



**MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2007
FIELD REPORT**

Introduction

This is the fourth quarterly field report of 2007 by Al-Haq's Monitoring and Documentation Department, covering the period from October to December 2007. Al-Haq's field reports cover human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law committed by Israel, the Occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), namely the West bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. The report also covers human rights abuses committed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in the West Bank and those committed by the *de facto* Hamas authority in the Gaza Strip.

Since 1967, Israel has occupied the OPT, despite binding United Nations Security Council resolutions ordering it to withdraw. Consequently, AI-Haq's monitoring and documentation activities have traditionally been directed towards the violations committed by Israel, the Occupying Power. However, following the creation of the PNA in 1994, AI-Haq also monitors and documents violations perpetrated by the PNA. In addition, since Hamas's take-over of the Gaza Strip in June 2007 and assumption of *de facto* authority, AI-Haq also monitors violations perpetrated by Hamas and its Executive Forces (EF).

Each field report highlights a particularly important and disturbing trend observed by the Monitoring and Documentation Department during the reporting period. The field reports are based on first-hand information gathered by Al-Haq's Monitoring and Documentation Department, covering a broad range of violations, including comprehensive coverage of killings, house demolitions and curfews. Al-Haq's specially trained fieldworkers visit sites of alleged violations, draw maps, draft reports and take sworn witness statements (affidavits) from victims and eyewitnesses. The affidavits excerpted or referenced in field reports are available on Al-Haq's web site www.alhaq.org, as samples of those gathered during the reporting period.

The Human Rights Situation since the Outbreak of the Second *Intifada*

The violations committed during the reporting period must be analysed in the broader context of the deteriorating general human rights situation since the outbreak of the second *intifada* on 29 September 2000, and Israel's persistent failure to respect its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law in the OPT. As AI-Haq only assigned a fieldworker to Gaza in June of 2007, it does not have comprehensive statistics similar to those of the West Bank dating back to the start of the second *intifada*.

According to Al-Haq's documentation, from the outbreak of the second *intifada* until the end of December 2007, Israeli occupying forces killed **1,802** Palestinians in the West Bank, **347** of whom were children, and **99** of whom were female. It is estimated that **296** Palestinians were killed in the course of targeted assassination operations. During the same period, Al-Haq documented the demolition, for punitive reasons, of **552** homes in the West Bank (whereof **494** were totally demolished, **56** were partially demolished, and two were totally sealed), leading to the displacement of **3,283** people. Israel has also carried out a large number of administrative house demolitions on the pretext that the houses were built without the required licence. Since the beginning of 2004, **497** houses have been demolished for lack of licence, **218** of which were in East Jerusalem.

Since the outbreak of the second *intifada*, the Occupying Power has almost completely eliminated the already limited authority of the PNA in the OPT. Israel's destruction of ministerial buildings, arrests of PNA officials and unlawful withholding of PNA tax revenues, have strongly limited the ability of the PNA to carry out its basic functions, including upholding law and order. The effects of many of these policies were exacerbated following the victory of Hamas in the democratic PNA elections of 2006, and continue to affect the *de facto* Hamas government in the Gaza Strip, a government that is plagued by economic and diplomatic isolation and whose function therefore does not extend beyond ensuring a minimum of law and order. By virtue of the control it does exercise over the Gaza Strip, Hamas is bound by international human rights and humanitarian law obligations.

The Human Rights Situation from October - December 2007

Highlighted Trend: Movement restrictions

Restrictions on Palestinian **freedom of movement** remained one of the most widespread forms of human rights violations during the reporting period. In the West Bank, checkpoints, roadblocks, the Annexation Wall, Israeli only roads, ditches, trenches and other forms of physical barriers continued to hinder Palestinians' access to their families, places of employment or worship, educational institutions, agricultural lands and markets.

The access of Palestinian farmers to their lands in the West Bank continued to be heavily restricted, mainly due to the construction of the Wall, of which 409 kilometres had been completed by November 2007. **Gates in the Wall**, opened seasonally and only at specific hours determined arbitrarily by the Israeli soldier in charge, remained the only way for many farmers to reach their land. In a typical example, during the olive harvest in November 2007 in Jalboun, in the northern West Bank, Israeli occupying forces prevented Muhammad Abu-al-Rub and his family from passing through the iron gate in the Wall to access their land, preventing them from harvesting their olives (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3961/2007](#)).

