



المركز الفلسطيني
للبحوث
السياسية والمسحية
Palestinian Center for
POLICY and
SURVEY RESEARCH

Who Needs Security?

Settler Attacks on Palestinians: The Example of Hebron's H2

Executive Summary



Jehad Harb

Alaa Lahluh

August 2017



المركز الفلسطيني
للبحوث
السياسية والمسحية
Palestinian Center for
POLICY and
SURVEY RESEARCH

The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR)

PSR is an independent nonprofit institution and think tank of policy analysis and academic research. It was founded in 2000 with the goal of advancing scholarship and knowledge on immediate issues of concern to Palestinians in three areas: domestic politics and government, strategic analysis and foreign policy, and public opinion polls and survey research. PSR conducts policy analysis and empirical surveys and public opinion research and organizes task forces, study groups, meetings and conferences. Its work focuses on current public policy issues with a special reliance on empirical evidence as a tool to advance scholarship and understanding.

PSR is dedicated to promoting objective and nonpartisan research and analysis and to encouraging a better understanding of Palestinian domestic and international environment in an atmosphere of free debate and exchange of ideas. PSR is registered as a nonprofit institution in the Palestinian Ministry of Justice.

This initiative has been organized in cooperation with the Netherland Representative Office in Ramallah and in cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Ramallah



The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR)

P. O. Box 76, Ramallah, Palestine

Tel: +970-2-2964933

Fax: +970-2-2964934

pcpsr@pcpsr.org

www.pcpsr.org

Preface:

Since early 2016, the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research has conducted empirical research on Palestinian needs for security and rule of law in the Palestinian territories outside the area known as “A.” These targeted areas included the following: (1) area B, (2) area C, (3) H2 sector of Hebron, and (4) isolated Jerusalem neighborhoods located to the east of the Israeli separation wall, including Kofr Aqab, Samir Amis, Shufat refugee camp, and parts of Qalandia.

The study utilized various means and activities. Eight focus groups were conducted, each with a small group of residents from these areas ranging between 15 and 20 men and women, young and old. Four public opinion polls have been conducted during 2016. They included all areas under study, with two among a representative sample of the entire West Bank, to allow comparisons between A and non-A areas, while the other two focused on non-A areas. Six case studies covered a range of issues, including forced migration from area C, the status of security in the Jerusalem neighborhoods in area B, drug trafficking in non-A areas, aggression against women in area C, settlers’ violence, particularly in H2 area, and absence of security in isolated Jerusalem neighborhoods beyond the separation wall. The case studies relied on official statistical data, polling results, focus group findings, and field interviews. Finally, the study relied on interviews with Palestinian officials in relevant ministries and agencies, such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Judicial Council, the Police, the Palestinian Military Liaison, and others. Interviews were also conducted with relevant international and Israeli figures involved in the management of Palestinian-Israeli security coordination and rule of law. The study concludes with a Final Report containing a summary of the findings and the study’s recommendation and main conclusions. This paper, “Settler Attacks on Palestinians: The Example of Hebron’s H2,” provides a review of one of the main problems prevailing in areas B and C of the West Bank and contributing to great Palestinian-Israeli tensions.

This initiative has been conducted in close cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Interior and in consultation with various security sector and rule of law agencies. The study has also been conducted in cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Ramallah and the Quartet Office and with funding from the Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah. PSR wishes to express gratitude to all those partners and donors who contributed to its work. It should be clear however that support for this project does not necessarily mean an endorsement of the content of this final report or any of the other papers and products.

PSR

Executive Summary:

After the 1967 war, in violation of international law, the Israeli government policy sought to colonize the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. A study by B'Tselem indicated that by the end of 2013 the number of official Israeli settlements has reached 125 and the number of unofficial “outposts” has reached 100. Twelve settlements have also been built in areas of the West Bank that have been annexed to Israel, along with Jerusalem, back in 1967. By 2015, the number of settlers has reached more than 588,000, including Jerusalem. Settlers began to colonize Hebron in 1968 with an outpost that later developed to become the settlement of Kiryat Arba. The settlers however focused their efforts on taking over existing Palestinian buildings and homes in the old city of Hebron leading to the formation of several concentrations of small settlements and outposts in that area that came later to be known as the H2.

