



Euro-Mid Observer
المركز الأوروبي لدراسات حقوق الإنسان

Confiscation of Palestinians' property by Israeli Forces in the WestBank

July- 2014



Introduction

Throughout the past three weeks, beginning with the disappearance of the three Israeli settlers on the evening of June 12, Israeli occupation forces have conducted 387 incursions into the West Bank and the Gaza Strip – an average of 18 per day. They included about 2,400 raids on homes and businesses.

The raids deliberately vandalized homes, including destruction of furniture – even turning a number of them into military outposts. The homes' inhabitants were frequently abused in the process, suffering kicks and blows from guns. 23 Palestinian civil society institutions also were ransacked, including medical centers, media offices, schools, universities and currency exchanges.

This wave of incursions into Palestinian territories is the most extensive to date since 2002, when the Israeli Army invaded every Palestinian city in the West Bank. However, what is new this time is the large amount of confiscated money and property belonging to the owners of these houses and institutions. According to data gathered by the Euro-Mid Observer of Human Rights, Israeli forces have seized an estimated US\$370,000 in cash to date. In addition, we have been able to document the confiscation of 93 desktop laptops and other computers (with the actual number likely higher since many establishments have not yet counted their losses), dozens of mobile phones and approximately seven private cars and buses.

A full audit of seized office furniture and equipment is still underway, but the value of the losses is estimated at US\$800,000 for a communications company called Trans Media and \$812,000 for a Hebron dairy factory. The total value of all confiscated private property is projected to be \$2.9 million.

Legal Justification

Spokespersons for the Israeli government justify the confiscation of money and equipment by claiming that they were used for funding or supporting terrorism, yet have offered no proof. According to testimony collected by the Euro-Mid team, Israeli authorities did not provide any evidence that judicial permission had been sought or obtained for the confiscations.

In addition, these acts violate international law. Israeli seizure of money and property belonging to Palestinian civilians and civic organizations is a gross violation of articles 27 and 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibit pillage and reprisal against civilians and their belongings. Likewise, article 53 of the convention states: “Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.”

These acts also constitute collective punishment, since they penalize large numbers of people for the acts of a few (two individuals have been accused by Israel for killing three Israeli settler youth, but no evidence has yet been offered). Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits punishing any person for an offense he or she did not personally commit.

Incidents

Personal property

Among the types of personal property seized were cash, gold coins, debentures (checks) and vehicles. The confiscations often occurred without first informing the families, and without showing a judicial warrant. In other words, they were conducted like an organized robbery.

Examples include:

- **June 18:** Israeli occupation forces stormed the home of Nasim Theb Derbas in Nablus and confiscated 8,750 new Israeli shekels (NIS), the equivalent of US\$2,560, from his private safe and 15,000 NIS from his son, Abdullah Derbas. They also confiscated a gold necklace worth 100 JD (Jordanian dinars), or US\$141.
- **June 21:** Soldiers raided three houses owned by Mohammed, Ali and Alla'a Maarouf. The compound housed 17 members of the brothers' families, and the 50,000 NIS confiscated by the troops was a significant loss. The same day, Israeli troops seized 5,000 NIS from the home of Eman Jameel Al-shouliin Aseera, near Nablus; 15,000 NIS from Tamer Fahmi Al-Hemoni in Hebron; and 85,000 NIS from Khalid Hussien Yousef Ali.
- **June 22:** Israeli forces confiscated a 2012 Peugeot car used by Zahy Naim Mahmoud Shibarwto distribute chocolate for his business in Nablus, claiming he bought it using "terrorist money." The same day, soldiers confiscated property from several other homes in Nablus: 5,000 JD from Waddah Abdulhameed Sheen, 15,800 NIS and 1,700 JD from Jamal Faris Khater and 15,800 NIS and 1,700 JD from Jamal Faris Khater.

