Press Release

Alarm over pattern of unlawful killings with two Palestinian families killed and settlers terrorising communities

16 March 2026

UN Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OHCHR OPT) condemns the killing of two Palestinian families by Israeli fire in Gaza and the West Bank on 15 March 2026 — incidents that raise serious concerns about a persistent trend of unlawful killings of Palestinians with impunity.

In Gaza, an Israeli airstrike reportedly struck one of the few houses still standing, in As Sawalha area in Az Zuwaida, Middle Gaza, and killed a man, his wife who was pregnant with twins, and their 10-year-old son, in addition to a 15-year-old boy in a nearby IDP tent. Later in the day, another attack by an Israeli unmanned aerial vehicle struck a car, also in Az Zuwaida, and killed eight Palestinian police personnel.

Since the announcement of the ceasefire in October 2025, 663 Palestinians were killed in Israeli military attacks both far from and in the vicinity of the redeployment line known as the “yellow line”, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

Killing entire families together in homes and shelters has been a fixed feature of Israeli military activity in Gaza since 7 October 2023, wiping out generations at a time and causing a high number of civilian victims including women and children.

In the northern West Bank, Israeli security forces opened fire on car in Tammoun, south of Tubas, and killed a father, 37-year-old Ali Khalid Bani Odeh, a mother, 35-year-old Wa'ad Othman Bani Odeh, and their two youngest sons: 5-year-old Mohammad and 6-year-old Othman who also had visual and hearing impairment.

The two older sons, aged 8 and 11, survived and later provided an account to the media saying the Israeli soldiers physically assaulted them after killing their parents and siblings and said: "we killed dogs."

The Palestinian Ministry of Health reported that all four family members were shot in the head. The father was reportedly also shot in the chest, thigh, and arm.

This brings the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces and settlers in the occupied West Bank to 1071 since 7 October 2023, including 233 children.

The violence has markedly intensified since the start of the regional war on 28 February, with movement restrictions keeping Palestinians in locked silos while armed Israeli settlers and security forces roam free, raiding and attacking Palestinian communities across the West Bank.

On 14 March, Israeli settlers reportedly shot and killed 28-year-old Amir Odeh in an attack on Qusra, Nablus, and injured at least two more Palestinians including Odeh's father.

This is the sixth Palestinian to be killed by settlers since the onset of the armed conflict in the region on 28 February, and the seventh since the beginning of 2026 — an alarming increase in pace compared to at least eight Palestinians killed by settlers in all of 2025.

In a separate attack on 13 March, residents of Khirbet Humsa in northern Jordan Valley reported to OHCHR OPT that settlers severely assaulted men and women in front of their children, stole livestock, and attacked two women international solidarity activists who were present to deter attacks.

One of the residents said he was sexually assaulted when settlers forcibly stripped him, put zip ties around his genitals and dragged him by the zip ties for a long distance. Settlers also reportedly threatened residents they will be back to kill them if they do not leave the community.

Unchecked settler violence has already driven away most of the Palestinian communities of the northern Jordan Valley.

Taken together, these incidents reflect a pattern of utter disregard for Palestinian lives that OHCHR OPT has documented with alarm, with complete impunity.

“Impunity is driving more killings, more displacement and dispossession, and more suffering for Palestinians across the occupied territory. Accountability for all violations of Palestinians’ rights is indispensable for any meaningful reversal of these disturbing patterns, not a luxury,” said Ajith Sunghay, Head of OHCHR OPT.



UN entities involved in this initiative

OHCHR

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

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