# Palestine Incident Report

July - September, 2018

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Introduction

Christian Peacemaker Teams Palestine is a faith-based human rights organization that supports Palestinian-led, non-violent, grassroots resistance to the Israeli occupation and the unjust structures that uphold it. By working with local Palestinian and Israeli peacemakers and educating people in our home communities, we strive to help create a space for justice and peace.

The CPT Palestine program monitors the human rights violations that occur on a daily basis in the Israeli occupied Old City of Al-Khalil/Hebron and in the villages of the South Hebron Hills. This document includes incidents from the third quarter of 2018, from July to September, that were witnessed by CPT or given as first-hand testimony. The report is divided into the following subsections: children under occupation, adults under occupation, checkpoint activity, settler violence, use of force, and human rights monitors.

We recognize that CPT cannot be present for all incidents that occur on the ground, and this report details only a small sample of violations committed by the Israeli occupying forces and illegal Israeli settlers against the Palestinian community. Our limitations are as follows:

1. Incidents occur across an area of several kilometers and at any time of day; our limited human resources prevent us from being physically present at all of them.

2. Israeli occupying forces maintain hundreds of obstacles and checkpoints throughout the Old City that can slow or completely prevent access to areas where incidents occur.

3. The Palestinian community does not notify CPT of incidents for fear of repercussions by settlers or Israeli forces, or because incidents happen so frequently.

In addition, between July and September CPT was unable to staff a team for two periods, totalling 39 days, which resulted in minimal presence on the ground and greater inability to monitor and report incidents. This staffing crisis is due to an increased crackdown by Israeli immigration authorities who, within a period of six weeks, denied entry into Israel to five CPT members because of their involvement with CPT. While this report shares the incidents that CPT was able
to monitor, our findings are significantly diminished as a result.

CPT documentation adheres to International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law whereby the presence of Israeli settlements within the West Bank is illegal according to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. We consider the rights of the child as applicable to all children under the age of 18. By contrast, Israeli occupying forces prosecute Palestinian children as adults from the age of 12 under military law, but prosecute Israeli settler children under 18 under Israeli civilian law.

**Definitions and key terms**

Al-Khalil has been divided into two areas as detailed in the [Hebron Protocol (1997)](#).  

**H1:** Under Palestinian Authority control.  

**H2:** Under complete Israeli military control, housing 20% of the Palestinian population as well as five illegal Israeli settlements.

The *Nahal Brigade* of the Israeli military was stationed in al-Khalil during the reporting period. The *Israeli Border Police* are a fixed presence in al-Khalil. Israeli Border Police are stationed at the fortified checkpoints that enclose H2, and often work in coordination with the military.

CPT defines *detention* as any or all of the following three circumstances:

1. A delay for more than 20 minutes for an adult or five minutes for a child.
2. When a person is moved without their consent to a military base.
3. Search, questioning, or physical restriction (eg. with a blindfold or zip ties).

An *arrest* is defined as an incident in which the detainee is moved and taken into custody at an Israeli police station.

CPT rejects the Israeli paradigm of security and anti-terrorism and thus we do not use the term Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), but rather *Israeli Military Forces* or *Israeli Occupation Forces* (IOF).
Children Under Occupation

The occupation directly affects the lives of children in al-Khalil as they face daily challenges to healthy child development. Alongside adults, they endure constant violations of their human rights, including physical, verbal, and emotional abuse which contribute to long-lasting psychological trauma.

Many of these traumatic incidents of human rights violations happen at the checkpoints that children must pass through on their way to and from school. CPT records these incidents in the bi-annual School Semester Reports; the latest data can be found in the semester report from January to May 2018 which details the effects on the right to education under occupation.

Child Detainment and Arrest

CPT has witnessed and documented countless cases of child detentions and arrests. It is not uncommon for Israeli forces to arrest children even under the age
of 12. In the majority of these cases, children are not accompanied by an adult or allowed the representation of a lawyer. Often, their parents are not even informed of the arrest.

**Statistics by Military Court Watch**

- **273 Palestinian children are in Israeli military detention as of 30 June 2018.**
- **268 out of those 273 are boys.**
- **The monthly average of children in Israeli ‘administrative detention’ (detention without trial or charge) in 2018 is 3.2.**
- **Approximately 54% of Palestinian child detainees are held in prisons outside the West Bank, within Israel, in breach of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.**
- **The conviction rate in this military court system is over 99%.**
1 July 2018: CPTers were called to Shuhada Street because soldiers were invading the Qurtuba School area. The soldiers were searching for a boy who had allegedly thrown marbles from a rooftop at soldiers passing by, and injured one of the soldiers in the leg. In a similar incident the previous day, soldiers claimed that a boy was throwing marbles from the roof of a Palestinian home opposite Beit Hadassah. But when the soldiers invaded the roof, they found Israeli settler children throwing marbles up at the house, which were then bouncing back towards Beit Hadassah.

