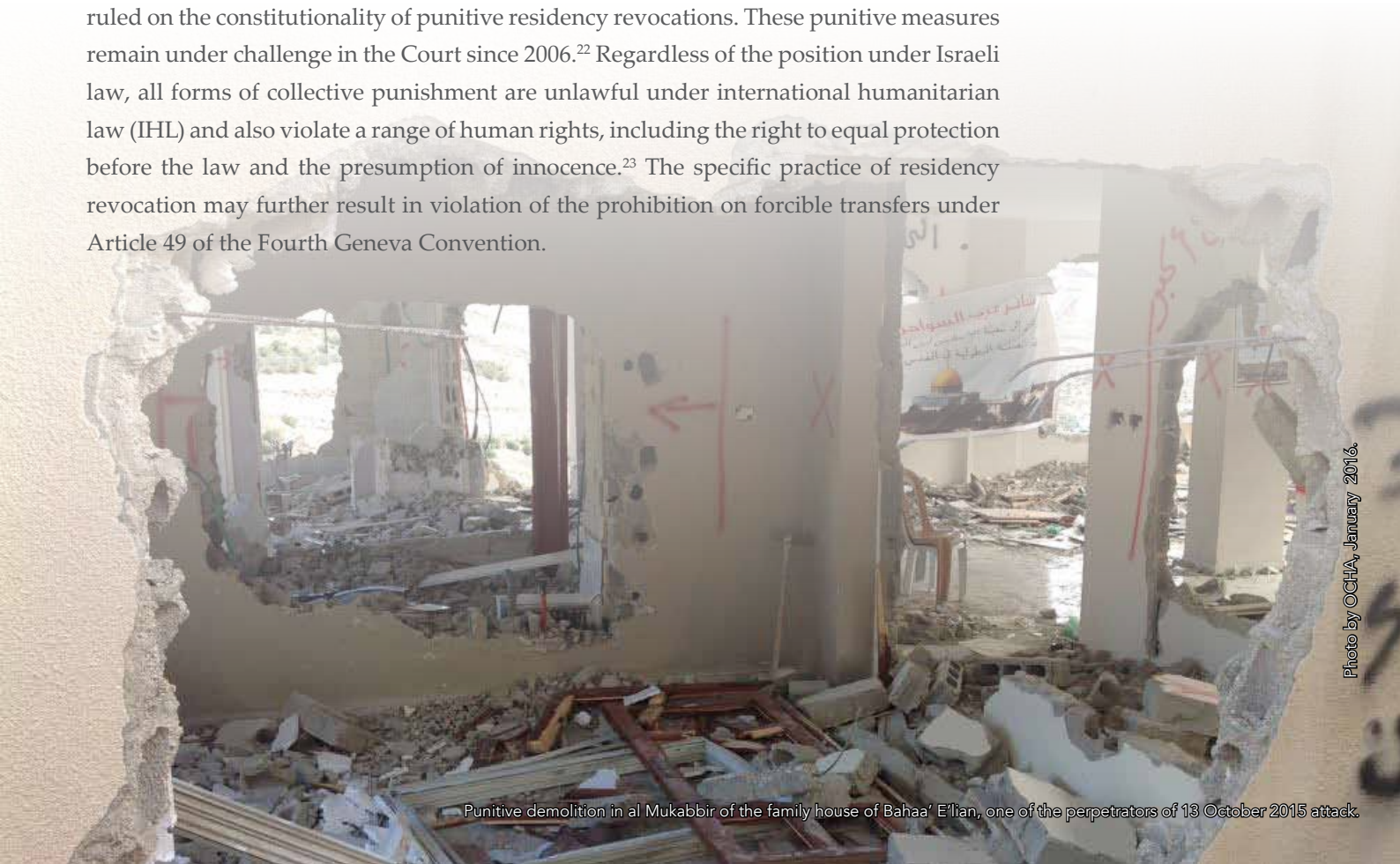


Photo by OCHA, January 2016.

Punitive demolition in al Mukabbir of the family house of Bahaa' E'lian, one of the perpetrators of 13 October 2015 attack.

Regardless of the position under Israeli law, all forms of collective punishment are unlawful under international humanitarian law (IHL) and also violate a range of human rights, including the right to equal protection before the law and the presumption of innocence.

THE CASE OF MENWAH AL QUNBAR

One of those whose East Jerusalem residency was revoked was 64-year-old Menwah Ahmad Hamdan Al Qunbar, the mother of the attacker Fadi Al Qunbar. She had acquired permanent residency status in 1988 after a family unification process following her marriage to r East Jerusalem husband in 1981. The day after the attack, the Israeli authorities served Menwah a notice of a hearing at the Ministry of Interior about her residency status.



