

# Settler Violence

## FAQ



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### Where do the commonly cited numbers on what is known as “settler violence” come from?

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OCHA-oPT) is the main body reporting what it labels as statistics in settler-violence. It maintains a special database of incidents that it calls the “Settler-Related Violence Dashboard.” OCHA-oPT does not investigate any allegations itself but relies on a group of left-leaning NGOs largely funded by foreign governments. These include Addameer, B’tselem, Defense for Children International – Palestine (DCI-P), Al-Haq, Al Mezan, and Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR).<sup>1</sup> In 2021, the Israeli Ministry of Defense designated Addameer, Al-Haq, and DCI-P as terror organizations affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).<sup>2</sup> Al-Haq has also been sanctioned in Sept. 2026 by the U.S. Treasury Department. All these groups assert that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, a claim the U.S. and most Western governments deem untrue.

### How are incidents calculated?

OCHA-oPT uses phrases like “settler violence”, “settler-related incidents” and “settler attacks”, but their definition is so broad as to include cases in which Palestinians were injured or killed as a result of an attack they committed against Jews, as well as anti-terror

- <sup>1</sup> OCHA removed the public list of organizations it relies on from its website, and this is drawn from a recent archived version.
- <sup>2</sup> Counter Terrorism Order (DESIGNATION OF A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION) (amendment), Yalkut HaPirsumim 9693, 21.10.2021.

operations by Israeli security forces.<sup>3</sup> For example, OCHA-oPT reports that a Palestinian was injured in an attack by a settler on 3.17.2023. The report apparently refers to the terror attack committed on the same day in Hawara, Samaria, when a terrorist fired on an Israeli couple's vehicle. David Stern, a U.S. citizen and Marine, was severely injured, but succeeded in firing back and hitting the terrorist.<sup>4</sup>

According to OCHA-oPT, 8 Palestinians were killed by “extremist settlers” in 2024 prior to the October 7 invasion.<sup>5</sup> Cross-referencing this number with the data published by the B'Tselem organization reveals that it includes Palestinians who were neutralized while carrying out terror attacks,<sup>6</sup> among them a Palestinian armed with knives and explosives who was killed while attempting to break into a farm near Karnei Shomron;<sup>7</sup> a terrorist who was shot trying to stab a Sde Ephraim resident;<sup>8</sup> and a terrorist who was neutralized after he went on a terroristic shooting spree in an eatery near Eli, murdering four Israelis and wounding four others.<sup>9</sup>

OCHA-oPT considers confrontations with the IDF in the West Bank “settler violence” incidents, as well as cases in which Palestinians were harmed while attacking Israelis. Between 98-99% of incidents presented on OCHA-oPT's database refer to confrontations with Israeli security forces, not settlers.<sup>10</sup>

## What counts as settler violence?

Entirely non-violent conduct, including non-criminal conduct, is counted as settler violence. OCHA-oPT records over 8,000 incidents between April 2023 January 2016. Among these incidents are alleged cases of Israelis “trespassing,” with no casualties or property

- 3 “Incidents involving Israeli settlers: includes attacks and alleged attacks by Israeli settlers, as well as incidents involving access prevention, and clashes following the entry of Israeli settlers into Palestinian communities. It also includes Palestinians killed or injured during attacks or alleged attacks they perpetrated against Israeli settlers.” Data on Casualties, OCHA: UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMAN AFFAIRS, <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties> (last visited 11.09.24).
- 4 “David Stern, ex-Marine who fired back, says surviving terror shooting was ‘a miracle’”, *Times of Israel*, 21.3.2023. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-american-says-it-was-a-miracle-he-survived-shooting-attack/>
- 5 Data on Casualties, OCHA: UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMAN AFFAIRS, [to see, (1) choose “Palestinian casualties”, (2) the required time period (01/01/2023-10/07/23), (3) choose ‘West Bank’ under ‘Area’ and (4) ‘Israeli civilian settler’ under ‘Perpetrator’].
- 6 Main Data, “Palestinians Killed by Israeli civilians – all”, B’Tselem.
- 7 “‘We promise more painful strikes,’ Hamas says as terror continues”, *Israel Hayom*, 10.3.2023. <https://www.israelhayom.com/2023/03/10/we-promise-more-painful-strikes-hamas-says-as-terror-continues/>
- 8 Jack Khoury and Yaniv Kubovich, “Palestinian Shot and Killed After Attempting Stabbing Attack in West Bank Outpost”, *Haaretz*, 21.1.2023. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-01-21/ty-article/.premium/palestinian-killed-by-israeli-forces-in-west-bank-palestinians-say/00000185-d378-da66-a1bf-fbfa78a60000>
- 9 Ammar Awad, “Palestinian gunmen kill four Israelis in West Bank”, *Reuters*, 21.6.2023. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/palestinian-gunmen-kill-four-near-west-bank-israeli-settlement-emergency-2023-06-20/>
- 10 *False Flags and Real Agendas: Settler violence – a modern blood libel*, Regavim Institute, April 2025. P.38

damage. Out of 1,704 incidents recorded in East Jerusalem, 1,361 involve Jews visiting the Temple Mount Judaism's holiest site, which Palestinians believe they should not be allowed to access. 1,613 incidents in Judea and Samaria involve Israelis hiking or touring land Palestinians claim Jews should be forbidden from.<sup>11</sup>

