

Assassination of Palestinians An Israeli Official Policy

Report on Extra-Judicial killings Committed by the Israeli Occupation Forces

29th September, 2002- 30th April,2003



The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

E-mail: pchr@pchgaza.org
web-Page: www.pchgaza.org

Introduction

During the current Palestinian Intifada, Israeli occupying forces have adopted a policy of extra-judicial assassinations against Palestinians allegedly involved in resistance activities against Israeli targets. International complicity concerning this issue has only served to encourage Israeli authorities to escalate their policy of extra-judicial assassinations; and in so doing, commit further grave breaches of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 1949 (Fourth Geneva Convention), against Palestinian civilians.

Since the beginning of the current Intifada, PCHR has made efforts to accurately document assassination attempts carried out by Israeli forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), highlight these actions, draw attention to their dangerous effects and urge the international community to intervene and pressure Israeli occupying forces to stop such actions.

Israeli occupying forces have carried out assassination attempts against field activists of various Palestinian organizations, whom they accuse of carrying out or planning attacks against Israeli forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and/or inside Israel. Israeli forces have begun to target the political leaders of Palestinian organizations. All assassination attempts against Palestinians have been carried out in a summary fashion; with neither evidence being offered to link the targeted individual to attacks committed by Palestinian resistance fighters, nor efforts made to provide judicial review of the means and methods employed and the process by which individuals are chosen to be targeted for assassination.

As part of its activities, PCHR has published a series of reports that document assassinations committed by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians during the al-Aqsa Intifada. The reports highlight the methods employed by Israeli occupying forces in carrying out assassination attempts, and provide statistics on the amount and type of Palestinians killed or wounded in such attempts.

This is the fifth in a series of reports published by PCHR on assassinations committed by Israeli occupying forces during the al-Aqsa Intifada. This report documents assassinations in the period 29 September 2002 – 30 April 2003.¹

¹ PCHR has published four previous reports on assassinations committed by Israeli forces. PCHR's first report on assassinations, covering 29 September 2000 – 28 April 2001, documented 13 assassination operations that killed a total of 13 targeted Palestinians and 6 bystanders. The second report on assassinations, covering 29 April – 28 September 2001, documented 26 assassinations that killed a total of 22 targeted Palestinians and 12 bystanders, including children. The third report on assassinations, covering 29 September 2001 – 30 April 2002, documented 30 assassinations that killed 42 targeted Palestinians and 16 bystanders, including 8 children. The fourth report on assassinations, covering 1 May – 28 September

Facts and Figures

During the period 29 September 2002 – 30 April 2003, Israeli occupying forces carried out 37 assassination attempts that targeted 70 Palestinians from various Palestinian organizations,² allegedly wanted by Israeli forces for their resistance activities. In these attempts, 76 Palestinians were killed; 54 targeted Palestinians, 3 of whom were children and 22 bystanders,³ 6 of whom were children. In addition, 106 Palestinians were wounded in these assassination attempts. Of those wounded, 8 were targeted individuals, while 98 were non-targeted bystanders, which included children, women and elderly people.

A total of 128 assassination operations were carried out by Israeli forces from 28 September 2000 to 30 April 2003. In these operations 159 targeted Palestinians were killed, 3 of which were children, and 83 bystanders were killed, including 30 children, 7 women and 9 elderly people. In addition, 27 targeted Palestinians and 332 bystanders were wounded by Israeli forces during these operations.

Most assassination attempts took place in the West Bank, where Israeli occupying forces carried out 104 attempted assassinations that left 121 targeted Palestinians and 48 bystanders dead, and 139 Palestinians wounded. In the Gaza Strip, 38 targeted Palestinians and 35 bystanders were killed in 24 assassination attempts carried out by Israeli occupying forces. In addition, 220 Palestinians, including 7 targeted persons, were wounded.

Escalation of Assassinations

According to PCHR's documentation, the number of assassinations carried out by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians has steadily increased during the current Intifada, and the number of *victims* has sharply increased. In the first year of the Intifada, 28 September 2000 – 28 September 2001, Israeli occupying forces carried out 41 assassination attempts. In these attempts, 53 Palestinians, including 35 targeted persons and 18 bystanders were killed. Furthermore, 65 Palestinians, including 13 targeted persons and 52 bystanders, were wounded. In the second year of the Intifada, 29 September 2001 – 28 September 2002, Israeli occupying

2002, documented 20 assassinations that killed 28 targeted Palestinians and 27 bystanders, including 14 children, 2 elderly people and 4 women. In addition, in the same period, 141 Palestinians, including 2 targeted Palestinians and 139 bystanders were wounded, some of whom sustained permanent disabilities

² 14 targeted Palestinians survived assassination attempts carried out by Israeli occupying forces. They were either lightly or seriously wounded, or were not hurt.

³ This number includes, Mohammed Ibrahim al-Haimouni, who died on 21 October 2002 from a wound he sustained on 10 December 2001 during an assassination attempt that targeted Mohammed Ayoub Seder in Hebron.

forces carried out 50 assassination attempts. In these attempts, 113 Palestinians, including 70 targeted persons and 43 bystanders were killed. In addition, 188 Palestinians, including 6 targeted persons and 182 bystanders were wounded. Over the past seven months of the third year of the Intifada, Israeli occupying forces have carried out 37 assassination attempts that targeted 70 Palestinians. In these attempts, 76 Palestinians, including 54 targeted persons and 22 bystanders have been killed. In addition, 106 Palestinians, including 8 targeted persons and 98 bystanders have been wounded.

Diagram (1)

Palestinians Killed in Assassination Attempts Carried out by Israeli Occupying Forces in the Years of the Intifada

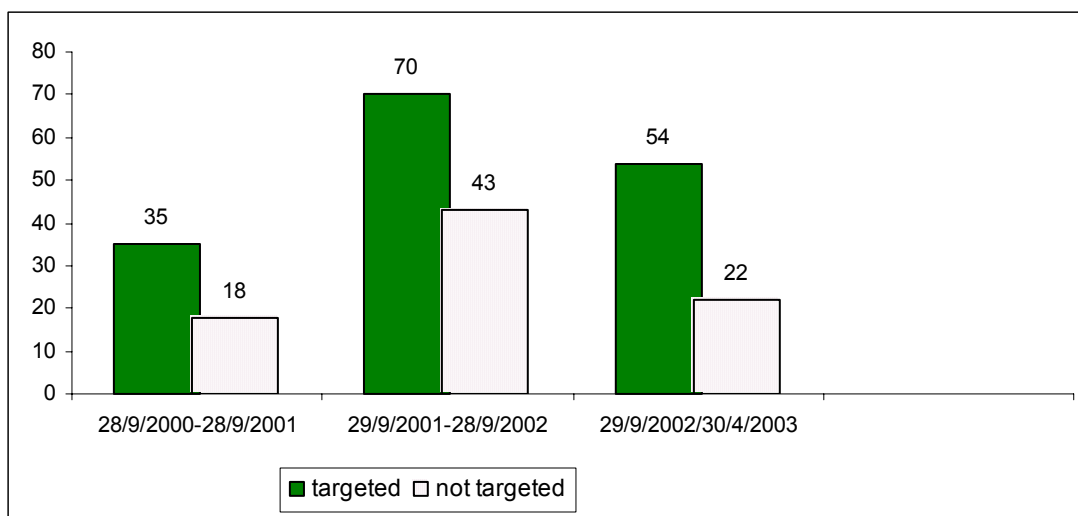


Diagram (2)

Palestinians Wounded in Assassination Attempts Carried out by Israeli Occupying Forces in the Years of the Intifada

