

Is Palestine on the brink of a full-scale revolt?

written by Ali Abunimah and Maureen Clare Murphy

October 16, 2022



Palestinian mourners carry the body of Abdallah Abu al-Teen during the slain doctor's funeral in Jenin refugee camp on 14 October.

Events in the occupied West Bank over the past week indicate that the Palestinian liberation struggle, and Israel's efforts to repress it with brutal violence, have entered a new phase.

In this looming scenario, the formerly extremist fringe settlers see themselves represented at the top levels of Israeli government, emboldened and beyond the restraint of the army.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority is proving increasingly ineffective at quelling armed resistance and teetering on what some Israeli analysts fear is the verge of collapse.

The PA exists to serve as an enforcement arm of the Israeli occupation and its presence would not be missed by many Palestinians except for those who are currently on its payroll.

But in a situation of complete Israeli impunity, and only empty gestures by international parties towards a nonexistent peace process, the grim statistic of more than 100 Palestinians killed in the West Bank so far this year foretells the even worse violence likely to come.

Six Palestinian boys have been killed by Israeli forces since the beginning of October.

Fayez Damdoum, 17

Mahdi Ladaawa, 17

Adel Daud, 14

Mahmoud Sous, 17

Mahmoud Samoudi, 12

Osama Adawi, 17

Israeli forces must be held accountable for targeting Palestinian children.
pic.twitter.com/BlM4XkG7EI

— Defense for Children (@DCIPalestine) October 14, 2022

Despite the Israeli brutality - indeed, because of it - Palestinians have risen up in defense of their existence on their land, with as much fearlessness and determination as every previous generation.

Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem have been transformed into battlegrounds this week, with residents burning tires and dumpsters, throwing firecrackers at raiding Israeli forces and even lighting police vehicles on fire:

تغطية صحفية: "الأخير من هبة أيار 2021.. مواجهات غير مسبوقة اشتعلت في القدس ونابلس" ..
pic.twitter.com/g0LBhWBuPw

— شبكة قدس الإخبارية (@qudsn) October 13, 2022

ניידת משטרת עלתה באש בסילוואן כתוצאה מירי זיקוקים / בקטב
pic.twitter.com/MpZNZQVx8c

— Yael Freidson (@YaelFreidson) October 12, 2022

Israeli settlers, some of them armed, streamed into Sheikh Jarrah, an East Jerusalem neighborhood they seek to take over, on Thursday night and attacked Palestinian residents and their property.

فديو يوثق اعتداء مستوطنين على منازل الأهالي في حي الشيخ جراح بالقدس المحتلة مساء اليوم
pic.twitter.com/zYfEE20iCF

— القسطل الإخباري (@AlQastalps) [October 13, 2022](#)

In this video, Jawad Burqan, a resident of Sheikh Jarrah, describes how people in the neighborhood, including members of his family, are constantly harassed by settlers who invade the neighborhood and indiscriminately fire weapons:

المقدسي جواد برقان من حي الشيخ جراح يروي لـ القسطل ما الذي يجري في هذه الأثناء بالحي
pic.twitter.com/Y72ww8IBbj

— القسطل الإخباري (@AlQastalps) [October 13, 2022](#)

Many of those who were subject to last night's violent harassment, assault, + vandalism are Palestinian families under looming threat of displacement via eviction lawsuits filed by state-backed settlers bent on seizing Palestinian homes in [#SheikhJarrah](#) for Jewish settlement. <https://t.co/6EOzBo2bCY>

— Ir Amim English (@IrAmimAlerts) [October 14, 2022](#)

The settlers were apparently led by Israeli lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir, who brandished a pistol and told the vigilantes that if Palestinians “throw stones, shoot them.”

