

Negev Coexistence Forum  
For Civil Equality

منتدى التعايش السلمي في  
النقب من أجل المساواة المدنية

פורום דו-קיום בנגב  
לשוויון אזרחי



In cooperation with the Recognition Forum

# International Human Rights Day 2011

## Report on

# The Demolition of Arab-Bedouin Homes in the Negev-Naqab

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**The Third Demolition in Al Arakib, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

(Photo: NCF - The Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Rights)



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## **Executive Summary**

This annual report, presented by the Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality, coincides with International Human Rights Day which marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly. It documents human rights violations against the indigenous Negev Bedouin in “unrecognized villages”, primarily in the form of home demolitions.

Throughout 2011, the government continued its policy of narrowing the available living area in the Negev for the Arab minority through not recognizing their villages, demolishing homes, destroying crops and demanding to recover demolition costs from the residents who lost their homes (as was the case in Al Arakib). This report documents a number of significant developments over the past 12 months. Most significantly, the number of home demolitions more than doubled to 1,000, reflecting the intensification of the state’s aggressiveness towards its Bedouin citizens. Further, on December 6, the Magistrate’s Court cancelled 45 demolition orders in the village of Alsira, however, the same court the following week rejected an request to cancel 33 demolition orders in the village of Atir Um al-Hiran. Finally, in an operation known as “Determined Arm”, 33 homes in a single week in November were demolished.

Policy decisions negatively impacting the community are also highlighted. For instance, on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Israeli cabinet approved the Praver-Amidror Plan that, if implemented, will result in the eviction of 30,000 to 45,000 Bedouin from their homes and the demolition of entire villages. Further, on October 30 the government approved the establishment of 10 new Jewish settlements around Arad, some of which will be built on the sites of Bedouin villages.

## Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a fundamental document in the history of human rights. The declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1948 in Decision 217A (III), and includes a universal obligation to provide basic human rights. International Human Rights Day marks the adoption of this important declaration.<sup>1</sup>

We are marking this day for the second consecutive year with a report that deals with a blatant negation of human rights in the Negev. This report is mainly concerned with the demolition of homes belonging to the Arab Bedouin in the so-called "unrecognized villages" in the Negev. Tens of thousands of Arab Bedouin reside in villages that are not recognized by the state, and are not connected to basic infrastructures. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the Israeli government approved the Praver-Amidoror Plan<sup>2</sup> that would result in the eviction of 30,000 to 45,000 Bedouin from their villages and the demolition of numerous villages. An additional government decision of October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011, will result in the establishment of ten new Jewish settlements in the area of Mevo'ot Arad, some of which will be built on the sites of Bedouin villages.<sup>3</sup> The government has not offered the residents of the unrecognized villages any serious alternative plans or retroactive adaptation of the present buildings as it did in July 2010 when it "justified" the establishment of single-family farms by means of the Bill for the Development of the Negev.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, 50,000 buildings are now considered "illegal" and are being threatened with demolition orders.

We wish to mark International Human Rights Day by presenting this painful issue to the general public as we did last year. House demolitions leave thousands of men,

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<sup>1</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Website, retrieved on 11 September 2011.

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

<sup>2</sup> Government Decision 3707, 11 September 2011, The Inter-Ministry Team Report for the implementation of the committee for arrangement the Bedouin settlements in the Negev (In Hebrew), Prime Minister office Website, retrieved on 24 November 2011.

<http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMO/Secretarial/Decisions/2011/09/des3707.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Government Decision 3782, 30 October 2011, Establishment of new settlements in the area of Mevo'ot Arad (in Hebrew), Prime Minister's Website, retrieved on 24 November 2011.

<http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMO/Secretarial/Decisions/2011/10/des3782.htm>

<sup>4</sup> The Negev development authority law (amendment no. 4), (in Hebrew) 2010, Knesset website, retrieved on 19 November 2010. <http://www.knesset.gov.il/Laws/Data/BillKnesset/286/286.pdf>

women, and children with deep emotional scars and mistrust of the state system that is supposed to protect their rights. Thousands of policemen and special military units provide security guards for carrying out demolitions. These forces often employ violence, and the demolitions leave entire families without shelter from the severe cold weather in winter and the scorching heat of the summer.

These people's homes are often temporary structures made of concrete blocks with tin roofs, or tin huts, lean-tos covered with jute or plastic, or merely tents. In many cases these homes are not insulated and provide only minimal shelter. It is questionable whether these crude structures meet the international standards for suitable living quarters.