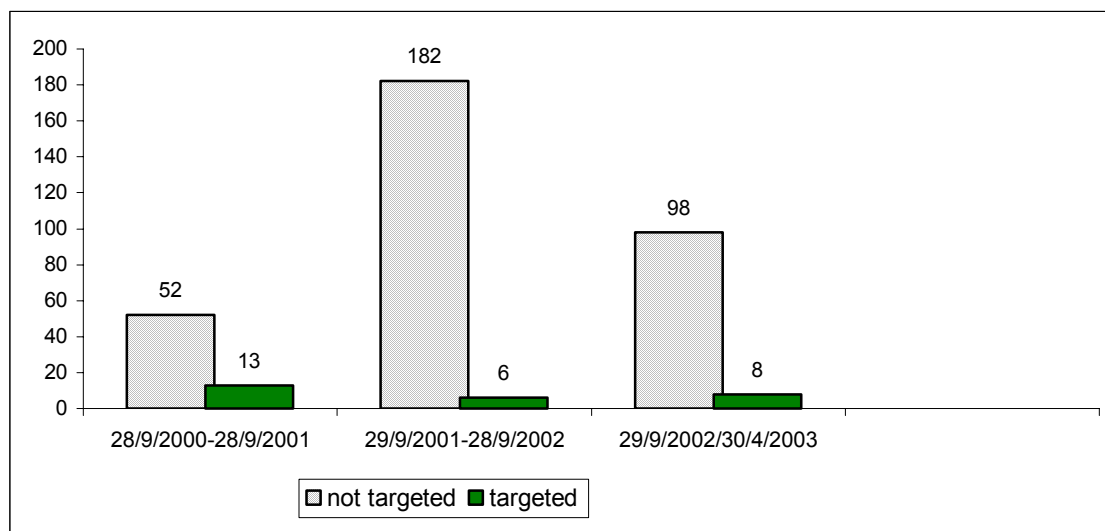
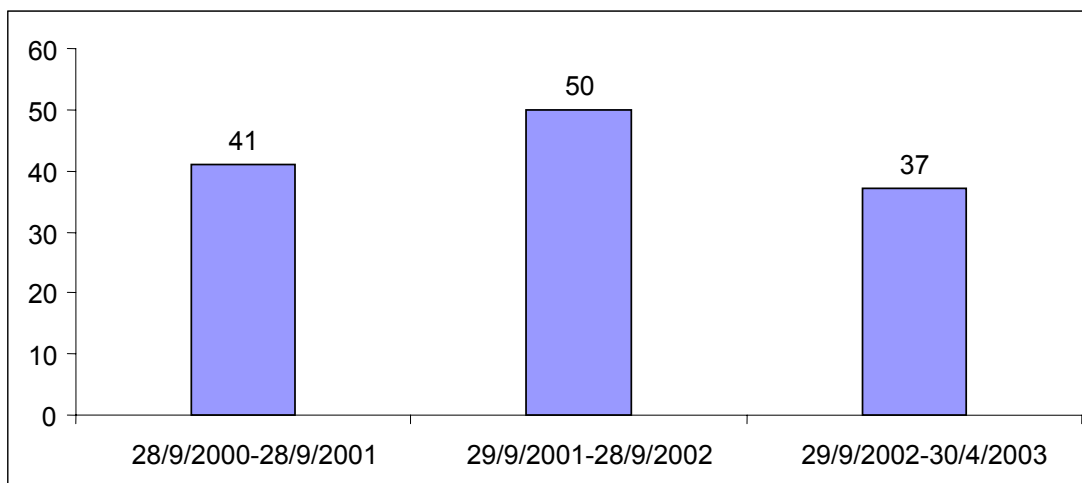


Diagram (3)

Assassination Attempts Carried out by Israeli Occupying Forces in the Years of the Intifada



The above diagrams show that the period under study witnessed an increase in the frequency of assassination attempts carried out by Israeli occupying forces. While

the average monthly number of assassination attempts in the first year of the Intifada was 3.41, it increased to 4.16 in the second year, and to 5.28 in the past period of the third year.

There was also an increase in the number of victims per month. While the monthly average number of victims was 4.41 in the first year, it sharply increased to 9.41 in the second year and to 10 in the past months of the third year.

Disregard for the Lives of Non-Targeted Palestinian Civilians

According to PCHR's documentation, Israeli occupying forces have shown clear disregard for the lives of non-targeted Palestinian civilians while carrying out assassination attempts. The fact that bystanders account for a large percentage of those killed and almost all of those wounded in Israeli assassination attempts demonstrates an increasing disregard for civilian life by Israeli officials.

According to PCHR's documentation, 34.3% of Palestinians killed during assassination attempts were civilian bystanders, 38% of whom were children. In addition, 92.5% of the Palestinians who were wounded in these attempts were also civilian bystanders. Such figures refute Israeli claims that assassination attempts are performed in an accurate manner that causes the least harm to civilians.

During the period under study, 22 Palestinian bystanders, including 6 children, were killed in assassination attempts, constituting 28% of the total number of victims. In addition, 98 civilian bystanders were wounded, constituting 92.5% of the total number of the wounded. In one assassination attempt on 8 April 2003, Israeli helicopter gunships attacked two members of the Hamas organization that were driving through Gaza City in a car. Civilians gathered around the car and began attempting to rescue the two men from the wreckage; the helicopters returned and launched a second missile at the car. As a result, 8 civilians were killed, including 2 children, and 53 others were wounded, including 23 children.⁴

Methods Employed in Assassination Attempts

Since the current Intifada began in September 2000, Israeli occupying forces extra-judicially assassinated dozens of Palestinians, who were allegedly wanted for carrying out, planning or facilitating resistance activities against Israeli targets. In such operations, Israeli occupying forces have employed a number of methods:

⁴ See Case Study 33 of this report.

1. Attacking the place where a targeted person is present with helicopter gunships or fighter jets

Israeli occupying forces have employed this method in dozens of assassination attempts. Israeli helicopter gunships launch missiles at a targeted person, who may be in a car, a house or a public building. In some attempts, Israeli occupying forces used F-16 fighter jets to fire rockets into densely populated areas, causing high casualties among Palestinian civilians. Out of 128 assassination attempts carried out by Israeli occupying forces, combat helicopters and fighter jets were used in 41 operations, constituting 32% of the total number of attempts.

2. Planting explosives in the place where a targeted person is present

Israeli occupying forces employed this method in a number of assassination attempts. Explosives are planted in the car of a targeted person, at the roadside, in a telephone booth, or in a house or a public place.

3. Undercover units

Undercover units are elite units of Israeli occupying forces that disguise themselves as Palestinians, and often use civilian cars with Palestinian registration tags to infiltrate Palestinian communities, in order to assassinate or arrest Palestinians. These units were formed during the first Intifada (1987-1993) in which they killed dozens of Palestinians. In the current Intifada, undercover units have intensified their activities and assassinated dozens of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

4. Firing at a targeted person from inside Israeli military locations

There are many Israeli military locations and military checkpoints surrounding Palestinian communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. During the current Intifada, Israeli occupying forces have reinforced their presence in some Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps. Israeli soldiers fire at Palestinian activists from military installations and checkpoints in these areas. At times, Israeli forces fire artillery shells at activists from these locations.

5. Surrounding and attacking the house of a targeted person

Israeli occupying forces infiltrate a Palestinian community, break into the house of a targeted person and shoot the targeted individual. During and after the Israeli

full-scale offensive on the West Bank in the spring of 2002 (“Operation Defensive Shield”), Israeli forces carried out a number of assassinations using this method. In many instances, Israeli occupying forces destroyed houses while the residents were still inside.

6. Using Palestinian civilians as human shields

Israeli occupying forces have used Palestinian civilians as human shields during attempts to assassinate Palestinian activists, unlawfully endangering the lives of these civilians. Palestinian civilians used as human shields are forced to stay in front of Israeli forces as they move towards the place where a targeted person is hiding. One Palestinian civilian was killed and others were wounded when they were forced to act as human shields during assassination attempts.

7. Killing the activist after arrest

Since the beginning of the current Intifada, Israeli occupying forces have assassinated Palestinian activists after arresting them. Often Israeli forces surround the structure in which an activist is hiding, such as the home of the targeted individual, and open fire on the location. After a targeted individual has been incapacitated by a wound or surrenders he/she is arrested, taken into custody and then executed. In one instance, Israeli soldiers arrested a Palestinian who was allegedly wanted, checked his identity and then executed him in front of several Palestinians who were observing the event.

During the period under study, Israeli occupying forces employed all of the methods described above in assassination operations. However, most assassination operations were carried out by the Israeli undercover unit, which performed 20 or 54% of the 37 total assassination attempts carried out by Israeli occupying forces. Nearly all of these attempts occurred in the West Bank, except one that took place in the Gaza Strip.

Illegal Actions Under International Humanitarian Law

Assassinations constitute extra-judicial executions under international humanitarian law and are thus illegal; they represent a distinct subset of “willful killings” insofar as they are clearly carried out in a premeditated and targeted manner. Moreover, assassinations by Israeli forces lack a judicial process; automatically excluding the possibility for presentation of evidence or opportunities for the defense and appeal of targeted individuals.

Article 3(1) of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the overriding instrument of international humanitarian law governing Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, provides:

“The following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever...:

(a) Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture...”

Moreover, under Article 27 of the Convention, “protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to “respect for their persons” and that “they shall be at all times humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof.”

Article 32 of the Convention prohibits "taking any measure of such a character as to cause the physical suffering or extermination of protected persons." It further provides that "this prohibition applies not only to murder, torture, corporal punishment, mutilation and medical or scientific experiments not necessitated by the medical treatment of a protected person, but also to any other measures of brutality whether applied by civilian or military agents."

Willful killings are considered grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention (Article 147), and further defined as war crimes in the First Additional Protocol (Article 185. All High Contracting Parties to the Convention are obliged “to search for persons alleged to have committed, or to have ordered to be committed, such grave breaches, and shall bring such persons, regardless of their nationality, before their own courts” (Article 146).