Israeli parliamentarian Ben Gvir flashing a weapon at Palestinians. He will soon head the third largest party in Israel. He calls for the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and who says his “hero” is a man who massacred 26 Palestinians as

they were praying in a mosque. <https://t.co/ahozg2XN7c>

— Diana Buttu (@dianabuttu) [October 13, 2022](#)

A tweet from Kahanist Member of Knesset, a man who openly praises Jewish mass murders such as Baruch Goldstein, and a very popular politician among israel's Religious Zionist society... pic.twitter.com/2lB481u4PM

— Jalal (@JalalAK_jojo) [October 14, 2022](#)

Ben-Gvir, an ally of former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu (who seeks to make a comeback in next month's Israeli election), once [proclaimed Baruch Goldstein as his hero](#).

Goldstein was a Jewish settler from Brooklyn who [shot to death 29 Palestinian men and boys](#) as they prayed at Hebron's Ibrahimī mosque during Ramadan in 1994.

After that massacre, Israeli forces partitioned the holy site and shuttered the formerly bustling adjacent Old City.



Israeli occupation forces deploy in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah during a solidarity rally on 14 October.

Palestinians fear that without determined resistance, Israel will seize any opportunity to impose similar measures at al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, where tensions are rising due to provocative, record-breaking visits by Jewish extremists who seek to change the status quo at the holy site during the Jewish holidays.

Violence in Jerusalem this week must be understood as part of Israel's wider efforts to erase Palestinian life from the city.

After the settler mob dispersed from Sheikh Jarrah on Thursday, Israeli police fired water smelling of sewage on Palestinian homes in the neighborhood:

الاحتلال يستعين بمركبة المياه العادمة لرش منازل وممتلكات الأهالي في حي الشيخ جراح بالقدس
pic.twitter.com/5TFQbtQ6ma

— القسطل الإخباري (@AlQastalps) [October 13, 2022](#)

The area stinks.

Yesterday, a mob of stone-throwing settlers attacked Palestinian homes and property in Sheikh Jarrah. Israeli forces present did not obstruct the rampaging settler mob.

After the attack ended, Israeli forces deployed the skunk truck, sprayed Palestinian homes. pic.twitter.com/AuxcXmd35J

— Jalal (@JalalAK_jojo) [October 14, 2022](#)

Settlers meanwhile attacked Palestinians in Huwwara, a town near Nablus in the northern West Bank, on Friday for a second consecutive day:

□ *In Huwwara right now: Israeli settlers and soldiers are continuing the attack on the town for the second day in a row. the mosques are calling over the loudspeakers for people to come protect the businesses and homes on the main road from the settlers.*

— Yumna (@yumna_patel) [October 14, 2022](#)

Notice the army is not using its weapons or force to stop the masked gangs of settlers attacking Palestinians & their property. Instead, the soldiers are working

in tandem w/ the settlers, their guns pointed towards the Palestinians, ensuring they do not dare to defend themselves <https://t.co/1KpVW7E7Dd>

— Yumna (@yumna_patel) [October 13, 2022](#)

Haaretz, a Tel Aviv newspaper, [reported](#) that settlers attacked Palestinian shopkeepers and threw stones at homes in Huwwara.

“The Israeli army later arrived and shot two Palestinians, who are being treated for their wounds,” Haaretz added, citing the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

Video shows settlers attacking businesses in Huwwara under the protection of Israeli soldiers on Thursday:

Watch: Israeli settlers, backed by the army, attack Palestinians in Hawara #westbank pic.twitter.com/2Rj9I5a8Bk

— Oren Ziv (@OrenZiv_) [October 13, 2022](#)

مشاهد من هجوم مستوطنين على محلات تجارية في حواره جنوب نابلس، وجنود الاحتلال يعتدون على الفلسطينيين الذين حاولوا التصدي لهم. pic.twitter.com/3bMPtjNoDZ

— شبكة قدس الإخبارية (@qudsn) [October 13, 2022](#)

The surge in confrontations across the West Bank this week was precipitated by Israel’s closure of Shuafat refugee camp, as well as the nearby East Jerusalem neighborhoods of Dahiyat al-Salam, Ras Shahda, Ras Khamis and Anata, since Saturday night.

Already surrounded by Israel's wall and cut off from the rest of the city, the neighborhoods were under a state of siege for several days following the fatal shooting of a soldier at Shuafat checkpoint late Saturday.

