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Shadow Report to the Human Rights Committee  
(Occupied Palestinian Territory – West Bank)

# The Systematic and Structural Erasure of Palestinian Bedouin Communities in the West Bank

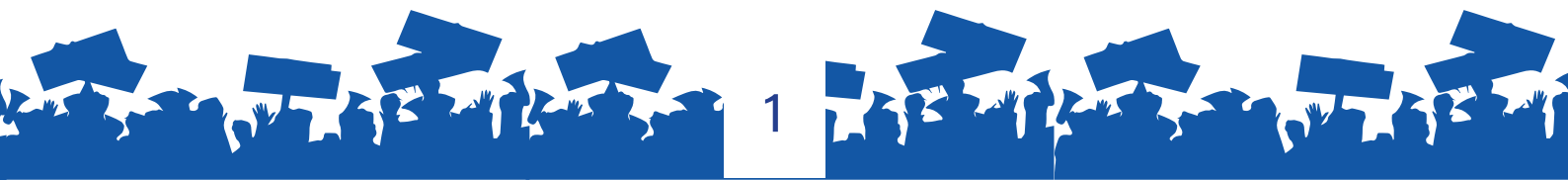
Submitted by:

Al-Baidar Organization for the Defense of Bedouin Rights  
In cooperation with Lawyers for Justice



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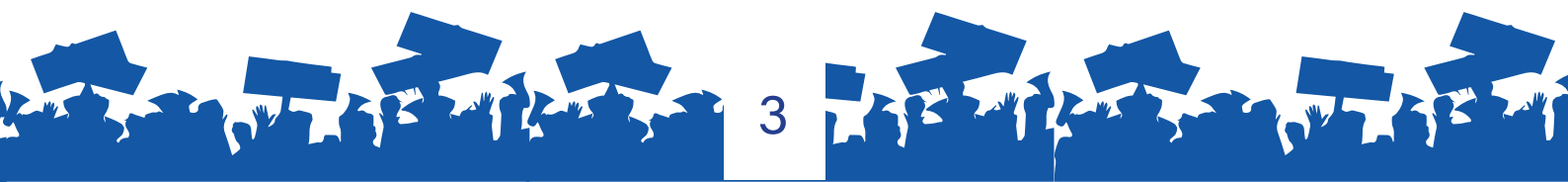
Geographic Focus: Area C of the West Bank



# Contents

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>1. Executive Summary</b> .....   | <b>4</b>     |
| <b>2. Methodology</b> .....   | <b>7</b>     |
| <b>3. Context: Bedouin Communities in Area C</b> .....                                    | <b>9</b>     |
| <b>4. Patterns of Documented Violations against Palestinian Bedouin Communities</b> ..... | <b>14-27</b> |
| • 4.1 Settler Violence .....  | 14           |
| • 4.2 Military Violence (Practices of the Occupying Forces) .....                         | 16           |
| • 4.3 Land Confiscation .....   | 18           |
| • 4.4 Demolitions, Evictions, and Construction Restrictions.....                          | 19           |
| • 4.5 Restrictions on Movement and Mobility.....  | 21           |
| • 4.6 Destruction of Livelihoods and Life.....  | 22           |
| • 4.8 Violations of the Right to Education and Health.....                                | 23           |
| • 4.9 Exploitation of Resources.....  | 25           |
| • 4.10 Civil Administration Policies.....   | 26           |
| <b>5. Impacts</b> .....   | <b>28-29</b> |
| • 5.1 Impact on Fundamental Human Rights.....   | 28           |
| • 5.2 Impact on Geographic and Demographic Cohesion .....                                 | 28           |
| • 5.3 5.3 Impact on Identity and the Social Fabric .....                                  | 29           |

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>6. Legal Analysis</b> .....   | <b>30-33</b> |
| • 6.1 Applicable Legal Framework .....                                       | 30           |
| • 6.2 De Facto Forcible Transfer.....  | 31           |
| • 6.3 Destruction of Private Property . . . . .                              | 31           |
| • 6.4 Denial of Basic Services and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. .32 |              |
| • 6.5 Settler Violence and Failure to Fulfil the Duty of Protection ... ..   | 32           |
| • 6.6 Structural Discrimination and Inequality Before the Law ... ..         | 32-33        |
| • 6.7 Violation of the Right to Self-Determination... ..                     | 33           |
| <br>   |              |
| <b>7. Conclusions</b> .....  | <b>34</b>    |
| <br>   |              |
| <b>8. Recommendations</b> .....  | <b>36</b>    |



# 1. Executive Summary



This report is submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Committee within the framework of its general mandate to promote, protect, and ensure human rights. It seeks to shed light on an integrated structural pattern of policies and serious violations committed against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C of the occupied West Bank, which under the Oslo Accords constitutes approximately 60% of the West Bank's total area and remains under full Israeli military and civil control<sup>1</sup>.

The report demonstrates that these violations and practices do not constitute exceptional incidents or sporadic, temporary measures prompted by extraordinary circumstances. Rather, they form an integral part of a systematic and structural colonial framework that targets the natural presence of the indigenous Palestinian population in these communities, undermines the foundations of their continued existence, and imposes a coercive reality that compels them to seek survival alternatives outside their communities.

These policies are manifested through a set of recurrent and interconnected violations, including settler violence; demolition, eviction, and construction restriction policies; arbitrary military measures; restrictions on movement and access; the targeting of livelihoods; and the denial of basic resources and essential services. These practices are implemented within a framework of systematic discrimination aimed at imposing a new demographic and geographic reality, whereby settler presence replaces the indigenous population. This produces a situation in which all forms of violations intersect, collectively exerting pressure on Palestinian Bedouin communities and rendering ordinary daily life extremely difficult, if not impossible.

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1 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Key Facts on Area C," various updates between 2014–2020, indicate that Area C constitutes approximately 60% of the West Bank under the territorial divisions established by the Oslo Accords and remains under full Israeli control.  
Available at: <https://shorturl.at/AGWm8>

The report further indicates a sharp and notable escalation in both the pace and severity of these violations following 7 October 2023<sup>2</sup>. In this context, the occupying authorities and settlers exploited the state of war as an opportunity to expand and intensify settlement activities, accelerate demolitions and confiscations, impose suffocating restrictions on movement and mobility, escalate settler violence, and provide protection and impunity for their criminal acts, particularly in the Jordan Valley, the Jerusalem periphery, the South Hebron Hills, and northern areas of the West Bank.