These killings also violate numerous provisions of international human rights law:

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Article 6(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Israel is a state party, provides that “every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.”

Furthermore, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court defines these killings as war crimes. The Statute states that war crimes include:

"(a) Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, namely, any of the following acts against persons or property protected under the provisions of the relevant Geneva Convention:

(i) Willful killing;...

(b)....

(iv) Intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects....

(vi) Killing or wounding a combatant who, having laid down his arms or having no longer means of defense...

(c)...

(iv) The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all judicial guarantees which are generally recognized as indispensable.

(e) ...

(ix) Killing or wounding treacherously a combatant adversary..."⁵

Israel Expresses Pride in Committing Assassinations

The Israeli government openly claims responsibility for and a determination to continue its policy of "targeted killing"—Israeli terminology for extra-judicial assassinations. Furthermore, Israel is the only state in the world that has legalized the use of assassinations, a policy widely condemned by the international community.

Decisions to carry out extra-judicial assassinations are made by senior Israeli officials, such as the prime minister and defense minister. In his comment on a bombing that occurred in the Israeli town of Karkour, the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon stated that "this time, Israel will not act against Palestinian Authority institutions, rather it will act against those who carried out the attack and who sent them...either they will be brought to the judiciary, or they will be killed."⁶ In a comment concerning the assassination of Riadh Abu Zaid in Gaza on 17 February 2003, the Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, referring to the same bombing, stated that "after the explosion of the tank on the weekend, I said that we would act in our full capacity; it is time to act not talk."⁷

⁵ Article 8, War Crimes, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted on 17 July 1998.

⁶ The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharanot*, 22 October 2002.

⁷ The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharanot*, 17 February 2003.

**Assassinations Committed by Israeli Occupying Forces
29 September 2002 – 30 April 2003**

Case (1)

Date: 13 October 2002

Targeted person: Mohammed Taleb Eshteivi 'Ebayat, 27, from Bethlehem.

On Sunday evening, 13 October 2002, Mohammed Taleb Eshteivi 'Ebayat, 27, from Bethlehem, was killed by a heavy explosion at the entrance of Beit Jala Hospital. According to information available to PCHR, 'In the evening Ebayat went to Beit Jala Hospital with his sick mother; at approximately 20:10, he exited the hospital to make a phone call from a public phone. As soon as he entered the phone booth, a heavy explosion occurred and he was instantly killed. According to people in the area and eyewitnesses that saw the assassination, the sound of the explosion was heard from a distance of several kilometers, while the force of the explosion threw 'Ebayat's body about 15m away from the phone booth. An Israeli helicopter was seen flying over the area shortly before the explosion occurred.

'Ebayat was allegedly wanted by Israeli occupying forces for his activities in the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade of the Fatah movement. Israeli military sources, commenting on the assassination of 'Ebayat, were quoted on the Arabic web-page of the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* as saying: "Who uses the sword dies by it," in an reference to the assassination of 'Ebayat for his alleged involvement in attacks against Israeli targets.

Case (2)

Date: 21 October 2002

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Wassim Ahmed Saba'na, 23, from Qabatya village near Jenin;**
- 2. Mohammed Faisal Tawfiq Nazzal, 24, from Qabatya village near Jenin; and**
- 3. Mohammed Nafe' Mousa, 27, from Marka village near Jenin.**

At approximately 17:00 on Monday, 14 October 2002, three Palestinians: Wassim Ahmed Saba'na, 23; Mohammed Faisal Tawfiq Nazzal, 24, both from Qabatya village near Jenin; and Mohammed Nafe' Mousa, 27, from Marka village, were traveling in a civilian car on a branch road between the villages of Kufor Qoud and Kafirat, southwest of Jenin. When they arrived in the al-Manshia area a civilian car that had a Palestinian registration number intercepted them. Eight armed members of an Israeli undercover unit got out of the car. Three Israeli helicopters flew over the area and four Israeli armored personnel carriers arrived to reinforce the undercover unit.

At approximately 19:30, the Israeli military liaison phoned its Palestinian counterpart, informing them that Israeli forces had killed two Palestinians, and requesting an ambulance to come to a Israeli military base, south of Jenin, to retrieve the bodies. Both bodies were moved to a hospital in Jenin, where the two victims were identified as Wassim Ahmed Saba'ana, who was shot by seven live bullets in the head, the chest, the back and the left shoulder and leg, and Mohammed Mousa Nafe', 27, who was shot by two live bullets in the head and the chest. The third Palestinian, Mohammed Faisal Tawfiq Nazzal, 24, was arrested after being seriously wounded. Allegedly, the three were activists of the Islamic Jihad in Jenin.

Case (3)

Date: 27 October 2002

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Ahmed Mahmoud Joudatallah, 23; and**
- 2. 'Alaa' Munther Khudeiria, 24, both from Nablus.**

At approximately 14:15 on Sunday, 27 October 2002, a civilian car, a grey Subaru with a Palestinian registration number, containing a 4-member Israeli undercover unit, moved into the Ras al-'Ein neighborhood in Nablus. The undercover Israeli soldiers, who were wearing civilian clothes, jumped out of the car and shot dead Ahmed Mahmoud Joudatallah, 23, and 'Alaa' Munther Khudeiria, 24, both from Nablus, at a range of 20 meters. Each man was hit by more than 10 live bullets.

As they withdrew from the area, the Israeli soldiers indiscriminately open fired at Palestinian civilians and their cars, critically wounding 7-year-old Yazan Mohammed Fatayer with a live bullet to the head. Another civilian, who was not identified, was also wounded by a live bullet to the head. Israeli occupying forces claimed that Joudatallah and Khudeiria were wanted for their activities in the Islamic Jihad and Fatah movement respectively.

Case (4)

Date: 29 October 2002

Targeted Person: 'Aassem Sidqi Mohammed Sawafta, 19, from Tubas

On Tuesday morning, 29 October, Israeli occupying forces assassinated 'Aassem Sidqi Mohammed Sawafta, 19, from Tubas village, southeast of Jenin. According to the victim's brother, 'Adnan Sidqi Sawafta, at approximately 04:00, Israeli occupying forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles, surrounded the house in which 'Aassem was living. Israeli forces then took the victim's father and brother to 'Aassem's place of residence and used them as human shields. Soon, Israeli forces opened fire at the house from a distance of less than 5 meters. After parts of the house were destroyed, Israeli forces broke into it and again fired at the victim from a very close distance, killing him instantly. Israeli forces then took the victim's body without disclosing where or for what purpose they were taking the corpse.

Case (5)

Date: 30 October 2002

Targeted Person: 'Aa'ed Baker Mohammed Mansour, 35, from Kufor Qallil village near Nablus.

At approximately 21:20 on Wednesday, 30 October, Israeli occupying forces shot dead 'Aa'ed Baker Mohammed Mansour, 35, with several live bullets in the upper part of the body, while he was on his way to his house in Kufor Qallil village near Nablus. Mansour was allegedly wanted by Israeli occupying forces for being a member of al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade of Fatah movement.

Case (6)

Date: 4 November 2002

Targeted Person: Hamed 'Omar al-Sader, 37, from 'Askar refugee camp in Nablus.

At approximately 14:00 on Monday, 4 November 2002, an explosion occurred in a civilian car that had a Palestinian license plate. When the explosion occurred the car was traveling from the center of Nablus towards the western entrance of the city. Two Palestinians who were traveling in the car were killed. They were identified as:

1. Hamed 'Omar al-Sader, 37, from 'Askar refugee camp in Nablus; and
2. Firas 'Abdul Ghani Ibrahim Abu Ghazala, 27, from al-Ram village in Jerusalem.

According to eyewitnesses, an Israeli helicopter was seen flying over the area when the explosion occurred. In addition, two passing civilians were injured:

1. Sameh Khaled Eshteiwi, 25, injured by shrapnel in the testicles; and
2. Mohammed 'Abdu al-'Aqrouq, 48, injured by shrapnel in the back and the left hand.

Israeli media reports quoted an Israeli security source as saying that "al-Sader – a wanted activist of Hamas – is the uncle of Mohammed Bsutami who carried out a bombing in a hotel inside 'Ariel' settlement near Nablus."

Case (7)

Date: 9 November 2002

Targeted Person: Eyad Ahmed Yousef Sawalha, 27, from Kufor Ra'ei village near Jenin.

According to information available to PCHR, at approximately 03:45 on Saturday, 9 November 2002, special units of Israeli forces surrounded the house of Eyad Ahmed Yousef Sawalha, 27, from Kufor Ra'ei village, in the town of Jenin. They then used a Palestinian civilian as a human shield; forcing him to approach the besieged house and call on Sawalha to get out of the house. Sawalha's wife then exited the house with her hands up. Immediately, Israeli forces opened fire at the windows and doors of the besieged house. The gunfire continued for approximately half an hour, after which Israeli forces threw bombs at the house. Sawalha was killed during the artillery barrage, and his body was transported to a hospital. According to medical sources, Sawalha was shot by 15 live bullets throughout the body, and his right hand was cut. The Palestinian civilian who was used as a human shield, Mohammed Kumayel, 29, from Qabatya village, was seriously wounded by a live bullet to the head.

The Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz congratulated his troops for "the successful operation." He claimed that "Sawalah was responsible for killing many Israeli citizens,"⁸ but failed to offer any evidence to support this claim.

⁸ The Israeli daily *Yediot Aaharanot* Arabic web page, 9 November 2002.

Case (8)

Date: 15 November 2002

Targeted Person: Mahmoud ‘Abbas ‘Obaid, 37, from ‘Anza village, south of Jenin.

At approximately 16:45 on Friday, 15 November 2002, during Ramadan Month, Israeli occupying forces, reinforced with more than 30 military vehicles surrounded the house of ‘Abbas Mustafa ‘Obaid in ‘Anza village, south of Jenin. Around 30 Israeli soldiers got out of the military vehicles, and an Israeli soldier fired a live bullet in the air. Immediately, the owner of the house came out. When he saw the Israeli soldiers, he told them that his son Mahmoud was at home and that he would surrender. When the son came into sight, Israeli soldiers fired at him, wounding him with a live bullet in both legs. Israeli soldiers then ordered the father to pull his son out of the house, and the father complied. When ‘Obaid and his father were near an Israeli military jeep, an Israeli officer ordered the father to go back into the house and shut the door. After the father closed the door of the house he heard sounds of shooting. Israeli forces then withdrew from the area.

At approximately 21:45, the son’s body was evacuated to a hospital in Jenin. According to Palestinian medical sources, the victim was shot by 5 live bullets in the mouth, the neck and the legs. Israeli occupying forces claimed that ‘Obaid was a member of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, the military wing of the Fatah movement. During their withdrawal from ‘Anza village, Israeli forces arrested Anwar Saleh ‘Ammour, 21.

Case (9)

Date: 17 November 2002

Targeted Person: Riadh ‘Abdul Rahman ‘Abdul Ghani, 30, from Saida village near Tulkram

On Sunday, 17 November 2002, shortly before the time of eating during Ramadan Month, an Israeli undercover unit in civilian clothes infiltrated Saida village, north of Tulkarm. Israeli soldiers then surrounded the house of ‘Abdul Rahman Yousef ‘Abdul Ghani in the center of the village. Soon, other units of the Israeli forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles, arrived in the area to reinforce the undercover unit. Then, an Israeli officer called on the owner’s son, Riadh, 30, through loudspeakers to get out of the house and surrender. When his brothers Mohammed, 25, and ‘Emad, 29, came out, Israeli soldiers opened fire at them without warning or provocation. Mohammed was killed by several live bullets throughout the body, while Emad was wounded by 2 live bullets in the legs. Israeli forces held the 2 brothers for 2 hours before allowing a Palestine Red Crescent Society ambulance to evacuate the wounded son to a hospital. Israeli occupying forces claimed that they came to arrest the eldest son, Riadh, who is allegedly a member of al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, but he attempted to escape, so Israeli soldiers fired at him, wounding his two brothers. However, eyewitnesses refuted this claim and asserted that Riadh was not at home when Israeli forces surrounded the house and fired at his two brothers.

Case (10)**Date: 19 November 2002****Targeted Person: Tariq Helmi al-Zaghal, 20, from Tulkarm**

At approximately 16:40, the time of eating during Ramadan Month, on Tuesday, 19 November 2002, an Israeli undercover unit traveling in civilian cars with Palestinian license plates and wearing civilian clothes moved into the eastern part of Tulkarm. They surrounded a 4-story apartment building. A number of activists of the Fatah Movement were in one flat getting ready to eat. Some Palestinian civilians discovered the unit and warned other people. Soon, a number of Palestinian boys gathered and threw stones at the unit. Immediately, Israeli soldiers fired at the boys killing 16-year-old Eihab 'Allam al-Zaqla with a live bullet in the chest. The Fatah activists attempted to escape, but Israeli soldiers fired at them. Tariq Helmi al-Zaghal, 20, was wounded by a live bullet in the left leg. Israeli soldiers surrounded him and asked him for his identity card. When they checked the card, they shot him dead with a live bullet in the neck. According to medical sources, the victim was handcuffed at the time of the shooting.

Soon, more Israeli forces came to the area and opened fire in all directions. Ziad Rashed Sadiq Mashaqi, 40, from Yassid village, northwest of Nablus, was shot dead by Israeli forces with a live bullet in the neck, when he looked from the roof of the building where he was working as a guard. At approximately 17:30, Israeli soldiers opened fire at a civilian car without prior warning. The driver, Sha'ban Shaker Budeir, 40, from Far'oun village, south of Tulkarm, was killed by 3 live bullets in the chest and the right shoulder and forearm, and Ahmed 'Ali Hussein Jayousi, 37, from Tulkarm, who was traveling in the car, was killed by 3 live bullets in the neck, the right arm and the left hand. In the Israeli operation, 10 Palestinian civilians, including 5 children, were wounded, one of whom was arrested.

The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* quoted Israeli military sources on its web page as saying that "Tariq al-Zaghal, who was inside the building, was suspected of having transported the man who carried out a bombing in a wedding hall in Gudeira in the north of Israel, which left 6 Israeli dead." The sources also claimed that "two activists of al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, Jihad Jallad and Hani Nidhal, were also in the building and surrendered to the Israeli military." However, once more no evidence was offered to support these claims.

Case (11)

Date: 1 December 2002

Targeted Persons: unknown

At approximately 14:40 on Sunday, 1 December 2002, two Israeli combat helicopters that were flying over Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip launched a missile at a civilian car that was traveling near al-Je'el fuel station, east of Jablaya. The missile hit the car directly and destroying it. The three men who were traveling in the car were able to jump out of it before the missile hit. Two of them were lightly wounded by shrapnel. A passing child, 'Emad Silmi al-Barqawi, 14, was also lightly wounded by shrapnel in the chest, the abdomen and the legs. Later, the Islamic Jihad declared that a commander of its military wing was traveling in the car, but withheld details about the identities of the men.

Case (12)

Date: 4 December 2002

Targeted Person: Mustafa Ahmed Sabbah, 35, from al-Nasser neighborhood in Gaza city

At approximately 14:20 on Wednesday, 4 December 2002, 5 Israeli combat helicopters launched 3 missiles at the Abu Khadra governmental compound in the center of Gaza City. The missiles hit a 5-square-meter guardroom located near the entrance of a building of the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Mustafa Ahmed Sabbah, 35, from al-Nasser neighborhood, who had worked as a civil guard in the Abu Khadra compound, was killed. According to eyewitnesses, his body was found about half a meter east of the room. Israeli forces claimed responsibility for the assassination, and alleged that the victim was an activist of the Palestinian Popular Resistance Committee who had carried out a number of attacks against Israeli targets in the Gaza Strip.

Case (13)

Date: 6 December 2002

Targeted Person: 'Abdul Hadi 'Omar Najib al-'Emari, 21, from Seilat al-Harthia village near Jenin

At approximately 18:00 on Friday, 6 December 2002, an Israeli undercover unit in civilian clothes infiltrated the al-Khaniq area south of Seilat al-Harthia village in Jenin. As soon as 'Abdul Hadi 'Omar Najib al-'Emari, 21, appeared in the area, Israeli soldiers opened fire at him without warning. He was killed by 4 live bullets in the abdomen. About 5 minutes later, Israeli forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles, moved into the village. They opened fire at houses and streets. Four passing Palestinian civilians were wounded by live ammunition. On its Arabic web page, the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* quoted Israeli sources who referred to the assassination of al-'Emari as an incident in which soldiers of "al-Musta'rebin" had killed a member of the Islamic Jihad wanted by Israel. Once again, no evidence was offered to support this claim. The newspaper also quoting sources from the central command of the Israeli army as saying that soldiers shot al-'Emari dead as he was attempted to escape. Eyewitnesses refuted such claims and asserted that al-'Emari was fired at without warning.

