

Statement in the name of the popular resistance in Palestine about the current collective punishment of the Palestinian population in the occupied Palestinian territories

Ever since Israel occupied Palestine, the state of Israel has continuously violated the rights of Palestinians and violated international Humanitarian Law, the Human Rights Declaration and the Oslo accords. Those repeated and continuous violations by the Israeli state have previously led to cycles of violence. Currently, we are witnessing the unfolding of another cycle of violence, which will continue to develop into further escalations if the local and the international communities do not take action.

Under the pretext of searching for three disappeared Israeli settlers on Thursday, 14.04.2014, the Israeli military and intelligence conducts an intensive illegal military operation since Saturday, 16.05.2014, in the occupied Palestinian territories. In addition, the Israeli state has announced that the security of the Israeli settler is part of the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority in the occupied territories. In reality, the Israeli military uses the pretext of the disappearance of three Israeli settlers to justify a huge operation of collective punishment against the Palestinian people through:

- Search operation in most areas of the occupied West Bank
- During the searches, civilians, including women and children, are being violently harassed and personal belongings of the families are destroyed.
- Demolishing Palestinian houses
- The arrest of 350 Palestinian civilians, amongst which youth under the age of 18, women, and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council
- Committing injuries of Palestinian civilians caused by Israeli soldiers without previous provocation by Palestinians
- Repeated bombings over the Gaza Strip
- Committing murder of three Palestinian civilians: Mustafa Aslan, 22 years old, was killed in Qualandiya refugee camp on Friday, 20 June 2014, Mohammad Jihad Doudin, 13 years old, was killed in his house in Doura on Thursday, 19 June 2014, and Ahmad Arafat Sabarin, 20 years old, was killed on his roof in Jalazon refugee camp on Sunday 16 June 2014.

Israel has until now not taken over the responsibility for these crimes against civilians, against humans. Instead, Israel has been elected the vice-chair of the UN Fourth Committee, also known as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee on 18 June 2014.

In light of the above, the popular resistance in Palestine strongly condemns the current operation of collective punishment by the Israeli state and its military forces against the Palestinian population of the occupied Palestinian territories.

We stress the following points:

- It is the right of Palestinians to conduct uprisings against the violations of their rights and against the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the Syrian Golan Heights.
- It cannot be the responsibility of an occupied population to protect the occupier. Thus, it is not the responsibility of the Palestinians or the Palestinian Authority to protect residents of illegal Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine, or even to implement any security cooperation with the occupier.
- In addition, by the Israeli law, the PA is not allowed to send its security forces into Areas C and B of the occupied Palestinian territories, i.e. almost 90% of the occupied West Bank, thus, could not, even legally, be responsible for the security of illegal Israeli settlers.
- We believe that the current operation is not a matter of three settler youth disappearing in the occupied Palestinian territories. Rather, it is an excuse for Israel used to implement an agenda in the occupied West Bank that aims at threatening the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza, violating their rights, deepening the division between Palestinians, and creating new facts on the ground in order to justify the annexation of more land and the expansion of the settlements.

Therefore, the popular resistance of occupied Palestine calls upon:

- Palestinians and Internationals to join popular resistance on the ground in Palestine in masses, in order to stop the current operation, to end the collective punishment.
- The international community to fulfill their responsibility of protecting civilians and to send international observers in order to protect the Palestinian civilian population.
- The Palestinian leadership to keep up the unity between Palestinians during and after this period of collective punishment.