

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2008 FIELD REPORT

Introduction

This is the fourth quarterly field report of 2008 by Al-Haq's Monitoring and Documentation Department, covering the period from October to December 2008. Al-Haq's field reports cover human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law committed by Israel, the Occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), namely the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. The report also covers human rights abuses committed by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in the West Bank and those committed by the *de facto* Hamas authority in the Gaza Strip.

Since 1967, Israel has occupied the OPT, despite binding United Nations Security Council resolutions ordering it to withdraw. Consequently, Al-Haq's monitoring and documentation activities have traditionally been directed towards the violations committed by Israel, the Occupying Power. However, following the creation of the PNA in 1994, Al-Haq also monitors and documents violations perpetrated by the PNA. In addition, since Hamas's take-over of the Gaza Strip in June 2007 and assumption of *de facto* authority, Al-Haq also monitors violations perpetrated by Hamas and its Executive Forces (EF).

Each field report highlights a particularly important and disturbing trend observed by the Monitoring and Documentation Department during the reporting period. The field reports are based on first-hand information gathered by Al-Haq's Monitoring and Documentation Department, and cover a broad range of violations, including, but not limited to, comprehensive coverage of killings, house demolitions and curfews. Al-Haq's specially trained fieldworkers visit sites of alleged violations, draw maps, draft reports and take sworn witness statements (affidavits) from victims and eyewitnesses. The affidavits excerpted or referenced in field reports are available on Al-Haq's web site, www.alhaq.org, as samples of those gathered during the reporting period.

The Human Rights Situation since the Outbreak of the Second *Intifada*

The violations committed during the reporting period must be analysed in the broader context of the deteriorating general human rights situation since the outbreak of the second *intifada* on 29 September 2000, and Israel's persistent failure to respect its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law in the OPT. As Al-Haq only assigned a fieldworker to the Gaza Strip in June of 2007 and a second fieldworker in August 2008, it does not have comprehensive statistics similar to those of the West Bank dating back to the start of the second *intifada*.

According to Al-Haq's documentation, from the outbreak of the second *intifada* until the end of September 2008, **1,870** Palestinians were killed in the West Bank, **363** of whom were children, and **103** of whom were female (including girls). It is estimated that **309** Palestinians were killed in targeted assassinations. During the same period, Al-Haq documented the demolition for punitive reasons, of **567** houses¹ in the West Bank (whereof **502** were totally demolished, **63** were partially demolished and **2** sealed off), leading to the forcible displacement of **3,336** people. Israel has also carried out a large number of house demolitions on the pretext that the houses were built without the required licence (administrative house demolition). Since the beginning of 2004, **557** houses have been demolished for lack of licence, **262** of which were in East Jerusalem.

Since the outbreak of the second *intifada*, the Occupying Power has almost completely eliminated the already limited authority of the PNA in the OPT. Israel's destruction of ministerial buildings, arrests of PNA officials and unlawful withholding of PNA tax revenues have severely limited the ability of the PNA to carry out its most basic functions, including upholding law and order. The effects of many of these policies were exacerbated following the victory of Hamas in the democratic PNA elections of 2006, and continue to affect the *de facto* Hamas government in the Gaza Strip, a government that is plagued by economic and diplomatic isolation and whose function therefore does not extend beyond ensuring a minimum of law and order. By virtue of the control it does exercise within the Gaza Strip, Hamas is bound by international human rights and humanitarian law obligations.

¹ The term home/house refers to each individual housing unit, accommodating a family or in case of an industrial or commercial building to each industrial unit/commercial shop.

The Human Rights Situation from October to December 2008²

Highlighted Trend: Settler Violence

During the reporting period, Al-Haq fieldworkers have documented a particularly high number of incidents involving **settler violence** against, and intimidation of, Palestinians in the West Bank. Israeli settlers carried out a number of attacks against Palestinians, their property and their sources of livelihood, aimed particularly at the prevention or destruction of the annual olive harvest, a vital economic and cultural fixture in Palestinian life (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4479/2008](#)). Despite Israel's obligation to protect the life, property and rights of the occupied Palestinian population, Israeli forces continually turned a blind eye to settler violence and in some cases even actively participated in it. This systematic refusal to prevent or punish criminal behaviour effectively encourages such action.

