



مركز العودة الفلسطيني  
Palestinian Return Centre

# SHEIKH JARRAH

**OCCUPIED EAST JERUSALEM**



## SHEIKH JARRAH FORCED EVICTIONS

In the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah, eight Palestinian families, approximately 75 Palestinians in total, are at risk of imminent forced eviction and dispossession, placing them at heightened risk of forcible transfer by Israeli authorities. These families are Palestinian refugees, who lost both their original homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict. In 1956, these refugee families moved into Sheikh Jarrah with the support of the Jordanian government and material assistance from UNRWA following their displacement. They have resided in these homes for nearly seventy years. They are now at risk of being displaced for the second time in living memory.



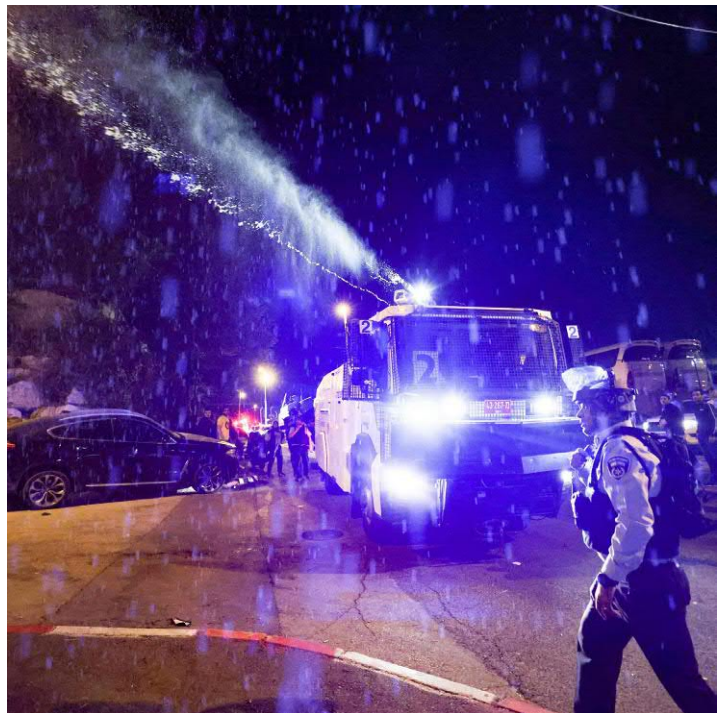
Four of the Palestinian families in the neighbourhood are under imminent threat of forcible transfer after a Jerusalem court rejected their appeal against an eviction order. Nahalat Shimon International, a settler company, has filed lawsuits to seize the homes of dozens of families in Sheikh Jarrah using inherently discriminatory laws, such as the Legal and Administrative Matter Laws as well as the Absentee Property Law of 1950, to confiscate Palestinian land or property and transfer it to settler groups. Forcible transfer of the occupied population is prohibited under international humanitarian law and constitutes a war crimes according to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

## UNWARRANTED RESPONSE TO PROTESTS

Palestinians have been protesting the forced evictions in Sheikh Jarrah since September 2019. However this past week their protests have been met with disproportionate force and brutality from Israeli authorities. Clashes and incidents of disproportionate force by Israeli authorities in Jerusalem have resulted in more than 150 Palestinians and six Israeli police being wounded (Friday 7th May 2021). A march, organised by the far-right group Lehava, ended at the main Damascus Gate entrance of the Old City of Jerusalem. Thousands of Palestinians had gathered to protect the City and hundreds of Israeli police in riot gear had closed off the area to prevent clashes.

Israeli police used water cannons, skunk spray, stun grenades and mounted police to try to push the marchers back. As clashes erupted, the majority of those injured were at Al Aqsa Mosque, inside the Old City. As it is the month of Ramadan thousands of Palestinians regularly go to pray at Al Aqsa Mosque (the third holiest site in Islam.)

The Palestinian Red Crescent opened a field hospital to treat the wounded, and they have reported treating at least 840 wounded Palestinians.



The director of Makassed Hospital's emergency department reported admitting 83 patients with rubber bullet injuries. 25 of these patients were seriously and severely injured with bullet wounds in the head and upper body, some with loss of sight.

Anti-eviction protests have been held in Palestinian cities across the West Bank and by Arab-Israelis in Haifa and Nazareth in response to the violent Israeli crackdown on protestors in Sheikh Jarrah and worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque. Violence has now escalated to Israeli bombing campaigns in Gaza, with twenty one Palestinians civilians killed, including nine children.

## FURTHER FORCED EVICTIONS PLANNED

The situation in Sheikh Jarrah is not an isolated incident. According to information and statistics released by UN OCHA, nearly a thousand Palestinians, almost half of whom are children, are at risk of forced eviction across East Jerusalem. In many cases in East Jerusalem, including in Sheikh Jarrah, the forced eviction of Palestinians is occurring within the context of Israeli settlement construction and expansion, illegal under international humanitarian law. Some of these are based on pre1948- claims, while Palestinian refugees are discriminatorily banned from reclaiming their properties/homes lost in West Jerusalem in 1948.

More than 1,500 Jerusalemite Palestinians dwelling in 100 housing units in the al-Bustan neighborhood in the town of Silwan, face a similar threat as their homes are threatened to be demolished at any moment by the Jerusalem municipality after the engineering plans submitted by Palestinian residents were turned down.



## JERUSALEM'S PALESTINIAN DEMOGRAPHIC



Since 1967, Israel's policy has been to change the demographic makeup of occupied East Jerusalem in its favour and entrench its control over it.

Systematic measures involving significant land grabs, rapid settlement constructions and the imposition of a repressive system on Palestinians, have been designed to stifle their daily lives and push them out of the city.

Israel's drive to settle Jerusalem and its environs has entirely changed the boundaries and parameters of the city, altering demographic trends and the historic skyline in order to achieve the ambitious objective of a "greater Jerusalem," the capital of the state of Israel, unified and indivisible from the West to the East with a strong Jewish majority.

The international community and the U.N. agencies should play a crucial third-party role in deterring unauthorized Israeli measures and in facilitating and fostering a climate of dialogue towards a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, including the future status of Jerusalem, which must be brought back onto the political map as this is of the utmost importance and urgency.

# RESOURCES

- 1) UNRWA - UNRWA JOINS OTHER UN ENTITIES IN RAISING ALARM OVER EIGHT SHEIKH JARRAH FAMILIES AT RISK OF FORCED EVICTION, MAY 2021  
<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-joins-other-un-entities-raising-alarm-over-eight-sheikh-jarrah>
- 2) Amnesty International - Israel/ OPT: End brutal repression of Palestinians protesting forced displacement in occupied East Jerusalem - MAY 2021  
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/05/2021/israel-opt-end-brutal-repression-of-palestinians-protesting-forced-displacement-in-occupied-east-jerusalem/>
- 3) REUTERS - East Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah becomes emblem of Palestinian struggle - MAY 2021  
<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/east-jerusalems-sheikh-jarrah-becomes-emblem-palestinian-struggle10-05-2021-/>
- 4) Middle East Eye - Sheikh Jarrah explained: The past and present of East Jerusalem neighbourhood - MAY 2021  
<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-sheikh-jarrah-jerusalem-neighbourhood-eviction-explained>
- 5) Daily Sabah - Jerusalem must be reintroduced to the political map - MAY 2021  
<https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/jerusalem-must-be-reintroduced-to-the-political-map>



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