The report is based on interviews conducted in 2025 with residents of Bedouin communities in Area C, which is subject to the civil and security authority of the occupying power. These testimonies highlight the suffering endured by community members and shed light on their struggle and steadfastness on their land in the face of the settler-colonial erasure apparatus. Their accounts constitute material evidence that supports the analysis and confirms the documented systematic patterns.

The findings demonstrate that the cumulative impact of these violations generates a persistent coercive environment that undermines the possibility of a dignified life and safe existence within Bedouin communities, and pushes residents to consider forced alternatives involving departure or displacement, even in the absence of formal expulsion orders, amounting to forcible transfer<sup>3</sup>. The effects of this coercive environment are not limited to material and economic dimensions; they extend to the collective identity and the social and cultural fabric of Bedouin communities by eroding traditional ways

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2 Ibid, Humanitarian Situation Update No. 252, 2 January 2025, documents a significant escalation in demolitions, movement restrictions, and settler violence following 7 October 2023.

Available at: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-252-west-bank>

3 "Forced eviction is defined as the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals and/or families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection." Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 7.

of life, weakening social cohesion, and threatening the continuity of the historical relationship with the land.

The report concludes that these policies and practices constitute serious and systematic violations of the principles of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in particular the principles of non-discrimination, the prohibition of forcible transfer, and the obligation to protect the civilian population under occupation. In light of the mandate of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, the report calls upon the Committee to address the situation of Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C as a structural case requiring a comprehensive response, one that focuses on the cumulative impact of violations and on halting policies that result in de facto forcible transfer and the gradual erasure of Palestinian Bedouin presence through the reconfiguration of the spatial and demographic landscape at the expense of the indigenous population and their fundamental rights.

## 2. Methodology



This report adopts a methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative analysis of documented data related to violations committed against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C of the occupied West Bank. The aim is to identify structural patterns of violations, analyze the associated policies and practices, and assess their cumulative impact on the enjoyment of fundamental rights by the population in these areas.

The analysis is based on documented data, including direct field testimonies from members of affected Bedouin communities and legal consultations, alongside documentation materials and periodic reports issued by specialized human rights organizations. Relevant UN reports and mechanisms were also reviewed, where available. These sources were approached in an integrated manner, allowing for an understanding of the facts within their broader context and for linking individual experiences to wider trends, rather than treating them as isolated incidents.

The report does not treat the documented violations as individual occurrences or transient events, but rather as qualitative indicators of recurring, systematic patterns of violations. These are analyzed in conjunction with descriptive quantitative data to demonstrate frequency, prevalence, and the interrelationship between different forms of practices and policies.

The report places particular analytical emphasis on the period following 7 October 2023, in light of the marked escalation in the frequency and severity of violations during this time. This phase is examined as an extension and intensification of existing patterns, rather than as a departure from the prevailing policy framework.

The report examines these violations within their broader context, taking into account the interaction of various policies and practices and their combined impact on livelihoods, community stability, the deepening of humanitarian conditions, and the ability of Bedouin communities to remain and survive

in their locations. This document is submitted as a shadow report intended to support the work of the United Nations Human Rights Committee by providing an analysis grounded in documentation and evidence. It seeks to assist in assessing the cumulative impact of the documented violations and to underscore the urgent need for effective follow-up, compliance, accountability, and the attribution of legal and moral responsibility to all relevant parties for the protection of Bedouin communities and the guarantee of their fundamental rights.

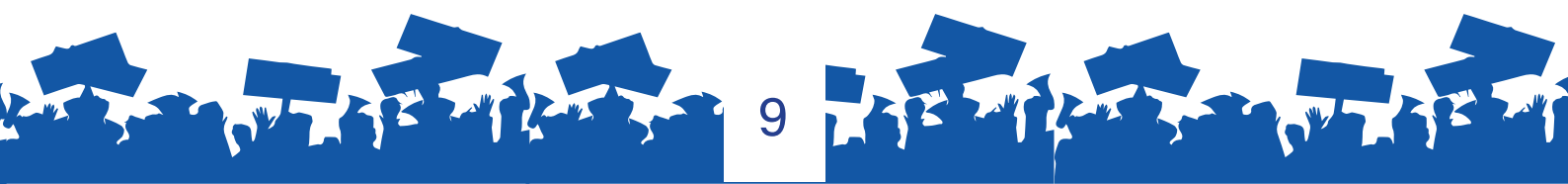


### 3. Context: Bedouin Communities in Area C

Palestinian Bedouin communities constitute indigenous communities deeply rooted in the occupied West Bank, with a long historical presence and a close relationship with land and natural resources. The vast majority of these communities are concentrated in rural and semi-arid areas, particularly in Area C. According to reports by Al-Baidar Organization, approximately 88% of Palestinian Bedouin communities reside in Area C, which constitutes around 60% of the West Bank's total area and remains under full Israeli civil and military control. Across successive generations, these communities have preserved a way of life based on pastoralism and traditional agriculture as primary means of subsistence and as a core component of their collective identity.

Documented data regarding the size and proportion of the Bedouin population varies considerably. United Nations reports estimate the number of Bedouins in the West Bank at approximately 40,000 persons, according to an official report issued by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2017. By contrast, local human rights organizations, including Al-Baidar Organization, estimate that the actual number is significantly higher, reaching approximately 400,000 individuals distributed across at least 212 documented Bedouin communities, according to Al-Baidar's assessment. The organization emphasizes that no official census has ever been conducted within Bedouin communities due to deliberate marginalization. Members of these communities live primarily in mountainous areas, distributed across Bedouin villages and small encampments. The three largest Bedouin tribes in the West Bank are:

- The Ka'abneh Tribe in the northern Jordan Valley;
- The Rashaydeh Tribe in the southern Hebron area;
- The Jahalin Tribe in the central West Bank, near Jerusalem.



Other tribes, including the 'Azazmeh, Ramadin, Suwarakeh, 'Areinat, and 'Ammarin, are spread across different parts of Area C, where they are subjected on a daily basis to policies of restriction and land confiscation.

