



**Six-Month Report on Demolitions and Confiscations of EU funded structures in the West Bank
including East Jerusalem**

September 2017 – February 2018

Summary

During the reporting period destruction and seizure of Palestinian property continued in the occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem.

From September 2017 to February 2018 over 165 Palestinian owned structures were impacted by demolition, seizure, sealing off, or eviction throughout the occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem. Almost 40% of the incidents took place in East Jerusalem. This brings the total number of affected structures in the West Bank including East Jerusalem in 2017 to 423, resulting in the displacement of over 600 Palestinians including 360 children.

Of the structures (such as classrooms and residential structures) targeted over the 6 month reporting period, 22 structures were funded by the EU or EU Member States (EUMS) for a value of nearly 60,920 €. This brings the number of EU funded structures targeted in 2017 to 80, constituting 19% of all Palestinian owned structures targeted by the Israeli Authorities, compared to 17% in 2016.

Of particular concern is the demolition of EU donor funded structures serving as classrooms during the reporting period, as several were also targeted in the last reporting period. Presently, a total of 44 Palestinian schools have been identified as being at risk of full or partial demolition due to outstanding orders, potentially affecting close to 5,000 students. Half of these schools have been provided with some form of assistance from the EU.

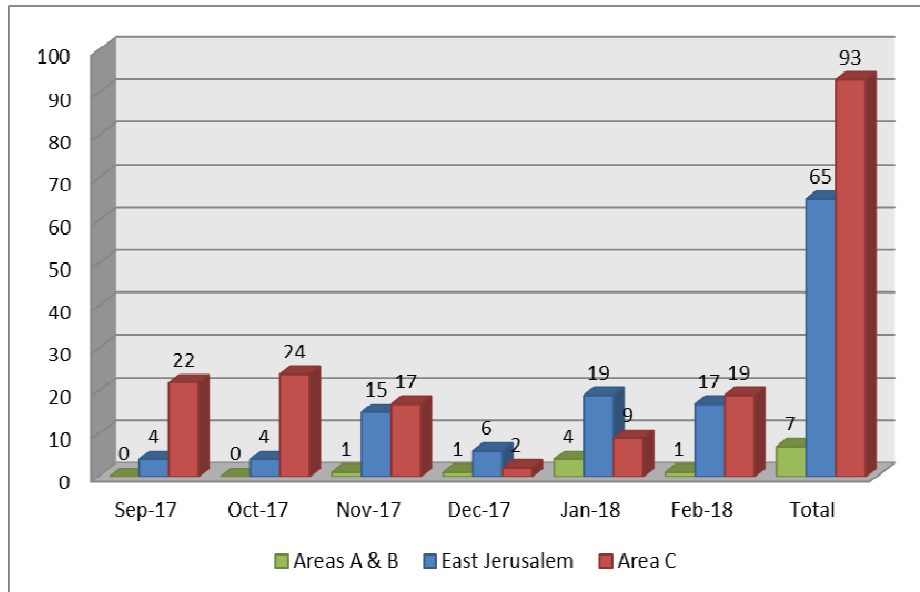
Plans to evict specific communities continued, including communities in the Jordan Valley, Bedouins in Khan al Ahmar, east of Jerusalem, and Susya in the South Hebron Hills.

In general, development in Area C and East Jerusalem is tightly restricted by the Israeli authorities through means such as limiting or refusing permits for construction of buildings and structures.

1. GENERAL DEMOLITION FIGURES

165 structures were targeted throughout the West Bank from September 2017 to February 2018, of these structures were 65 located in East Jerusalem and 93 in area C (see table 1). The demolitions in the reporting period resulted in the displacement of over 200 Palestinians and adversely impacting the livelihoods of a further 2,000 people.

Table 1: Monthly number of structures demolished or seized, September 2017-February 2018



In 2017 a total of 423 structures were targeted representing a 60% decline compared to the 2016 (see annex 1). The overall decline in demolitions in 2017 is seen only in Area C (270), where there has been a sharp decrease in incidents. By contrast, demolitions/evictions in East Jerusalem witnessed a monthly average of 12 structures, almost the same high pace as in 2016, which saw more demolitions than in any other year since 2009.¹ A third of all structures (142) targeted in 2017 were located in East Jerusalem.

