CALL TO ACTION: Risk of Forcible Transfer in Masafer Yatta | June 2025

2025-06-24 Press Release And Media Downloads

1,200 Palestinians including 500 children in Masafer Yatta of Hebron are at critical risk of forcible transfer. The Israeli military's 17 June announcement to resume military training in "Firing Zone 918", alongside new directives by the Israeli Civil Administration enabling retroactive dismissal of Palestinian building applications, would result in the demolition of homes and infrastructure across the area. The zone encompasses 13 communities already exposed to longstanding practices – such as home demolitions, evictions, denial of building permits, establishment of settler outposts and ongoing settler violence – that have created increasingly unlivable conditions, which forms part of a coercive environment that induces forcible transfer. Affected structures include homes, schools, clinics, water systems, and religious sites, and the demolitions will result in the forced displacement of 200 households, which could amount to forcible transfer.

Any individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportation of protected persons, constitutes a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is a war crime. It could also amount to a **crime against humanity** when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack.

Implementation of the new Israeli Civil Administration directives will have an immense and irreparable impact on Palestinian communities in Masafer Yatta that will echo across the occupied West Bank. In addition to the destruction of homes and services and the loss of traditional livelihoods, community members report growing protection concerns including **severely restricted freedom of movement**, **family separation**, and **risk of injury or death** due to the use of the area by the Israeli military for live-fire training.

An additional 5,000 Palestinians live in Israeli-declared "Firing Zones" across the West Bank and remain at high risk of forcible transfer. If enacted, these new directives will further consolidate annexation of the West Bank by Israel and violate the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

The Protection Cluster with the Legal Task Force and partners has engaged in multiple protective measures in Masafer Yatta over the past decades including through mobilizing protective presence and community self-protection, delivering mental health and psychosocial support, and submitting petitions to the Israeli High Court challenging demolition and eviction orders. The Protection Cluster is in ongoing communication with the affected communities to identify their urgent priority needs and plan interventions. Repercussions on the affected communities will be multisectoral and detrimental to all aspects of life in Masafer Yatta, necessitating coordinated action and advocacy across the humanitarian and diplomatic communities.

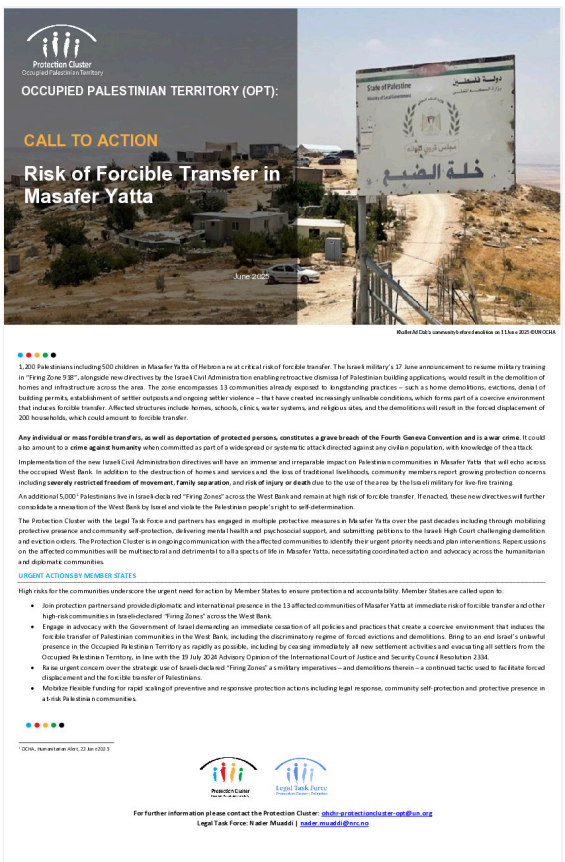
URGENT ACTIONS BY MEMBER STATES

High risks for the communities underscore the urgent need for action by Member States to ensure protection and accountability. Member States are called upon to:

- Join protection partners and provide diplomatic and international presence in the 13 affected communities of Masafer Yatta at immediate risk of forcible transfer and other high-risk communities in Israeli-declared "Firing Zones" across the West Bank.
- Engage in advocacy with the Government of Israel demanding an immediate cessation of all policies and practices that create a coercive environment that induces the forcible transfer of Palestinian communities in the West Bank, including the discriminatory

regime of forced evictions and demolitions. Bring to an end Israel's unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory as rapidly as possible, including by ceasing immediately all new settlement activities and evacuating all settlers from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in line with the 19 July 2024 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and Security Council Resolution 2334.

- Raise urgent concern over the strategic use of Israeli-declared "Firing Zones" as military imperatives – and demolitions therein – a continued tactic used to facilitate forced displacement and the forcible transfer of Palestinians.
- Mobilize flexible funding for rapid scaling of preventive and responsive protection actions including legal response, community self-protection and protective presence in at-risk Palestinian communities.



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