## **Background**

Approximately 95,000 Bedouin lived in the Negev-Naqab at the eve of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 (see Illustration 1). During the war, some of the Bedouin were evicted from the southern area of the country, and this eviction continued after the war. The 1960 census revealed that there were 11,000 Bedouin remaining in the Negev. At the beginning of the 1950s the State of Israel gathered the Bedouin into the "Sayig" designated area that was a closed security zone under military rule. Entry and exit to and from the area required a special permit (see Illustration 2). At the time several tribes were moved from their lands in the western and southern Negev to the designated area. The state declared part of the designated area as an area without any municipal government. The Bill of Planning and Building of 1965 declared most of the lands within the designated area as agricultural land, and any construction in that area was consequently forbidden. As a result of this act, any house that was already built in the area immediately became "illegal". The Israeli government thus transformed the entire Bedouin population into lawbreakers by means of a political decision – while the Bedouin were merely pursuing their basic right to shelter.

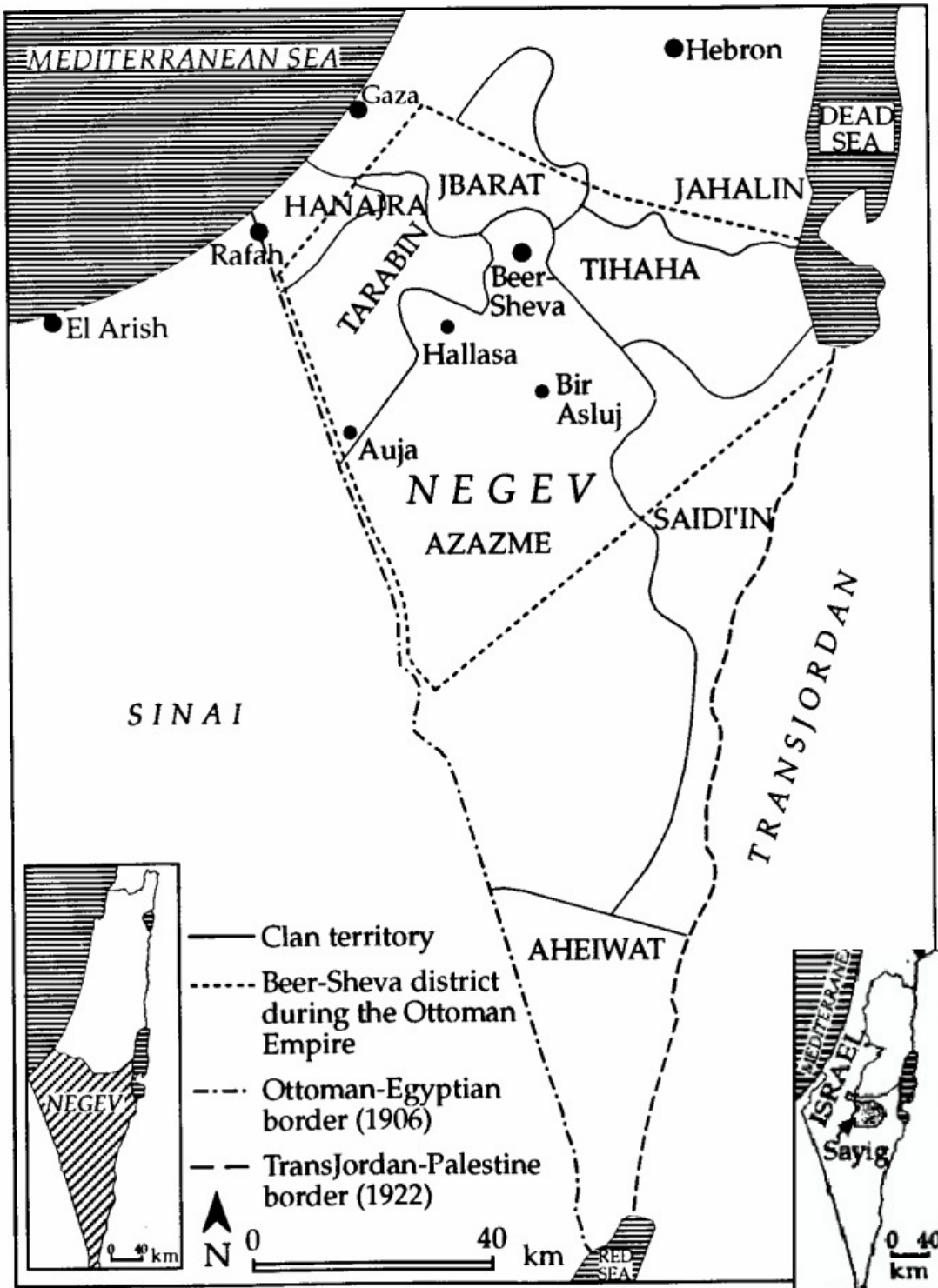
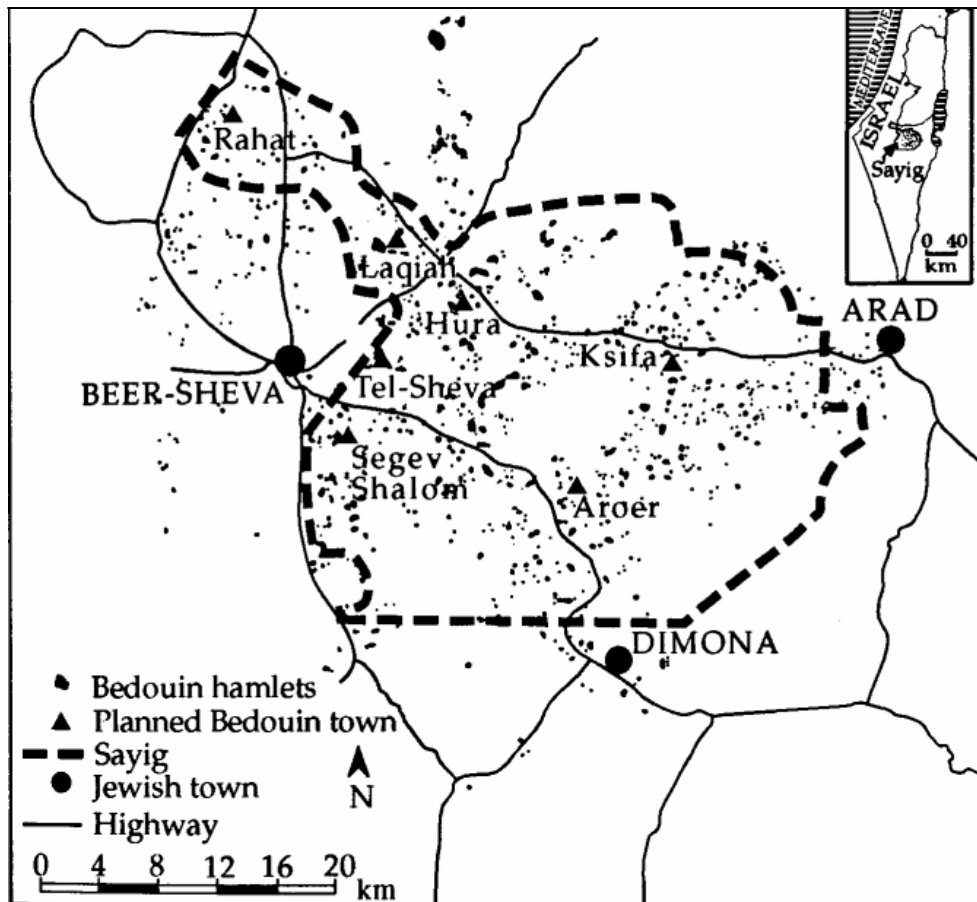