- Elsewhere, soldiers seized 3,200 NIS and a private car from Nouredin Sati Mohammed in Tulkarem and 200,000 NIS from Nizar Abdullah Saadeh Ziadeh in Madma, along with two checks worth 1,750 NIS and 800, two laptops, an iPad and two mobile phones along with 22 “credit” cards.
- **June 24:** Israeli forces raided a number of homes in Nablus. Soldiers confiscated 1,500 NIS from Thaer Samir Hasan Nassar and gold coins worth 3,000 JD, a mobile phone and an iPad from Sael Hasan Mohammed Hamad. They also seized 8,000 NIS from the home of Fares Muhammad Rabih Rubai, along with 50 grams of gold coins. A 2008 Kia car was taken from Mohammed Khalid Sadiq Abu Seif.
- **June 26:** The home of Faris Mahmoud El-Amour in Hebron was raided by Israeli forces who confiscated a 50-gram gold coin and 8,500 NIS. On the same day, soldiers confiscated around 2,000 JD from the home of Thaer Jaber Ali El-Titi.
- **July 2:** Israeli forces confiscated a Subaru car owned by Omar Abu Eisha after demolishing his house in Hebron. Abu Aisha’s son is one of two men accused by Israeli authorities of murdering the three settlers.

Muntaser Mohammed Musa (“Musa Mohammed”), a 24-year-old from Taffuh, near Hebron, told Euro-Mid in an exclusive interview that on June 15, 50-60 Israeli soldiers stormed the building in which he and his family live. They ordered everyone to leave the premises, women and children included.

“A group of soldiers broke into our house and acted aggressively toward us and forced us to step outside the house,” he recalled to the Euro-Mid team. “Then they broke all the doors inside. After around an hour, they told us that the search was over and we could go back inside. When I got into my house, I was surprised by the presence of three soldiers, with

one of them holding a heavy weapon. They had destroyed everything. My mother, who was at the hospital that day, called to check on us. I explained to her what happened she asked me to look for the 3,000 shekels belonging to my brother, which she had kept in a wallet under her pillow. I looked for it but couldn't find it. Then I remembered seeing money in the pocket of one of the soldiers who stayed behind.”

Muntaser added, “I followed them and talked to the officer in charge, and told him about the missing money. He started laughing with the other soldiers, then they threatened me with their guns and ordered me to go back home.”

Health centers and media

June 17: Israeli occupation forces entered Al-Sadaqa Clinic in Bethlehem after busting the doors down and confiscated three computers, medical records and financial receipts -- hampering the clinic's service for days. It was the second time that the Israeli occupation forces had assaulted the clinic in less than three months.

June 18: Headquartered in Al-Bireh, TransMedia is a company that provides broadcasting and photography services for 14 satellite television stations. Israeli troops confiscated all property inside the office, including computers, cameras and documents. TransMedia estimates the loss at about US\$800,000. In a statement pinned on the company doors, Israeli authorities stated that the reason for shutting down the company was its work with Al-Aqsa TV, which is owned by Hamas.

• **June 21:** Israeli troops entered the Al-Bireh headquarters of Pal Media, which provides services for Al-Quds TV, confiscating 12 computer hard disks, five camera SDs and some documents.

Currency exchanges

June 18: Computers and a laptop were confiscated by Israeli soldiers from the al-Sweedan Exchange shop. Later, they stormed Alhwari Exchange in Nablus, seizing four computers and the money in the safe. The owner, Tail Mohammad Saleem Oda, is not certain of the total loss, but estimates that 50,000 shekels were stolen. Israeli forces also confiscated his car, a 2010 Mercedes worth about 500,000 NIS, which he had just purchased six months previously.

Meanwhile, in Hebron, Israeli forces raided Abdeen Exchange, confiscating computers and about US\$89,000 in cash.

Muhammad Fadel Taher Muhammad Abdeen, 60 years old, is the owner of an exchange shop with 10 branches across the West Bank. His company is licensed by and operating under the supervision of the Palestine Monetary Authority.

