



[Israeli Settlers Rampage Through West Bank Villages Burning Homes, Cars, and Harvests](#)

Armed Israeli settlers have rampaged through villages in the occupied West Bank, carrying out physical assaults against Palestinian farmers during the ongoing olive harvest season, stealing crops, blocking access to groves, and burning homes and vehicles. The violence included a heinous attack on a Palestinian woman which was captured on video by American journalist Jasper Nathaniel showing a masked Israeli settler savagely clubbing the victim over the head and beating her repeatedly as she laid unconscious. In addition to footage of the crime, Nathaniel also recounted how Israeli forces lured himself and others into the ambush by armed settlers, with the soldiers departing the scene just before the settlers launched the violent assault. Regrettably, this does not come as a surprise to many given that activists have documented that attacks like these have been carried out and gone unpunished for years – and that perpetrators of these crimes have clearly been further emboldened by Israeli forces’ protection and at times even active participation in them. As human rights monitors have sought to draw attention to, state-sponsored violence and attacks like these are aimed at intimidating native Palestinians and seeking to expel them from their land to make way for more unlawful Israeli land seizures and settlements.

Olive harvesting season for Palestinians in the West Bank has always been one of the main targets of routine Israeli settler violence and attacks. This is because – as observers have pointed out – it provides undeniable evidence of local Palestinian residents’ indigenous ties to the land, and as such, illegal settlers have been keen to try and destroy these links. The olive harvest is more than an important economic event, as it also represents a vital cultural and social symbol of Palestinian connection to the land and endurance under occupation. For these reasons, Palestinian olive farmers are subjected to violence, theft, harassment, and property destruction year after year at the hands of illegal settlers and their enablers. During the harvest season last year in 2024, human rights groups documented at least 113 separate incidents of these involving Israeli settlers and soldiers. While the olive harvest season has always witnessed Israeli settler violence and attacks, the escalation in recent years is incredibly alarming. The role that Israeli forces play in encouraging, protecting, and taking part in these crimes has been chronicled as well. In the overwhelming majority of these cases, Israeli forces were present and either prevented Palestinians from accessing and harvesting their land or failed to stop settlers who harassed and assaulted them.

The latest Israeli settler violence is part of a disturbing uptick in this and other human rights violations in the occupied West Bank over the past two years while most of the international community’s focus has been fixated on Gaza. Reports from entities like the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have shown that Israeli settler attacks this year in 2025 are on track to be the highest ever recorded since they began collecting this data almost 20 years ago. The troubling increase has seen Israeli settlers regularly damage, set fire to, and destroy Palestinian homes, infrastructure, vehicles, and other property such as agricultural equipment used by farmers. These daily assaults across the occupied West Bank – protected and often backed by Israeli forces – constitute a government-endorsed effort to further unlawfully seize Palestinian land, expand illegal settlements, and intimidate local communities into leaving. It is the blatant climate of impunity and enabling, in conjunction with attention being diverted elsewhere, that has allowed this violence to skyrocket and emboldens repeated criminal behavior.

Rights groups have highlighted how Israeli authorities are exploiting and purposely using the focus on what has been taking place in Gaza as a means to commit egregious violations in the occupied West Bank – hoping that these will fly under the radar. Thus, to counter this, it is of the utmost importance that activists continue to draw attention to these crimes and pressure foreign governments to impose sanctions, suspend arms transfers, and ban trade with illegal Israeli settlements. Impactful mechanisms are needed in order to uphold standards of international law and ensure accountability in the face of glaring violations. In the absence of punitive measures, transgressions like these will only worsen.