Case (14)

Date: 10 December 2002

Targeted Person: Yassin Sa'id D'iab al-Agha, 24, from Khan Yunis

At approximately 02:45, on Tuesday, 10 December 2002, Israeli occupying forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles and jeeps, moved into the al-Rabwat area in the northwest of Khan Yunis. Israeli soldiers, some wearing head-covers, were deployed in the area. They surrounded the al-Shawakra residential community and called on the residents to leave their homes. Israeli soldiers then ordered one member of the community, Adib Shukri D'ib al-Agha, 34, to go to the houses of Sa'id D'iab al-Agha, the father of Yassin, and Ziad Sa'id D'iab al-Agha and tell the residents inside to exit the homes. After the residents existed Israeli forces ordered Adib to enter each house. Using Adib as a human shield, Israeli forces then raided and searched the houses using dogs, damaging the belongings within the homes in the process. Two hours later, sounds of shooting were heard in the backyard of the house of Sa'id D'iab al-Agha, where his son Yassin, allegedly wanted by the Israeli forces, was hiding. In his testimony to PCHR, Bassem Shukri D'ib al-Agha, who was in his house only 2m away from the aforementioned backyard, said:

"Between 04:30 and 05:00, I heard sounds coming from the backyard of the house of my relative Sa'id al-Agha. It sounded like it came from Israeli soldiers who invaded the area. They ordered someone to stop and I heard sounds of shooting. Then I heard an Israeli soldier saying in Lebanese Arabic: 'Do not be afraid! Talk to me! I do not want to shoot you.'" I heard a voice that I could not recognize as it was very low. The conversation continued for 10-15 minutes, during which I recognized the voice of the person the Israeli soldiers were talking with. It was Yassin Sa'id al-Agha. I then saw a military car, a Suzuki, stop in the yard in front of our house. I saw the feet of a person lying on their back inside the car. He was wearing brown pajamas. The, Israeli forces withdrew from the area. I knew later that they arrested my brother Adib, 34, Ziad Sa'id al-Agha, 35 and his brother Yassin, 24, who is believed to have been wounded during the arrest."

At approximately 05:30, Israeli forces withdrew from the area leaving a statement written in Arabic and signed by the commander of the Israeli army in the Gaza Strip which said: "To residents of al-Qarara, the Israeli Defense Force is operating in your area to stop subversive activities carried out by terrorist Yassin al-Agha against Israel."

Later, the Israeli media reported that, according to Israeli sources, “a unit of Israeli forces shot dead a Hamas activist in Khan Yunis called Yassin al-Agha, while they were attempting to arrest him.” The Israeli sources added that an undercover unit and soldiers of the Shimshon brigade raided al-Agha's house. It also claimed that when they got close to the house, “he threw a big stone at them and attempted to use his gun, which was the reason why they shot him dead.”

However, ink was seen on al-Agha's fingers, which indicates that Israeli soldiers took his fingerprints, and may have executed him after he had been arrested. The body of al-Agha was delivered to the Palestinian side at noon. According to medical sources, he was shot by 8 live bullets in the legs and the abdomen.

Case (15)

Date: 11 December 2002

Targeted Person: Uassama Hassan Badra, 27, from Balata refugee camp in Nablus

At approximately 02:30 on Wednesday, 11 December 2002, Israeli occupying forces surrounded the house of Hassan 'Ali Badra in the al-Hashashin area in the south of Balata refugee camp, east of Nablus. Israeli soldiers knocked on the door of the 3-story house and Badra opened it. Immediately, dozens of Israeli soldiers rushed into the house and searched it. They asked Badra about his son Ussama, 27. They did not find him, so they left the house at approximately 03:00. At approximately 03:15, they came back. When Badra opened the door, they again rushed into the house. A number of soldiers mounted the roof and pointed their guns at the stairs where Ussama was hiding. They fired at him from a distance of only 3m. He was wounded and fell onto the roof of the house. Israeli soldiers then surrounded Uassama, and did not allow an ambulance to attend to him until 04:45. When medical personnel reached him, he was dead. His body was evacuated to a hospital. According to medical sources, he was shot by two live bullets in the chest and the left shoulder, and sustained shrapnel wounds in the right hand.

The Israeli media reported Israeli security sources as stating that “security forces killed a Palestinian, who was wanted by security services, in Balata refugee camp.” The sources added that “he was killed as he attempted to escape when soldiers came to arrest him.” However, according to information available to PCHR, Uassama was unarmed and, it would appear, neither the severe level of force nor the delay of medical assistance to Uassama after he was wounded were justified.

Case (16)

Date: 13 December 2002

Targeted Person: Tariq Mahmoud 'Abed Rabbu, 25, from Tulkarm

At approximately 15:30 on Friday, 13 December 2002, undercover units of Israeli occupying forces, reinforced by 15 heavily armored military vehicles and four helicopters, moved into the Nour Shams refugee camp, east of Tulkarm. They surrounded the al-Manshia area and open fired at houses and passing Palestinian civilians. After the operation began, Tariq Mahmoud Ahmed 'Abed Rabbu, 25, from Tulkarm refugee camp who was hiding in Nour Shams refugee camp, attempted to escape from the area by moving from one house to another. When he entered the house of 'Omar 'Aaref, the owner advised him to hide in a cupboard and left the house. Soon the Israeli forces began to open fire on 'Aaref's house. Israeli undercover units then raided the house, using intense gunfire throughout the house. 'Abed Rabbu was killed in the raid. Field investigations carried out by the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (LAW) indicate that Israeli soldiers killed 'Abed Rabbu while he was unarmed. According to a medical report issued by "Dr. Thabet Thabet Hospital" in Tulkarm, there were injuries to the body of Rabbu that were not caused by live ammunition, which may have been inflicted through physical abuse. The report stated: "'Abed Rabbu's body was brought to the emergency unit at Dr. Thabet Thabet Hospital. He was killed by wounds sustained from Israeli gunfire. Upon checking, it was clear that 'Abed Rabbu was shot by four live bullets in the chest, and the left arm, side and thigh."

In addition, five passing Palestinian civilians were wounded by the Israeli gunfire during the assassination operation. According to medical sources, Israeli forces denied ambulances access to the refugee camp to evacuate the wounded. Palestinian civilians were forced to carry the wounded and walk a distance of approximately 2km to reach the ambulances.

Case (17)

Date: 23 December 2002

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Mustafa Jalal Saleh Baqqas, 30; and**
- 2. Shaman Hussein Mohammed Subeh, 29, both from Burqin village in Jenin**

At approximately 13:15 on Monday, 23 December 2002, an undercover unit of Israeli occupying forces, traveling in a civilian car with a Palestinian registration number, attacked Mustafa Jalal Saleh Baqqas, 30, and Shaman Hussein Mohammed Subeh, 29, from Burqin village in Jenin. They were riding a tractor on a branch road in the Wad Hassan area, nearly 3km away from their village. Israeli soldiers opened fire at the two men, killing them instantly. According to Palestinian medical sources, they were shot in the upper part of the body from behind. Israeli occupying forces alleged that the two men were on their way to carry out a bombing inside Israel and that they were wanted for being members of Hamas.

Case (18)

Date: 25 December 2002

Targeted Person: Taleb Mohammed Abu Hawash, 32, from Nablus

At approximately 02:00 on Wednesday, 25 December 2002, while Taleb Mohammed Abu Hawash, 32, was in a flat on the second floor of an apartment building in the Ras al-'Ein neighbourhood of Nablus. Israeli occupying forces surrounded the building and quietly made their way into the flat. The soldiers remained in the flat for 4-hours, during which time neighbors suspect that Hawash was subjected to ill-treatment, until two shots were heard coming from the flat at approximately 06:15. Israeli forces withdrew from the building at approximately 09:00. The neighbors then entered the flat where they found Hawash dead. He was transported to Rafidya Hospital in Nablus. According to medical sources, he was shot by two explosive bullets that entered the left thigh and settled in the right one, causing massive hemorrhaging that led to his death. Israeli forces announced that they had carried out the action, claiming that Hawash was wanted and as they were attempting to arrest him, he fired at them, at which point Israeli soldiers shot him dead. Neighbors of Hawash, however, have asserted that they did not hear an exchange of fire.

Case (19)

Date: 26 December 2002

Targeted Person: Yousef Mohammed Abu al-Rub (Hamza), 40, from Qabatya village near Jenin

At approximately 02:00 on 26 December 2002, ten Israeli heavy military vehicles, a number of Israeli military jeeps and an Israeli ambulance moved into Qabatya village, southeast of Jenin. They seized control of the village, and then proceeded to the western area of the village, where they surrounded a number of Palestinian houses and mounted others. At approximately 02:35, they called through loudspeakers for Bilal Helmi 'Ezzat Abu al-Rub to evacuate his house. Afterwards they interrogated him, beat him and his family, and submerged his head in a puddle of rainwater. Then the Israeli soldiers forced him to go to his neighbor's house, Yousef Mohammed Khalil Abu al-Rub, 40, known as "Hamza", to tell him to exit his home. The wife and children of Hamza exited their house, while Hamza remained inside. Israeli soldiers then forced the wife and children to go back into the house and tell Hamza to surrender. Hamza went to the door and informed the Israeli soldiers that he would surrender with the presence of the ICRC or another international agency to ensure his safety. At which point, Israeli snipers positioned on neighboring buildings fired on him. He was killed by ten live bullets throughout the body, including the head and the chest. After Israeli soldiers forced neighbors to remove Hamza's body, they destroyed his house.

