

Palestinians defy Israeli repression to save homes

written by Lev Koufax
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On May 7, 80,000 Palestinians congregated at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Old City of Jerusalem to mark the last Friday of Ramadan. Palestinians call the ancient city Al-Quds, the Holy.

The large attendance was in spite of Israeli blockades in the West Bank, which made it impossible for many Palestinians to reach Jerusalem.

After Friday prayers, almost the entire crowd stayed to protest Israeli plans to evict Palestinian families from their homes in the city's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood. Sheikh Jarrah was built in 1954 by Palestinians forced from their homes in western Jerusalem by the Israeli army. Now the Israeli state wants to give these homes to settlers from the United States and Europe.

Without warning, [Israeli troops assaulted Al-Aqsa Mosque](#). Stun grenades, sound bombs, tear gas and rubber-plated metal bullets rained down on the people inside. Videos recorded inside the mosque paint a picture of terror and chaos.

Over 200 people were wounded, and 88 were hospitalized. At least one man lost an eye and several people are in critical condition. Palestinians fought back with bare hands, and a number of border police were also injured.

If only this repression wasn't the norm in occupied Palestine.

The May 7 attack came on the heels of Israeli troops murdering two Palestinians in the West Bank: a 60-year-old woman named Rihab Zaoul in Bethlehem and a 16-year-old boy named Said Odeh in Huwara.

Odeh was shot twice in the back during a raid by the Israeli "Defense" Forces on his village. His murder is evoking comparisons to those of Michael Brown and Adam Toledo in the U.S. The "deadly exchange" of training [between the IDF and U.S. police departments](#) is well-documented.

Racist mob attacks

Israeli attacks on Palestinians have been a constant during this year's observance of Ramadan.

On the night of April 23, a mob of white-shirted Western settlers invaded the Old City, chanting "Death to Arabs" and "We'll burn your village down!" Gangs of white shirts attacked Palestinian families breaking their daytime fast. Youth who mobilized to defend their community were attacked, shot at and gassed by the IDF.

Settler gangs have also invaded Sheikh Jarrah to harass and intimidate the families resisting eviction. These families report being [censored by Instagram](#) when they attempt to post about the attacks.

However, across Palestine people have risen up in solidarity with Jerusalem. In the West Bank, Palestinian land defenders clashed with settlers and occupying troops. On May 8, thousands of Palestinians living inside Israel's 1948 borders broke through an Israeli blockade to come to Al-Aqsa.

As this article is written, the fascist, Zionist forces continue their attacks on Al-Quds, while the Israeli government quibbles over which racist to appoint prime minister. Even the European Union has condemned Israeli advances into Arab East Jerusalem.

Joe Biden's State Department has called for "deescalation." But Washington continues to pour in weapons and billions of dollars to the racist Israeli regime. It is this massive financial and military support that makes Israel's crimes possible.

The [European Union's condemnation](#) of Israel's actions, along with Human Rights Watch and the U.N., is a significant development. Historically, both the EU and HRW turned a blind eye to Israel's apartheid regime. There is no doubt that the strength of the Palestinian mass movement, along with international solidarity, have pushed

these historically pro-Zionist institutions to criticize the racist Israeli state.

Mainstream Western media has been mostly silent about the events now playing out in Jerusalem. But that won't stop the Palestinian struggle for independence and the right to return.

Across the U.S. and the world, people are demonstrating in support of Palestine even as these events are unfolding. More protests will take place on May 15, the 73rd anniversary of Al-Nakba (the Catastrophe), the 1948 exile and dispossession of the Palestinian people from their land. The [Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network](#) and other organizations have named May 15-22 a week of international action in support of Palestine.

The global working class must support Palestinian liberation in any way it can. We must shine a light on Israel for what it is: an apartheid settler state built on stolen land. We must demand an end to all U.S. military and financial aid to the racist settler state that illegally occupies Palestine.

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