The absence of accurate demographic data on the size and distribution of the Palestinian Bedouin population reflects the long-standing political marginalization and exclusion experienced by these communities at both the local and international levels. This disparity also points to the challenges of documentation in the absence of official recognition, as well as the continuous changes affecting Bedouin communities as a result of imposed policies.

Within this historical and demographic context, it is noted that a large proportion of Palestinian Bedouin communities in the West Bank trace their origins to families forcibly displaced from their original areas within historic Palestine in 1948. Numerous reports indicate that approximately 70% of Bedouins are refugees by origin<sup>4</sup>, rendering their current situation an extension of a prolonged history of forcible displacement and land loss. Accordingly, current policies imposed on these communities cannot be separated from a continuing trajectory of exclusion and dispossession, reproduced through evolving mechanisms. (Annexed to the appendices is a map issued by UNDP documenting the distribution of Bedouin tribes in the West Bank and their areas of presence, illustrating that Bedouin communities form a wide and interconnected geographic fabric, despite its fragmentation by the Wall, settlements, and military checkpoints.)

In the northern and western areas of the West Bank, Bedouin communities are generally composed of small, dispersed family units, while communities in the southern and central regions and in the Jordan Valley tend to be larger and more densely populated.

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4 Heneiti, Ahmad, "Bedouin Communities in Greater Jerusalem: Planning or Forced Displacement?" Institute for Palestine Studies, Jerusalem Quarterly No. 65 (Spring 2016).

These communities are characterized by a young age structure and high fertility rates compared to other Palestinian communities. Bedouins typically live in tents or temporary metal structures (zinc shelters) spaced no less than fifty meters apart, reflecting a spatial and architectural pattern that expresses Bedouin territorial identity and ensures privacy among extended families. Each cluster usually consists of two to three generations of the same family.

Since the beginning of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967, Palestinian Bedouin communities, particularly in Area C, have been subjected to a continuous series of policies and practices targeting their physical presence and traditional way of life. These communities are governed by an administrative and planning regime that imposes strict and systematic restrictions on construction, development, and land use. Israeli authorities do not recognize any Bedouin villages or communities in Area C and virtually prohibit the issuance of building permits. As a result, homes and essential structures including tents, animal shelters, and agricultural facilities are classified as “unlicensed,” rendering them perpetually vulnerable to demolition or confiscation and placing communities in a constant state of legal and livelihood insecurity.

This administrative and planning framework operates within a broader context marked by the expansion of settlements and settlement outposts around many Bedouin communities, as part of decades-long annexation policies implemented by the occupying authorities<sup>5</sup>. These policies are accompanied by

5 The policy of partial or gradual annexation of the West Bank has been a component of Israeli discourse since the occupation in 1967. Over the years, several plans and proposals have been advanced in the Knesset aiming to impose Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank, including the Jordan Valley and the settlements, and to gradually extend Israeli law over the occupied territories. Examples include:

- The decision of the Likud Committee in 2017 to impose “Israeli sovereignty” over the settlements in the West Bank, in which party members called for voting in favor of legislation to that effect. (Source: France 24, 2017, <https://shorturl.at/gfVAD>)
- The Knesset’s vote on 23 July 2025 on a resolution calling for the annexation of the West Bank, reflecting the ongoing political trend toward annexation.
- In late 2025, the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) voted by a narrow majority to pass a bill applying Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank at its preliminary reading—an action consid-



increasing restrictions on access to land and grazing areas, recurrent military measures, and systematic attacks carried out by settlers. The interaction between these administrative policies and on-the-ground practices undermines the ability of communities to maintain their traditional way of life and directly affects community stability.

Bedouin communities also suffer from chronic deficiencies in access to basic services, including water, electricity, education, and healthcare, due to restrictions on infrastructure development, movement limitations, and the absence or inaccessibility of service facilities. This cumulative deprivation contributes to fragile living, humanitarian, and health conditions, disproportionately affecting women, children, and the elderly.

Reports by the Al-Haq indicate that Bedouins who rely on pastoralism in these areas face severe restrictions on movement and grazing, which have had devastating effects on agriculture and rangelands. At the same time, occupying authorities impose strict construction restrictions, confiscate land, and deny access to resources essential for life, rendering everyday existence nearly impossible.

This marginalization is also reflected in the spatial and cartographic representation of Bedouin communities, many of which are inaccurately represented, or entirely absent, from official or widely used digital maps, with the legal status of Area C often unclear or omitted. Recent reports indicate that Google Maps has removed Area C from its latest updates, visually retaining only Areas A and B. This omission contributes to a growing gap between on-the-ground realities and publicly accessible representations, negatively affecting spatial understanding of the area and deepening the invisible erasure of Bedouin presence within a broader context of structural exclusion<sup>6</sup>.

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ered a step toward its formal annexation. (Source: Reuters, <https://shorturl.at/SciyS>)

6 A series of reports issued by the 7amleh – The Arab Center for Social Media Advancement. Available at: <https://7amleh.org/msa/>

In this context, the situation of Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C cannot be understood in isolation from the overarching framework of imposed policies and practices that reshape the spatial and human landscape in ways that restrict residents' choices and undermine their ability to remain on their land. This framework produces a coercive environment in which administrative restrictions intersect with field practices, forming the essential backdrop for understanding the patterns of violations documented in this report and for assessing their cumulative impact on the individual and collective rights of Bedouin communities.

## 4. Patterns of Documented Violations against Palestinian Bedouin Communities



“They do not tell us to leave. Instead, they tighten the pressure little by little, until life becomes unbearable, and we leave our land on our own.” Bedouin woman from the Jordan Valley

Field testimonies and documented data collected by the Al-Baidar Organization, upon which this report relies, reveal a set of recurring and interrelated patterns of serious violations against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C. These violations do not occur in isolation or as incidental acts; rather, they intersect and reinforce one another within a single structural context aimed at undermining the foundations of daily life and forcing residents to live under coercive, unsustainable conditions. This reality renders their continued presence on their land extremely difficult, if not impossible.

