

# BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK

## No Home, No Homeland: East Jerusalem Ethnic Displacement

Exerpts from ICAHD report 10.31.11. See <http://www.icahd.org/?p=7845>

[The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions] ICAHD submitted three complaints this morning to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons), the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, and the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Occupied Palestinian Territories. ICAHD an open investigation into the legality of Israeli policy in East Jerusalem.

[The] report . . . states that Israel is committing severe violations of international law in East Jerusalem. [It] . . . analyzes Israeli policy and practice in East Jerusalem under international human rights law and international humanitarian law [and] . . . concludes that Israel is perpetrating serious violations of these laws by denying the right to adequate housing, development, and self-determination [to Palestinians], as well as violating the prohibition on residency revocation.

Since 1967, Israel has demolished more than 2,000 homes in East Jerusalem. Between 2000 and 2011, 771 homes were demolished. The number of demolition orders issued to homes in the area currently stands at about 1,500.



Furthermore, the report states that **demolition of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem** is, in the majority of cases, **a war crime of destruction of property**. By destroying homes, limiting the possibility to build legally, and denying permanent residency status of Palestinians in East Jerusalem, Israel is forcing the migration process on the basis of ethnicity – which violates international law, and is possibly a war crime.

The report also states that there is evidence that the actions and policies implemented by Israel in East Jerusalem are designed to preserve a demographic balance in the city of a Jewish majority – a motive that is forbidden by international law. . . . While Palestinians represent about 30% of Jerusalem's population, they live in an area that comprises only 9% of the city. The state of Israel is spearheading a policy for the Jewish population of Jerusalem to be a majority of 70%, while keeping the Palestinian population at 30%.

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To preserve this ethnic ratio, the Israeli government has applied a discriminatory policy against Palestinians in East Jerusalem. . . . Applications to rezone or increase density are regularly denied, as are applications to build in the small areas that are allocated for residential construction. Palestinians therefore have no opportunity to lawfully meet the housing needs of a growing population.

Israeli policy leaves Palestinians nothing but two choices: stay in the area, build irregularly, and risk a demolition and forced displacement from their homes, or leave East Jerusalem, and endanger their residency status that includes losing the right to return to their homes.

If Palestinians have their residency revoked, they are rendered stateless and residency-less. That violates the right to practice self-determination, and the right to citizenship, residency and nationality, enshrined in international human rights law. This forced deportation, on the basis of ethnicity, is a violation of international law and may constitute a war crime under international humanitarian law.

Demolition of houses in and of itself is a denial of Palestinians' right to adequate housing. Demolitions have major implications for the victims: the families whose homes are destroyed are not given alternative housing or compensation. A significant number of them spend months in makeshift tents or in the streets following the demolition of their homes. In addition to the loss of value of the home, and the destroyed property, owners are expected to pay heavy fines . . . .

See more at

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/nov/10/israelandthepalestinians>,

<http://mondoweiss.net/2010/01/weekly-sheikh-jarrah-protest-greeted-with-hostility-in-west-jerusalem-cheers-in-east-jerusalem.html>

[http://thewe.cc/weplanet/news/middle\\_east/stolen\\_land/armed\\_settlers.html](http://thewe.cc/weplanet/news/middle_east/stolen_land/armed_settlers.html)

Bay Area Women in Black are Jews and allies who stand against militaristic and fundamentalist leadership in all countries, including our own. We wear black as a sign of our mourning for all the lives that have been lost as a result of war, militarization and violence, and particularly those in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel and Palestine. As part of the international movement of Women in Black, we seek to transform women's mourning for the dead into a powerful refusal of the inevitability of war.

Join us at the Grand Lake Theater every Saturday at noon to register your protest and your presence as we continue to urge the end of the US military and financial support for Israel's disastrous occupation.