On 19 October 2008 for example, an armed Israeli settler accompanied by two large dogs threatened Hatem Zuheir and his family as they were harvesting their olives in Jenin Governorate. The settler, protected by three Israeli soldiers watching the incident, stole and then dumped the family's harvested olives. He then threatened them, telling them not to come back to their land, thus depriving them of their main source of income (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4450/2008](#)).

In another incident in 'Awarta village in Nablus Governorate, settlers set fire to Palestinian agricultural land. By the time the local Palestinian fire fighters were allowed to access the land, 400 olive trees had burnt down (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4461/2008](#)). On 22 October 2008 Kafa Shteivi and her two children, two-year-old Suha and five-year-old Ahmad, were subjected to death threats and assaulted by a large number of Israeli settlers who threw stones at them, as they were attempting to harvest the olives from their land in Qalqiliya Governorate. When Israeli army and police officers arrived at the scene, they forced Kafa at gunpoint to leave her land (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4456/2008](#)).

"The settler immediately fired a second bullet, this time at my cousin Husni, also from a distance of only one metre. The bullet hit Husni in the chest and he fell to the ground (...) I saw settlers set fire to our neighbour Fadl al-Razem's house, which is only 12 metres northwest of my uncle and his children's houses. They threw burning objects inside the house. Through the window they had broken, settlers threw a mattress into the house and set it on fire (...) Meanwhile, settlers attacked my uncle and his sons' houses, my house, and my brothers' houses. They climbed on the roofs of our houses as well as knocked down water tanks, satellite dishes and everything else present on our roof tops (...) They tried to burn down my brother Hisham's house by throwing burning torches inside. I also saw individuals dressed in military uniform participating in the settlers' attacks."

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4526/2008
Given by Jamal Jamil Abu-S'eifa, resident of the Wadi al-Husein area, Hebron City, Hebron Governorate, West Bank

"The soldiers carried long black guns while the settler had a pistol and a small short knife on the right side of his waist. They came over to us and, immediately upon their arrival, the settler said to us in Hebrew, which I understand well, "Get out of here. This land is ours. It belongs to the city of Mevo Dotan. You are all banned from entering this land. I told him that this land was ours, to which he replied severely, "This land is not yours," and refused to discuss it. The hearts of the women and children were struck with panic and fear, especially given that the settler had two large menacing dogs with him (...) We did not say a word, out of fear for our lives and the lives of our wives and children. We left the area and returned to our homes. Since then, we have not gone back to our land because that same settler, protected by Israeli soldiers, is always present on the land. We learned that he deliberately damaged and cut down olive trees."

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4450/2008
Given by Hatem Fawzi Zuheir, resident of 'Arraba town, Jenin Governorate, West Bank

On 4 December 2008, Husni Matariyya and his father were shot and injured by a group of Israeli settlers in Hebron city. The settlers had come to impede the evacuation – carried out by Israeli occupying forces - of those settlers who were illegally occupying the nearby home of the al-Rajabi family, referred to as the "House of Peace" (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4527/2008](#)). When clashes broke out between Palestinian residents and Israeli settlers, a group of armed settlers, accompanied by a small number of Israeli soldiers, attacked and injured Palestinian residents as well as Israeli journalists, and destroyed Palestinian property, including setting fire to Palestinian houses (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4526/2008](#)).

² The violations described in a small number of the affidavits appearing in this report occurred slightly before the current reporting period (October-December 2008). As these violations were either not covered in the last report (July-September 2008), or because their effects are ongoing, they are referred to in the current report.

The Occupying Power

Among the most disturbing trends of human rights violations documented during the reporting period are those committed by the Israeli Occupying Power in relation to the ongoing **siege of the Gaza Strip**. Please note that violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by the Israeli Occupying Power in the occupied Gaza Strip during its 22 day large scale offensive "Operation Cast Lead" launched on 27 December 2008 are not included in this report and will be covered in a separate report.

On 5 November 2008, after violating its ceasefire with Hamas by launching airstrikes against the Gaza Strip, Israel closed all of the border crossings, stopping the movement of goods and people in and out of the territory. Despite violating the ceasefire, Israel claimed that it sealed the borders in response to rockets fired into Israel by Palestinian armed groups. The continuing intensification of the blockade on the Gaza Strip initially imposed in June 2007, reached an unprecedented level during the reporting period, harshly limiting Palestinians' access to essential goods and utilities, such as food, (running) water, electricity, medicine and fuel.

