

Israele sta cercando di espellerci da Masafer Yatta. Ci rifiutiamo di lasciare le nostre case.

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Circa un mese fa, dopo anni di persecuzioni e demolizioni intermittenti, le forze di occupazione israeliane sono arrivate nel villaggio palestinese di Khallet al-Dabe', una delle 12 comunità che compongono Masafer Yatta, sulle colline a sud di Hebron, nella Cisgiordania occupata. Hanno proceduto alla demolizione quasi completa del villaggio. In sole due ore e mezza, le forze di occupazione israeliane hanno ridotto quasi l'intero villaggio in macerie.

Come Khallet al-Dabe', tutti i villaggi palestinesi di Masafer Yatta sono ora a rischio di espulsione definitiva dopo che l'Amministrazione civile, l'organismo militare israeliano incaricato di governare la Cisgiordania, ha emesso un'ordinanza che autorizza quella che definisce "esercitazione con fuoco vivo" a Masafer Yatta, un'azione intrapresa per rafforzare la designazione dell'area come "Zona di tiro 918".



Khallet al-Dabe' di Masafer Yatta nel febbraio 2022. (Foto: Ihab Alami/APA Images)

Per oltre cinquant'anni, gli abitanti di quest'area hanno subito le conseguenze di questa designazione, con le loro case e terre distrutte per far posto a insediamenti e avamposti israeliani metastatizzanti, riservati esclusivamente agli ebrei. I palestinesi si oppongono

alle loro espulsioni e, fino a poco tempo fa, abbiamo avuto qualche possibilità di ricorso presso i tribunali militari israeliani.

Oggi non è più così.

Il nuovo ordine dell'Amministrazione Civile dà il via libera all'esercito israeliano per espellere con la forza praticamente tutti i residenti di Masafer Yatta con il pretesto che stanno utilizzando la "Zona di Tiro 918" per esercitazioni militari. Prima di quest'ordine, un villaggio o due potevano aver ricevuto ordini che consentivano ai residenti, almeno sulla carta, di tornare alle proprie case. Ma ora sta accadendo il contrario: gli ordini di demolizione vengono accelerati e le richieste di permesso di costruire palestinesi vengono respinte in blocco, persino retroattivamente.

Ciò significa che tutti i documenti di proprietà e i diritti fondiari sono ora, agli occhi del tribunale, nulli e privi di valore. Queste misure, supportate dall'approvazione del tribunale, rischiano di sfollare oltre 1.200 residenti, tra cui più di 500 bambini.

Decine di case, scuole, reti idriche e altre infrastrutture sono a rischio imminente di demolizione, segnando il passo successivo nella completa pulizia etnica delle colline meridionali di Hebron.

This chilling acceleration forces Palestinians in Masafer Yatta to face displacement without even the possibility of remedy. While the waves of bulldozing have been ongoing, this new development codifies the intent to spread new Jewish-only settler outposts on our lands. I am not alone in this plea; international human rights groups have warned that this orchestrated approach — dismantling Palestinian structures, resurrecting live-fire excuses, and expelling communities — is a calculated push under the lie of military necessity.



Khallet al-Dabe' on May 5, 2025, following its demolition by Israeli forces. (Photo: Mamoun Wazwaz/APA Images)

The Palestinians who refuse to be erased

On May 5, between 9:00 and 11:30 a.m., the Israeli army destroyed nine homes, six caves, ten water tanks, four animal barns, eleven toilet rooms, seven water wells, 400 meters of agricultural fencing, a community center, an electricity room, all solar panels, internet systems, and security cameras in Khallet al-Dabe'. Hyundai bulldozers and other machinery tore through the buildings as steel twisted and cement crumbled.

But the people of Khallet al-Dabe' refused to be erased.

Despite the destruction and the suffocating summer heat, residents began to rebuild what they could using tents and salvaged materials. These makeshift shelters were more than physical structures — they were acts of resilience, resistance, and rootedness. They declared: We are staying. And although many of the demolished homes already had similar statements muralled on their sides, the people of the village will just paint again, as Sisyphean as it seems.



Israeli forces demolish Palestinian structures in the village of Khallet al-Dabe' in Masafer Yatta in the South Hebron Hills, May 5, 2025. (Photo: Mamoun Wazwaz/APA Images)

In response, settlers and soldiers continue to escalate their campaign of harassment and violence. Just two weeks after the demolition, settler militias attacked Suleiman al-Dababseh, a resident of the village. They beat him so severely that they fractured his skull and broke his arm. He was left bleeding in the dirt. With no immediate access to medical care, he endured more than an hour of agony before reaching a distant hospital, where he remained for three days. The settlers who attacked him were never arrested. This is the pattern, though never normal: violence without consequence.

Shortly afterward, settlers targeted a cave where Abdullah al-Dababseh had taken refuge with his family following the demolition of their home. Fearing for his children's safety, Abdullah fled deeper into the village. Settlers quickly occupied the cave in his absence, installed a tent for their stolen livestock, and declared it a new outpost — an illegal, *de facto* extension of their presence.

Since the expulsion of two Palestinian families from their caves, settlers have been bringing herds of sheep, cattle, and camels into the fruit orchards and gardens of the destroyed homes in Khallet al-Dabe'. The animals are deliberately used to destroy the remaining trees. This tactic is part of a larger pattern: state forces demolish homes, and settlers — with impunity — invade, attack, steal, and establish outposts, all with the support of the Israeli military. This strategy of building settler “herding outposts” is being implemented in other parts of the West Bank.

The villagers, some close to 90 years old, are forced to stand by while groups of settlers invade gardens and what's left of their homes with rifles. The fact that these elders were born in Khallet al-Dabe', long before the establishment of the Zionist state — as were their parents and ancestors before them — does not stop the Israeli regime from issuing demolition orders and declaring that they must be expelled from their land.

From the stolen caves and occupied homes, settlers launch daily assaults. They march in broad daylight, block families inside, destroy crops and fruit trees, and trample any last source of sustenance. Even children are harassed on their way to school, chased through the hills, denied safety in classrooms, and in some cases, denied access to education altogether.

All of this happens in full view of Israeli occupation forces. They do nothing. In many cases, they assist, providing encouragement and legal immunity.

A known settler, nicknamed “Benny,” dressed in military greens, took leadership in these attacks and is known to issue commands to soldiers and police. He uses 24-hour expulsion orders to expel me and my friends, colleagues, and Israeli activists and internationals. Under his direction, two international women were arrested, taken to the Israeli authorities, and deported — permanently banned from returning.

He targeted me twice in the village of Khallet al-Dabe' because he knows me as an activist and a journalist from the village of Tuwani, and because he arrested me twice on my land in the past few months.

On June 1, 2025, we, as activists from the region, alongside internationals and Israeli activists, achieved a small but significant victory: we dismantled the illegal settler outpost in Abdullah's cave and forced the settlers to leave. But within hours, the Israeli military declared the area a “closed military zone,” barred Abdullah from returning, and stationed soldiers at the site.

The following day, June 2, international media teams arrived in Masafer Yatta to report on the destruction. Israeli forces blocked every entrance, closed roads, and sealed off entire villages. Journalists were denied access. The intent was clear: silence the truth and hide what is happening in Khallet al-Dabe' and the other villages in my community.

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