### 4.1 Settler Violence

Violence perpetrated by Israeli settlers constitutes one of the most severe and dangerous documented patterns of violations against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C, both in terms of its nature and its direct impact on residents’ daily lives. This violence is rendered particularly grave given that it emanates from an unlawful settler presence under international law, including the rules of international humanitarian law that prohibit the transfer of the occupying power’s civilian population into occupied territory<sup>7</sup>.

The majority of documented cases show repeated and overlapping forms of settler violence, including physical and verbal assaults, threats and intimidation, property damage, livestock theft, crop destruction, and obstruction of access to grazing lands and water sources. This violence does not occur in

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) affirms the illegality of Israeli settlements and characterizes them as a “flagrant violation under international law;” while the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Wall (2004) determined that the transfer of the occupying power’s civilian population into occupied territory constitutes a violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.



isolation from other violations; it frequently coincides with military measures and administrative restrictions, thereby contributing to the erosion of daily living conditions and directly affecting livelihoods and community stability. (Photographs documenting certain settler violations are included in the annexes.)

Field testimonies and reports indicate that these attacks often occur in the presence of occupying forces, under their supervision or protection, or in circumstances marked by a failure to provide protection or accountability. This entrenches a climate of impunity and transforms settler violence into a systematic tool of pressure and displacement, used to compel Bedouin communities to reduce or abandon their presence on their land. A marked escalation in the frequency and severity of these attacks has been observed in the period following October 2023, particularly in light of the unprecedented increase in the arming of settlers, whereby exceptional circumstances were exploited to intensify attacks and heighten threats against Bedouin communities<sup>8</sup>.

A forty-year-old Bedouin woman from the Jericho area stated: "After 7 October, the attacks increased in a way we had never experienced before. Everything became more violent." She added: "Settlers began targeting women and girls shouting at them and threatening them. Many stopped going to school or work out of fear." In another testimony, a nine-year-old child recounted: "I was going to school when a settler stopped me and told me that if I didn't stop, he would shoot me." One Bedouin community resident further reported that repeated attacks have forced many families to avoid accessing

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8 See: the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Human Rights Council, United Nations document A/HRC/56/CRP.4, 10 June 2024, which documents the escalation of settler attacks against Bedouin communities following 7 October 2023, the occurrence of these attacks in the presence of or with the support of occupying forces, the increase in the arming of settlers, and the use of such violence as a tool of forcible transfer. See also: reports by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in particular its update issued on 1 November 2023, concerning the displacement of pastoral communities in Area C as a result of escalating settler violence.

their land and sources of livelihood out of fear of harm, describing remaining in the community as a “daily risk” in the absence of any effective protection.

These testimonies demonstrate that settler violence is not limited to attacks on property or resources alone; rather, it constitutes an assault on all that is Palestinian. It permeates the details of daily life, extends to the body and identity, and renders fear and anxiety constant companions of Bedouin everyday existence, transforming daily life within these communities into a form of silent resistance against policies aimed at erasing their presence from both the land and collective memory.

## 4.2 Military Violence (Practices of the Occupying Forces)

Alongside the escalation of settler attacks, Israeli occupying forces exercise a sustained form of direct military violence against Palestinian civilians residing in Bedouin communities located in Area C. This violence manifests through the excessive use of force, repeated incursions, night raids, the imposition of military closures, and coercive search operations. It also includes the suppression of solidarity activists and human rights defenders present in or around these communities for purposes of monitoring or protection, through threats, expulsion, or arrest, measures that are often carried out in the absence of any genuine or concrete security justification.

The role of occupying forces is not limited to the direct perpetration of violence; it extends to a functional division of roles with settlers and the provision of practical cover for settler violence. This occurs through protecting settlers during attacks, accompanying them on the ground, or deliberately refraining from intervening to halt violations or hold perpetrators accountable. This pattern integrates settler violence into a broader institutional framework, such that it no longer constitutes isolated individual acts but rather, according to the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem, forms part of an integrated system of violence exercised under the effective over-

sight of the occupying authority. This reflects a clear functional overlap between formal military violence and settler violence<sup>9</sup>.

These practices are carried out in the context of an almost complete absence of effective accountability mechanisms, transforming military presence from an exceptional or temporary measure into a permanent tool of control and repression. This directly affects all aspects of civilians' daily lives. In this context, a Bedouin woman from the Fasayil area stated: "The army raids us almost every day," a description that reflects the normalization of incursions as a daily reality imposed on these communities.

Field testimonies further indicate that military violence is not limited to moments of direct confrontation, but extends to ongoing patterns of psychological intimidation, including heavy military deployment, armed presence near homes, and the use of force to instill fear within communities. In this regard, a 35-year-old mother from al-Jiftlik stated: "They started attacking us at night with military dogs, just to frighten our children," clearly indicating the direct targeting of family life and the sense of safety and privacy.

This pattern of violence has severe consequences for the civilian population, including restrictions on freedom of movement, disruption of livelihoods, threats to physical and psychological integrity, and the imposition of a permanent state of fear and instability. As a result, remaining in these communities becomes a daily risk, contributing to the creation of a coercive environment that undermines the ability of Bedouin communities to continue living on their land.

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9 See: the report by Human Rights Watch, "West Bank: Israel Responsible for Rising Settler Violence," which establishes that Israeli forces have either directly participated in, or failed to act to protect Palestinians from, settler attacks in the West Bank since 7 October 2023; data published by Yesh Din, indicating that the vast majority of investigations into settler violence are closed without genuine prosecutions; as well as reports by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) documenting the continued perpetration of settler attacks and the persistent failure of authorities to provide adequate protection.

### 4.3 Land Confiscation

Since 1967, Israeli occupying authorities have pursued a policy of land confiscation as a central tool to undermine Palestinian Bedouin presence in Area C, through established administrative and legal mechanisms. These include declaring large areas as “State land,” confiscating land for “military purposes” or “public interest,” or classifying it as “absentee property.” In 2024 alone, Israel classified 24,258 dunums as “State land,” a figure equivalent to nearly half of all land declared as such since the Oslo Accords<sup>10</sup>. These mechanisms have been systematically employed to redefine Palestinian land as available for settlement or military use, while stripping historical Bedouin presence of legal recognition.

These policies are not confined to executive decisions but are reinforced by the Israeli judicial system, which has adopted legal interpretations denying Bedouin land rights on the grounds that such land was not formally registered during earlier historical periods. This facilitates their classification as trespassers on “State land,” renders their communities “unrecognized,” and paves the way for land confiscation and home demolitions.