The lack of fuel forced Gaza's only power plant to shut down for half of both November and December, resulting in prolonged power outages for up to 16 hours per day. An example of the effects of limited electricity on the population of the Gaza Strip is the case of paralysed 11-year-old Yaser Sweisi. Yaser's life depends on an electricity generated artificial respiratory system, whose functioning has been gravely compromised as a result of electricity shortages, thereby constantly leaving the boy's life at risk ([Affidavit No. 4493/2008](#)).

The ongoing closure of the Gaza Strip has further prevented patients from seeking medical treatment in Israel or abroad, resulting in several deaths. In a notable example, on several separate occasions Israeli occupying forces denied Khaled Abu-Shammala permission to leave the Gaza Strip in order to receive medical care unavailable in the territory. Israeli authorities had requested Khaled to act as a collaborator as a condition for his permission to exit the Gaza Strip for medical treatment. Khaled refused, and he died on 28 October 2008 (see [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4464/2008](#)).

"I have owned my bakery for five years. The bakery operates on a semi-automatic system and is dependent on gas (cooking gas) and electricity in order to operate its machinery, from the kneader to the cooler and the oven (...) My suffering has increased since 5 November 2008, when the Israeli occupying authorities completely closed off all of the crossing points into the Gaza Strip. They did not allow the transportation of gas and flour necessary to operate the bakery. Similarly, the occupying authorities have refused to supply the electricity generation station with the industrial fuel necessary for its operation, causing prolonged electricity outages. We are connected to the electric current for barely two hours during the entire daytime, and two hours during the night (...) Thus, I was forced to stop my work completely and close the bakery in the face of my employees and customers due to the exhaustion of flour and gas supplies as well as the very long power outages. It should be noted that with the bakery no longer in operation, my workers and I have lost our only source of income (...) I have learned from my colleagues who also own semi-automatic bakeries that they too have had to completely cease their operations for the same reasons."

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4492/2008

Given by Hamdan Muhammad Hassouna, resident of al-Rimal neighbourhood, Gaza Governorate, Gaza Strip

"The electricity is cut off for more than 16 hours everyday, forcing me to conduct a manual respiration for my son in fear for his life. Take into consideration that my son Yaser gets very afraid when the electricity cuts off. "I am afraid to die," he used to repeat whenever electricity disconnected in the house and the electricity-run devices which keep him alive ceased to operate. Yaser suffers from breathing difficulties whenever artificial respiration is conducted manually. The oxygen which he gets by the manual respiration is double the quantity he usually gets through the electric device. Moreover, he is afraid of the extreme darkness resulting from electricity cuts. Therefore, I use a one kilogramme electricity generator, which I bought at an exorbitant price in fear for my son's life which depends on electricity. However, this did not resolve the problem or stop Yaser's suffering from power outages. The generator only runs for four hours. To operate, it needs diesel, which the occupying authorities have prevented from entering through the Nahal 'Oz Crossing since 5 November 2008. Electricity is the one major component on which my son's life depends (...) My son is an innocent child; he is only 11 years old."

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4493/2008

Given by Ahmad 'Umar al-Sweisi, al-Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood, Gaza Governorate. Gaza Strip

The availability in the Gaza Strip of basic food commodities such as water, dairy products, meat and flour are far below minimum needs. Due to the lack of flour (and fuel), for example, five out of six mills in the Gaza Strip had stopped grinding by the end of November 2008. At the same time, 30 out of 47 bread bakeries were forced to close down. For example, the lack of flour and fuel has forced Hamdan Hassouna to shut down his bakery in the al-Rimal neighbourhood of Gaza City, depriving him of his only source of livelihood (see [Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4492/2008](#)).

Al-Haq field workers documented new cases of **house demolitions**, some on the pretext of the absence of a building licence and others for punitive reasons (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4463/2008](#)). Amongst the home demolitions carried out during the reporting period were those of Bedouin tents, such as that of Tha'er 'Awawda and his 12 family members. On 29 October 2008 Israeli occupying forces demolished Tha'er's Bedouin home, set up on his land in Deir Diwan in the Ramallah Governorate. During the demolition process, the soldiers demolished sheep enclosures, furniture and kitchen tools, covering them with soil (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4455/2008](#)). On 12 October 2008, Israeli occupying forces demolished the home of Ibtisam al-Dweik, on the pretext that a person allegedly wanted by the Israeli military was hiding there. Despite this claim, the home was empty when it was demolished (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4472/2008](#)).