In recent years, settlers’ violence against Palestinians and their properties has increased throughout the West Bank. The incident in Duma, near Nablus, in August 2015 in which three members of the Dawabshah family were burned to death in their own home in the middle of the night by settlers, came to heighten Palestinian threat perception. Palestinians strongly believe that the Israeli army shows leniency toward settlers and their violence while resorting to fire arms and arrests when Palestinians seek to defend themselves against such attacks. Settlers’ violence takes many shapes: residents complain of verbal abuse, physical attacks, shootings, car ramming, attacks on private property like homes and fields, cutting and burning of fruit trees, and attacks on public property such as places of worship and schools. In the H2 area, residents also complain of the absence of rule of law as well as other violations of order including illegal construction, use of firearms, and drug trafficking.

In order to enforce the law and protect citizens against settlers’ violence the PA can opt to open a police station in H2 or alternatively insure the presence of police patrols in the areas where most needed. Both options require Israeli approval as they would entail the extension of PA functional jurisdiction to fully include law enforcement. This is the preferred choice of the majority of the residents of that area. Given current conditions and tensions, a variation of the second option might be more viable; one in which the status of “inspectors” who are currently deployed in H2, is significantly upgraded. Inspectors should build a wide coalition with civil society groups, particularly those involved in monitoring and document settlers’ violence and the status of human rights in the area. Inspectors should be allowed to engage the current international presence in the city, TIPH, and rely on it as a partner, particularly in those areas in which the inspectors themselves are unable to operate openly.

Since early 2016, the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research has conducted empirical research on Palestinian needs for security and rule of law in the Palestinian territories outside the area known as “A.” These targeted areas included the following: (1) area B, (2) area C, (3) H2 sector of Hebron, and (4) isolated Jerusalem neighborhoods located to the east of the Israeli separation wall, including Kofr Aqab, Samir Amis, Shufat refugee camp, and parts of Qalandia.

The study utilized various means and activities. Eight focus groups were conducted, each with a small group of residents from these areas ranging between 15 and 20 men and women, young and old. Four public opinion polls have been conducted during 2016. They included all areas under study, with two among a representative sample of the entire West Bank, to allow comparisons between A and non-Areas, while the other two focused on non-A areas. Six case studies covered a range of issues, including forced migration from area C, the status of security in the Jerusalem neighborhoods, drug trafficking in non-A areas, aggression against women in area C, settlers’ violence, particularly in H2 area, and absence of security in isolated Jerusalem neighborhoods. The case studies relied on official statistical data, polling results, focus group findings, and field interviews. Finally, the study relied on interviews with Palestinian officials in relevant ministries and agencies, such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Judicial Council, the Police, the Palestinian Military Liaison, and others. Interviews were also conducted with relevant international and Israeli figures involved in the management of Palestinian-Israeli security coordination and rule of law. The study concludes with a Final Report containing a summary of the findings and the study’s recommendation and main conclusions. This paper, focusing on the reallocation of resources within the security sector, provides a review of the capacity of the Palestinian security sector and addresses one of the recommendations of the Final Report of the study.

This initiative has been conducted in close cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Interior and in consultation with various security sector and rule of law agencies. The study has also been conducted in cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Ramallah and the Quartet Office and with funding from the Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah. PSR wishes to express gratitude to all those partners and donors who contributed to its work. It should be clear however that support for this project does not necessarily mean an endorsement of the content of this final report or any of the other papers and products.

PSR



The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR)

P. O. Box 76, Ramallah, Palestine

Tel: +970-2-2964933

Fax: +970-2-2964934 pcpsr@pcpsr.org

www.pcpsr.org