Field data and reports by specialized human rights organizations indicate that land cleared of Bedouin communities is frequently repurposed for the establishment of new settlement outposts or the expansion of existing settlements, including pastoral outposts, effectively resettling settlers on these lands. This results in deliberate demographic reengineering, whereby long-standing Bedouin presence is replaced by organized settler presence, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law prohibitions on the transfer of the occupying power’s civilian population into occupied territory.

Recent data published by specialized human rights organizations, including reports by the Al-Baidar Organization, show a marked escalation in the

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<sup>10</sup> The report of the Office of the European Union Representative in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “Israeli Settlements in the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem (2024),” which documents the declaration of thousands of dunums as “State land” and the escalation of settlement plans in Area C through administrative mechanisms.

pace of Bedouin land confiscation during 2024–2025. One monthly report indicated that more than 49,671 dunums were confiscated between January and the end of May 2025, the highest rate recorded in the past five years, particularly in the Jordan Valley and Masafer Yatta, where confiscations coincided with settlement expansion and the accelerated declaration of land as “State land.” Data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) further confirm that Bedouin communities were among the groups most severely affected by these measures, especially in areas designated as firing zones or nature reserves.

Available data indicate that a significant proportion of Bedouin communities in Area C are directly or indirectly affected by land confiscation measures or restrictions on access to land, particularly in the Jordan Valley, Masafer Yatta, and the surroundings of East Jerusalem. This includes areas impacted by major planning projects such as the E1 project<sup>11</sup>, among other settlement initiatives aimed at entrenching annexation policies and imposing new geographic and demographic realities. These measures result in the deprivation of grazing and agricultural lands, the erosion of traditional livelihoods, and the forced spatial contraction of communities, pushing them toward de facto displacement.

#### 4.4 Demolitions, Evictions, and Construction Restrictions

Home demolitions and the imposition of severe construction restrictions constitute one of the most prominent discriminatory policy tools applied against Bedouin communities in Area C. Demolition and eviction orders are issued repeatedly, while residents are almost entirely prevented from obtaining building permits, with permit rejection rates reaching approximately 98%. As a result, homes and essential structures remain under constant threat of actual demolition, forced self-demolition, or confiscation. This has a profound negative impact on residents’ sense of safety and family and community stability, exacerbating already fragile living conditions. These prac-

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11 Al Jazeera Net, “The ‘E1’ Plan: A Settlement Scheme for Demographic Change in Jerusalem,” 15 August 2025.

tices lead to the loss of shelter, family displacement, and repeated instances of internal displacement, in the absence of any alternative housing solutions or compensation.

These policies are not limited to preventing construction; they extend to repeated demolition orders, forced self-demolitions, night raids, confiscation of construction equipment, and the execution of administrative evictions. This keeps Bedouin communities in a permanent state of legal and livelihood insecurity. By contrast, Israeli settlements established in the same areas are granted building permits, opportunities for expansion, and fully developed infrastructure, demonstrating the application of a dual legal standard based on national identity and the systematic prevention of any Palestinian urban development in Area C.

According to recent human rights data, specifically the annual report issued by the Al-Baidar Organization, a significant escalation in demolitions and evictions was recorded in Area C during 2025. The report documented 965 demolition operations affecting Bedouin homes and structures, resulting in harm to more than 1,000 individuals. Field testimonies further illustrate the direct impact of these discriminatory policies on daily life. In the town of Bardala, a 21-year-old Bedouin woman stated: "They forced our neighbors to demolish the third floor of their house with their own hands and prohibited us from using a bulldozer. They said we had to demolish it ourselves."

In the Fasayil area, a 40-year-old Bedouin woman said: "They confiscate construction equipment every time we try to repair or build. There is no hope at all of getting a permit."

## 4.5 Restrictions on Movement and Mobility

Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C face severe restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by the Israeli occupying authorities. These include the closure of main and secondary roads, the installation of permanent and temporary military checkpoints, the imposition of curfews, travel bans, and the confiscation of private vehicles. These measures disrupt daily life and deprive residents of regular access to basic services, including education, healthcare, markets, and workplaces, imposing a form of forced isolation that renders remaining on the land a constant struggle.

These restrictions intensified sharply after 7 October 2023, as military measures were tightened and vast areas were closed to civilian movement. This transformed many Bedouin areas into de facto isolated enclaves surrounded by checkpoints, within a context that empties the right to freedom of movement of its substance and undermines any possibility of normal life.

Field testimonies reflect the direct impact of these restrictions on daily life. A 21-year-old Bedouin woman from Bardala stated: “My biggest problem is transportation. Checkpoints only open at certain hours, and if I miss the time, I have to take a long detour with another checkpoint, and it doesn’t always open.”

In another testimony from Fasayil, a 40-year-old woman said: “Before 7 October there were areas we were forbidden from accessing, but after the war, all areas became forbidden.”

A mother from al-Jiftlik reported: “We can’t sell our products because of the checkpoints.”

A 66-year-old man from the northern Jordan Valley concluded: “After 7 October, they took away our freedom completely.”

These restrictions are not limited to local residents; they also extend to preventing solidarity activists, humanitarian actors, and journalists from ac-

cessing many Bedouin communities. This deepens their isolation and limits opportunities for monitoring, documentation, and assistance. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that movement restrictions are not imposed as temporary security measures, but rather as a systematic policy aimed at suffocating Bedouin communities, deepening their isolation, and making their continued presence on their land exceedingly difficult.

## 4.6 Destruction of Livelihoods and Life

Agriculture and pastoralism constitute the primary pillars of livelihood for Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C, and represent the framework that binds these communities to the land and ensures the continuity of their social and economic existence. This way of life, however, is subject to direct and systematic targeting by the occupying authorities and settlers through the confiscation of land and grazing areas, denial of access thereto, the imposition of increasing restrictions on movement and mobility, as well as tree uprooting, crop burning, destruction of agricultural equipment, water poisoning, theft or killing of livestock, and repeated attacks against shepherds<sup>12</sup>.