"Why do you want to demolish my tents and the sheep enclosures? I own this land." I got out the land registration certificate to prove my ownership of the land. However, the officer tore apart the certificate and said, "This is not your land." Immediately then, the bulldozers started to demolish our tents, in which we slept, and also demolished the sheep enclosures. The bulldozer destroyed everything in its path to the extent that it also damaged about ten tons of barley, one ton of which costs me 1200 Israeli shekels. The general scene was one of terror and fright, which was evident from the eyes of the children and women (...) When the demolition was over, all contents of the tents were destroyed, including pieces of furniture and kitchen tools. In order to destroy everything and to make me suffer even more, the bulldozer driver mixed the demolished tents and enclosures with soil. He then dug a pile of soil and dumped it on the demolished structures and mixed them together again. This method of demolition means all of the contents of the tents were completely destroyed. After the occupying troops left the area, I looked at our home where we used to live, reduced to a heap of destruction and soil. As a result, I took my family to a cave and we have been living in this cave since, until I can manage to find another place of residence."

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4455/2008

Given by Tha'er Ibrahim 'Awawda, resident of Deir Diwan village, Ramallah Governorate, West Bank

In another incident, on 19 November 2008, Israeli occupying forces partially demolished the house of Jamal Abu-Daoud, who was refused the necessary permit to build on his rightfully owned land in occupied East Jerusalem (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4519/2008](#)).

The reporting period has further revealed a high number of **home raids**, accompanied by **property destruction and/or confiscation, theft**, as well as **arbitrary arrests**. In a notable example on 6 October 2008, Israeli soldiers raided the home of Khalil Jabarin, the adjacent home of his parents, as well as those of several others in the neighbourhood, damaging property, throwing around furniture, stealing at least two gold rings and a sum of USD 7,000. During the raid, Khalil and his brother Tha'er were handcuffed, blindfolded, and interrogated for several hours and finally arrested without charge (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4470/2008](#)). In another incident, on 3 November 2008, the Israeli Occupying Power conducted a mass raid on al-Far'a refugee camp in Toubas Governorate, imposing a curfew on the camp, raiding numerous homes, and injuring several Palestinians when Israeli soldiers fired tear gas and rubber coated steel bullets at them (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4486/2008](#)).

Harassment, humiliation and beatings continued to be endured by Palestinians at the hands of Israeli forces. In a typical example, on 7 October 2008, Israeli occupying forces shot 'Umar Subuh, at close range and without any prior warning, in his house in al-Far'a refugee camp, mistaking him for his neighbour who was allegedly wanted. 'Umar sustained a bullet wound in his stomach and large intestine (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4486/2008](#)). On 11 October 2008, Israeli soldiers opened fire on, fired tear gas at and beat with their rifles a group of Palestinians who were arguing about the arbitrary arrest of three boys allegedly having thrown stones. Muhammad 'Awad suffered a gunshot wound in his left shoulder and Ahmad 'Awad sustained shrapnel wounds in his stomach; several women suffered contusions (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4443/2008](#)).

In another incident, soldiers shot and injured 21-year-old Shadi 'Awajna with a bullet that penetrated his waist and back as he was about to throw a stone at them (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4457/2008](#)). On 4 November 2009, Israeli soldiers shot Hanin Saleh al-Loh as she was seeking refuge in her neighbour's house after the soldiers had told her to leave her home. Hanin suffered bullet wounds in her leg, thigh, and back. After treating her, soldiers took Hanin to the Erez Crossing, between the Gaza Strip and Israel, and questioned her about the Hamas movement (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4463/2008](#)).

Checkpoints throughout the West Bank remain major obstacles to the **freedom of movement** of goods and people, heavily impeding the movement between Palestinian cities and villages and restricting Palestinians' access to their places of work, education and worship. Palestinians remain subjected to delays, humiliation and **ill-treatment at checkpoints** (see Al-Haq [Affidavit 4499/2008](#)). In a typical example, on 19 November 2008, 'Abdallah Najjar was assaulted by Israeli soldiers as he was in line at the Huwwara checkpoint waiting to cross into his village. 'Abdallah was severely beaten and detained in a small cell where he was subjected to death threats (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4513/2008](#)).

Palestinian movement is further restricted by the Annexation Wall, 87% of which is built on land confiscated from Palestinians, and which divides the West Bank into enclaves, preventing Palestinians from reaching their land and/or homes, while creating irreversible facts on the ground that threaten to undermine the future realisation of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. In many areas the only way for Palestinians to reach their lands and homes is by passing through **gates in the Wall**, which requires permits issued by the Israeli military authorities.