Case (20)

Date: 26 December 2002

Targeted Person: Jamal Nader Yahia, 32, from Tulkarm

At approximately 11:30 on 26 December 2002, an undercover unit infiltrated the western part of Tulkarm. They surrounded the house of Jamal Nader Mohammed Yahia, 32, and then knocked on his door. When Yahia opened the door Israeli soldiers immediately opened fire at him from a close distance. He was wounded by seven live bullets throughout the body, including in the neck, the chest and the abdomen. Israeli soldiers did not allow Palestinians to offer him help. Soon, other Israeli forces arrived at the house to support the undercover unit. They forced people away from Yahia and allowed him to bleed to death. Then, they took the body and withdrew from the area.

Case (21)

Date: 26 December 2002

Targeted Person: Bassam Lutfi al-Ashqar, 26, from 'Ein 'Arik village near Ramallah

At approximately 11:30 on 26 December 2002, an Israeli undercover unit traveling in an unmarked truck with a Palestinian license number, entered al-Manara square in the center of Ramallah. The truck stopped. When Bassam Lutfi al-Ashqar, 26, from 'Ein 'Arik village in Ramallah, passed by the area in his private car, a number of gunmen got out of the truck and fired at him from a close distance, killing him with two live bullets in the head and the abdomen. When Palestinians discovered the presence of the Israeli undercover unit in the area, they tried to attack them, but a number of Israeli military jeeps arrived at the area and began to open fire. Mahdi Samir 'Obaid, 17, from Ramallah, was critically wounded by three live bullets in the chest and the abdomen. He was evacuated to a hospital where he died of his wounds. After the clash, Israeli forces took al-Ashqar's body and withdrew from the area.

Case (22)

Date: 12 January 2003

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Ra'ed al-'Attar, 29; and**
- 2. Mohammed Abu Shammala, 30, both from Rafah**

At approximately 17:00 on Sunday, 12 January 2003, two Israeli combat helicopters flying over Khan Yunis began chasing a civilian car that was traveling towards Rafah on the Khan Yunis-Rafah road (Salah al-Din Street). Besides the driver, Ra'ed al-'Attar and Mohammed Abu Shammala, from Rafah, allegedly wanted by the Israelis, were traveling in the car. When the car arrived at the crossroads leading to the European Hospital, southeast of Khan Yunis, the passengers noticed the presence of the Israeli helicopters, so they stopped the car and jumped out. They ran south towards agricultural land in the Fukhari area. The helicopters pursued them and launched three missiles in the area in which the three men were running. The missiles exploded 30m west of a tin-roofed house. Shrapnel from the missile explosion hit three residents inside the house, killing two of them, and wounding the third. The passengers of the car were able to escape.

Those killed were:

1. 'Abdul Rahman Mohammed Hamed al-Najjar, 16, a mentally handicapped child who was visiting a friend in the area, was hit by shrapnel throughout the body; and
2. Mohammed Hammad Mahmoud Kaware', 21, who was hit by shrapnel throughout the body.

A third civilian, 'Abdul Karim Subhi Salem Shubair, 16, a resident of the house, was wounded by shrapnel in the left foot.

Later, it was reported in the Israeli media that, according to Israeli military sources, the attack was aimed at assassinating Ra'ed al-'Attar and Mohammed Abu Shammala. Al-'Attar and Abu Shammala. According to PCHR's documentation, Israeli forces had attempted to assassinate these men several months before on 14 July 2002. In the previous attempt Israeli F-16 fighter jets launched missiles at the house of Yousef 'Abdul Wahab a few minutes after the targeted group had left the house. The house and a neighboring house were totally destroyed, and a child was injured.

Case (23)

Date: 30 January 2002

Targeted Person: Fayeze Sabri Fayeze Jaber, 25, from Tulkarm

At approximately 13:45 on Thursday, 30 January 2003, while a number of Palestinian civilians were standing near their car in front of a shop in the center of Tulkarm, they were surprised by an undercover unit of Israeli occupying forces in the area. Israeli soldiers immediately opened fire at these civilians without prior warning, wounding Fayeze Sabri Fayeze Jaber, 25, from Tulkarm, with a live bullet in the abdomen. When he fell to the ground, an Israeli soldier moved towards him and killed him with a shot to the head from a close distance. Then, Israeli soldiers fired at passing Palestinian civilians. Some civilians hurried towards the nearby shop for shelter, but Israeli soldiers chased after them and opened fire. One of these civilians, Badi' Rafe' D'iab Abu Qa'qoura, 26, from Bala'a village, was killed by several live bullets throughout the body. Israeli soldiers pulled his body out of the shop, and then took the two bodies to the headquarters of the Israeli military liaison in the Khadouri area. The two bodies were taken to the Palestinian side one hour later. Israeli occupying forces alleged that Jaber was wanted for his activities in al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, the military wing of Fatah movement, in Tulkarm.

Later in the same evening, a number of Israeli military jeeps moved into Tulkarm and opened fire at Palestinian civilians. Eight civilians were wounded.

Case (24)

Date: 10 February 2003

Targeted Person: 'Emad 'Ali Qassem Mabrouk, 25, from 'Ein Beit al-Maa' refugee camp in Nablus

At approximately 01:30 on Monday, 10 February 2003, Israeli occupying forces surrounded the house of 'Ali Qassem Mohammed Mabrouk, 58, in 'Ein Beit al-Maa' refugee camp, west of Nablus. 69 civilians were then forced to exit the house of 'Ali and two other neighboring houses owned by the Mabrouk's brothers. Israeli soldiers then broke into 'Ali's house and searched it. They began asking 'Ali about his son 'Emad, 25, allegedly wanted by Israeli forces for his activities in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Israeli soldiers then mounted the roof of the 3-storey house and found the son hiding there. According to eyewitness statements and a medical report made by Rafidya Hospital in Nablus, Emad was stabbed with sharp tools and was shot by several live bullets throughout the body. An Israeli military spokesman claimed that Israeli forces killed an activist of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine as he attempted to escape arrest. Emad was married and the father of two children.

A medical report issued by Rafidya Hospital, also mentioned other signs that Emad may have been physically beat and abused including: injuries to the face, the left ear, the chest, the abdomen and the limbs. There were also fractures to his skull, the lower jaw, the right hand, the left forearm, the nose, the right thigh and the left leg. In addition, Emad suffered shrapnel wounds to his head, chest, abdomen, pelvis and right thigh.

Case (25)

Date: 16 February 2003

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Eyad Faraj Shaldan, 23, from Gaza;**
- 2. Akram Fahmi Nassar, 32, from Gaza;**
- 3. Mohammed Isma'il Silmi, 24, from Gaza;**
- 4. Mufid 'Awadh al-Bal, 21, from Gaza;**
- 5. Nidhal Fathi Farahat, 32, from Gaza; and**
- 6. Ayman Ibrahim Yousef Mahanna, 30, from Beit Lahia**

At approximately 15:30 on Sunday, 16 February 2003, a heavy explosion occurred in a house owned by Faraj Shaldan, in al-Zaytoun neighborhood in the south of Gaza city. Immediately, members of the Hamas movement closed off the area and denied entry of the media and journalists, including PCHR's field worker in Gaza city. Four Palestinians were immediately killed and 3 others were injured, two of whom died at hospital. Those killed were:

1. Eyad Faraj Shaldan, 23, from al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City;
2. Akram Fahmi Nassar, 32, from al-Shaojaeya neighborhood in Gaza City;
3. Mohammed Isma'il Silmi, 24, from al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City;
4. Mufid 'Awadh al-Bal, 21, al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City;
5. Nidhal Fathi Farahat, 32, al-Shojaeya neighborhood in Gaza City; and
6. Ayman Ibrahim Yousef Mahanna, 30, from al-Karama housing project in Gaza City.

Salama Khaled Hammad, 31, from Beit Lahia, was seriously wounded by shrapnel throughout the body.

After the explosion, the Hamas movement issued a statement saying that some members of the 'Ezziddin al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of the movement, were killed in an assassination planned by the Israeli intelligence, while they were preparing a small aircraft that flies by remote control, which they had obtained in a complicated process on Sunday, 16 February 2003.

Case (26)

Date: 17 February 2003

Targeted Person: Riadh Hussein Abu Zaid, 33, from al-Boreij refugee camp in Gaza

At approximately 10:30 on Monday, 17 February 2003, while Abu Zaid was traveling from al-Boreij to Gaza City on the coastal road, accompanied by an unidentified person, an Israeli undercover unit traveling in a truck, stopped and erected a sudden check point at the crossroads between "Netzarim" settlement and the coastal road. As soon as Abu Zaid arrived, Israeli soldiers opened fire at his car, killing him. Soon, a number of Israeli military jeeps came to the area. Israeli forces took Abu Zaid's body and arrested the other person who accompanied him. They then withdrew to the "Netzarim" settlement.