"When we wanted to go back to our lands on the fourth day, in order to continue with the olive harvest, we were surprised by the Israeli soldiers telling us that we were no longer allowed to pass through the gate to reach our lands. This prevented us from continuing the olive harvest for this season. There were tens of trees that still needed to be picked, but the measures taken by the Israeli occupying soldiers at that gate prevented us from doing so. The gate opens only seasonally only, at the time of the olive harvest. This hindered our ability to take care of the trees, led to the deterioration of their production and caused damage to many of them. We go to our lands with special permits issued by the Israeli occupying authorities, which enable us to pass through the iron gate. These permits are only temporary, for a very limited period of time."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3961/2007](#)

Given by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Razeq Abu-al-Rub, resident of Jalboun, Jenin Governorate, West Bank

Amongst the most severe consequences of movement restrictions imposed on Palestinian goods and people is their impact on **health**. Access to crucial medicine as well as the possibility to leave the territory to seek

medical care abroad was severely restricted, particularly in the Gaza Strip. On 10 November 2007, 'Ayda 'Abd-al-'Al died from curable breast cancer after Israeli occupying forces prevented her from leaving the Gaza Strip in order to receive the necessary chemo therapy, abroad, as it was unavailable in Gaza, (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3955/2007](#)).

"At the beginning of January 2007, my 31 year old late wife, 'Ayda 'Abd-al-'Al, started to suffer from breast cancer. She went to one of the Egyptian hospitals for treatment, where she stayed for approximately a month and underwent radiotherapy and chemotherapy. She then returned to Gaza on the condition that she would go back to Egypt in mid-June for further treatment and a check up. But due to the complete closure of the Rafah border crossing and the other borders by the Israeli side from 10 June 2007, she could not go to Egypt."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3955/2007](#)

Given by Zakariyya Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al, resident of al-Tuffah quarter, Gaza City Governorate, Gaza Strip

In Toulkarem Governorate in the West Bank, on 15 September 2007, a cancer patient died at the checkpoint after Israeli occupying forces denied him passage to the nearest hospital (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3867/2007](#)). On both 30 October and 8 November 2007, Israeli occupying forces denied

Muhammad 'Awawda entry to Jerusalem where he was receiving medical treatment. His passage through the checkpoint was refused even though he had a valid permit as well as a magnetic card issued by the Occupying Power allowing him to enter Jerusalem (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3931/2007](#)).

"Muntaha Rifa'I took him in her car and headed for the Jbara checkpoint, in order to drive him to the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem for treatment. They left the house at around 10:20 am, accompanied by three of my sons, all holders of special permits which enable them to enter the territories occupied in 1948. When they arrived at the Jbara checkpoint a debate started between my sons and the Israeli soldiers, who refused to let them cross the checkpoint. I do not want to name my sons who were accompanying Muhammad. This debate continued for around 40 minutes, during which Muhammad was screaming in pain. Although this occurred in front of the Israeli soldiers, they would not allow him to cross the checkpoint for treatment. Muhammad passed away, inside the car, at about 11:15 am at the Jbara checkpoint, within sight of the Israeli soldiers."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3867/2007](#)

Given by Munira Muhammad Younes, resident of Nour Shams refugee camp, Toulkarem Governorate, West Bank

The Occupying Power

During the reporting period, Al-Haq field researchers documented a total of 122 killings of Palestinians by Israeli occupying forces, 111 of whom were killed in the Gaza Strip and another 11 in the West Bank. While a number of the killings occurred during exchanges of gunfire between Israeli occupying forces and Palestinian gunmen, most instances of **wilful killing** occurred in the total absence of armed clashes and included **targeted assassinations** (the intentional taking of a wanted person's life by surprise attack as the result of a politically motivated policy decision). In Khan Younis, on 20 November 2007, Israeli occupying forces shot and killed, at close range, an unarmed Palestinian who was raising his empty hands in surrender (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3952/2007](#)). In Toulkarem refugee camp, an Israeli undercover unit shot dead unarmed Muhammad Qozah after he was injured and lying wounded on the ground (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3974/2007](#) and Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3976/2007](#)). On 10 October 2007, Israeli occupying forces targeted Sufiyan Qandil in an attempt to assassinate him. While Qandil was injured, his unarmed friend was killed (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3947/2007](#)).

