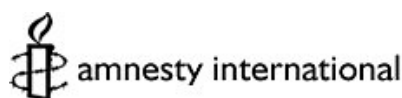


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## Israeli army destroys Palestinian homes

Every single home in the West Bank villages of Humsa and Hadidiya is slated for destruction. The Israeli army has declared most of the Jordan Valley, where the villages are situated, as a "closed military area" from which the local Palestinian population is barred.

The local Palestinian population – which has been there since long before Israeli forces occupied the area four decades ago – is being put under increasing pressure to leave the area. On the morning of 6 February, Israeli army bulldozers destroyed the homes and livelihoods of four Palestinian families in Hadidiya, in the Jordan Valley area of the occupied West Bank.

More than 30 people and their animals were left without shelter. The families of Mohammed Ali Sheikh Bani Odeh, Ali Sheikh Musleh Bani Odeh, Omar 'Arif Mohammad Bisharat and Mohammed Sahad Bani Odeh included some 20 children.

In the past year, several other Palestinian families in the area have suffered the same fate. The Israeli army served demolition orders on all the residents of Hadidiya in April 2007, giving them 10 days to leave their homes. Most of the villagers moved to nearby Humsa, about a kilometre away.

Four months later, in August, Israeli army bulldozers razed several tents and animal pens in Humsa, leaving some 40 villagers homeless, and, on 3 January 2008, Israeli forces destroyed 12 homes and as many animal shelters in Fasayl, further south in the Jordan Valley.

The Palestinian villagers have to travel miles to get water for their basic needs, but even this is made difficult. Israeli military checkpoints and blockades restrict their movements on main roads and, last August, their tractors and water tanks were confiscated by Israeli soldiers. The villagers could only retrieve these vital items after paying a large fine.

In contrast, Israeli settlements – established in blatant violation of international law – continue to be expanded in the area and Israeli settlers are allowed to move freely and use vast quantities of water.

In recent visits to the area, Amnesty International delegates witnessed the extremely difficult conditions in which the residents of Hadidiya and Humsa are forced to live, with no running water or electricity. Because they are not allowed to build houses they live in tents or shacks, but even these have not been spared by the Israeli bulldozers.

The villagers rebuild their homes each time and have shown their determination to remain in the area. However, they are no longer able to cultivate their land and are finding it increasingly difficult to survive.

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[Enduring occupation: Palestinians under siege in the West Bank \(Report, 4 June 2007\)](#)

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