In his testimony to Euro-Mid Observer, Abdeen said that Israeli forces called him at dawn on June 23, and demanded his son's presence within 10 minutes. That was impossible, because his son was in Hebron. Abdeen told the Israeli officer that he would send one of his employees to open the safe for them. However, when the employee arrived, the soldiers had already broken in, opened the safe and stolen four computers, the camera's archive and documents.

According to Abdeen, four of his company's 10 branches were raided by Israeli forces, who opened the safes and collected all of the money inside. Abdeen reported that the troops stole US\$26,000 from just one of the branches, and that the total amount seized was approximately \$63,000. When Abdeen asked for a receipt, the soldiers refused and said he should ask the Israeli police office for it. However, the police claimed to know nothing about the money.

Universities

June 19: Israeli forces stormed Birzeit University near Ramallah, raiding the student union and confiscating some media materials belonging to Hamas. Later, soldiers broke into the Arab American University in Jenin and Polytechnic University in Hebron, confiscating four computers.

Associations, civil institutions and businesses

June 19: Twenty Israeli soldiers stormed four branches of the Islamic Benevolent Society for Orphans, the largest charity in Hebron and responsible for 3,200 orphans and schools that serve 2,700 students. They confiscated computers, printers and documents. Later the same day, the troops raided the society's dairy factory and confiscated equipment valued at US\$812,000.

Israeli forces also seized computers and money donated to the Orphan Care Association in Bethlehem, along with a kindergarten bus valued at 80,000 NIS from Al-Eman School in Urif, south of Nablus.

June 23: Soldiers stormed the Developed Company for Agricultural Activities, broke egg boxes, damaged a number of machines, and confiscated computers and other equipment. These broken and confiscated belongings are valued at a 1.5 million shekels.

July 2: Israeli forces raided Dar al-Esra's Book Shop for Printing & Publishing in Hebron, owned by Taher Dandis, and confiscated computers and financial papers (checks).

Statistics

Owner(s)	Date (2014)	Area	Confiscated Property
Yasser Muhammad Aljamal	June14	Hebron	Cellphoneand recording device
Muntaser Muhammad Musa	June15	Hebron	3,000 NIS in cash
Palestinian National Initiative	June16	Jenin	Content, equipment & records
Alsadaqa Clinic (formerly Alehsan)	June17	Bethlehem	3 computers & medical records
TransMedia Co.	June18	Al-Bireh, Hebron	Computers, cameras, broadcasting & production devices(estimated value of more than US\$800,000)
NaseemTheebDerbas	June18	Nablus	8,750 NIS in cash& gold necklace worth 100 JD
Abdullah NasseDerbas	June18	Nablus	15,000 NLS
Muhammad Abdel Aziz Khurfan	June18	Qalqilya	2,100 NIS in cash, 4 laptops& a cellphone
Swaydan Exchange Shop	June18	Nablus	Computer, 2 laptops, computer hard disk, notes on personal accounts
Islamic Benevolent Society for Orphans	June20 & 19	The society's branches in Hebron (Yatta, al-Shuyukh, Al-hawooz 2, BeitUmmar)	All computers & printers in the administrative building
Muhammad FathiQarawi	June20	Tulkarm	Computer, cellphones, personal records & documents
KhaledSulieman FayeZ Abu Hassan	June20	Jenin	2 laptops & 2 cellphones
Khaled Said Yahya	June20	Jenin	Laptop & cellphone
Palmedia Co.	June21	al-Bireh	12 computers, hard disk, 5 camera SDs, records & documents

