

UN reports says Israel demolished 43 Palestinian structures in two weeks



United Nations, June 3 (RHC)-- The United Nations has said the Israeli regime demolished about 43 Palestinian-owned structures, including 11 homes, in the occupied cities of West Bank and East al-Quds in the last two weeks of May.

The biweekly Protection of Civilians Report published by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Palestine, said Israel demolished, confiscated, or forced people to demolish the structures under the pretext of construction without a permit, resulting in the displacement of 56 Palestinians, including 33 children, Palestine's WAFA official news agency reported.

The report noted that 35 of the affected structures were located in the so-called Area C, which is under full Israeli control, and makes up more than 60 percent of the entire occupied West Bank. The remaining eight targeted structures were demolished in East al-Quds, including two residential buildings in the Wadi Qaddum area of the Silwan neighborhood, it added.

According to the OCHA report, five out of the eight structures demolished in East al-Quds were destroyed by their owners to avoid the payment of fines to Israeli authorities. It also said one of the affected structures in the West Bank was provided by donors as humanitarian assistance in the village of Umm al-Khair, near the city of al-Khalil.

Moreover, the report said, Israeli forces have destroyed three residential structures, displacing six households comprising 34 people, including 20 children, during a military raid on the Balata refugee camp, near Nablus.

Since the beginning of 2023, 11 homes and one agricultural structure have been demolished on "punitive" grounds, compared with 14 structures in 2022 and three in 2021, it stated.

Israel routinely demolishes Palestinian houses in the occupied West Bank and East al-Quds, claiming that the structures have been built without permits, which are almost impossible to obtain. They also sometimes order Palestinian owners to demolish their own houses or pay the costs of the demolition. Israel has already occupied thousands of dunums of Palestinian agricultural land to construct and expand new illegal settler units in various areas in the West Bank.

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and al-Quds. All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law. The United Nations Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions. Palestinians want the West Bank as part of a future independent state with East al-Quds as its capital.

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