Despite holding a permit to cross through iron gate number 154 to his agricultural land (isolated behind the Wall since 2002) in al-Tayba, Jenin Governorate, 54-year-old Isma'il Isma'il was denied permission to cross

"On 1 October 2008, I wanted to access my land to harvest my olive crops. At 8:00 am, I arrived at the gate and presented my ID card and my special access permit to cross the said iron gate to the Israeli soldiers. However, the soldiers seized and confiscated my special access permit, claiming that I had used it to access the territories occupied in 1948 and stayed there overnight. This claim is not true. I have never used the special wall permit to stay overnight, as I enter my land in the morning and return at 4:00 pm. I asked the soldiers for the date on which I was believed to have spent the night on the other side of the wall. However, they did not specify a date, which indicates that their allegations are false. From that day on, I have not been able to retrieve my permit, despite having repeatedly reported to the Israeli District Coordination Office at Salem Military Base, which is located two kilometres north of al-Tayba village. As a result, I have not been able to reach my land since that date. Consequently, I will not be able to harvest my olive crops this season, which will be a great loss for me."

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4451/2008

Given by Isma'il Ahmad Isma'il, resident of al-Tayba village, Jenin Governorate, West Bank

"Without advance warning, the officer hit me with his right hand forcefully on my neck. Then, he grabbed my throat and the other soldier held my arm. Immediately then, they led me about nine metres into the southeast section of the checkpoint, to a concrete room that measured no more than three square metres. The officer immediately took my ID card and kicked me forcefully on my right leg more than ten times consecutively. Also, he beat me with his hands on my chest and face several times. The other soldier also beat me forcefully with his fists and kicked me with his feet several times on my legs and chest. I was in a lot of pain (...) they began to beat me with their fists on my chest and neck. Along with the aforementioned soldiers and the officer, they beat me on all parts of my body for about seven minutes continuously. There were only a few seconds in which I was not beaten during this period. About five minutes into the beating, the officer turned behind me and hit me on the back with the butt of his rifle"

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4513/2008

Given by 'Abdallah Zidan Najjar, resident of Bourin village, Nablus Governorate, West Bank

this gate on 1. October 2008. The soldiers at the gate confiscated Isma'il's permit, falsely claiming that he had illegally used it. Ismail has to date been unable to access his land and harvest his olives, thus suffering a major loss of income during the olive season (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4451/2008](#)).

Al-Haq field workers have further documented new cases of **land confiscation** as a result of the construction of the Annexation Wall, which cuts deep into the West Bank in several locations. In al-Tayba, in Jenin Governorate, for example, the Wall currently isolates and annexes approximately 750 *dunums* out of a total of 4,000 *dunums* of land (Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4451/2008](#)).

“On Tuesday, 2 December 2008, I was sitting with my friends ‘Umar Mousa Hammad, who is 15 years old and Hani ‘Awwad Abu-Sheiban, also 15 years old, as well as with my cousin Ramzi Ibrahim al-Duheini, who is 16 years old. We were present near my house along the road leading to Gaza International Airport, about 700 metres east of Salah-al-Din Street and about 2,000 metres away from the Israeli border fence in the town of al-Shoka south east of the city of Rafah. I heard the sound of an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft, which patrolled the skies over the area for almost ten minutes. Suddenly, I heard a sound approaching us. It was like the sound of a whistling tin sheet when it falls from an elevated place. As it was close to us, it produced a noise and was followed by a very strong explosion in the area where we were present. I felt like I was pushed for several metres away from my place. I also sensed that I was injured. I lost consciousness for a while. After I regained consciousness, I saw my friends lying on the ground at a few metres away from me. Their bodies were torn into pieces and bled heavily.”

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4530/2008

Given by Khaled Nasr al-Duheini, resident of al-Shoka town, Rafah Governorate, Gaza Strip

Al-Haq fieldworkers continued to document instances of **wilful killings** of Palestinians by the Israeli Occupying Power. On 16 October 2008 Israeli soldiers shot dead 21-year-old ‘Abd-al-‘Aziz Yousef, as he attempted to throw stones at a nearby Israeli army patrol (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4457/2008](#)).