Illustration 1: Distribution of the tribes in the Negev before 1948

(Source: Meir 1979, after Araf al Araf, 1934)

In the late 1960s a new stage in government policy began in which the Bedouin were gathered into an even smaller area. The state began to establish a small number of towns in which all the Bedouin would be gathered. The government then began to encourage the Bedouin to move to these towns and attempted to force them to do so by punishing those who chose to remain on their lands in the unrecognized villages. This punishment took the form of denying basic infrastructures such as water, electricity, access roads, schools, medical clinics, and sewage. The government also pursued a policy of active penalties, which involved demolishing homes, uprooting trees, destroying crops, and confiscating herds of sheep and goats. Only after legal and public battles was the state finally obliged to build 25 schools and 12 medical clinics in the unrecognized villages and connected some of them to the national water network following public protests and tedious court hearings.



*The Sayig area and the Bedouin planned townships (Sources: Meir 1997)*



In addition to the fact that a majority of the Bedouins' lands were nationalized and confiscated, the policy of robbery and eviction was accompanied by a government campaign to degrade and demonize the Bedouin. The towns in which the Bedouin live are a failure in every aspect. They are at the bottom of the socioeconomic indicators among the municipalities and local authorities in Israel<sup>5</sup> and have the highest rate of unemployment (some as high as 40%). They suffer from severe problems of crime, violence, and lack employment opportunities, public transport, banks, and other large businesses.