Islamic Relief Organization	June21	Batin al-Hawa-Ramallah	5 computers, central computer server, financial papers
The Polytechnic University	June21	Hebron	4computers, floppy disks
Alhwari Exchange Co. (Tayel Muhammad SaleemAwda)	June21	Nablus	4 computers, 50,000 NIS from the depository safe, private car (2010 Mercedes valued at 500,000 NIS)
Tamer FahmiAlhaymouni	June21	Hebron	15,000 NIS in cash
HatemAsafra	June21	BietKahel-Hebron	2,500 NLS in cash
Noon Center for Research & Quran Studies	June21	al-Bireh	3 computers
KhaledYousef Ali	June21	Qalqilya	85,000 NIS (with confiscation receipt)
Orphan Care Association	June21	Bethlehem	Computers, donated money
EmanJamilAlshuli's house	June21	Nablus	5,000 NLS
Muhammad, Ali & AlaaMarouf	June21	EinBeit al-Ma<Nablus	50,000 NIS
Nezar Abdullah Zyada	June22	Madama,-Nablus	200,000 NIS; 2 checks, one for1,750 NIS & the other for 800; 22 cell phone re-charge cards; 2 laptops; an iPad; & 2 cellphones (estimated total value = US\$41,000)
Jamal Fares Khater	June22	Aqraba,Nablus	15,800 NIS & 1,700 JD
Sati Alashqar	June22	Seida-Tulkarm	3,500 NIS in cash & Peugeot car
Omer Mayadma	June22	Aqraba, - Nablus	30,000 NIS in cash
Ibrahim Ahmed Atta Sabah (Al-Eman Kindergarten)	June22	Urif, Nablus	Bus worth 80,000 NIS
ZahyNaim Mahmoud Shibarw	June22	Nablus	2012 Peugeot car valued at US\$29,000
Waddah Abdel Hamid Shaheen	June22	Nablus	5,000 JD
Mustafa ArefShtya	June22	Salem, - Nablus	Necklace valued at 300 JD
MuradAyeshAlbaden	June22	Tuqu, ' - Bethlehem	4,000 NIS in cash
Abdeen Exchange Shops	June23 & 22	Hebron&Bethlehem	Computers & an estimated US\$89,000
Muhammad Swafta	June23	Tubas	2,900 JD in cash

Muhib Ahmed Muri	June23	QarawatBani Hassan	10,000 NIS in cash
Developed Co. for Agricultural Activities	June23	Batonya	The administration's computer, laser computer (for IQ tests), monitoring device & records. Estimated total loss = 1.5 million NIS
Thaer Samir Hassan Nassar's house	June24	Nablus	A deer & its baby worth 1,500 NIS
Sayel Hassan Muhammad Hamad	24 June	Aynabus, Nablus	6,000 NIS in cash, 3,000 JD in gold, iPad & a Blackberry cellphone
Najib Mustafa Shibani	June24	Arrab, Jenin	5,000 NIS in cash
Fawaz Khalil Rabih	June24	Abu Dis- Jerusalem	50,000 NIS in cash
Mahmoud Shubita	June24	Azzoun-Qalqilya	US\$5,000 in cash
Mahmoud Adam	June24	Azzoun-Qalqilya	50,000 NIS in cash
Muhammad Khaled Abu Seif	June25	Jenin	2008 KIA car
Fares Muhammad RabihRubai	June25	Yatta, -Hebron	8,000 NIS in cash & 50 g gold coins
Muhammad EissaAlyateemRubai	June25	Yatta, -Hebron	1,000 JD
Fares Mahmoud Alamour	June26	Hebron	8,500 NIS in cash & 50 g of gold coins
Thaer & Dia'a Jaber Ali Altiti's house	June26	Hebron	2,000 JOD in cash & a gold coin
Al-Ehsan Benevolent Society	July2	Hebron	Computers & records of the society
Dar al-Esra'a Bookshop for Printing & Publishing	July2	Hebron	Computers, records, checks
Al-Asail Center	July2	Hebron	Computers
Omer Abu Aisha	2 July	Hebron	Subaru car
Al-Rayan Dairy Factory	2 July	Hebron	Factory belongings, including machines & equipment. Total estimated value= US\$812,000

*These are the most recent statistics the Euro-Mid could collect, and do not include all cases of confiscation.

*JD: Jordanian dinar



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