



Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir Orders the Demolition of Palestinian Homes in East Jerusalem during Ramadan

The ongoing destruction of Palestinian homes by Israeli authorities is a clear violation of international law and a significant contributing factor to the growing militarism in the West Bank. As tensions continue to rise over Israeli abuses at Al-Aqsa Mosque, Israeli media reports that police will continue to demolish Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, despite warnings from security authorities. For years, Israel has demolished Palestinian homes for a variety of reasons, including allegations that they were constructed without licenses that are nearly impossible to obtain from Israeli officials. This practice has been widely criticized by human rights organizations as a form of collective punishment, particularly when the homes of family members of alleged Palestinian attackers are destroyed. Furthermore, Israel's recent actions in Jerusalem, including the attempted eviction of families from the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, have sparked unrest and violence, leading to a bombing campaign in Gaza. During 11 days of conflict, 274 Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops, including 243 in Gaza, and 13 Israelis lost their lives. More recently, there has been a rash of attacks by Israeli settlers concentrated mostly in Huwwara and other West Bank towns and villages resulting in at least one Palestinian fatality and close to 400 injuries. At least 35 homes were destroyed by settlers, while another 40 were damaged. Several of the structures were burned down while the Palestinian occupants took refuge inside. More than 100 automobiles were torched or damaged.

The Israeli policy of forced eviction and the destruction of homes exacerbates the already tense situation. This is particularly concerning during Ramadan, a time when tensions are already high, and the risk of violence is increased. The demolition of homes during this holy month is a clear affront to Palestinian religious and cultural practices, further fueling resentment and animosity towards Israeli authorities. The situation is made worse by the presence of extremist Israeli politicians like Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's Minister for National Security, who have advocated for the eviction of Palestinians and harbor extreme views towards them. Gvir frequently joins Israeli settlers in storming the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, further stoking tensions and contributing to the growing militarism in the West Bank. It reinforces the perception among Palestinians that Israel seeks to dominate and control their land, while also contributing to a sense of desperation and hopelessness that often leads to violence.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in violent incidents in the West Bank. These incidents have contributed to a sense of insecurity and instability in the region, making it increasingly difficult to negotiate any sort of peace deal. To address this situation, the international community must take action to hold Israel accountable for its violations of international law and respect the rights of the Palestinian people. This includes imposing economic sanctions and other measures to pressure Israel to comply with international law and halt the demolition of Palestinian homes. At the same time, there must be a commitment by both Israelis and Palestinians to engage in honest and constructive dialogue

toward a peaceful resolution of the conflict. This requires an end to the expansion of Israeli settlements and a recognition of the rights and dignity of Palestinians.

The international community can play a crucial role in facilitating this process by supporting initiatives that promote dialogue and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians. Initiatives that promote economic development, education, and cultural exchange, as well as those that promote human rights and the rule of law. Ultimately, achieving lasting peace and stability in the region requires a commitment by all parties to work towards a just and equitable solution that respects the rights and dignity of all people. This means ending the ongoing destruction of Palestinian homes, halting the expansion of Israeli settlements, and creating the conditions for a negotiated settlement that respects the rights and aspirations of Palestinians. This is not only a moral imperative but also a practical necessity, as the ongoing conflict threatens the stability of the entire region and undermines any fair democracy and the prospects for a better future for all people.