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AL-QUDS: KHAN AL-AHMAR IN FACE OF FORCIBLE DISPLACEMENT



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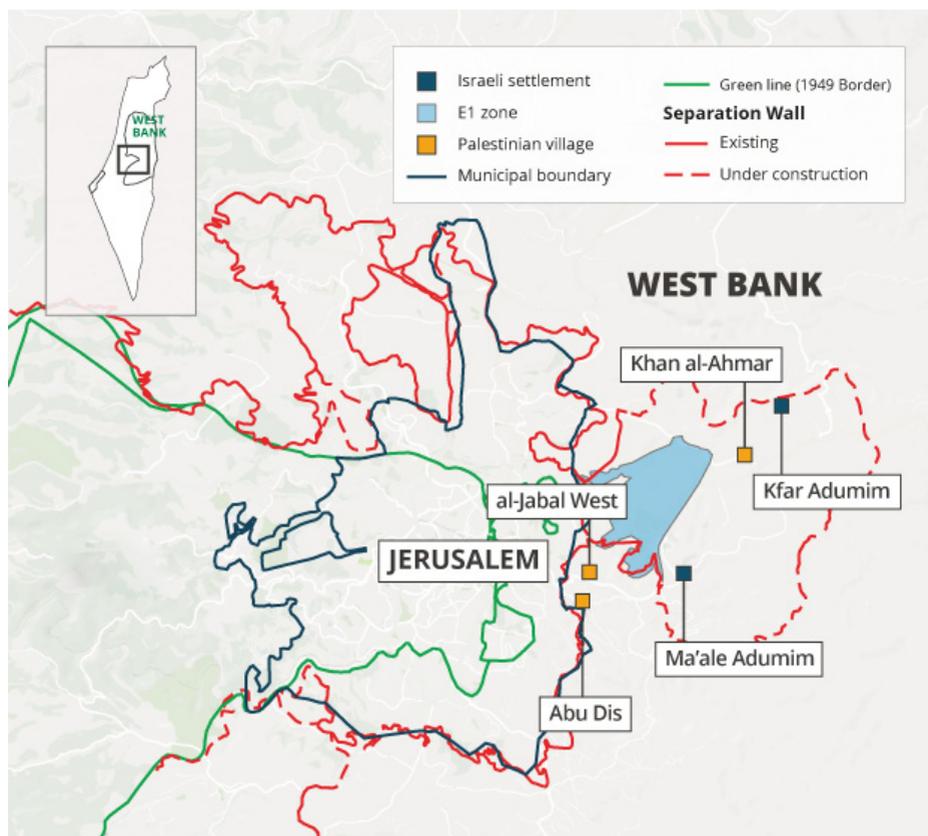
Near the East and South of Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin village, the Israeli settlements of Kfar Adumim and Maaleh Adumim are overwhelmingly expanding as part of Israeli attempts to purposely banish the entire Palestinian community. Indeed,



the Israeli Occupation Authorities (IOA) have intentionally been using demolition and forcible transfer to compulsorily deport the Palestinians from their lands and give room for more Jewish expansion into the West Bank regardless the rights of the Palestinians; thus committing major violations of international law. Ultimately, targeting Bedouin communities in the West Bank serves the Israeli projects seeking



to expel Palestinians and take over their homes and lands. Such actions can be reported at one of the Palestinian Bedouin villages in the West Bank that the Israeli Occupation is already targeting with forcible transfer, displacement and demolition: the village of Khan al-Ahmar. On 4/7/2018, the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) invaded Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin village in order to demolish it. As the residents protested the



Source : Ir Amim, peacenow.com, BTSelem, AFP

attempt to demolish their homes, the Occupation forces used violence to quell the protests and announced the area as a closed military zone.

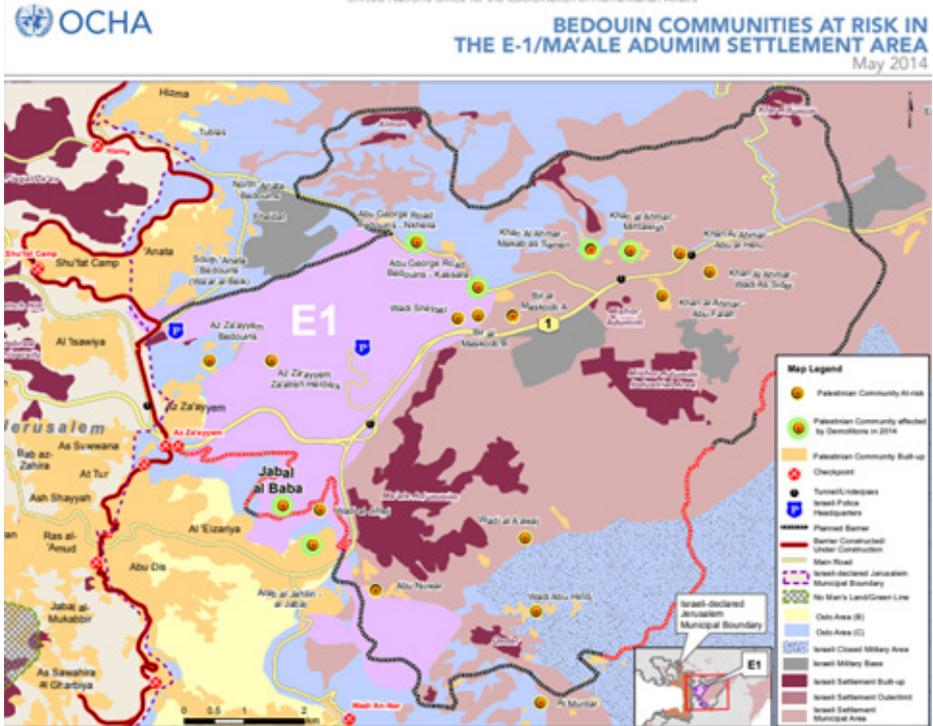
On 8/7/2018, the IOF installed mobile homes (caravans) near Abu Dis preparing to relocate the residents. However, on 9/7/2018, the Israeli Supreme Court suspended the planned demolition pending an appeal amid international opposition to its move. The village lawyers introduced new documents confirming that the lands that the village was constructed on during the fifties of the last century were legally owned by Palestinians and registered especially for the Bedouin inhabitants and not for the Public. Hence, deporting those