This targeting goes beyond restriction and denial, extending to the allocation of vast areas of confiscated or closed land for the benefit of pastoral settlement outposts, which rely on effective control over grazing lands and the prevention of Palestinian owners from accessing them. In this way, the land itself is transformed into an instrument of slow expulsion of Bedouin communities. Collectively, these practices result in more than the loss of income; they dismantle the entire traditional livelihood system, transforming the Bedouin way of life from a sustainable option into an unbearable burden and compelling residents to seek coercive alternatives outside their land.

According to reports by the Al-Baidar Organization, the area under settler pastoral control had reached approximately 786,000 dunums by 2025, equivalent to 14% of the West Bank. This has resulted in the displacement of more

12 Reuters, "West Bank Bedouin Community Says Israeli Settlers Stole Hundreds of Sheep," 11 March 2025.

than 66 pastoral communities and the forcible displacement of over 7,000 Palestinians since October 2023. The organization also documented the establishment of more than 100 pastoral settlement outposts, concentrated in the Jordan Valley, Jerusalem, Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, and Salfit. In the Jordan Valley alone, settlers control approximately 80% of grazing-suitable land, transforming Palestinian Bedouin communities into isolated enclaves surrounded by military and administrative restrictions.

Residents' testimonies reflect the direct impact of these policies on their lives. A 21-year-old woman from Bardala stated: "They arrested a shepherd and his son claiming they entered a prohibited grazing area, even though they didn't cross it, they just keep shrinking the area every time." She added: "In the same village, they burned a shepherd's home, and later tried to poison the livestock's water, but people saw them."

A resident of Fasayil stated: "We were forced to sell our livestock. We can't graze them anymore. Roads are closed, and fodder trucks are banned." A 50-year-old man from the northern Jordan Valley said: "We used to cultivate large areas. Today I can only farm next to my house."

These testimonies reflect a recurring pattern of measures that do not merely target sources of income, but systematically strip away the basic conditions for survival, resulting in the gradual and coercive uprooting of Bedouin communities from their land.

## 4.7 Violations of the Right to Education and Health

Testimonies included in this report show that access to education and healthcare in Bedouin communities has become contingent upon a series of daily obstacles, including movement restrictions, long distances, lack of infrastructure, and repeated attacks and harassment targeting schools and mobile clinics<sup>13</sup>. Children are forced to travel long distances to reach schools

13 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), previously cited source.

under unsafe conditions, leading some families to keep their children at home or withdraw them from education altogether. Patients are likewise compelled to delay or forgo medical treatment due to checkpoints and access restrictions, as reported by residents of Bardala, Fasayil, al-Jiftlik, and Kardala.

With regard to education, Bedouin communities suffer from a shortage of schools, long travel distances, lack of safe transportation, and direct attacks against students and educational institutions. These conditions contribute to high dropout rates, particularly among children who must traverse unsafe routes, whose families prevent them from attending school due to safety concerns, who are unable to maintain regular attendance, or who are compelled to contribute to household income following the erosion of livelihoods.

A 21-year-old woman from Bardala stated: "Settlers attacked the boys' secondary school last year, injuring three students. They fired live ammunition in the air and threw gas. For two days after that, no one sent their children to school."

A woman from Fasayil said: "We are steadfast despite everything. I continued my education after marriage and received a scholarship. But others were forced to pull their children out of school to help support the family, and we can't even bring in cement to build houses."

A 35-year-old mother from al-Jiftlik stated: "My children suffer a lot on their way to school because of checkpoints. Even the UNRWA school is subjected to raids by settlers."

In the health sector, most Bedouin communities lack adequately equipped medical centers or resident healthcare staff, forcing residents to travel long distances to reach hospitals, often through checkpoints and rough roads. The occupying authorities also obstruct the access of ambulances, prevent the establishment of clinics, and restrict the work of medical teams.

A woman from Fasayil stated: "If there is a medical emergency, we have to

go to Jericho, and it can take hours because of the blockade.” Another added: “We tried to set up a field emergency clinic, but the army prevented us.”

From al-Jiftlik, R.G. stated: “Mobile clinics don’t come because of checkpoints. Once I was stung by a scorpion. I almost died. There was no treatment and no nearby hospital.”

A cancer patient from Kardala said: “I can’t receive treatment. Every time, checkpoints prevent me from reaching the hospital.”

## 4.8 Exploitation of Resources

Palestinian communities, particularly Bedouin communities in the Jordan Valley, suffer from systematic deprivation of natural resources, alongside extensive Israeli exploitation of those resources for the benefit of settlements. This deprivation includes water resources, agricultural land, the Jordan River, and the Dead Sea, in addition to restrictions on the development of basic infrastructure related to water, electricity, sanitation, and roads.

Since the beginning of the occupation, Israel has imposed a system of military orders granting it exclusive control over water resources and almost entirely restricting Palestinians’ ability to access or utilize them. These policies have resulted in a stark disparity in water distribution between Palestinian communities and Israeli settlements, with the latter enjoying comprehensive water services and infrastructure, while Bedouin communities survive on extremely limited quantities of water or are entirely deprived of access.

These policies are clearly reflected in field testimonies. A 66-year-old resident of the northern Jordan Valley stated: “The water we have is six cups per hour for the whole village, 350 people. Can you imagine?”

This testimony illustrates how control over water has become a tool of pressure used to entrench dependency and impose a coercive living reality on residents. This is corroborated by reports of the World Health Organization, which highlight the deterioration of access to health services and the de-

clining availability of safe water in the West Bank, particularly in rural and marginalized areas of Area C. These conditions directly affect public health and livelihoods and undermine the ability of these communities to remain on their land.<sup>14</sup>

## 4.9 Civil Administration Policies

Palestinian communities especially Bedouin communities in the Jordan Valley and Area C are subjected to an integrated system of administrative policies and bureaucratic military orders imposed by the occupying authorities through the so-called "Civil Administration." This system is used as a tool to control land and resources and to suffocate Palestinian presence. These policies include the denial of permits, demolitions, land confiscation, restrictions on agricultural and service-related activities, and the subjugation of all aspects of daily life, from construction to water access to infrastructure, to unjust occupation-driven administrative decisions.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) noted in a recent report that these policies form part of an organized campaign led by the occupying power and settler organizations through the Civil Administration to confiscate Palestinian homes and expand Jewish settlements. The Office warned that such practices constitute a clear violation of international law, which prohibits the confiscation of private property in occupied territory, and reaffirmed this prohibition with reference to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, issued in July of the previous year<sup>15</sup>.