An estimated number of 12,500 Palestinian structures in Area C² currently have outstanding demolition orders issued by the Israeli Civil Administration due to lack of required building permits³. These pending demolition orders could be implemented at any moment.

2. DEMOLITION OF EU-FUNDED STRUCTURES AND STRUCTURES FUNDED BY EU MEMBER STATES (EUMS)

During the reporting period, 22 structures⁴ funded by the EU or EUMS with a total value of 60,920 € were destroyed/seized (see table 2).

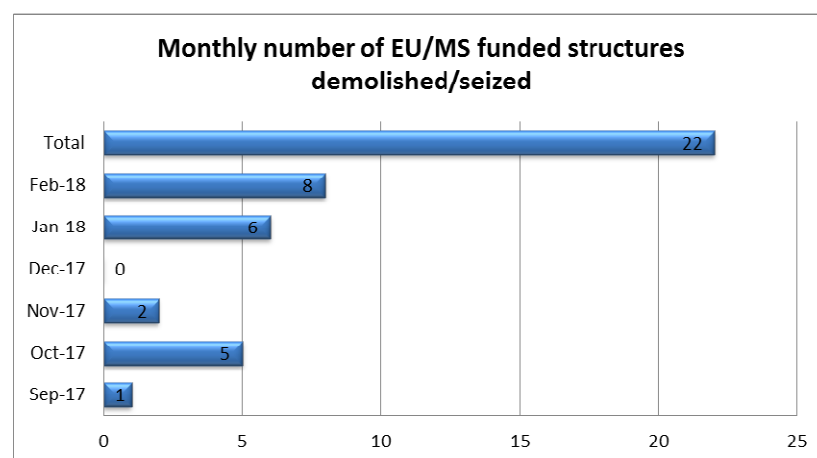
¹ Source: OCHA

² Source: OCHA, Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin, January 2017

³ Building permits are practically impossible to get. For reference, between 2014 to mid-2016, only 1% of the building permits requested by Palestinians in Area C were granted (16 permits granted from 1,253 applications, see also annex 3). Another 3% were approved (37 permits out of 1,253 applications) specifically in 2016 in preparation for transfer of Palestinians to relocation sites advanced by the Israeli authorities. From 2010-2015, only some 8% of all building permits in Jerusalem were given in Palestinian neighborhoods (714 out of 9,106 permits given). Source: Bimkom – planners for planning rights.

⁴ Structures targeted (demolished or seized) were residential structures, schools, animal sheds etc.

Table 2: Monthly number of EU and EU member states (MS) structures demolished/seized



A total of 80 structures funded by EU or its Member States have been demolished or seized in 2017 with material losses valued at 270,000 €. More than 100 EU funded structures worth nearly 900,000 € were also placed under threat of demolition in 2017, despite the reported decrease in demolitions.

Between 2009 (when recording began) and 2017, some 450 EU/EUMS funded structures worth over 1.3 million € have been demolished or seized (see annex 4).⁵

3. TRENDS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN

- A total of 44 Palestinian schools across the West Bank including East Jerusalem have pending "stop work" or demolition orders, which place them at risk of being fully or partially demolished, due to lack of building permits which are near impossible to obtain. Nearly half of the schools identified have been provided with some form of assistance from the EU. The orders prevent both the maintenance and expansion of school infrastructure.⁶ This is of particular concern since every child has the right to access to education and States have an obligation to protect, respect and fulfil this right, by ensuring that schools are inviolable safe spaces for children.
- All structures in the communities of Susya (South Hebron Hills) and Khan al Ahmar (east of Jerusalem) are under imminent threat of demolition. The Israeli authorities have informed the residents of Khan al Ahmar that they plan to evacuate the whole community. For over a decade, the residents of Susya have lived under the threat of demolition and displacement. All attempts to obtain approval for a master plan and building permits have been rejected by the Israeli authorities.
- Communities like Ein el Hilwa, Umm al-Jamal (Jordan Valley) and Jabal al-Baba (east of Jerusalem) were issued a so-called demarcation orders that orders the residents to leave their homes and taking their properties with them. A demarcation order implies that individual demolition orders for each concerned structure are replaced by a single "order" covering the whole community, thereby posing a potentially even bigger risk to the whole community being forced to relocate. This kind of order has not been used previously against

⁵ For the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the financial losses incurred due to demolitions accounts for an average of 1 per cent of its 2014-2017 budgets for humanitarian aid for the West Bank.