Most instances of wilful killings, however, occurred in the absence of any instigation or clashes. The motivation behind most killings, especially in the northern Gaza Strip, remained unclear. In a notable example, on 2 December 2008, in Rafah Governorate, an Israeli missile hit and killed 15-year-old ‘Umar Hammad, and 16-year-old Ramzi al-Duheini (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4530/2008](#)).

In a similar incident, on 7 December 2008 in Jabaliya refugee camp, a missile hit and killed Salah Abu-‘Okal, father of seven children, as he was irrigating his garden (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4531/2008](#)). The reasons behind these three killings remain unclear.

Several of the killings documented during the reporting period included **targeted assassinations**, most of which were carried out in the northern West Bank, such as the assassination of 27-year-old and allegedly wanted Muhammad Abu-Thra’ in Balata refugee camp. Israel occupying forces shot Muhammad at close range, without any prior attempt to arrest or apprehend him, while he was unarmed and getting into a van belonging to the Palestinian Preventive Security forces (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4523/2008](#) and [No. 4524/2008](#)).

In another incident on 15 December 2008, in Jenin Governorate, Israeli undercover forces opened fire, at close range and without any prior warning, at 20-year-old Jihad Nawahda, who was allegedly wanted for his membership in a Palestinian armed group (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4525/2008](#)).

*The Palestinian National Authority and the Hamas De Facto Authority in the Gaza Strip*³

To the extent that the PNA exercises some control over parts of the West Bank and the Hamas *de facto* government exercises control over the Gaza Strip, they are respectively responsible for enforcing law through effective and lawful measures.

The majority of the human rights violations perpetrated during the reporting period continued to be solely motivated by the ongoing frictions between opposing political movements, based on affiliation with or the expressed criticism of such movements. Members of the PNA in the West Bank as well as officials of the Hamas *de facto* authority in the Gaza Strip have continued their policy of **arbitrary arrests** of members of opposing political factions, typically subjecting them to **torture** and other forms of **ill-treatment**. In a notable example, on 12 October 2008, Yousef Fayyad was abducted from his home in Deir al-Balah city and arrested by Hamas Internal Security officers. Yousef was detained for almost two months, during which time he was regularly tortured and interrogated about his work as a correspondent for Palestine Press. Upon his release, Yousef was forced to sign a pledge confirming that he would no longer express any criticism of the Hamas *de facto* government in the Gaza Strip (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4516/2008](#)).

On 14 October 2008, Hamas Internal Security Forces detained and interrogated three students from the al-Aqsa University about their membership in the Fateh Youth group. During their detention, the young men were subjected to various kinds of verbal and physical abuse, such as death threats, and beatings with fists and sticks (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4424/2008](#)).

In another incident, on 16 October 2008, in Gaza city, Mustafa Ibrahim, together with two journalists, was arrested after having monitored a raid on al-Azhar University by a number of students affiliated with the Hamas movement (see Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4425/2008](#)).

On 28 October 2008, PNA Security officers abducted 17-year-old Mohammed Dagher from his father's commercial shop in Bitouniya, Ramallah Governorate. Around the same time, his neighbour Mohammed al-Khaldi was abducted. The boys were falsely accused of planning a car bombing the coming month, interrogated for several hours and subjected to severe ill-treatment. Mohammed Dagher was further subjected to death threats in an attempt to force his confession (See Al-Haq [Affidavit No. 4460/2008](#)).

At about 10:00 am, they transported me and my colleagues, blindfolded, onboard a police car to the Internal Security headquarters in al-Saraya Prison in the centre of Gaza City. They subjected me to interrogation about my work as a journalist for long hours while blindfolded. I was interrogated for ten consecutive days. After each interrogation session, they sent me out, blindfolded, for "shabeh" [a torture technique which forces one to remain in uncomfortable positions, with hands and/or feet typically shackled to a specific object, for prolonged periods of time] in a place known by the name "The Bus," which is a narrow place used by the Internal Security to torture detainees. There they would order me to stand on my feet, with my arms raised high, for very long hours during a single day. During this time, I was subjected to beating by fists whenever I tried to sit down due to fatigue caused by standing on my feet for such long hours. They did the same to my three colleagues. I stood on my feet like that for 14 consecutive hours a day and underwent interrogation about the same subject, my work as a correspondent for the Palestine Press"

Extract from Al-Haq Affidavit No. 4516/2008

Given by Yousef 'Ali Fayyad, resident of al-Bahar Street, Deir al-Balah City, Central Gaza Governorate, Gaza Strip

³ Due to the reluctance of many Palestinians to provide affidavits relating to intra-Palestinian violence, the information in this section of the Monitoring and Documentation Report is primarily based on reports drafted by Al-Haq's specially-trained fieldworkers.