Israel was purportedly looking for the suspected shooter, a 21-year-old resident of Shuafat refugee camp.

On Tuesday, Palestinians in the camp announced a general strike and a campaign of civil disobedience in protest of the severe Israeli restrictions, which prevented residents from accessing work, healthcare and schools and bringing life to a standstill.

Adalah, a Palestinian human rights group, [said](#) that the “sweeping collective punishment including power cuts, spraying of foul-smelling ‘skunk’ water, and firing of tear gas in densely populated civilian areas” was in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The closure violated “the freedom of movement of some 130,000 Palestinian residents,” Adalah added.

[Israel issued instructions to ease those measures](#) on Thursday in an effort to defuse the situation and on Friday, Palestinians in the camp reportedly [announced the suspension](#) of the civil disobedience campaign.

But by Friday night, it seemed that the severe movement restrictions had been reimposed:

قوات الاحتلال تغلق حاجز مخيم شعفاط بالقدس pic.twitter.com/muyzEQs1zb

— القسطل الإخباري (@AlQastalps) [October 14, 2022](#)

For all the upheaval caused, Israeli forces still haven't managed to capture Palestinians wanted for shooting and killing soldiers in two separate instances in [Jerusalem](#) and [Nablus](#), which was also subjected to closure, since Saturday.

It would seem that Israel has all but lost control of both cities as a whole, in addition to Jenin, where occupation forces shot and killed two Palestinians on Friday.

Both Nablus and Jenin have re-emerged as centers of armed resistance to the Israeli military occupation. In recent months, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have [stepped up their attacks](#) in these areas amid concerns among Israeli leaders that they are slipping out of the occupation's grip.

For Israel, the nightmare scenario - one that appears to be becoming reality - is that the Palestinian Authority collapses or ceases to function as an auxiliary police force.

In that case, Israeli forces would have to be deployed directly in major Palestinian population centers, as they were during the first intifada prior to the signing of the 1993 Oslo accords which created the PA.



Palestinian Authority security forces fire crowd control weapons as Hamas supporters hold a demonstration in the West Bank city of Hebron on 14 October.

If that were to happen, the confrontations in East Jerusalem would be just a tiny taste of what would likely be a full-scale Palestinian revolt across the West Bank.

The level of violence and brutality that Israel would have to deploy in an effort to crush such a revolt is unthinkable. And if sustained, it could be even more costly to Israel in terms of international support than its regular spasms of killing in Gaza.

And as was [seen in May 2021](#), the confrontations would not necessarily be contained to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

At least one Israeli commentator for the influential newspaper *Haaretz* [expressed fear](#) that the current unrest in Nablus, Jenin and East Jerusalem “will slither across the Green Line again, including possible clashes in the mixed (Jewish-Arab) cities.”

[Another writer](#) for the same publication likened it to “the terrible feeling of a car hurling down the slope toward an abyss,” offering only prayer as a prescription because ending the structural causes of violence, principally Israel’s supremacist settler-colony regime, is beyond imagination.

For these writers, the fear is that Jewish Israeli communities might be affected by the violence that Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line are subjected to on a daily basis.



Israeli occupation forces take position during confrontations with Palestinians in the West Bank city of Hebron on 14 October.

Jenin has endured almost daily raids after a string of deadly attacks in Israel by Palestinians from the area in March.

Around 40 Palestinians in the Jenin area have been killed so far this year.

One of those killed during an Israeli raid in Jenin on Friday was Abdallah Abu al-Teen, a 43-year-old doctor. The Palestinian Authority health ministry [said](#) that Abu al-Teen was shot in the head by soldiers in front of a government hospital in the northern West Bank city.

Israeli authorities [suggested](#) that Abu al-Teen may have been killed by armed Palestinians and then claimed that the doctor was engaged in a firefight with soldiers when he was killed.

The shifting narrative is similar to that [proffered by Israel](#) in the hours and days after Shireen Abu Akleh was killed in the same city.

[Several investigations](#) in the months following Abu Akleh's death found that the Al Jazeera journalist was shot by Israeli troops when there were no armed Palestinians present or confrontations occurring.

