



March 2016

Call on Congress for an end to Israel's demolition of Palestinian property

Last month, thanks to the advocacy of people like you, **nearly 40 congressional offices were represented at a Capitol Hill [briefing](#)** where listeners learned about the struggles facing the Palestinian village of Wadi Foquin due to Israeli settlement expansion.

Many other villages and neighborhoods are threatened throughout the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and a growing part of that threat is the Israeli practice of demolishing Palestinian property.

In a February 17 [press release](#), the UN humanitarian coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory, Robert Piper, called attention to the overall increase in West Bank demolitions saying, ***"The number of demolitions for just the first six weeks of 2016 is greatly alarming...Over 400 Palestinians have been displaced from their homes – equivalent to over half the total number of Palestinians displaced in all of 2015."***

Property is often demolished due to the lack of a building permit, but the reality is that only a tiny fraction of Palestinians living in Area C—the area of the West Bank under Israeli civil and security control—receive the necessary Israeli-issued permits.

The Israeli government has also resumed its practice of demolishing the homes of Palestinians suspected of or implicated in attacks on Israelis.

The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem [explains](#), "The people who bear the brunt of the demolitions are relatives – including women, the elderly, and children – whom Israel does not suspect of involvement in any offense. In the vast majority of cases, the person whose actions prompted the demolition was not even living in the house at the time of the demolition."

A recent UN [report](#) states, "Punitive demolitions are a form of collective punishment and run counter to a range of provisions under international law."

Demolishing homes and property is disastrous for Palestinian families and communities and does nothing to further the prospects for a just peace.

Contact your [senators](#) and [representative](#) today and ask them to urge the State Department to firmly appeal to the Israeli government to stop the demolition of Palestinian homes and property.

Note: You can take further action by joining a ["Contact Congress Briefing,"](#) an effort of the Rebuilding Alliance to save Palestinian villages.

Sample Letter:

Dear Senator/Representative,

I am writing to ask you to urge the State Department to firmly appeal to the Israeli government to stop the demolition of Palestinian homes and property. The human suffering created by these demolitions is of deep concern to me as a person of faith.

In a February 17 [press release](#), the UN humanitarian coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory, Robert Piper, called attention to the overall increase in West Bank demolitions saying, “The number of demolitions for just the first six weeks of 2016 is greatly alarming...Over 400 Palestinians have been displaced from their homes – equivalent to over half the total number of Palestinians displaced in all of 2015.”

Demolishing homes and property is disastrous for Palestinian families and communities and does nothing to further the prospects for a just peace.

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,