⁶ OCHA data.

Palestinian communities. Legal proceedings by the communities challenging this order are still ongoing.

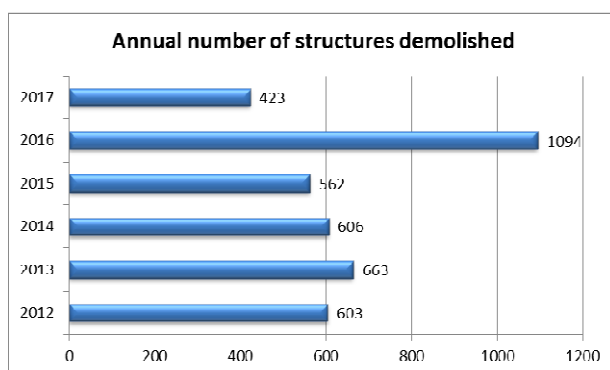
- Several local contractors have had their construction equipment seized while working on humanitarian projects funded by the EU or MS in the occupied West Bank.

4. EU ACTION DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

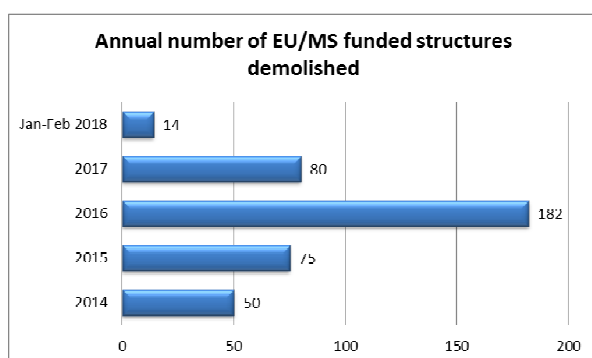
During the reporting period the Office of the EU Representative in Jerusalem, together with the EU Delegation to Israel, met and raised matters of demolition with COGAT. In addition, the following actions took place.

- Donors raised with the Israeli authorities the dismantlement and confiscation of donor-funded humanitarian assistance to the communities of Abu Nuwar and Jubbet Adh-Dhib.
- On 24 November 2017 a local EU statement by EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah on the continuing threat of demolitions and seizures of Palestinian structures in the occupied West Bank was issued.
- On 4 December 2017 EU and EU Members visited Susya community and a local statement calling on Israel to halt plans for forced transfer was issued.
- On 6 February 2018 a local EU statement on the demolition by Israeli authorities of parts of the school of the Bedouin community of Abu Nuwar was issued.

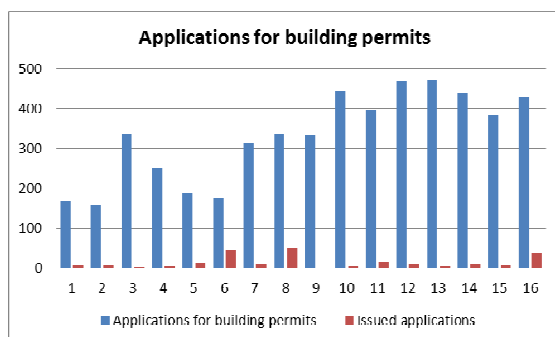
Annex 1: Historical overview: Demolitions in the West bank including East Jerusalem, 2012-2017



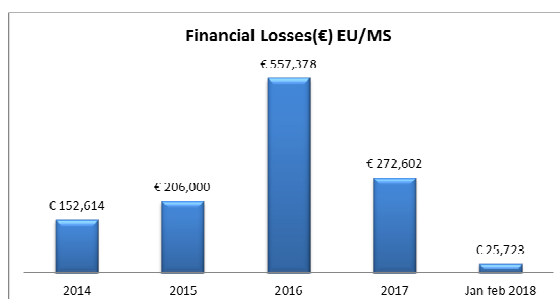
Annex 2: Historical overview: Annual demolitions of EU/MS structures in the West Bank, 2014-2018



Annex 3: Historical overview: Applications for building permits 2001-2016



Annex 4: Historical overview: Financial losses of EU and EU member state 2014-2018



(All information disclosed in this report is susceptible to change at any time depending on new available data)