The Palestinian Council of Ministers has further affirmed that the expansion of the powers and activities of the Israeli Civil Administration in the West Bank, particularly in Area C, aims to entrench control over land and deepen the reality of creeping annexation in furtherance of the occupation system.

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14 WHO <https://www.who.int/ar/news/item/08-12-1445-who-concerned-about-escalating-health-crisis-in-west-bank>

15 OHCHR <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/06/1164971>.

This undermines any possibility of independent Palestinian planning or development and contributes to the imposition of a coercive environment that leads to indirect displacement of the population, especially within Bedouin communities.





## 5. Impacts

### The Cumulative Impact of Violations and the Imposed Coercive Environment

The documented violations against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C cannot be understood as isolated practices or short-term effects. Rather, they constitute an integrated system that produces a long-term cumulative impact affecting multiple dimensions of individual and collective life, and contributes to the creation of a coercive environment that undermines the ability of these communities to remain and survive in their place.

### 5.1 Impact on Fundamental Human Rights

The policies imposed on Bedouin communities deprive residents of the minimum conditions necessary for a dignified life. This includes severe restrictions on access to clean water and electricity, persistent obstacles to regular access to healthcare and education, and the constant threat to housing resulting from demolition and confiscation orders. This reality produces a sustained state of livelihood and security instability, undermining the enjoyment of core economic and social rights and leaving residents in a condition of permanent vulnerability.

### 5.2 Impact on Geographic and Demographic Cohesion

These violations contribute to the fragmentation of Palestinian geographic space, particularly in Area C, by reducing Bedouin population presence and forcing communities into dispersal or gradual displacement. This occurs within a broader context aimed at emptying the area of its indigenous population and establishing contiguous settler territorial continuity. Such dynamics undermine any genuine possibility of Palestinian territorial contiguity or the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, as affirmed by recent reports of the Office of the European Union Representative in the Occupied Palestinian Territory regarding settlement expansion in Area C.



### 5.3 Impact on Identity and the Social Fabric

The cumulative impact of these policies extends beyond material deprivation to affect the collective identity and social fabric of Bedouin communities. The erosion of traditional ways of life based on pastoralism, mobility, and extended social relations leads to the weakening of bonds that historically formed the foundation of Bedouin social organization and intergenerational knowledge transmission. Children and youth grow up in an environment dominated by fear and uncertainty, affecting their sense of belonging and stability and undermining the ability to preserve Bedouin cultural and social heritage.

In this context, the targeting of identity can be understood as one of the intended structural effects of the coercive environment, whereby presence in place is stripped of its social and cultural meaning, and de facto forcible transfer is deepened not only through the loss of livelihood and living conditions, but through the dismantling of the existential bond between people, their land, and their community<sup>16</sup>.

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16 BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, *Forced Population Transfer: The Case of Palestine*, 2014.

## 6. Legal Analysis



### Violations of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law

The documented violations committed against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C constitute serious and systematic breaches of the occupying power's obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, particularly in the context of a prolonged occupation. Such an occupation imposes specific positive duties on the occupying power to protect the civilian population, ensure normal life, and safeguard human dignity<sup>17</sup>. These violations cannot be viewed as isolated or temporary practices; rather, their recurring and integrated nature demonstrates that they produce a coercive environment that undermines the effective ability of Bedouin communities to remain on their land and leads to the gradual erasure of their communal existence.

### 6.1 Applicable Legal Framework

As an occupying power exercising effective control over Area C of the West Bank, Israel is subject to concurrent obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. These obligations include the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, particularly those related to the protection of civilians and their property, alongside customary international humanitarian law, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, all of which remain applicable in situations of occupation.

These legal frameworks obligate the occupying power to ensure respect for the fundamental rights of the civilian population, protect them from violations, and refrain from imposing coercive changes to their living conditions or demographic composition.

17 International Committee of the Red Cross, "What Does the Law Say about the Responsibilities of the Occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory?" Available at: <https://url-shortener.me/6RLS>



## 6.2 De Facto Forcible Transfer

(Violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention)

International humanitarian law prohibits the forcible transfer or deportation of the civilian population from occupied territory, whether carried out directly or indirectly. The facts documented in this report demonstrate that the cumulative effect of policies and practices imposed on Bedouin communities including home demolitions, permit denials, construction restrictions, and the targeting of traditional livelihoods, creates coercive living conditions that do not allow residents to remain in their homes in dignity. This pattern of indirect forcible transfer constitutes a violation of the absolute prohibition set out in Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, even in the absence of formal eviction orders.

## 6.3 Destruction of Private Property

(Violation of Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention)

International humanitarian law prohibits the destruction of private property in occupied territory except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations. The documented facts show that the demolition of Bedouin homes and structures is carried out within a discriminatory administrative and planning framework, and in the absence of any imperative military necessity. As such, these demolitions constitute a direct violation of Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, in addition to amounting to arbitrary interference with the right to housing and the inviolability of the home.

## 6.4 Denial of Basic Services and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Restrictions imposed on access to water, electricity, education, healthcare, and livelihoods constitute a serious breach of the obligations enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, particularly the rights to adequate housing, health, work, and education. The systematic and repetitive nature of these restrictions exacerbates livelihood insecurity and undermines the principle of the progressive realization of rights without discrimination, in clear violation of the occupying power's obligations<sup>18</sup>.

### 6.5 Settler Violence and Failure to Fulfil the Duty of Protection

International humanitarian law and international human rights law impose a positive obligation on the occupying power to protect the civilian population under its control from violence perpetrated by third parties. The information presented in this report demonstrates a systematic failure to protect Bedouin communities from settler violence, alongside the absence of effective accountability measures. This constitutes a breach of the duty of protection, a violation of the right to personal security, and a failure to provide effective remedies in accordance with Article 2(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

## 6.5 Structural Discrimination and Inequality Before the Law

The documented facts reveal the application of a discriminatory legal and administrative regime in Area C, under which Israeli settlements are granted extensive planning and service-related privileges, while Palestinian Bedouin communities are denied recognition, development, and basic infrastructure. This discrimination violates the principle of equality and non-discrimination, a cornerstone of international human rights law enshrined in Articles 2 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and is used as a tool

<sup>18</sup> Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Article 2, paragraph 1, of the Covenant).

to perpetuate coercive conditions that undermine equal enjoyment of rights.

