



On the occasion of World Habitat Day

Palestine is the habitat of the Palestinians ... either to live with dignity on their land ... or as martyrs under their land

Statement by the Land Research Center on the occasion of World Habitat Day - 1 October 2018

Today, the world celebrates "World Habitat Day" as an advocate for the human right to adequate housing that provides human security, stability and dignity ... at a time when the people of Palestine are being uprooted from their houses and deported from their land by the Israeli occupation that rob natural resources including land, water and environment, in addition to forgery the history to create a homeland to which they do not belong by robbing the land from the rightful owners, it's indigenous Palestinian people.

The Palestinian Bedouin village of al-Khan al-Ahmar is standing on the edge of the sword, facing the danger of demolition and deportation, while its children, women and men wait in horror for the bulldozers of the occupation to come to demolish their homes and uproot their tents and take with them their hopes and dreams.

The anniversary of this year commemorates the 70th year of the Israeli occupation of the historical land of Palestine, where we remain standing after enduring crimes not subject to any statute of limitations.

During 1948 (the Nakba), the Israeli occupation demolished about 125,000 Palestinian houses and displaced nearly 800,000 Palestinians, who constitute 47% of the total number of Palestinians at that time.

After the success of the Israeli conquest to control 78% of the total area of historical Palestine, they did not stop their violation against the rest of the Palestinians who remained steadfast in their land. From 1950 to 2018 the Israeli state of colonization and occupation demolished about 4,450 houses and displaced about 30 thousand internally.

During the war of 1967, in which the state occupied the rest of historical Palestine (the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip). Israeli occupation forces demolished 5,500 houses and displaced 200,000 Palestinian residents. The policy of the Israeli demolition of houses in the West Bank, particularly in East Jerusalem, continues to escalate. The bulldozers have demolished about 11,000 Palestinian houses, including 7,000 in East Jerusalem, between 1967 and 2018, causing the additional displacement of about 69,000 Palestinian citizens, including 45,500 citizens of Jerusalem. During the same period, the Israeli occupation destroyed about 19,000 Palestinian's house in Gaza Strip. Moreover, the result of Israeli wars against the Gaza Strip in 2012–2014 have left vast destruction and displaced another 180,000 Palestinians.

This policy of destroying Palestinian habitat, demolishing some 165,000 Palestinian houses, displacing a total of 1,380,000 Palestinians and confiscating about 19 million dunums of historical Palestinian land, has made it possible for Israel to bring and settle 5 million Zionists from all over the world to replace the rightful Palestinian owners.



Palestinians ask how is it that the world witnesses over time this racist policy of substitution and replacement as the Israeli colonization, occupation, state aggression and torture that the people of Palestine suffer without finding a supporter for their rights?!

As they commemorate the World Habitat Day, the people of Palestine call upon the international community to stand up to its peremptory obligations. The Palestinian people continue to uphold the banner of steadfastness on its land and the banner of struggle against the Israeli occupation until the liberation of the land of Palestine and the return of the Palestinian refugees to their land.

Our people will continue to abide by international humanitarian law and the conventions and treaties that have been adopted, which consider forced eviction and the demolition of houses is an international crime and that its perpetrators must be prosecuted and punished.

We in Palestine, as stated in the first statement of the Palestinian Movement for the Right to Housing in 1996, consider ourselves part of the global movement that is struggling for a homeland to live in peace, security and dignity. We draw our inspiration from these global efforts and work in solidarity with them.

World Habitat Day: The Global Struggle for the Human Right to Life ... long live the struggle of the people of Palestine for their right to their land and their home.

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Jerusalem

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