Despite this incident the previous day, soldiers forcibly removed a 14-year-old Palestinian boy from his home. The commander took him up the Qurtuba stairs, isolating and intimidating him for about 10 minutes. Later, he took the boy back into his house while another two soldiers prevented anyone from entering the house, including his younger sister who had a video camera. An hour later, the soldier came downstairs with the boy and placed him under arrest, putting him in the military vehicle and taking him to the police station. He was released 1.5 hours later after his father paid bail.
**Child Injury**

**10 September 2018:** At 12:30 CPTers witnessed a teenage boy being followed by an Israeli soldier as he exited Salaymeh checkpoint. When the soldier reached the boy, he physically assaulted him, hitting him in the head and attempting to kick him. CPTers asked the soldiers the reason for the aggression and they responded that this boy had thrown stones. CPTers affirm that this particular boy was not part of the group of children who had been throwing stones at the checkpoint.

**Adults Under Occupation**

The systematic denial of human rights observers into Israel significantly decreased the ability of CPT monitors to witness and document human rights abuses from July to September 2018. This has impacted the numbers of incidents that CPT Palestine is able to report. The statistics given below represent only those human rights violations that were witnessed first hand by CPT members or shared by local partners. The reported violations were committed by the Israeli military and border police during their interactions with Palestinian adults.

<table>
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<th>Observed Human Rights Abuses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male ID checks: 93</td>
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<td>Male body searches: 43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female ID checks: 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female bag searches: 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult detentions: 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult arrests: 1</td>
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<td>Adults killed: 1</td>
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Adult ID Checks and Body Searches

6 July 2018: At the Ibrahimi Mosque Checkpoint, during a period of ten minutes, CPTers witnessed six men asked for their ID cards, submitted to body searches, and required to lift their shirts and trousers by Israeli border police.

17 August 2018: At the Ibrahimi Mosque checkpoint during the Friday Noon Prayer, 21 male adults had their IDs checked and were body searched, and one also had also his bag searched by border police. Five men were delayed for over ten minutes and four were denied entrance to the Mosque.

6 September 2018: Five border police blocked street passage between Qitoun checkpoint/209 and Tarek Bin Ziad, including access to a medical center. Two male pedestrians were stopped by the police, forced to present ID, and body checked. 19 vehicles were stopped and a total of 36 ID checks were performed on males only. One truck had its interior searched. Border police left 45 minutes later via Qitoun checkpoint/209.

Adult Detainment

25 August 2018: A CPT partner reported to CPT that he had been stopped at the Mosque checkpoint, body searched, and ID checked. He was held for two hours and his B'Tselem map and another map were confiscated.

Adult Death

3 September 2018: CPT was notified by partners that a 27-year-old man, Wael al-Jabari, had been shot dead by Israeli soldiers near the checkpoint at Kiryat Arba for allegedly wielding a knife.

Checkpoint Activity

The Old City of al-Khalil within the H2 area has effectively been cordoned off by 20 permanent armed and fortified checkpoints, creating an apartheid system of movement. Checkpoints, blockades, fences, military watchtowers, and gates in the Old City restrict Palestinians’ access and movement to work, school, place of worship, medical care, and daily activities. Meanwhile, illegal Israeli settlers can
move freely, and are heavily guarded by Israeli forces (see Visualizing Palestine’s illustrated map of segregation and a recent report from United Nations OCHA on the impact of settlements within al-Khalil).

The following incidents are an example of the obstacles people face when passing through checkpoints in al-Khalil. Please note that other examples of the daily restrictions and humiliations against Palestinians can be found in our Semester School Report and that these examples are only a fraction of routine daily restrictions.

**Delays**

22 July 2018: During CPT monitoring of Friday Noon Prayer at Abed’s checkpoint, there were nine ID checks. Six men were body searched: four of those were detained for 20 minutes, and another was refused passage through the checkpoint. One woman was also ID checked, and her bag searched.

