

## Israel: ICC must investigate forced displacement of Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah and attacks against civilians in Gaza

**The International Criminal Court (ICC) must immediately investigate the forced eviction of Palestinian families and residents in Sheikh Jarrah and other neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, as well as any indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks against civilians in the [Gaza Strip](#), the ICJ said today.**

The investigation must establish whether any serious violation of international humanitarian law, such as indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks against civilians, the forced deportation of Palestinians and the transfer of Israeli settlers into occupied East Jerusalem, as well as the extensive destruction and appropriation of property, have taken place in Sheikh Jarrah and in Gaza.

Following the [opening](#) of an investigation by the ICC Office of the Prosecutor, if warranted, Israeli officials should be prosecuted for such crimes to ensure accountability. As [confirmed](#) by the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I, the Court's territorial jurisdiction "extends to the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, namely Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem."

Evictions against Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah were [ordered](#) by the Jerusalem District Court following legal proceedings initiated by Israeli settlers organizations under [Israeli law](#). The Supreme Court was due to rule on 10 May 2021 on challenges against evictions brought by Palestinian families, yet, it decided to [postpone](#) the hearing at the request of Israel's Attorney-General.

***"Evictions in Sheikh Jarrah are part of a cynical campaign by the Israeli authorities to purge occupied East Jerusalem from its Palestinian civilian population," said Said Benarbia, the ICJ MENA Director.***

The ICC must also ensure accountability for unlawful attacks targeting civilians and civilian objects in connection to the hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza. Since 2007, Israel has imposed a full closure on Gaza, which has resulted in a major humanitarian crisis, and has led to significant escalation of hostilities in 2008-09, 2012 and 2014, where thousands of Palestinians have been killed and injured.

On 10 May 2021, Hamas [started](#) firing rockets against Israel following a crackdown on Palestinian worshippers in the al Aqsa compound in Jerusalem. In response, Israel has carried out multiple airstrikes in Gaza, which have [reportedly](#) caused the death of at least 24 people, including nine children. All parties to the conflict are prohibited from conducting indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks, which may amount to war crimes under the Rome Statute.

***"The ICC must ensure that all those responsible for ordering and carrying out these attacks be held criminally accountable," Benarbia added.***

Since April 2021, Palestinians peacefully demonstrating against the evictions in Sheikh Jarrah, a decades-long legal battle, have been subjected to violence by

Israeli settlers and Israeli security forces. Earlier this year, the Jerusalem District Court ordered that several Palestinian families be evicted from the neighborhood.

According to the [UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), “at least 218 Palestinian households in East Jerusalem, including the families in Sheikh Jarrah, have eviction cases filed against them”, and overall “970 people, including 424 children, [are] at risk of displacement.”

As part of the Israeli crackdown on Palestinians, Israeli security forces have also been firing tear gas and employing other less-lethal weapons against people praying at the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem purportedly in crowd-control operations. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent, [more than 200 demonstrators](#) have been injured as a result of the use of such less-lethal weapons.

Israeli forces have also been [preventing](#) gatherings of Palestinians at Damascus Gate in East Jerusalem during the night hours of the month of Ramadan when many Muslims gather for prayer and breaking of the fast at sunset, and have responded with excessive force to the ensuing demonstrations.

Israel has a duty to respect the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of religion of Palestinians in East Jerusalem. Israel’s use of excessive force against Palestinian demonstrators and the crackdown on Palestinian worshippers violate its obligations under international human rights law

***“Israeli authorities must respect and ensure the right of Palestinians to protest and challenge decades of prolonged unlawful occupation and related abusive practices, and immediately end the use of disproportionate and unlawful force to disperse protesters”, Benarbia said.***

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