"I saw Israeli border guards. I recognised them from their uniforms. They came out from a hole in the ground. There were three or four of them, but I don't know the exact number because they began beating me as soon as they saw me. They beat me with their hands, batons and feet. I fell on the ground and screamed in pain as two soldiers grasped my left leg and started to twist it at the ankle until I heard a noise from the joint that was accompanied by severe pain. I screamed."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3908/2007](#)

Given by Bahi Shihda Zibdiyya, resident of al-Dhahrivva. Hebron Governorate. West Bank

Harassment, humiliation and beatings continued to be endured by Palestinians at the hands of Israeli forces. The motivation behind many of these incidents was generally hard to identify, with most of them appearing to be purely gratuitous. In one incident, Israeli border police attacked an unsuspecting Bahi Zibdiyya. Without cause, they beat him with their fists, batons and feet, fractured and dislocated his ankle and left him unable to walk for several weeks (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3908/2007](#)). In another incident, Israeli occupying forces took, Majdi 'Abd-al-Jawad out of his house, handcuffed and blindfolded him, interrogated him about alleged members of Palestinian armed groups residing in the area and beat him gratuitously (see [Affidavit No. 3975/2007](#)).

Al-Haq's documentation further revealed continued Israeli **settler violence** against, and intimidation of, Palestinians in the West Bank, particularly in the Hebron and Qalqiliya areas. Settlers carried out a number of attacks against Palestinians, their property and their sources of livelihood, such as their businesses. In a typical example, on 24 November 2007, more than 200 settlers attacked the granite shop and home of Majed Thiyab in Qalqiliya Governorate. With the assistance of Israeli soldiers and the Israeli police, they broke the windows of Thiyab's house, insulted him and his family and destroyed numerous granite slabs stored in front of his shop (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3983/2007](#)).

In another incident, in Hebron, Israeli settlers assailed Qurtuba Primary School, burning furniture, destroying classroom doors and uprooting plants (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3900/2007](#)). Israeli occupying forces continued to actively assist Israeli settlers in their assaults. In those cases where Israeli authorities did not directly participate in settler violence, their passive observance or wilful ignorance as well as their cursory investigation of such incidents amounted to a systematic refusal to prevent or punish criminal behaviour, thereby effectively encouraging it.

"When we arrived on the roof, we saw the settlers, and the Israeli army and police, breaking the granite slabs that were in front of the shop [...] During the incident the settlers were shouting in poor Arabic, "We do not want Arabs! Death to Arabs!" A female settler was saying through loud speakers in Hebrew, which I understand, that this would be repeated every day. Also next to the shop was a car with a yellow Israeli licence plate, which belongs to our neighbour who holds an Israeli ID. An Israeli policeman told the settlers not to go near that car and stood next to it to protect it. There was a female Jewish settler who wanted to break a huge granite slab but was unable to do so. She was around 18 years old. An Israeli soldier then helped her and they broke it together."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3983/2007](#)

Given by Majed Thiyab Thiyab, resident of al-Funduq village, Qalqiliya Governorate, West Bank

Throughout the West Bank, Israeli forces continued their policy of **land destruction and/or confiscation** in order to either expand or enclose existing illegal Israeli settlements or build Israeli infrastructure, most notably the Wall, 80% of which is built on West Bank land. Large tracts of arable land were put out of agricultural use after being confiscated or levelled. In a typical example, Israeli occupying forces levelled 50 dunums of agricultural land owned by the villagers of al-Ma'sara near Bethlehem, and uprooted 60 grape vines, in order to widen the Israeli-only Road 60, leading to the Efrat settlement (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3971/2007](#)).

"He introduced himself as the infrastructure officer at the Civil Administration, and told me that this land was confiscated by a military order from the year 1982. I asked him to show me the order, but he refused and asked me for the deeds to title of the land. I responded that I would present them in court. He then said that this land was not mine."

Excerpt from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3971/2007](#)

Given by Mahmoud Husein Suleiman, resident of al-Ma'sara, Bethlehem Governorate, West Bank

Israeli soldiers also carried out **house raids** accompanied by **theft** and **property destruction**. These raids were focused primarily on the homes of family members of allegedly wanted Palestinians or even in the general vicinity of where allegedly wanted Palestinians might live (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3907/2007](#)). On the night of Thursday, 22 November 2007, 20 masked occupying soldiers raided the house of Majdi 'Abd-al-Jawad in Far'a Refugee Camp near Jenin. They ordered him and his family members to wait outside in the cold for thirty minutes while the soldiers were searching his house, stealing gold and NIS 300. They later interrogated him about two residents of the camp who were allegedly wanted by the Israeli occupying forces (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3975/2007](#)).