The research group Forensic Architecture and Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq [stated last month](#) that their investigation, which involved spatial imaging and reconstructions of the incident, shows that Abu Akleh and her colleagues were deliberately targeted. No Israeli soldier has been held criminally liable for her death.

Israeli forces in [#Jenin](#) refugee camp this morning. At least one arrested and several injured, including 2 [#paramedics](#) - who have been trying to reach a man bleeding in one of the alleys of the camp for about 40mins, but being shot at,

every attempt. pic.twitter.com/v6xC0xexgm

— Fatima AbdulKarim (@FatiabdulFatima) [October 14, 2022](#)

The other Palestinian killed in Jenin on Friday was identified as Mateen Dabaya, in his twenties. Al Jazeera, citing the Palestinian health ministry, [reported](#) that Dabaya was shot with a bullet to the head.

Also on Friday, a third Palestinian from Jenin, 17-year-old Muhammad Maher Ghawadreh, died in Israeli detention from injuries sustained last month:

عاجل مكتب إعلام الأسرى: استشهاد الأسير #محمد_ Maher_ تركمان في سجون الاحتلال الإسرائيلي متأثرا بحروق أصيب بها قبل شهر pic.twitter.com/2LWZCkIgBR

— (الجزيرة مباشر) (@ajmubasher) [October 14, 2022](#)

Ghawadreh was being detained at an Israeli hospital while being treated for injuries sustained while he allegedly carried out a shooting attack on a bus carrying Israeli soldiers in the West Bank's Jordan Valley in early September.

Seven were injured in the attack that Israeli authorities [said](#) was carried out by two others in addition to Ghawadreh, all members of the same family.

Maher Ghawadreh, Muhammad's father, was present with the father of [Raed and Abdalrahman Khazem](#) at the funeral of Mateen Dabaya in Jenin on Friday:

https://twitter.com/Alaqsavoice_Brk/status/1580879545175244800

تغطية صحفية: "المطارد ماهر تركمان (غواردة) يظهر بدون لثام ومسلحًا في جنازة الشهيد متين ضباعاً، حيث [استشهد صباح اليوم نجله الأسير محمد ويتممه الاحتلال بتنفيذ عملية الأغوار مع نجله](#)

pic.twitter.com/bYAQt16PAx

— بدون رقابة (@bedounraqabah) [October 14, 2022](https://twitter.com/bedounraqabah/status/1513800000000000000)

The elder Ghawadreh, remarkably seen openly and armed in public on Friday, is also wanted by Israel for allegedly carrying out the shooting attack in the Jordan Valley in September.

Israeli raids and Palestinian resistance were ongoing in various points across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, late Friday.

Palestinian gunmen [reportedly opened fire](#) at Beit El settlement, near the West Bank city of Ramallah, on Friday, lightly injuring an Israeli man.

Israeli media reported that an alleged Palestinian assailant was shot and killed by troops as he attempted to flee.

Meanwhile, video showed Israeli police beating and detaining Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah as confrontations were ongoing in East Jerusalem:

قوات الاحتلال تعتدى على الأهالي في حي الشيخ جراح بالقدس وتعتقل شاباً

pic.twitter.com/KUq0FIFA6Y

— القدس الإخباري (@AlQastalps) [October 14, 2022](https://twitter.com/AlQastalps/status/1513800000000000000)

The siege on Shuafat this week united Palestinians across East Jerusalem, where long-simmering frustration was already high due to a daily atmosphere of repression as Israel seeks to crush Palestinian life in the city.

Earlier this year, history-making masses of Palestinians accompanied journalist

Shireen Abu Akleh's coffin during her funeral procession after she was shot and killed by Israeli forces in Jenin refugee camp during May.

Sheikh Jarrah resident and writer Muhammad El-Kurd [described](#) the huge mobilization for Abu Akleh's funeral, despite Israel's restrictions on public gathering, "a reclamation of public space" in the city.

The events in Jerusalem this week will likely be remembered as something similar.

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Source: [Electronic Intifada](#)