3 September 2018: CPTers witnessed three border police at the Mosque checkpoint engage in an apparent training exercise, which included an ID check of a young man, and which delayed all access to the checkpoint for 10 minutes. As two border police held their guns raised, a third entered into the entrance side of the checkpoint and stood by the metal detector. The other two appeared to be giving him instructions and he emptied his pockets and placed a piece of paper on the table. He then walked around the exit side and selected a young man from the queue and made him show his ID. After a few minutes, 10 people who were waiting were allowed through.
**Checkpoint Closure**

9 August 2018: At 10:00 the Ibrahimi Mosque checkpoint was closed. Announcements had been made on the radio the next morning that the closure was due to a Jewish holiday, and that the Mosque itself had been closed entirely to everybody except Israeli Jews. Additionally, the call to prayer from Ibrahimi Mosque was prohibited during that time. The closure of this checkpoint caused several shops closest to it to close earlier than expected.

**Settler Violence**

Israeli settlements are a direct violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which states that it is illegal for an occupying power to “deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.” Israeli settlements also breach Article 55 of the Hague Regulations, which states that the occupying power is responsible for safeguarding occupied properties and maintain the status quo.
The city of al-Khalil has been occupied by five illegal Israeli settlements directly within the Old City, as well as the neighboring settlement of Kiryat Arba, one of the largest settlements in the West Bank. Al-Khalil is often referred to as a ‘microcosm of the occupation’ because it is the only place in Palestine with such close proximity of illegal Israeli settlers to Palestinian neighborhoods and communities.

Because these illegal Israeli settlements are located within and among Palestinian neighborhoods, settler harassment and attacks are commonplace.

One such settlement sits immediately above the Old City souq (Palestinian market). To prevent settlers from throwing rocks and rubbish down onto shops and people below, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee installed wire meshing—but this does not prevent excrement, chemicals, eggs, or some stones from passing through.

Since the early 2000s, illegal Israeli settlers have invaded the souq every Saturday, and during Jewish religious holidays, accompanied by a large group of Israeli forces. During this incursion, Palestinian movement is severely restricted in order to facilitate settler movement. At times, soldiers will invade Palestinian family homes’ roofs to station themselves during this intrusion into the Palestinian market.

**7 July 2018:** CPT visited Miriam (real name withheld for privacy) in Tel Rumeida, who recounted a settler attack against her family. Her brother was jogging when six settlers physically attacked him. Some community members came out to the street to support him and settlers attacked them as well. When Miriam heard her brother yelling, she got her phone and went outside to start filming. She said the settlers had pepper spray and were spraying it at Palestinians.

At some point, a female settler attacked Miriam, but her brother-in-law came to help her without hurting the settler. The settlers then started attacking him as well. The security guard of the settlement hit her and took off her hijab. During this event, soldiers were trying to de-escalate the situation but the settlers laughed at them.

At some point the police came and told the Palestinians to go home. Miriam noted that the Israeli security cameras had been turned off during the incident. Her brother was arrested, registered at the police station, and released under
a 500 shekel bail. Miriam was also at the police station from 22:00 to 03:00 to report the incident and the fact the security cameras were off. Miriam stated that this is not the first time she’s been attacked. Her entire family is constantly attacked by settlers.

23 September 2018: CPT was notified by International Solidarity Movement volunteers that a settler deliberately hit a child with his car close to Shuhada checkpoint/56, causing bruising to his hip. Soldiers were present but did nothing to help.
Use of Force

The Palestinian civil population in al-Khalil is subject to a variety of weapons used against them regularly by the Israeli occupying forces and border police. This excessive use of force against a civilian population includes tear gas, sound grenades, skunk water, rubber coated steel bullets, and live ammunition. The use of these weapons is particularly common at checkpoints within the H2 area, but also occurs in the H1 area, despite the latter officially being under full Palestinian control.

3 September 2018: Palestinian community members gathered in an area where a man had been murdered by the Israeli forces. There were 12 soldiers stopping cars and preventing pedestrian movement in the area. Press were filming and a group of six soldiers demanded that they move back, and threw sound grenades at them. Five sound grenades were thrown in 25 minutes - three directly at press and two at young Palestinian men. Then one tear gas cylinder was thrown at a house where Palestinians were on a rooftop, another one directly at the press, and a third one as the soldiers left the area and moved further down the street.
5 September 2018: Two military vehicles entered the road by the UNRWA school from Tareq Bin Ziad and threw two sound grenades at children leaving school.

Deployment of weapons
The following numbers are a result of direct monitoring of CPT field workers during 10 different incidents, and thus only represent a fraction of the overall use of force by Israeli forces in al-Khalil. Due to the denial of entry of five CPT members CPT has not been able to monitor the twice daily use of force at Salaymeh checkpoint/29 or at demonstrations on Friday afternoons.

