

**A Report on Sweeping of  
Agricultural and Wooded Land by  
the Israeli Occupation Forces in  
the Gaza Strip**

**October 1-25, 2000**

**The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights**  
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## **Introduction:**

The Israeli occupation forces' abuses against Palestinian civilians have not been limited to killings, shootings and the shelling of Palestinian cities and villages. Clashes between Palestinian civilians and the Israeli occupation forces have been continuous since September 29, 2000. These forces have responded to peaceful marches in a very aggressive way, and they have faced stones by firing rockets, live ammunition and rubber-coated metal bullets, which are scarcely less dangerous and lethal than live ammunition. As a result, 122 Palestinians, including 35 children, have been killed and more than 3,400 wounded – more than one third of whom are children. These criminal acts have apparently taken attention away from other abuses no less serious than the killings continuously perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces. These include sweeping agricultural and wooded lands in a wide range throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, including areas under the control of the Palestinian National Authority.

This report highlights sweeping that has been carried out throughout the Gaza Strip by the Israeli occupation forces since the beginning of this month, which has affected 807 donums of agricultural and wooded land. In addition, the past month has seen damage to civil and agricultural facilities. The report relies on information gathered by PCHR's field officers.

## **The Vicinity of Netzarim Settlement:**

There is an Israeli military post that towers over the main road that links the north of the Gaza Strip with its south, and the road crossing it leading from Netzarim Settlement to the eastern borders of the Gaza Strip. This junction was one of the points of clashes between Palestinian civilians and the Israeli occupation forces. It witnessed the bloodiest incidents because of firing by the Israeli occupation forces at Palestinian demonstrators. Early this month, this junction and its branch roads were directly targeted by the Israeli occupation forces, which destroyed the facilities and buildings adjacent to the Israeli military post. The Israeli occupation forces also swept the agricultural land near the junction and on the road leading to the eastern borders of the Gaza Strip, known as Al-Mentar Crossing.

In the evening of October 7, 2000, Israeli tanks and bulldozers invaded the junction and destroyed two residential buildings near the Israeli military outpost. The buildings consisted of 32 apartments in which Palestinian families live. These families could not evacuate their furniture as apartments were completely destroyed. On the following day, the Israeli occupation forces destroyed an iron-processing factory and its equipment. The losses are estimated at about \$2 million.

At the same time, the Israeli occupation forces' bulldozers swept the agricultural land on the southeastern and southwestern sides of the junction. They swept an area of more than 20 donums planted with citrus trees. These forces demolished the wall that

appeared on televisions throughout the world when the Israeli occupation forces fired at the child Mohammed Al-Durreh on September 30, 2000.

On October 23, 2000, Israeli tanks and bulldozers invaded the road between Netzarim Junction and Al-Mentar Crossing. At night, the Israeli occupation forces' bulldozers swept the agricultural and wooded land on both sides of the road. PCHR's field officer reported that sweeping lasted from 21:00 GMT to 7:00 GMT the following morning. They swept an area 40m wide and 3km long on both sides of the road. Sweeping included:

1. A tract of land planted with olive trees, water lines and a store of agricultural tools owned by Fuad Ibrahim El-Dabbeh.
2. A tract of land planted with olive trees owned by Mahmoud El-Harazin.
3. A tract of land planted with olive trees owned by Fadel Abu Dayyeh.
4. A tract of land planted with olive trees owned Basem Siam.
5. A tract of land planted with olive trees, a wall of an orchard and a water network owned by Fayez El-Harazin.
6. A tract of land planted with olive trees owned by Ahmed El-Shawa.
7. The destruction of the façade of a factory of flagstones.
8. A wooded land owned by Talab Ayyad.
9. A wooded land, a well and a water pump owned by the heirs of Zuhdi Al-Efranji.
10. Damage to two hothouses owned by Eissa Hajji.
11. Destruction of a factory of bricks owned by Yousef Malaka.

### **Khan Yunis:**

Since October 16, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces have been sweeping the areas surrounding Gush Qatif Settlement Block and on both sides of the road between the settlement block in the west and the eastern borders of the Gaza Strip, known as Kissufim Crossing.

On October 16, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces' bulldozers swept an 80-donum area of land to the north of Neve' Dekalim Settlement adjacent to the road between Khan Yunis and the area of Al-Mawasi. On October 18, 2000, this land was fenced with barbwire and annexed to the mentioned settlement.

On October 18, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces seized a 2-donum area of land owned by the Al-Semeiri family and established a new military post surrounded by sand mounds. The land is adjacent to the road between Gush Qatif Settlement Block in the west and Kissufim Crossing on the eastern borders of the Gaza Strip, crossing the main road that links the north of the Gaza Strip with its south (Salah El-Din Street). The land is 800m to the east of the junction, known as Al-Matahen.