## Is there an epidemic of settler violence? Is it not out of control?

According to OCHA-oPT, in 2025, there were over 1,800 settler attacks that resulted in casualties or property damage, including 838 Palestinians injured by Israeli settlers and 9 killed.<sup>12</sup> Assuming purely for the sake of argument that the 9 claimed Palestinian deaths in 2025 were all murdered (it is quite likely, given the rate of Palestinian terror described above, that a significant number of these were army operations or individual self-defense) occurring within a population of roughly 3.2 million Palestinians, that translates to a per capita rate of approximately 1.29 deaths per 100,000 people. This is below the murder rates of major European capitals like Paris, Berlin, and Amsterdam. The average American city (e.g. Chicago, Philadelphia) has a murder rate between 15.0 and 25.0 per 100,000 residents. Again, the actual murder rate among Israeli settlers is likely to be far lower. All violent crime is tragic and outrageous, but this by no means constitutes a major phenomenon by the standards the world uses to measure violence in their own cities.

## How does “settler-violence” compare with Palestinian terrorism?

Israel's FBI, the Shabak, records 1,374 foiled and 54 successful terrorist plots in 2025. These include 717 cases of gunfire, 630 cases of bombs, as well as stabbings, ramming, suicide attacks and kidnapping. In 2025, 197 Israelis were injured and 25 murdered.<sup>13</sup>

## Does the Israeli police investigate allegations of settle violence?

Yes, reported incidents are investigated, and almost invariably result in the matter being closed due to its low threshold. However, most of what is counted as settler violence is never reported to the police According a report by Colonel (res.) Prof. Gabi Siboni and Brig. Gen. (res.) Erez Winner, official data from the Israel Police show a wide divergence with OCHA-oPT's claims. According to OCHA, between 2023 and 2026, there were 6,285

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 41-45

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA oPT), “Humanitarian Situation Update #352 | West Bank,” January 7, 2026.

<sup>13</sup> Shabak 2025 Yearly Report [Hebrew].

complaints against Jews, while the Israel Police reported about 500 cases from 2014 to 2024 that merited opening an investigation. In 2025, OCHA-oPT claimed more than 1,800 incidents of settler violence. By contrast, the Israeli Police investigated 967 cases that year and filed 61 indictments.<sup>14</sup>

It should be noted that worldwide, property crime is notoriously under-investigated due to police resources typically being directed to violent crime. According to the FBI, in 2024, the property crime clearance rate across all US agencies was 15.9%.<sup>15</sup>

## But haven't governments sanctioned settlers for violence?

The Biden Administration sanctioned numerous individuals for “violence” in the West Bank, but the sanctions were immediately removed by President Trump. There were clear factual problems with the sanctions, including U.S. citizens being sanctioned by mistake. One of the sanctioned individuals was not even a settler, or accused of violence, but rather of protesting the delivery of aid to Gaza where it is diverted by Hamas. In May 2025, Europe announced sanctions against several right-leaning Israeli groups, but not for violent activity, but rather for building homes in Jewish communities, and lobbying and litigating the government to enforce laws against illegal Arab building. In short, “settler violence” is a label that is being used as a screen for targeting civil society organizations explicitly working through the legal system.

## Does the Israeli government support settler violence?

Criminal and political violence, typically vandalism and property crime, directed at Palestinians by Israeli Jews (not necessarily settlers) in the West Bank does exist. It is wrong and rare. Israel's leaders, and leading rabbis condemn it categorically, in contrast with the Palestinian Authority, which pays pensions to its terrorists.<sup>16</sup>

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14 Colonel (res.) Prof. Gabi Siboni and Brig. Gen. (res.) Erez Winner, “The ‘Settler Violence’ Influence Warfare Campaign,” Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security (JISS), April 15, 2026.

15 US Property Crime Clearance Rate By Crime Type in 2024, Updated on September 21, 2025. <https://www.beautifydata.com/united-states-crimes/fbi-ucr/2024/us-property-crime-clearance-rate-by-crime-type>

16 Or Guetta, “Rabbis and Senior Religious Zionists Against Jewish Terrorism: ‘Silence Is Not Neutrality, It Is Complicity’,” *Davar*, March 30, 2026; Elliott Abrams, “The Palestinian Authority Continues to Teach Hate and to Reward Terror,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 31, 2025.