- Sound grenades: 59
- Tear gas canisters: 58
- Rubber coated steel bullets: 2
- Live ammunition: 1
- Skunk water: 0

Human Rights Monitors

Human Rights monitors are also targeted by the Israeli military and settlers. This may take the form of verbal abuse, intimidation, denial of entry through checkpoints, denial of entry at the border, physical pushing by soldiers, photographing of passports and visas, detention, threat of arrest, and threat of physical violence by settlers. CPT acknowledges that the risks are not as high for them as they are for Palestinians, but they do exist.
A CPTer talks with armed Israeli soldiers that went on the roof of the CPT Palestine office seeking to arrest a child for allegedly throwing rice.

Below are some of the main incidents that occurred to CPT monitors:

6 July 2018: While monitoring the Mosque checkpoint, a CPTer was told to delete photos taken during the last 15 minutes, which included the documentation of body searches of Palestinians going to prayer.

24 August 2018: CPTers were monitoring the use of force against young Palestinian men by Israeli border police and soldiers in the Bab iZaweyeh area when they were approached by a member of the Palestinian Authority who spoke in Arabic and told them to move. The man identified himself as Palestinian police and insisted that they continue to walk together all the way down to the Old City and then into the CPT office. A Palestinian friend of CPT asked the policeman why he had done this and he replied that they had heard the Israeli military threatening to shoot at a CPTer and that the soldier’s gun laser was pointed at their head.

30 August 2018: After 20 minutes of standing by Saraya checkpoint, out of view of the border police, CPT was told they were not allowed to stand there accord-
ing to the law. CPT was told they had to move.

**9 September 2018:** A middle-aged male settler with an elderly female settler stopped their car where CPT was monitoring Qitoun checkpoint/209. They engaged CPT in conversation and became verbally abusive, accusing them of supporting terrorism and being anti-semitic. The settlers left after CPT walked some distance away from the road.

**13 September 2018:** Border police were violently arresting three boys, and CPT tried to intervene by asking them to let them go and videoing the incident. One border police tried to snatch a CPTer’s phone and then pushed her with his body. After the boys had been taken through the checkpoint, three border police returned to speak to CPT and demanded their passports and photographed them. One of the border police was using his own camera to photograph the CPTers. CPT were told that they had interfered with military business and next time they would be arrested.

**Conclusion**

As a result of the above compilation of incidents within the third quarter of 2018, CPT concludes that the Israeli occupation in al-Khalil continuously violates the human rights of Palestinian adults and children, and negatively affects the quality of life for Palestinians living under constant restriction of movement and threats of physical and psychological abuse, injury, and death.

CPT’s documentation of ID checks, body searches, and detainment illustrate the arbitrary nature of the Israeli forces’ abuse of power to intimidate and subjugate the Palestinian community, effectively eliminating any safe space for Palestinians to exist. They are subject to Israeli search and detention at the permanent checkpoints, as well as fly-in checkpoints across the city, arbitrary patrols, and random house raids. Any of these encounters has the potential to result in arrest, injury, or death. This constant risk severely affects Palestinians’ mental health and psychological wellbeing while living under occupation.

The permanent checkpoints disrupt movement on a daily basis and are in direct violation of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “Everyone has
the right to freedom of movement and residence within the border of each state.” It is particularly difficult to measure the indirect effects of checkpoint restrictions on the community. Aside from physical harassment, delays, and humiliation, the Palestinian community experiences ruptures in the social fabric because of closures, curfews, and changes to daily practices of education, spiritual life, medical care, and employment in order to avoid checkpoints.

Illegal settler attacks against Palestinians are rarely reported to CPT. Palestinians have no recourse for complaint, as the Israeli police are complicit during these incidents and evidence is disregarded or unattainable, as documented when Israeli security cameras were inexplicably turned off during the time of the attack. Settlers receive protection from the Israeli forces and are awarded almost complete impunity for their actions.

Crucially, we must recognize that the previously described staffing crisis resulted in severe gaps in CPT’s ability to monitor human rights violations during this period. Therefore, this report does not accurately reflect the extent of incidents or the statistics on the use of force that the Israeli forces continue to perpetrate on a daily basis in al-Khalil.

Directly related to the inability to staff a team in al-Khalil is the fact that CPT was unable to maintain a regular presence in the communities of the South Hebron Hills. Therefore, this report does not contain any data on the continued threat of demolition by Israeli authorities and illegal Israeli settler abuse towards these Palestinian rural communities.

CPT denounces the continual violation of the rights of the Palestinian people in al-Khalil and across the West Bank and Gaza, and provides this report as further evidence of the apartheid state and grave human rights violations committed by the state of Israel. CPT also expresses our concern about the systematic denial of entry to human rights observers – as well as students, professors, activists, and BDS supporters – by Israeli immigration in an evident attempt to mask the reality of occupied Palestine.