Only 12.5% of all the settlements in the Negev are Arab settlements (17 out of a total of 136). The municipal area of the Arab settlements in the Negev extends over an area of 120-150 square kilometers and constitutes one percent of the total area of the Negev (12,954 square kilometers).<sup>6</sup> Despite this, the Arab population in the area of Be'er-Sheva at the end of 2010 numbered 201,900, or 32% of the entire population in the area, which numbered 627,000, or 18.12% of the total population of the south.<sup>7</sup>

The Bedouin tribes were distributed over the entire 3.25 million acre area of the Negev and actively used an area of 500,000 to 600,000 acres (see Illustration 1). Today the Bedouin tribes live within an area of approximately 87,500 acres. They are presently engaged in a struggle for ownership of 160,000 acres,<sup>8</sup> which constitute approximately 4.9% of the entire area of southern Israel.<sup>9</sup> Bedouin residents live in dozens of unrecognized villages (about 53,111), in six towns, a city and ten villages that were recognized in the last ten years (about 148,729 residents).<sup>10</sup> The government has not

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<sup>5</sup> Table 2 – Local Councils and Municipalities, by socioeconomic index, ranking and cluster membership for 2006, page 1, Central Bureau of Statistics website, retrieved on 10 November 2010.

[http://www.cbs.gov.il/www/publications/local\\_authorities06/pdf/t02.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/www/publications/local_authorities06/pdf/t02.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Bedouin Arabs in the Negev – Nakab Israel, Shadow Report for the Committee for the Implementation of the Charter for Civil and Political Rights, Table 1, Areas of Jurisdiction and Population in Cities and Settlements in the Negev, pp. 8-9, Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality Website, retrieved on 10 November, 2010.

[http://dukium.org/user\\_uploads/pdfs/Response\\_to\\_State%20Report.pdf](http://dukium.org/user_uploads/pdfs/Response_to_State%20Report.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Annual Statistics for Israel, 2011, Table 2.8 Localities and Population by Population Groups, District, Sub district and Natural Region, p.107, Central Bureau of Statistics website, retrieved on 1 November 2011. [http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton62/st02\\_08.pdf](http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton62/st02_08.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> The unrecognized villages in the Negev: recognition and equal rights position paper, background paper, November 2007, (in Hebrew) p. 27-28: Bimkom Website, retrieved on 25 November 2010

<http://www.bimkom.org/dynContent/articles/BedPosPapPart1.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 28.

<sup>10</sup> Settlements 2011, Central Bureau of Statistics Website, retrieved on 1 December, 2011.

<http://gis.cbs.gov.il/ishuvim/viewer.htm>

demolished houses within the planned area of the towns ("the master plan blue line"). In February 2010 Judge Sara Dovrat of the Regional Court made a decision ordering the demolition of 65 houses within the area of settlements in the Abu-Basma Regional Council within a 12 month period.<sup>11</sup> The head of the Abu-Basma Regional Council appealed to the High Court of Justice, which postponed the demolition procedures (Decision 2219/10).<sup>12</sup>

If the government succeeds in gathering the Bedouin into the towns, their living area will decrease even more dramatically. These steps are evidence that the State of Israel is persecuting its Bedouin citizens and desires to possess the remainder of their land. The terrible situation within the Bedouin towns attests to the fact that the government did not establish the towns out of concern for the Bedouin, but of a desire to evict them from their land. Does the State of Israel act legally with regard to its Arab-Bedouin citizens, particularly in matters having to do with their right to shelter? According to the international human rights treaties, or the decisions of the High Court of Justice regarding the right to shelter, the answer to this question appears to be no.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Coreal A., "The Judge: Demolish Bedouins' Homes and where is the Government's Political Advisor?", Ynet, 16.2.2010, Ynet Website (In Hebrew), retrieved on 19 November 2010  
<http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3849450,00.html>

<sup>12</sup> Amendment Plea 2219/10 – A, Head of the Local Abu Basma Planning and Building Committee et al, N., Regavim Association, Decision of 12.4.2010, High Court Of Justice Website, retrieved on 1 December, 2011.  
<http://elyon1.court.gov.il/files/10/190/022/k03/10022190.k03.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> International Human Rights Day 2010, Report on the Right to Housing, House Demolitions of the Bedouin in the Negev, pp. 6-8, Negev Coexistence Forum Website, retrieved on 1 December, 2011.  
[http://dukium.org/user\\_uploads/pdfs/doh\\_harisot.pdf](http://dukium.org/user_uploads/pdfs/doh_harisot.pdf)