On October 19, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces imposed a total siege on the above-mentioned junction leading to Gush Qatif Settlement Block and stopped traffic

between the north and south of the Gaza Strip. They swept a 44-donum area of agricultural land by:

1. Sweeping a 20-donum area of land planted with more than 600 citrus trees to the east of the main road, owned by Sae'b Mustafa El-Farra.
2. Sweeping a 5-donum area of land planted with more than 200 citrus trees to the west of the main road, owned by Husam El-Din El-Farra.
3. Sweeping a 19-donum area of land planted with more than 250 olive trees to the east and south of an Israeli military post at the junction, owned by the heirs of Jebara Ismail El-Farra.
4. Sweeping a 28-donum area of land planted with potatoes adjacent to the road leading to Gush Qatif Settlement Block from the north, owned by Jihad Mohammed Madi.
5. Sweeping a tract of land 200m long and 7m wide planted with olive trees adjacent to the road leading to Gush Qatif Settlement Block from the north, owned by Abdel Qader Moteir Abu Houli.
6. Destroying two dirt roads between Al-Matahen Junction and Al-Berka area in Deir El-Balah and Al-Mawasi area in Al-Qarara that were used by farmers to transport agricultural products.
7. Demolishing the external walls of two houses to the west of Al-Matahen Junction owned by A'ashour Ibrahi A'abdin and Nayef Salem A'abdin.

On October 23, the Israeli occupation forces seized a 4-donum area of land planted with olive trees adjacent to the road between Gush Qatif Settlement Block, and 250m to the east of Al-Matahen Junction. Their bulldozers swept it and established a new military post. The land is owned by Hassan Kawarie' and Mahdi Zou'rob.

#### **Rafah:**

On October 22, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces' bulldozers swept an area of land 500m long and 20m wide that was planted with trees to the north of the settlement of Morag near Rafah.

On October 22, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces' bulldozers swept a 2-donum area of land to the south of the settlement of Morag near Rafah.

On October 25, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces' bulldozers swept a 4-donum area of land near the settlement of Morag.

#### **The Northern Area of the Gaza Strip:**

On October 8, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces in cooperation with dozens of Jewish settlers swept an area 700m long and 7m wide of agricultural land on both sides of the road between the settlement of Dogit, established on the land of the Palestinian town Beit Lahia, and the sea coast. The land swept is owned by Palestinian farmers.

On October 18, the Israeli occupation forces paved a dirt road of 400m long and 80m wide between the settlement of Dogit and an Israeli military post to its south.

On October 18, the Israeli occupation forces started in the evening to sweep the land on both sides of the main road (Salah El-Din Street) near

Erez. Sweeping was completed the following day. They swept 35 donums of wooded land and put cement blocks on the mentioned road.

On October 23, 2000, the Israeli occupation forces started to sweep the land to the southwest of Nissanit settlement. Sweeping still continues, and has included an area 2km long and 200m wide of wooded land adjacent to the settlement.

**The following table shows the area and location of land swept by the Israeli  
occupation forces in the Gaza Strip  
October 1-25, 2000**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Area in Donums</b>	<b>The Kind of Land</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>The kind of Plantation</b>
Oct. 7	20	Agricultural	Netzarim Junction	Citrus trees
Oct. 8	10	Agricultural	Beit Lahia (Dogit settlement)	Vegetables (potatoes)
Oct. 10	10	Wooded	Rafah (Morag settlement)	Trees
Oct. 16	80	Wooded	Khan Yunis	Trees
Oct. 18	2	Agricultural	Khan Yunis	Olive trees
Oct. 18	32	Sandy	Beir Lahia (Dogit settlement)	---
Oct. 18	35	Wooded	Erez area	Trees
Oct. 19	66	Agricultural	Khan Yunis	Citrus and olive trees, and vegetables
Oct. 22	2	Sandy	Rafah	---
Oct. 23	4	Agricultural	Khan Yunis	Olive trees
Oct. 23	120	Agricultural and wooded	Netzarim	Olive and other trees
Oct. 23	400	Wooded	North Gaza (Nissanit settlement)	Trees
Oct. 25	26	Agricultural	Rafah (Morag settlement)	Olive trees and vegetables
<b>Total</b>	<b>807</b>			

## **Conclusion:**

The wide-ranging Israeli violations of the civil and political rights of the Palestinian people have not come to an end. The current situation has provided an opportunity for the Israeli occupation forces to increase their attacks on Palestinian civil properties. In fact, this is part of an Israeli systematic policy that aims at creating new facts on the ground to be imposed on civilians protected under Geneva Fourth Convention of 1949. These violations have become more serious than ever before, as the Israeli occupation forces have destroyed residential buildings and industrial facilities leaving large losses and a high number of victims. This is a form of coercive displacement of civilians. The continued attacks by the Israeli occupation forces during this month are unprecedented in the Gaza Strip, which portends serious consequences for civilians. The resort to tanks, bulldozers and hundreds of soldiers by the Israeli occupation forces gives the impression that they are waging a comprehensive war that aims at completely destroying all Palestinian properties.

The Israeli occupation forces have swept 807 donums of agricultural and wooded land in the Gaza Strip since the beginning of this month, in addition to destroying civil and agricultural facilities, uprooting fruit-bearing trees, and damaging plants, irrigation networks, water pumps, etc. It is not expected in the near future that the Israeli occupation forces will halt these actions. Consequently, the Israeli occupation forces are creating new facts on the ground as they have continued to establish new military posts while reinforcing existing ones throughout the Gaza Strip.

PCHR reiterates its call to the international community, especially the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to take practical steps to deter the Israeli military occupation authorities from carrying out such actions, and to force Israel to comply with Article 1 of the Convention. PCHR calls on the international community to immediately provide protection for Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories, as it is an essential step towards stopping the Israeli aggression against their lives and properties.

***“END”***