



March 29, 2020

To:

Major General Nadav Padan
Commander of the Central
Command
pniot-tzibur@mail.idf.il

Major General Kamil Abu-Rukun
Coordinator of Government
Activities in the Territories
inquiries@cogat.gov.il

Brigadier General Rasan Alian
Head of the Civil
Administration
mnz@mgar.co.il

URGENT!

Dear all,

Regarding: **Freezing Home Demolitions in the West Bank**

In reference to: Our appeals submitted on March 18 and March 25, 2020

We are contacting you once more, following home demolitions and property seizures that were carried out on Thursday, March 26, 2020, at the height of the Coronavirus crisis in the Jordan Valley. This took place one day after restrictions on the local population were further intensified. As we have written repeatedly, ongoing home demolitions at this time is unreasonable. Last Thursday's demolition was particularly unacceptable. Demolitions currently jeopardize the local population and authorities at large, neglecting to adhere to both public guidelines and restrictions on large group gatherings, deeming it impossible for residents to live as soundly as this period permits.

1. On Thursday, March 26, 2020, at approximately 7:30, Civil Administration and IDF forces confiscated temporary structures in the village of Khirbet Ibziq, located in the northern Jordan Valley. Two of the tents that were seized were intended for use as a temporary health clinic during this period, and the other tents taken were meant for people evicted from their homes. Additional confiscations included a tin shack initially built over two years ago, as well as a generator, water tank, and other equipment.
2. Later that same day, the Civil Administration demolished three residential structures, used seasonally by farmers who are residents of Jerusalem, in the village of Ein ad-Duyuk at-Tahta, west of Jericho.
3. After the demolitions, the Civil Administration sent out the following press release:



"The Civil Administration prevented illegal construction in a Firing Zone located in the northern Jordan Valley. Today (Thursday), the Civil Administration's Inspection Unit, escorted and protected by the IDF's Brigade 417, carried out enforcement activities against a transportable structure that was erected illegally in an active IDF Firing Zone, in the northern Jordan Valley region.

Over the course of the enforcement activities, transportable parts of the structure being used as a lookout post were confiscated, as well as tarps and rods that had been placed alongside the structure for future construction purposes.

As part of the effort to eliminate the phenomenon of illegal construction in Firing Zones throughout Judea and Samaria, inspectors from the Inspection Unit continue to conduct and initiate patrols in order to locate and evict structures that have not been built in accordance with the law in these territories.

Coordination Officer Marco Ben-Shabat, noted: "Even in the current situation, the Civil Administration's Inspection Unit is actively pursuing the eradication of the phenomenon of illegal construction throughout Judea and Samaria at large, and in the Firing Zones in particular. We will continue to operate without delay in order to uphold the law throughout Judea and Samaria, and invest vast efforts and resources in preventing ongoing illegal construction in Area C."

4. There is no way to justify confiscating equipment to construct a health clinic at this time, let alone to justify the demolition of a health clinic for a community completely cut off from any healthcare centers, while the whole world contends with an unprecedented pandemic. The fact that the Inspection Unit boasted of the demolition, and that its director bragged of this operation, demonstrates a heartlessness if not complete animosity toward the well-being and health of the population living under their jurisdiction.
5. We will note yet again that under international law, the health of the Palestinian population in the West Bank is the responsibility of Israel. This truth is even more evident when it comes to the health of residents of Area C. This responsibility must be respected with regard to the provision of health services as well as the protection of public health.



6. Enforcement activities create friction among the local communities and may lead to high rates of infection. The consequence of the demolition – people left without a clinic, without water, and without electricity – poses an immediate threat to their lives. This is not merely an abdication of the obligation to care for the health of these residents, this is a targeted assault against them.

In consideration of the above, we repeat our request that all enforcement entities be urgently instructed to cease all demolitions and seizures, as well as all inspection activities until the period of uncertainty has passed.

Best wishes for good health,

Roni Pelli, Attorney

CC:

The Military Legal Advisor to the Region of Judea and Samaria, Colonel Asem Hamed
Deputy Attorney General (Civil), Mr. Erez Kaminitz : ErezK@justice.gov.il