Approximately two hours later, the Israeli media reported, that according to Israeli security sources, "a special military unit fired at Riadh Abu Zaid, a prominent activist of the Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip."

Case (27)

Date: 8 March 2003

Main Targeted Person: Ibrahim Ahmed al-Maqadma, 55, from al-Boreij refugee camp

Other Targeted Persons:

- 1. Khaled Hassan Joma'a, 30, from Jabalya;**
- 2. 'Abdul Rahman Zuhair al-'Aamoudi, 29, from Gaza; and**
- 3. 'Alaa' 'Ouda al-Shukri, 30, from Gaza.**

At approximately 08:15 on Saturday, 8 March 2003, 4 Israeli helicopter gunships launched 4 missiles at a civilian car, a white Mitsubishi, in which 5 persons were traveling southwards on Palestine Street, which links the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood and the center of Gaza City. The missiles hit the car directly, destroying it. Four of its occupants were killed:

1. Ibrahim Ahmed Khaled al-Maqadma, 55, from al-Boreij refugee camp, a senior member of Hamas movement;
2. Khaled Hassan Joma'a, 30, from Jabalya;
3. 'Abdul Rahman Zuhair al-'Aamoudi, 29, from al-Shati refugee camp; and
4. 'Alaa' 'Ouda al-Shukri, 30, from al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City.

The fifth person in the car, Riad Mohammed al-Dada, 30, from al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City, was critically injured. Two bystanders were also injured. A number of nearby houses and a civilian car that was traveling behind the targeted car were severely damaged .

Israeli media reports quoted Israeli security sources as saying that “al-Maqadma played a major role in planning the policy of attacks carried out by the Hamas movement. Source??

Case (28)**Date: 13 March 2003****Targeted Persons:**

- 1. Baker Nayef 'Atiya Bani 'Ouda, 21;**
- 2. 'Emad Nayef 'Atiya Bani 'Ouda, 28;**
- 3. Amin 'Ali Sa'ad Bisharat, 18;**
- 4. Sami Fathi Bisharat, 22; and**
- 5. Mohammed 'Aaref Mahajna, 23, all Jenin**

At approximately 18:00 on Thursday, 13 March 2003, 6 Palestinian young men, allegedly wanted by Israeli occupying forces, moved from Tammoun village, which was under full Palestinian control, southeast of Jenin, to al-Batta Mount, west of the town, an area where they hid at night to avoid being arrested by Israeli forces. When they were approximately 20m away from Tammoun secondary school, they saw 4 persons wearing civilian clothes on the roof of the school. One of the persons on the roof shouted at the young men. Immediately after, the young men came under gun fire from three directions: the school roof, al-Batta Mount and the western entrance of the village. The 6 young men were approximately 30m away from the sources of fire. Five of them were killed:

1. Baker Nayef 'Atiya Bani 'Ouda, 21, from Tammoun village;
2. 'Emad Nayef 'Atiya Bani 'Ouda, 28, from Tammoun village, the first victim's brother;
3. Amin 'Ali Sa'ad Bisharat, 18, from Tammoun village;
4. Sami Fathi Bisharat, 22, from Tammoun village; and
5. Mohammed 'Aaref Mahajna, 23, from al-Taybeh village, west of Jenin.

The sixth young man was wounded by 7 live bullets, but was able to escape. A few minutes later approximately 20 Israeli heavy military vehicles, accompanied by a bulldozer and two ambulances, arrived in the village. Ten heavy military vehicles, the ambulances and the bulldozer moved towards the place of the incident and imposed a curfew on the village, while the rest of the vehicles imposed a siege on the western entrance of the village. At approximately 03:00 on the following day, Friday, 14 March 2003, Israeli occupying forces withdrew from the village, taking with them the bodies of the victims. In the morning, villagers went to the place of the incident, where they found the clothes of the victims and blood on the ground.

Case (29)**Date: 14 March 2003****Targeted Persons:**

- 1. Wathiq Ahmed Beshar Eghbariya, 17, from Jenin refugee camp;**
- 2. Rabi' Hassan Masharqa, 20, from al-Zababda village near Jenin;**
- 3. Ussama Rebhi Abu Khalil, 15, from 'Attil village near Tulkarm; and**
- 4. Ibrahim Khalil Munaizel, 20, from 'Attil village near Tulkarm.**

At approximately 06:30 on Friday, 14 March 2003, an undercover unit of Israeli occupying forces wearing civilian clothes infiltrated the al-Hawashin quarter in the Jenin refugee camp. Israeli soldiers then broke into the house of Mazen al-Adib. Israeli soldiers shot dead 4 Palestinians who were sleeping in the house. Soon, about 30 Israeli heavy military vehicles, reinforced with two helicopters and covered by intense gunfire, moved into the camp to cover the withdrawal of the undercover unit. A number of Palestinian gunmen confronted Israeli forces. One of the gunmen, Yousef Ahmed Masharqa, 20, from Jenin refugee camp, was killed by two live bullets in the chest and the right leg, which were fired from an Israeli helicopter. When Israeli forces withdrew from the camp, Palestinian ambulances moved towards the house that was attacked by Israeli forces. The four bodies were evacuated to a hospital, where the victims were identified as:

1. Wathiq Ahmed Beshar Eghbariya, 17, from Jenin refugee camp, shot by 6 live bullets in the head and the chest;
2. Rabi' Hassan Masharqa, 20, from al-Zababda village, southeast of Jenin, shot by 5 live bullets in the head and the chest;
3. Ussama Rebhi Abu Khalil, 15, from 'Attil village, north of Tulkarm, shot by 6 live bullets in the head, the chest and the hands; and
4. Ibrahim Khalil Munaizel, 20, from 'Attil village, north of Tulkarm, shot by 6 live bullets in the head, the chest and the hands .

Case (30)**Date: 25 March 2003****Targeted Persons:**

- 1. Nader Ibrahim Jawarish; and**
- 2. 'Alaa' al-Din Hassan Mohammed 'Ayad, 25, both from 'Aaida refugee camp near Bethlehem.**

At approximately 18:50 on Tuesday, 25 March 2003, Mo'affaq 'Abdul Raziq Badwan, 45, from Beit Jala, Nader Ibrahim Salama Jawarish, from 'Aaida refugee camp, northwest of Bethlehem, and 'Alaa' al-Din Hassan Mohammed 'Ayad, 25, also from 'Aaida refugee camp, were traveling in a civilian car in Jamal 'Abdul Nasser Street. When they arrived at Shepherd Hotel, members of an undercover unit of Israeli occupying forces got out of a car they had parked in the area and opened fire at the civilian car. The three Palestinians were killed. Then, a civilian car, in which George Antoine Sa'ada, 38, his wife, Najwa Fu'ad Marar Sa'ada, 35, and their daughter, Kristine, 10, were traveling, arrived in the area. Immediately, Israeli soldiers opened fire at the car. The child was killed by several live bullets in the head and the chest, while the father was wounded by a live bullet in the neck, and the mother was wounded by shrapnel throughout her body.

Soon, two military jeeps and an armored truck belonging to Israeli occupying forces arrived and imposed a curfew on the area. Israeli forces took the bodies of Jawarish and 'Ayad, while Badwan's body was evacuated to al-Hussein Hospital in Beit Jala. According to medical sources, Badwan was shot by 15 explosive live bullets throughout the body.

Later, Israeli media quoted Israeli military sources as claiming: "An undercover unit of the Border Guard moved into Bethlehem to arrest members of a cell of the Hamas movement. Members of the unit got out of their car. Then, a car, in which three Palestinians, including two gunmen, were traveling, arrived in the area. The gunmen fired at the unit, so the unit returned fire. The two gunmen were killed. The third passenger, Mowaffaq Badwana, 40, attempted to escape so Israeli soldiers shot him dead. During the exchange of fire, a car, in which the family of Sa'ada, from Beit Jala, was traveling, arrived. Israeli soldiers opened fire at the car, killing 10-year-old Kristine and injuring her parents." The sources further claimed that "according to an initial investigation, Israeli soldiers thought that the driver was going to run over them, while another testimony revealed that the car arrived in the area where the exchange of fire was taking place by coincidence." The source added that "initial investigation revealed that Israeli soldiers thought that gunmen were traveling in the second car, so they opened fire at it."

Case (31)

Date: 3 April 2003

Targeted Person: Khaled 'Ali Mohammed Baker, 33, from Nablus

At approximately 03:00, Israeli soldiers broke into a flat of Hassan Sanakra, located on the fourth floor of an apartment building in al-Nimsawi neighborhood in the north of Nablus, where Khaled 'Ali Mohammed Baker, 33, his wife and his 8-month-old infant lived. Baker went to the door that was broken into and found Israeli soldiers standing there. They immediately opened fire at him. He was killed by several live bullets throughout the body. Baker was an activist of the Hamas movement in Nablus.