In another incident, in Balata Refugee Camp near Nablus, Israeli occupying forces raided the house of 'Eisha Ka'bi, under the pretext of looking for her son who was allegedly wanted by the Occupying Power. The soldiers locked her and her family members in a room while they destroyed furniture as well as numerous electrical devices and set off explosives in the house, making it uninhabitable. She was unable to retrieve the official documents, including birth certificates of herself and her family members before the explosion (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3945/2007](#)).

"We entered the house and saw the volume of destruction. On the first floor, the north, west and east walls were destroyed and had cracks in the ceiling, and all the furniture, clothes, kitchen utensils, TV, electric appliances, etc. were severely damaged as a result of the explosion. I went to the second floor despite the danger caused by the blasting of the first floor. There I also found cracks in the walls, the couches were torn, while cupboards and beds were broken and thrown on the floor. Moreover, all the food supplies including sugar, flour, rice, oil and other food stuffs were thrown on the floor. On the third floor, which was not yet furnished, the walls were also cracked."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3945/2007](#)

Given by Eisha Younes Ka'bi, resident of Balata Refugee Camp, Nablus Governorate, West Bank

On 24 October 2007, Israeli soldiers raided the house of Muhammad 'Awawda in Hebron Governorate at night, destroying his property, including furniture, and stealing large amounts of cash he had saved in a bag in his daughters' room.

During the raids, Palestinians continued to be subjected to **threats and coercion** by the Occupying Power, including blackmail. In a typical example, 'Awawda was told he would be denied entry into Israel for medical treatment if he did not agree to spy on the residents of the village and surrender his son to the occupying forces (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3931/2007](#)).

The declaration of the Gaza Strip as a "hostile entity" by the Israeli Occupying Power on 19 September 2007 was followed by various sanctions imposed on the civilian population in the Gaza Strip during the reporting period that amounted to collective punishment, prohibited under international humanitarian law. These included intensification of the already severe border closures, limiting the provision of essential supplies, including food and medicine, and dramatically reducing the supply of electricity, all of which exacerbated the already dire **humanitarian crisis**.

As a result of these restrictions, the price of essential **food** commodities, including water, meat and dairy products, significantly increased over the reporting period. Fuel shortages affected the functioning of water pumping stations, waste treatment plants, hospitals, primary health centres and garbage collection.

Occupying forces carried out a series of **arbitrary arrests** of Palestinian civilians, including children. Some of the arrested Palestinians were detained in the course of **mass arrests**, notably in Toulkarem and Jenin. On 25 November 2007 for example, Israeli occupying forces arrested a group of 11 young and unarmed Palestinians, only two of whom were alleged to be members of a Palestinian armed group. After having been detained without charge and interrogated for several hours, nine of the arrested Palestinians were eventually released (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3976/2007](#)). In another incident, during a raid of al-Far'a Refugee Camp in the northern West Bank on Thursday 22 November 2007, Majdi 'Abd-al-Jawad, together with eight other residents of the camp, were arrested and interrogated. The young Palestinians were detained without cause for 12 hours while they were handcuffed and blindfolded (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3975/2007](#)).

"We reached an Israeli military camp, which I had not known of before. They put me inside a room where I recognised eight other young people from al-Far'a Camp. All had been arrested with me on the same day, as I discovered when one of the Israeli soldiers registered our names. Our detention continued for 12 hours under very bad conditions. During that time the soldiers only gave us water and no food. They continued to cover our eyes and cuff our hands for the entire 12 hours. I felt that there were persons taking photos of us. At approximately 6:00 pm on the same day, the eight young men and I were put in a military bus which drove around for one hour. Then the bus stopped and one of the soldiers told me and another guy called Naser Ishteivi, a citizen of al-Far'a camp, to get out. After we got out one of the soldiers uncuffed our hands and uncovered our eyes, and told us to return to our camp."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3975/2007](#)

Given by Majdi Subhi 'Abd-al-Jawad, resident of al-Far'a Refugee Camp, Jenin Governorate, West Bank

The Palestinian National Authority and Hamas De Facto Authority in Gaza

Al-Haq fieldworkers documented new cases of **kidnapping**, and **arbitrary assaults**, of Palestinians, some of which amounted to **torture**, particularly by members of opposing political factions. In the Gaza Strip on 12 November 2007, journalist Khaled Bulbul was attacked by Hamas' Executive Forces while he was photographing a commemoration of the third anniversary of President Yaser Arafat's death. The Executive Forces opened fire at the assembled crowd, confiscated Bulbul's camera and tortured him (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3950/2007](#)).

