# Israeli Settler Attack on A School: Urgent Demand for Accountability and Protection

The Education Cluster and the West Bank Protection Consortium (WBPC) raise their serious concerns about an Israeli settler attack yesterday Monday 16 September 2024, on the Arab al-Kaabneh Basic School in Al-Mu'arrajat, northwest of Jericho. At approximately 9:47 am on Monday, while the school was in session, Israeli settlers armed with clubs, aggressively entered the school, assaulted teachers and students, and tied up the principal of the school. Preliminary reports state that three female teachers and some students were injured, along with a British solidarity activist who was transferred to a Palestinian hospital.

Footage from the attack shows a group of male settlers marching into the school, and one can hear the screams of children and the teachers during the attack. The school employs 30 teachers who serve around 100 students and has been supported by the WBPC.

When Israeli security forces arrived, it was reported that they arrested the school principal. The Israeli police also confiscated the school's digital video recorder, which the police claimed was in order to review the incident. Video footage shows the identities of most of the assailants.

Today marks another red line being crossed in the increasing aggressive violence by Israeli settlers. We call on the international community to ensure that Palestinians, including school children and their teachers, are protected from Israeli settler violence. This includes ensuring that Israelis engaged in such violence, like those who are clearly identifiable in the video footage, are immediately held to account.

Under international humanitarian law, Area C where this school is located is occupied territory. The occupying power is obligated to protect school children and facilitate their continued education. It is also prohibited from transferring its own citizens to settlements and outposts in the occupied territory, such as those in this area northwest of Jericho.

The International Community must emphasize not just in words, but in policy, the protection of children's rights and adherence to international laws and conventions including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These conventions mandate the protection of children from harm, guarantee their right to education without discrimination, and ensure that educational environments are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. The level of diplomatic pressure should reflect the urgent and critical situation faced by Palestinian children, who face very high protection risks and threats to their education.

Further, the international community should demand immediate actions from the Government of Israel to address the key barriers that are preventing continuous and safe access to education in the West Bank, especially:

- Protecting students and teachers, in and around schools, from settler attacks.
- Removing all restrictions preventing the movements of persons and goods in the West Bank.
- Ensuring that schools are never targeted by military operations or hostilities. Similarly, teachers and children on their way to schools should never be affected in any way by military operations or hostilities.
- Investigating and ensuring accountability for those engaged in attacks on schools.

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