According to the victim's wife, at approximately 03:00, while she was with her husband, Khaled 'Ali Mohammed Baker, 33, and their 8-month-old infant, in the flat of Hassan Sanakra, who hosted them, they heard an explosion outside. They also heard a noise at the door. Her husband went to check on the noise when she heard Israeli soldiers open fire at him. The victim's wife also stated that Israeli soldiers fired several bullets into her husband's head after he dead.

Case (32)

Date: 7 April 2003

Targeted Person: Bader 'Abdul Ra'ouf Yassin, 23, from Salfit

At approximately 20:15, on Monday, 7 April 2003, while Bader 'Abdul Ra'ouf Yassin, 23, from Salfit, was sitting in front of a grocery shop near a café, a civilian car that had a Palestinian registration number stopped near the café. Six gunmen in civilian clothes got out of the car and fired at Yassin from a distance of 10m. Yassin was wounded by a live bullet in the chest. Yassin put his hand on the place of the wound and ran towards a nearby alley. The gunmen chased and fired at him until he fell. One of the gunmen moved towards Yassin and moved his body. The gunman then shot Yassin point blank. His body was evacuated to a hospital. According to medical sources, Yassin was shot by 24 live bullets throughout the body. Yassin was a member of Palestinian Military Intelligence and an activist of the Fatah movement.

Israeli media sources quoted Israeli security sources as saying that "an Israeli military unit killed a Palestinian activist in Salfit as he tried to escape when the unit wanted to arrest him." An Israeli military source of the Israeli central command claimed that "the military unit attempted to arrest the activist, but he escaped, so soldiers fired warning bullets in the air, and when he did not stop, they shot him dead." Eyewitnesses refuted this claim.

Case (33)

Date: 8 April 2003

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Sa'ad Musa'ed al-'Arabid, 35, from the Sheikh Rdwan neighborhood in Gaza; and**
- 2. Ashraf 'Abdul Rahim al-Halabi, 28, from al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza.**

At approximately 20:35 on Tuesday, April 8 2003, two Israeli combat helicopters, accompanied by an F-16 fighter jet, flew over Gaza City. One of the helicopters launched a missile at a civilian car that was traveling approximately 30m away from Imam Shaf'ei mosque in the 'Asqoula area, a densely populated area in the east of Gaza City. The missile hit the left side of the car. Soon after, the helicopter launched another missile that hit the car. The car exploded and those inside were killed. Later, the victims were identified as:

1. Sa'ad Musa'ed al-'Arabid, 35, from the Sheikh Rdwan neighborhood in Gaza City, a member of 'Ezziddin al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of the Hamas movement; and
2. Ashraf 'Abdul Rahim al-Halabi, 28, from al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza.

Soon after, a number of Palestinian civilians gathered around the car to see what had happened and to attempt to rescue the victims. Immediately, in an action apparently aimed at causing the maximum number of Palestinian civilian casualties, a missile was launched at the crowd by one of the helicopters. Five Palestinian civilians, including two children, were killed:

1. Ahmed Khamis al-Ashram, 13;
2. Sami Hassan Qassem, 16;
3. 'Omar Kamel Nassar, 21;
4. Mohammed Saber Basal, 20; and
5. Mahmoud Sa'id Farawana, 30.

In addition, 53 other civilians were wounded, 8 sustained serious injuries and were in critical condition. Later, three of the wounded succumbed to their wounds:

1. Fadi Yousef Toutah, 19, died on 13 April 2003;
2. Mohammed Suleiman Toutah, 21, died on 16 April 2003; and
3. Mahmoud al-Louh, 21, died on 17 April 2003.

A number of houses and civilian facilities in the area were also severely damaged.

Case (34)

Date: 10 April 2003

Targeted Persons: 3 Activists of Fatah movement

At approximately 13:00 on Thursday, 10 April 2003, an undercover unit of Israeli occupying forces used a civilian car with a Palestinian registration number to enter Tulkarm. The car stopped at the old road of the Municipality of Tulkram, and four individuals wearing civilian clothes and armed with machine guns got out. They immediately opened fire at a civilian jeep, a black Suzuki with a Palestinian registration number, in which three Palestinian were traveling. The three were able to escape. One of the armed persons fired at another civilian car, in which three other Palestinians were traveling. According to eyewitnesses, the two cars were fired at from a distance of 10m. A few minutes later, a number of Israeli military jeeps, accompanied by a military ambulance, came to the area and closed it, denying passage to Palestinians. Eyewitnesses asserted that they saw Israeli soldiers pulling a person towards the ambulance, and arresting two persons that were traveling in the second car and a civilian that was walking by when the incident occurred, all of which appeared to be wounded. In the evening, Israeli occupying forces delivered the body of one of these detainees to the Palestinian authorities. The victim was identified as Jasser Hussin 'Olaimi, 23, from Tulkarm. According to medical sources, he was shot by several live bullets in the head and the chest.

Case (35)

Date: 10 April 2003

Targeted Person: Mahmoud Saqer Ragheb al-Zatma, 47, from Gaza

At approximately 15:45 on Thursday, 10 April 2003, 4 Israeli combat helicopters flew over Gaza City. They fired two missiles at a civilian car which was traveling approximately 200m away from al-Rawda mosque at the end of Palestine Street in Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza City. One of the missiles hit the car and destroyed it. The person who was driving the car was able to get out. He was still alive, but sustained serious burns throughout the body and his left hand was cut. He succumbed to his injuries shortly after he had been evacuated to a hospital. The victim was identified as Mahmoud Saqer Ragheb al-Zatma, 47, from Rafah, a resident of Gaza city and a prominent leader of the military wing of Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip. At the time of the attack, school children were on their way back home from school. Twelve school children were injured by shrapnel, and a number of nearby houses were damaged. According to eyewitnesses, the other missile was launched at another civilian car that was on the same street, in which a person who is allegedly wanted by Israeli occupying forces was traveling. The missile went astray and did not explode.

Case (36)

Date: 29 April 2003

Targeted Persons:

- 1. Mahmoud 'Abdul Fattah Salah, 29, from al-Khader village near Bethlehem; and**
- 2. 'Anan Tayseer Jawarish, 25, from Beit Jala.**

At approximately 06:50 on Tuesday, 29 April 2003, an undercover unit of the Israeli "Border Guard," reinforced with two tanks and 8 military jeeps, surrounded a house owned by 'Abdul Fattah Salah in al-Khader village, southwest of Bethlehem. The operation targeted Salah's son and one of his aides. Israeli forces shelled the house, killing them both. Later, an Israeli military ambulance came to the area and evacuated the bodies of the two victims, who were identified as:

1. Mahmoud 'Abdul Fattah Salah, 29, from al-Kahder village near Bethlehem; and
2. 'Anan Tayseer Jawarish, 25, from Beit Jala.

Israeli media sources quoted Israeli security sources as stating that "an Israeli military unit killed two Palestinian activists in Bethlehem." The sources claimed that "Israeli soldiers surrounded a house where the activists were hiding, and when the soldiers were fired upon, the soldiers returned fire, killing the activists."

Case (37)

Date: 29 April 2003

Targeted Person: Nidal Mohammed Salama, 36, from Khan Yunis refugee camp

At approximately 09:45 on 29 April 2003, two Israeli Apache gunships were seen flying over Khan Yunis. One of the gunships launched 2 missiles at a civilian car, which was traveling towards offices of the Palestinian General Intelligence near the College of Science and Technology in the Gizan al-Najjar area in the south of the town. The two missiles hit the car directly, destroying it and killing the driver. The driver was later identified as Nidal Mohammed 'Ouda Salama, 36, from Khan Yunis refugee camp, allegedly wanted by Israeli forces for activities with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. 'Awni Mohammed Sarhan, 39, from Khan Yunis, who was passing by on an animal cart, was critically injured and later pronounced dead.

Conclusion

Israeli occupying forces commit extra-judicial assassinations against Palestinian field and political activists of various organizations, despite the fact that it is usually possible for them to arrest these activists and prosecute them in a proper judicial forum. This policy of extra-judicial assassination has been officially adopted by the Israeli political and military establishments, and judicially sustained by the Israeli Supreme Court, in contradiction of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Furthermore, international complacency concerning this issue has reinforced Israel's ability to continue its policy of extra-judicial assassinations; acts which constitute war crimes under international humanitarian law, and which the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions are legally obligated to take all steps necessary to prevent. In contravention of this obligation the United States, a signatory of the Fourth Geneva Convention, has continued to provide strong military and political support for the illegal assassination policy that Israel has adopted.

In the face of Israeli practices, PCHR calls upon the international community and the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949:

1. To immediately intervene to stop war crimes committed by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians and to force Israeli to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT);
2. To take concrete measures to stop war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law committed by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians and ensure Israel's respect for the Fourth Convention in the OPT;
3. To provide immediate international protection for Palestinian civilians in the OPT .