residents from their homes is a stark violation of International Law which prevents forcible displacement. Although the Supreme Court postponded the sanction on the decision till the 16/7/2018 to study the petition, the IOF continued to invade the village and on 11/7/2018 they blockaded the school in which protestors from the village and their supporters were gathering. In addition, IOF deliberately detained solidarity activists and prevented them from entering to the village to participate in the protests. On 12/7/2018, the Supreme Court again postponed the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar until 15/8/2018.

Back on 24/5/2018, the Israeli Supreme Court sanctioned the demolition of the village claiming that it was built without the necessary construction permit while the residents would be transferred to another place¹. On 24/9/2017, the Israeli government told the Supreme Court that it intended to deport Khan al-Ahmar residents by mid-2018 as the Court was looking into two petitions: one from the Israeli settlers asking for demolishing the village while the other from the Palestinian inhabitants of Kahn al-Ahmar protesting the demolition of their village and the provocative actions of the Israeli settlers against them. Notwithstanding the policy of forcible displacement adopted by the IOA against the Bedouins, the government would transfer the inhabitants to a landfill near to Abu Dis.

1 The Guardian, 25/5/2018



Khan al-Ahmar is located in Area “C” of the occupied West Bank which is totally under Israeli administrative and military control. More interestingly, it is located 15 km to the northeast of Al-Quds. In 1953, Palestinians expelled by IOF from Negev moved to live in the village. The village is a part of the region targeted by the settlement project known as E1 which aims to connect the settlement blocks in the West Bank with occupied Al-Quds while separating the North of the West Bank from its South. An Italian-funded school was established in Khan al-Ahamr in 1994 and was built from rubber tires and mud.

One of 44 West Bank schools under threat of complete or partial demolition by IOA, the school receives students from neighbouring Bedouin communities who had to cover long distances to reach West Bank schools before this school was established. Besides this humble school, Khan al-Ahmar village lacks the basic services, including electricity supplies, water, drainage systems. According to B'Tselem, a human rights organization, the IOA have systematically refused to provide and connect the village to water network, drainage systems and electricity supplies while restricting farming lands to oblige the people of the village to leave it².

The IOA is planning to expand the project of (E1) on an area inclosing 12000 dunums including lands from Izariyya, Anata, A-Tur and Abu Dis. In addition, the Israeli Occupation intends to establish 4000 settlement units and 10 hotels in the region as well as industrial and commercial areas. It was Yitzhak Rabin, former Israeli prime minister, who introduced this project in 1994 while then Israeli Army Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai sanctioned it in 1997.

Every Israeli prime minister since Rabin has supported the plan as a strategic project for Israel since it connects Al-Quds with Maaleh Adumim and the approaches to the Dead Sea and provides a security belt of Jewish settlements around Al-Quds.

2 B'Tselem: Communities facing expulsion: The Khan al-Ahmar area, 10/10/2017. https://www.btselem.org/communities_facing_expulsion/khan_al_ahmar

Indeed, Israel remains concerned about losing control over Al-Quds and the Jerusalem-Jericho road which is regarded as a vital road, particularly in time of war ³.

Facing Israeli endeavours to demolish Khan al-Ahmar, the inhabitants of the Bedouin village, supported by solidarity activists, are firmly protesting the illegal Israeli decision in order to prevent its execution. The IOA tend to break down the Bedouins peaceful resistance and to prevent any support for the community. While the US has remained silent on the matter, the European Union is strongly opposed to it and has voiced concern about the demolition and displacement of Khan al-Ahmar. Concurrently, Israel is concerned about the protests that might expand and attract further support, especially at a time when Aqsa Mosque is witnessing escalated Israeli aggression.

This suggests that the IOA might feel obliged to retreat and prevent any possible confrontation. However, any retreat from the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar would only be a step backward and a delay of the decision awaiting the next suitable opportunity. This makes it necessary to remain alert and prepared for the next probable step by the IOA.

3 Nadav Shragai: Protecting the Contiguity of Israel: The E-1 Area, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 24/5/2009. <http://jcpa.org/article/protecting-the-contiguity-of-israel-the-e-1-area-and-the-link-between-jerusalem-and-maale-adumim/>



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