Furthermore, human rights violations were perpetrated not only based on the victims' **political affiliation**, but also on the political affiliations of their respective family members. In a typical example, PNA authorities cancelled the appointment of Samira Radayda, a teacher at the Rawabi al Quds Secondary Girls School in Bethlehem, because of her husband's affiliation with Hamas (see Al-Haq [Affidavit 4439/2008](#)).

Al-Haq continued to register acts of **vigilantism**, particularly in the Gaza Strip, in which private actors use illegal coercive methods to achieve their own goals. Most of the documented violence is linked to rivalries between people affiliated with the Hamas party, the *de facto* ruler in the Gaza Strip, and people linked to the opposition Fateh party. There was insufficient enforcement by the responsible authorities against vigilantes who broke the law. On 14 November 2008, masked and armed members of al-Qassam Brigades stormed the wedding of Bilal Abu-Rjeila. Without any prior warning, the vigilantes shot at guests, beat them and eventually set fire to the wedding hall.

**MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2008
STATISTICS**

VIOLATIONS BY THE OCCUPYING POWER IN THE WEST BANK

Total of Killings	8
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Special Types of Killings

Death in custody	2
Targeted assassination	1
Assassination in custody	1
Death at checkpoints	-

Special Types of Victims

Women	1
Children	1

Killings by District

Bethlehem	-
Hebron	-
Jenin	2
Jericho	-
Jerusalem	1
Nablus	1
Ramallah	4
Toulkarem	-
Total	8

Killings by Age Group

12 or younger	-
13-17	1
18-25	4
26-35	1
36-50	1
Over 50	1
Total	8

Killing by Perpetrator

Israeli Occupying Forces	-
- Soldiers	4
- Special undercover units	-
- Snipers	1
Israeli Border Guards	-
Israeli Policemen	-
General Security Services	-
Settlers	-
Armed Israeli civilians	-
Collaborators	-
Special forces	2
unknown	1
Others	-
Total	8

Situation during Killing

Normal/calm	6
Incursion	-
Demonstration and stone-throwing	2
Armed clashes	-
Shelling	-
Closed military area	-
Bystanders killed during attempted assassination	-
Unclear	-
Curfew	-
Raid	-
Total	8

Methods of Killing

Live bullet	7
Fragmented bullet	1
Rubber-coated metal bullet	-
Explosives and small missiles	-
Shrapnel	-
Mine	-
Tear gas	-
Blunt instrument	-
Sharp instrument	-
Missile	-
Medical obstruction	-
Others	-
Total	8

HOUSE DEMOLITIONS BY DISTRICT

Punitive House Demolitions

Bethlehem	-
Hebron	-
Jenin	-
Jericho	-
Jerusalem	-
Nablus	-
Ramallah	-
Toulkarem	-
Qalqiliya	-
Total	0

House Demolitions for Lack of Licence

Bethlehem	-
Hebron	7
Jenin	-
Jericho	-
Jerusalem	7
Nablus	-
Ramallah	-
Toulkarem	-
Total	14

CURFEWS BY DISTRICT

District	Hours
Bethlehem	20
Jenin	16
Nablus	-
Toulkarem	-
Jerusalem	-
Ramallah	-
Hebron	-
Jericho	-
Total	36

KILLINGS BY THE OCCUPYING POWER IN THE GAZA STRIP

Total of Killings⁴	22
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Killings by District

Gaza	5
North Gaza	5
Rafah	2
Khan Younes	9
Central district	1
Total	22

Killings by Age Groups

12 or younger	-
13-17	2
18-25	13
26-35	6
36-50	1
Over 50	-
Total	22

Killing by Perpetrator

Israeli Occupying Forces	18
- Soldiers	4
- Special undercover units	-
- Snipers	-
Israeli Border Guards	-
Israeli Policemen	-
General Security Services	-
Settlers	-
Armed Israeli civilians	-
Collaborators	-
Totals	22

⁴ Until 26 December 2008.

Situation during Killing

Normal/calm	5
Incursion	-
Demonstration and stone-throwing	-
Armed clashes	4
Shelling	13
Closed military area	-
Bystanders killed during attempted assassination	-
Curfew	-
Totals	22