Al Qunbar, mother of January 2017 perpetrator from Jabal al Mukabbir whose residency was revoked, March 2017.

Menwah told UN OHCHR that she attended the hearing on 18 January with her lawyer, her husband and another son. Although the notice to her was on the grounds that her marriage was bigamous and her residency was received on the basis of false information, she said that this was not the focus of the hearing. Instead, the discussion was about her son and the attack he had carried out, and whether she supported his action. This again raises questions about the rationale of the action against her and other family members.

Despite the serious nature of the criminal allegations against them (connections with ISIS and involvement in terror activity), neither Menwah nor the other Al Qunbar family members appear to have been charged or arrested on those grounds. They continue to live in the neighbourhood but face the risk of forcible transfer if their appeals against the revocation are unsuccessful.[24]

The forcible transfer of another Jabal al Mukkaber resident, Nadia Abu Jamal – whose husband killed 6 Israelis in an attack in November 2014 – illustrates the devastating impact such measures have on Palestinians. Nadia Abu Jamal's application for family unification was cancelled after the attack and the Israeli Supreme Court upheld the revocation of her residency status in July 2015. Her family house was punitively demolished in October 2015. Forced to move out, she currently lives in a West Bank village beyond the Barrier, separated from her four children who continue to live with their grandparents in Jabal al Mukabber.

OHCHR spoke with Menwah Al Qunbar again after her son's house was punitively sealed in March. Despite the risk of her being forcibly transferred, she was more worried about her family: "I am afraid I will be disconnected from my children and grandchildren. My husband cannot sleep at night because of worry and anxiety. He does not know what will happen to us. I have to hold myself firm and strong to strengthen him."

Outbreak of animal disease is risk to already weakened livelihoods in the Gaza Strip

This section was contributed by FAO

On 26 January 2017, the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in the Gaza Strip reported its first official outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) on cattle farms in North Gaza and Rafah. Early epidemiological evidence suggests that FMD may have been carried into the Gaza Strip by animals smuggled from Egypt. By 8 March 2017, FMD had affected 105 farms in Gaza: more than 3,000 cattle (a third of the total population), in addition to nearly 3,000 small ruminants (mostly sheep), slightly less than five per cent of the total.

This development may have a further impact on the livelihoods of people relying on the livestock sector,[25] already weakened by almost ten years of blockade, recurrent hostilities and the destruction of productive assets, and the internal Palestinian divide. Stakeholders in this sector reported the adoption of negative coping strategies during February such as the selling of animals, often below market value, to avoid the possibility of a total loss if their animals were to contract FMD.

By mid-March 2017, the course of the disease had slowed as result of the temporary control measures by veterinary services.

Preventive and mitigation measures

Following the detection of the outbreak, the Palestinian MoA launched an emergency vaccination campaign that reached nearly 17,000 animals. Coordination between Palestinian and Israeli veterinary services facilitated the entry of the essential vaccines needed to implement disease-control measures. The MoA has requested support to purchase doses of vaccine for an additional 42,000 animals.

By mid-March 2017, the course of the disease had slowed as result of the temporary control measures by veterinary services, including the vaccination campaign; the suspension of animal imports; the closure of animal markets; the strengthening of animal monitoring and control measures to avoid the informal sale of livestock; and the halt of animal movement between districts.



Infected cows in Gaza debilitated by FMD, March 2017.

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In addition, livestock owners have been educated about practical steps they can take to minimize the spread of FMD, such as implementing quarantine, isolating affected animals, and avoiding contact between infected and non-infected farms.

Concern about limited prevention capacity

Although it ultimately managed to stop the spread of the disease, the MoA response to the outbreak has been undermined by structural deficiencies in animal disease prevention capacity in Gaza.

Although it ultimately managed to stop the spread of the disease, the MoA response to the outbreak has been undermined by structural deficiencies in animal disease prevention capacity in Gaza, including inadequate monitoring procedures and the unavailability of vaccines. Currently, there are an estimated 20 veterinarians in the entire Gaza Strip, many of whom are working unpaid. About 60 per cent of these professionals will reach retirement age within the next three years. This is particularly troublesome given that Gaza does not have a university faculty in veterinary sciences, and under the blockade, potential veterinary students are not eligible for exit permits to access education in the West Bank, Israel or elsewhere. Even if current restrictions were lifted immediately, given the length of veterinary studies, it would take over five years until the first graduate is available.

WHAT IS FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE?

