



## Yesh Din

Volunteers for Human Rights

### Two Months Into the War - 242 Incidents of Settler Violence, with No Indictments Filed

This week, Yesh Din documented incidents like [this December 11 attack](#), in which dozens of Israeli settlers celebrated the holiday of Hanukkah by stealing crops from Palestinian-owned olive trees outside the West Bank village of Awarta. After the theft, which was secured by Israeli soldiers and police, the settlers proceeded to cut down and destroy several trees.

In the two months since the war broke out on October 7, settlers have perpetrated intense violence against Palestinians in the West Bank daily. In these two months, Yesh Din alone documented 242 incidents, yet the Israeli law enforcement authorities in the West Bank have not filed a single indictment against the violent settlers. These figures indicate that Israel's failure to enforce its own laws is an intentional policy of the state, which normalizes ideologically motivated crime against Palestinians in the West Bank, supports it, and benefits from its outcomes.



A home in Masafer Yatta was set on fire by settlers on October 31, 2023.  
Photo: Masafer Yatta residents.

## **20 Israeli Organizations Sent an Urgent Letter to President Biden**

On December 12, Yesh Din and 19 Israeli CSOs sent an urgent letter to US President Joe Biden, urging him to influence the Israeli government to change its policy and allow humanitarian aid into Gaza. This demand is consistent with Israel's legal obligations to international humanitarian law, which states that when a civilian population is under armed conflict and cannot survive on available means, the fighting parties have a positive obligation to enable rapid, unimpeded passage of humanitarian aid, including food and medicine. This obligation applies even when aid is needed for civilians of the other party, and binds countries whose location is vital for facilitating the passage of aid or even easing it. The letter states "we, Israeli human rights organizations and civil society groups, must at this stage, state with a heavy heart that our government has chosen to ignore your advice and similar statements by US officials. This letter does not address the grave suspicions of Israeli violations of international humanitarian law during the war, but centers on the extreme humanitarian crisis developing in Gaza and the urgent need to change Israel's policy on this issue. [...] We are in the final throes of an emergency. Many deaths can still be prevented. Israel must change its policy now." Read the full letter [here](#).

## **The United States and 13 EU Countries Support Entry Ban & Other Sanctions Against Violent Settlers in West Bank**

On December 5, the U.S. State Department announced a new visa restriction policy aimed at Israeli citizens believed to have committed acts of violence against Palestinians in the West Bank. In a [press release](#) published by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, he announced that “The United States has consistently opposed actions that undermine stability in the West Bank, including attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians, and Palestinian attacks against Israelis. We have underscored to the Israeli government the need to do more to hold accountable extremist settlers who have committed violent attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank”.

13 European countries [have since announced](#) that they support the implementation of a policy preventing entry from Israeli citizens who have engaged in settler violence in the West Bank. In addition, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen supports such sanctions, [she stated](#) yesterday, December 13. Among the countries that have issued public statements supportive of this policy are [The US](#), [Belgium](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), [Ireland](#), [Spain](#), [Malta](#), and [Slovenia](#). Earlier today, [UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron announced](#) that the UK will be implementing a visa ban policy to violent Israeli settlers as well, stating that “we are banning those responsible for settler violence from entering the UK to make sure our country cannot be a home for people who commit these intimidating acts”. We urge the European Union member states to seriously consider these statements which urge the International community to act responsibly in the face of Israel’s culture of impunity towards ideologically-motivated criminals carrying out violence against Palestinians.

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*Yesh Din is proud to be funded by States that are committed to the rule of law, that believe the occupation is not an internal Israeli matter, and that support the defense of international humanitarian law and human rights.*



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