
Israel Goes Ahead with Punitive Demolition of Palestinian Homes

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Israel Defence Forces (IDF) said they have issued notices to the families of several suspected attackers to vacate their homes in the West Bank ahead of their impending destruction.

In addition, police said they also designated several homes in east Jerusalem for destruction or sealing and were now waiting for the final government approval before to proceed.

The controversial punitive measure gives the families 48 hours to appeal against the notice. If the petition is not received or is rejected, their houses are then immediately levelled.

Authorities didn't specify the exact number of houses targeted.

Israeli rights group B'Tselem said three flats in east Jerusalem and three West Bank houses were facing demolition, condemning the move.

"This action constitutes harming the innocent," the group [said](#). "It is collective punishment that is both unlawful and immoral."

It follows Prime Minister Benjamin [Netanyahu's order that security officials use a heavy hand against extremists](#), amid growing violence and tensions in the region.

Recent unrest in the West Bank and Jerusalem has seen an Israeli settler and Israeli soldier killed in separate knife attacks, two hit-and-runs that claimed three lives, including that of [a three-month-old baby girl](#), and the attempted assassination of [far-right Jewish activist](#) Rabbi Yehuda

Glick.

The much maligned policy of house destruction was brought back into fashion by the Israeli government, after years in which it was largely suspended, following the abduction and murder of three Jewish teens in the West Bank, this summer.

The measure, which Israel claims works as a deterrent from further terrorist attacks, was discontinued in 2005, as the Defence Ministry said it was counterproductive as it stirred up more hatred.

Right groups have long maintained the demolitions violate [international legal prohibitions against collective punishment](#), for they affect the lives of other inhabitants in the buildings.