FMD is a transboundary, viral animal disease that affects cattle and small ruminants. It is rarely lethal but is often debilitating, reducing animal productivity, endangering livelihoods and presenting significant risks to the livestock sector and the economy as a whole with negative implications for food security and trade. FMD cannot be transmitted to humans and all products (milk, meat, etc.) from infected animals remain safe for human consumption. The threat from FMD is greatest in low and middle income countries where animal disease control capacities are less robust and diseases often spread more quickly.[26]

Endnotes

1. Depending on the Gaza operating environment and other funding inputs for totally demolished homes, these funding needs may change.
2. Another settlement compound, an extension of Kiryat Arba settlement, lies on the border of H2 where Palestinian movement is also restricted, especially on Saturdays and during Jewish holidays. Within H2, scattered Palestinian houses have been taken over by settlers.
3. Figures based on a 2015 survey conducted by the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee.
4. Report of the UN Secretary-General, Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, A/HRC/34/38, para. 28, 16 March 2017.
5. Hebron Rehabilitation Committee.
6. Residents below the age of 16 were not registered as they have no IDs, but are allowed to pass through the checkpoints.
7. Since May 2016, Israeli ID holders and internationals have been allowed access.
8. On 13 March 2017, OCHA staff tried to visit Al Shuhada Street and Tel Rumeida. Taking the route of the Ibrahimi Mosque, the staff passed through two staffed checkpoints before being stopped and refused entry by Israeli soldiers at a third one, Tnuva checkpoint, all within a two-minute walk. Staff were informed by the soldiers that Al Shuhada Street and Tel Rumeida were declared a closed military zone for the festive Purim celebrations and only Israelis [settlers] and their invitees were allowed to pass.
9. Since 2012, after three years of negotiations with the Israeli authorities, the PRCS has been allowed to operate an ambulance sub-station in the old city of Hebron.
10. Fire extinguishers were distributed after setting on fire the house of Dawabsheh family in Duma on 31 July 2015 by settlers which resulted in the death of the mother, the father and their infant son.
11. Gilbert checkpoint has no metal turnstiles, just a metal detector door.
12. Checkpoints can be closed at any time without any prior warning to local residents. When OCHA staff visited Hebron on 13 March, they met about eight Palestinians at the checkpoint stationed between the old market and the Ibrahimi Mosque/Cave of the Patriarchs. The men had already been waiting for about one hour and a half for the soldiers to allow them in to go home and they had no idea when the checkpoint would open.
13. See Gili Cohen, "Hebron Shooter Elor Azaria Sentenced to 1.5 Years for Shooting Wounded Palestinian Attacker," 21 February 2017 Haretz : http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.767137
14. The UN Secretary-General recently expressed concern regarding such practices, confirming that they may amount to prohibited collective punishment. A/HRC/31/40 paras 29-33, 16 March 2017; A/HRC/34/36 paras 31-33; A/71/364 paras 25-26, 16 March 2017.
15. East Jerusalem ID holders who marry persons carrying a West Bank or Gaza ID must apply to the Israeli Interior Ministry for family unification on their behalf if they wish to live together in East Jerusalem. In 2002, Israel froze applications for family unifications, and a year later it enshrined the freeze in the Nationality and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order). The Law was amended in 2005, making women aged over 25 and men over 35 eligible for military family unification permits to live with their spouses in East Jerusalem. An additional amendment from 2007 allows certain cases outside the eligible category above to be reviewed by a committee and to be considered for family unification based on 'exceptional humanitarian grounds.'
16. http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4905413,00.html
17. Letter dated 25/01/17 by Population and Immigration Authority.
18. http://www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Updates1840
19. This is in addition to 36 demolitions and self-demolition incidents carried out on the grounds of lack of building permits that displaced 44 people and otherwise affected 46 others during the same period (2015 – Jan 2017).
20. OCHA Protection of Civilians Database.
21. Initial mapping of affected people by UN OCHA, January 2017.
22. HCJ 7803/06. Four Palestinians from East Jerusalem were forcibly transferred to the West Bank after their residency was revoked on the grounds of lack of allegiance due to their alleged association with Hamas. See also A/67/372, para 39.
23. Article 14, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Depending on the form of punishment, more rights may be violated. E.g. punitive demolitions lead to violations of the right to adequate housing and prohibitions on forced eviction (Art. 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. See also Articles 6, 7, 9 and 16, ICCPR).
24. Article 47, Fourth Geneva Convention (GC IV). Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are protected persons under international humanitarian law, despite Israel's unlawful annexation of the city.
25. PCBS data from 2012/3 lists 15,983 agricultural employees (including paid, unpaid and temporary) in animal and mixed holdings. This figure does not capture those involved in secondary processing.
26. The FAO and the World Organization for Animal Health, partnered with the European Commission, have been working to implement the Progressive Control Pathway for Food-and-Mouth Disease control (PCP-FMD) since 2008. For further information see: http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/commissions/eufmd/commissions/eufmd-home/en/

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