"While I was standing in the vicinity of the Brigade Mosque, also referred to as Sheikh Zayed Mosque, and photographing the rally activities, I heard very intense shooting. I also saw members of the Executive Force, police officers, and the masked persons in black uniforms, shooting. I saw some of them pointing their weapons upward and some directing their weapons towards the participants and firing. Meanwhile, the participants started to leave the place in all directions from fear of the shooting. I saw a number of them falling on the ground and bleeding."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3950/2007](#)

Given by Khaled Jamal Bulbul, resident of al-Rimal, Gaza Governorate, Gaza Strip

On 7 October 2007, six masked members of Hamas' Executive Forces attacked Bassam Abu-Zuhri in Rafah Governorate in the Gaza Strip. They kidnapped, tortured and interrogated him about his alleged affiliations with Fateh (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3863/2007](#)).

"I was taken to a place where I heard someone say, "take him to the room," and then I heard an iron gate being closed. After about five minutes I heard the door open and suddenly about three persons assailed and beat me. I knew the number of them from their voices, as they insulted me with bad words. They beat my legs with sticks and pipes for about half an hour, and then others rotated in, beating me several times in the same way. I knew this from the different voices telling me to lift my legs, and they hit the bottom of my feet for an hour and a half. They also attacked my knee with sticks, and used their hands and legs all over my body. Then one of them put his hands on my feet and threatened to shoot, saying he would take me to al-Mashtal Interrogation Centre if I did not cooperate with them."

Extract from Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3942/2007](#)

Given by Sa'id Muhammad Tafesh, resident of al-Tanour quarter, Rafah Governorate, Gaza Strip

Similar measures were taken by the Palestinian National Authority in the West Bank during the reporting period. In Hebron, for example PNA Preventive Security forces attacked the calligrapher Firas Hijazi, searched his shop, confiscated two computers and interrogated him about his alleged affiliation with Hamas (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 3887/2007](#)¹).

¹ The violations described in a small number of the affidavits appearing in this report occurred slightly before the current reporting period (January-March 2008). As these violations were either not covered in the last report (October-December 2008), or because their effects are ongoing, they are referred to in the current report.

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2007 STATISTICS

KILLINGS BY OCCUPYING POWER IN THE WEST BANK

Total of Killings	14
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Special target groups	
Death in custody	7
Targeted assassination	2
Assassination in custody	-
Death at checkpoints	-
Women	-
Children	-

Killings by District

Bethlehem	2
Hebron	1
Jenin	6
Jericho	-
Jerusalem	-
Nablus	2
Ramallah	2
Toulkarem	1
Total	14

Killings by Age Groups

Less than 12	-
13-17	-
18-25	7
26-35	3
36-50	3
Over 50	1
Total	14

Killing by Perpetrator

Israeli Occupying Forces	-
- Soldiers	7
- Special forces	4
- Snipers	-
Israeli Border Guards	1
Israeli Policemen	-
General Security Services	-
Settlers	-
Armed Israeli civilians	-
Collaborators	-
Others	2
Total:	14

Situation During Killing

Normal/Calm	3
Incursion	-
Raid	3
Demonstration and stone-throwing	1
Armed clashes	3
Shelling	-
Closed military area	-
Bystanders killed during attempted assassination	-
Unclear	3
Curfew	-
Inside prison	1
Total:	14

Methods of Killing

Live bullet	9
Fragmented bullet	-
Rubber-coated metal bullet	
Aluminium bullet	1
Explosives and small missiles	2
Shrapnel	-
Mine	-
Tear gas	-
Blunt instrument	-
Sharp instrument	-
Missile	-
Others	2
Total:	14

HOUSE DEMOLITION FOR LACK OF LICENSE BY DISTRICT

Bethlehem	-
Hebron	-
Jenin	-
Jericho	-
Jerusalem	3
Nablus	-
Ramallah	-
Toulkarem	-
Total:	3

CURFEWS

Curfew by District

District	Hours
Bethlehem	-
Jenin	7
Nablus	-
Toulkarem	202
Jerusalem	-
Ramallah	-
Hebron	-
Jericho	-
Total:	209

KILLINGS BY OCCUPYING POWER IN THE GAZA STRIP

Total of Killings	111
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Special target groups	
Targeted assassination	10
Death at checkpoints	1
Women	1
Children	7
Bystanders killed during attempted assassination	3

Killings by District

Khan Younes	29
Rafah	10
North Gaza	33
Gaza	15
Deir al-Balah	24
Total	111

Killings by Age Groups

Less than 12	-
13-17	7
18-25	66
26-35	21
36-50	17
Over 50	-
Total	111