## 6.6 Violation of the Right to Self-Determination

The documented facts indicate a profound infringement of the right to self-determination as a fundamental collective right guaranteed under Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The continuation of policies that undermine the effective control of Palestinian Bedouin communities over their land and natural resources, and that impose coercive patterns of living or displacement, prevents these communities from freely determining their economic, social, and cultural development. This constitutes an ongoing violation of the right to self-determination in the context of occupation.

### Legal Conclusion

This legal analysis concludes that the policies and practices documented against Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C constitute serious and systematic violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention and customary international humanitarian law, as well as multiple breaches of the two International Covenants. Taken together, these violations generate a coercive environment that results in de facto forcible transfer, the destruction of livelihoods, and the erosion of identity and collective presence, necessitating effective international accountability and urgent intervention to halt these ongoing violations.

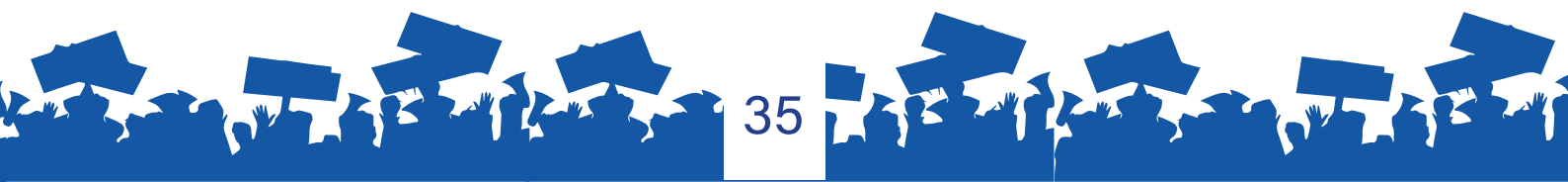
## 7. Conclusions



1. The quantitative and qualitative evidence presented in this report demonstrates the existence of a deliberate and systematic policy aimed at erasing Palestinian Bedouin presence in Area C of the West Bank, not through explicit mass expulsion, but through the accumulation of structural violence that strips daily life of its essential foundations.
2. This structural violence manifests through the intersection of discriminatory planning policies, restrictions on construction and movement, the targeting of livelihoods, deprivation of resources and basic services, and systematic tolerance of settler violence, transforming violations into continuous tools of pressure rather than isolated incidents.
3. The report shows that these practices produce a permanent coercive environment that compels residents to leave their land de facto, without the need for formal deportation orders, thereby constituting a form of indirect forcible transfer prohibited under international law.
4. The findings of the report intersect with prior conclusions of United Nations bodies in their concluding observations, which have warned against the use of administrative and security tools to effect gradual demographic change in the occupied territory, in a context marked by the absence of accountability and the persistence of impunity.
5. The report concludes that the continuation of this approach reflects a systematic failure to comply with international obligations, and that the situation facing Bedouin communities in Area C amounts to a deliberate, slow process of erasing population presence, requiring the international community to move beyond repeated monitoring toward genuine accountability and the cessation of policies that produce this coercive reality.



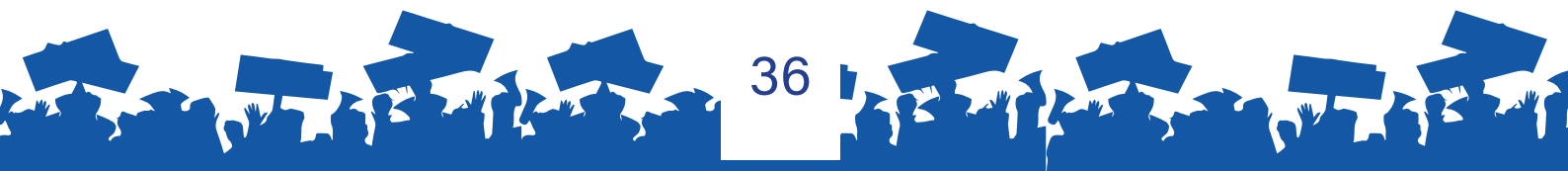
6. These conclusions acquire additional legal weight in light of the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice in July 2024, which found the continuation of the occupation to be unlawful. This reinforces the conclusion that the policies documented in this report are implemented within an already unlawful legal framework.



## 8. Recommendations



1. We urge the United Nations Human Rights Committee to recognize that the situation facing Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C constitutes a deliberate and systematic policy aimed at erasing population presence through structural violence, rather than isolated violations or administrative shortcomings.
2. We request that the Committee affirm, in its concluding observations, the absolute prohibition of forcible transfer in all its forms, and establish binding and deterrent mechanisms to prevent the occupying power from advancing displacement practices and publicly declared settlement-expansion plans, including indirect forcible transfer resulting from the creation of coercive living conditions. The situation of Bedouin communities should be recognized as a continuous violation of this prohibition.
3. We call on the Committee to demand that the occupying power immediately halt discriminatory planning policies, home and structure demolitions, restrictions on construction and movement, and the targeting of livelihoods, as these constitute tools that generate a coercive environment leading to de facto displacement.
4. We urge the Committee to highlight the occupying power's failure to provide effective protection to Bedouin communities from settler violence, and to call for measures that ensure accountability and an end to impunity.
5. We call on the Committee to reaffirm the occupying power's obligation to guarantee non-discriminatory access to water, basic services, education, healthcare, and grazing and agricultural land, as non-derogable rights in the context of occupation.



6. We request that the Committee call for the provision of effective remedies and comprehensive reparations for victims of violations, including compensation and guarantees of non-repetition.
7. We urge the Committee to include the situation of Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C within its special follow-up procedures, and to request specific, verifiable information on steps taken to address the root causes of these violations.
8. We call on the Committee to urge the international community to move beyond monitoring and expressions of concern toward effective measures that ensure accountability and compliance with international law, including refraining from supporting or enabling policies that contribute to the continuation of these violations.