

International Community Urged to Act Against Israel's Repeated Failure to Stop Settler Attacks on Palestinian Communities

The undersigned members of the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA) urgently call upon the international community to intervene and halt settler attacks targeting Palestinian civilians and protect Palestinian communities near illegal settlements. The International NGO Community urges international actors to hold the Government of Israel accountable for persistently failing to prevent these attacks, forcibly transferring Palestinians, and expropriating large swathes of land in the occupied West Bank.

Israeli settler attacks against Palestinian West Bank villages intensified on Friday, 12th April, and extended into Sunday. Settlers have so far fatally shot two Palestinians, including a child, while [dozens sustained injuries](#) during these assaults. Around [40 per cent](#) of those injured were with live ammunition. Additionally, settlers set ablaze numerous homes and vehicles across the West Bank.

According to media [reports](#), thousands of armed Israeli settlers, escorted by the Israeli military, invaded Palestinian West Bank villages including Al-Maghayer, Khirbet Abu Falah, As-Sawiya, Deir Dibwan, and others in the area north of Ramallah and southeast of Nablus. Israeli forces provided protection to the settlers, barricading village entrances and obstructing Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulances from reaching the wounded. Israeli media [reported](#) that the settlers were retaliating against Palestinian communities following the killing of a 14-year-old Israeli child from the illegal outpost, known as Malachei Hashalom, although the identity of the perpetrator remains unknown.

These reprehensible vigilante attacks targeting entire Palestinian communities demand unequivocal condemnation. The international community must swiftly and decisively pressure the Government of Israel to halt these attacks and urgently de-escalate the situation. Palestinian communities near the settlements are currently [completely vulnerable](#) to such violent attacks. As the Occupying Power, the Government of Israel is obligated to protect the Palestinian population, including ensuring that private property is respected. However, it has permitted these mass vigilante attacks to become commonplace, with similar large-scale settler assaults occurring in [Huwwara](#), [Turmusayya](#), and many other Palestinian communities throughout 2023, often with Israeli perpetrators enjoying near-total impunity.

With international attention centred on Gaza, the Government of Israel has not only allowed settler violence to spiral but also persisted in the expansion of Israeli settlements built on Palestinian land and [unlawfully seized](#) Palestinian territory by designating it as 'state land', blatantly violating international law.

Despite some states imposing sanctions on individual violent Israeli settlers and outposts, these measures have proven insufficient to deter the Government of Israel from transferring its citizens into the occupied Palestinian territory in [violation](#) of international humanitarian law, arming them, [drafting](#)

them into reserves serving in the West Bank, and supporting [settlement expansion](#) through land expropriation and illegal construction in existing settlements. The scale and intensity of settler attacks have only soared. States have an [obligation](#) under international humanitarian law to safeguard compliance with the Geneva Conventions. States have several options at their disposal such as: implementing measures such as restrictions on arms trade.

The UN has [documented](#) over 700 settler attacks since 7th October 2023, with the daily average doubling from two to four in 2024. These figures only include attacks resulting in casualties or property damage and exclude instances of firearm threats, harassment, and intimidation. The UN [estimates](#) that the Israeli military was present or involved in half of the settler attacks over the past year. The Government of Israel has consistently failed to hold settlers and Israeli soldiers accountable for these attacks, with a mere [3 per cent](#) of Israeli investigations into settler violence resulting in full or partial convictions. Moreover, in 2023 alone, over 1,500 Palestinians were forced to flee their homes due to settler violence, and they have been barred from returning since.

AIDA urgently calls on the international community to take decisive action against the Government of Israel for its failure to prevent settler attacks, prosecute violent Israeli settlers, and deter its military forces from joining, participating in and otherwise enabling such assaults. Immediate measures must be implemented to protect Palestinian communities residing near illegal settlements. Additionally, steps must be taken to address the Government of Israel's grave breach of international law by continuing to transfer its population into occupied Palestinian territory.

Furthermore, concerted efforts are needed to tackle the root cause of settler violence by permanently dismantling settlement outposts and ensuring the safe return of displaced Palestinians to their lands. Forcible transfer constitutes a grave breach of international humanitarian law and a war crime. Those involved in designing and implementing such policies would be criminally liable.

AIDA members call on third states to:

1. Require the Government of Israel to immediately prevent, cease and reverse all settlement construction and expansion, including the creation of 'outposts', make guarantees of non-repetition and provide full reparations for any damages caused.
2. Require the Government of Israel to fully prosecute Israeli settlers for instigating and inciting acts of violence and to remove them from occupied territory.
3. Expand measures on individual settlers to include Israeli governmental bodies, officials, settler non-profit organisations and any other entity actively seeking to encourage violations of international humanitarian law, including the settlement expansion, hindrance of the delivery of humanitarian aid and forcible transfer of Palestinians.¹
4. Demand that the Government of Israel immediately reverses the designation of occupied territory as 'state land'.
5. Require the Government of Israel to take all necessary measures to put an end to the highly coercive environment it has created for Palestinians in the West Bank.
6. Require the Government of Israel to facilitate the immediate return of all displaced Palestinian communities.

¹ Such measures should include exemptions for the delivery of humanitarian aid.

7. Actively pursue replacement of the existing discriminatory planning regime imposed by the Israeli Government in Area C (the area fully Israeli-controlled and only contiguous territory in the West Bank) with an [autonomous, rights-based and Palestinian-led construction process](#).

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HEKS/EPER (Swiss Church Aid)
Islamic Relief Worldwide
Mennonite Central Committee
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