## The Demolition of Bedouin Villages in the Negev

There are presently several villages in the Negev in which demolition orders have been issued against all homes. These include Um al-Hiran, Tel Arad, Alsadir, and others. The request of the village of Alsira to cancel 45 demolition orders was brought before the Magistrate's Court (9364/06) and a decision was made on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to cancel the orders. The decision regarding the request of the village of Atir Um al-Hiran (8477/06) as to whether or not 33 demolition orders will be canceled was made on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011. A request by the village of Atir Um al-Hiran to cancel the eviction order of the village was rejected by the Magistrate's Court and the people of Atir Um al-Hiran asked a permission to appeal to the High Court of Justice (3904/11).<sup>14</sup>

House demolition policy and "Illegal buildings" in the "unrecognized villages" are the opposite mirror image of the policy regarding Jewish settlement in the Negev, and is presently being conducted against approximately 50,000 buildings.<sup>15</sup> The government is talking about dispersing the Jewish population, encouraging Jews to come and settle the broad expanses of the Negev, and is offering them single-family farms and small settlements in the form of *kibbutzim* and community villages, but they are not coming.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the policy towards the Bedouin is designed to narrow the expanse of land for the Arab population in the Negev and limit their area of living space by means of not recognizing their villages, demolishing homes, and destroying crops.

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<sup>14</sup> Request for Appeal 3904/11, Ibrahim Farhoud Abu Alkian et al, vs. the State of Israel, Adallah, 1.12.2011,

[http://www.adalah.org/Leagl\\_full\\_heb.asp?id=463&category\\_id=321](http://www.adalah.org/Leagl_full_heb.asp?id=463&category_id=321)

<sup>15</sup> The Goldberg Committee Report on Settlement Arrangements of the Bedouin in the Negev, Housing Ministry Report, 19.11.2010.

[http://www.moch.gov.il/SiteCollectionDocuments/odot/doch\\_goldberg/Doch\\_Vaada\\_Shofet\\_Goldberg.p](http://www.moch.gov.il/SiteCollectionDocuments/odot/doch_goldberg/Doch_Vaada_Shofet_Goldberg.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Darel, Y., "The Next Environmental Battle; 11 New Settlements in the Negev", Ynet 7.11.2010. Ynet Website (In Hebrew), retrieved 19 November 2010

<http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3977877,00.html>



*Photograph 1: House demolitions in Al Furah, May 2011 (photo: NCF)*



*Photograph 2: Demolitions in Al Arakib, 23 August 2011 (photo: NCF)*



*Photograph 3: Plowing newly-planted fields by representatives of the Israel Land Authority in the Village of El Arakib, February 10, 2010 (Photo: Oren Ziv)*



*Photograph 4: Matpah - Enforcement Police Forces in Al Arakib during the plowing of newly planted fields, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 (Photo: Oren Ziv)*

House demolitions (see photographs 1 and 2) and plowing newly planted fields (see photograph 3) is done under cover of large special police forces that were established specifically for that purpose called the Matpah (acronym in Hebrew for the Administration for coordination, control, building and construction law enforcement Unit).<sup>17</sup> These forces instill fear and terror in thousands of men, women, children, and elderly people (see photograph 4) who live with constant uncertainty regarding their homes. These people live in temporary shelters for fear their homes will be demolished. This policy, which is allegedly a planning policy, indicates the political behavior of all Israeli governments up to now. We are not talking about a solution to the unrecognized villages and the houses within them based on mutual consent, but of a policy of brute force that creates anger and resentment among a large population of Arab citizens.

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<sup>17</sup> Administration for coordination, control, building and construction law enforcement Unit, Israeli Police Website (In Hebrew), retrieved on 28 June, 2010.  
<http://www.police.gov.il/mehozot/agafShitor/machalkot/Pages/mefkedettiumveprilutakifa1.aspx>

**Testimony of Mohammad Abu-Nawaf from the village of Al-Furah, whose  
home was demolished in May 2011**

They say that a new settlement is going to be built here, and that it will be recognized, and will be named Al Furah. We have been living at this site since before the time of the Turks. Generations and generations of my grandfather and my father used to live here. I can show you houses that were built hundreds of years ago. We were ready to accept any solution. I went to every office. I went to every government official in the south, in Be'er Sheva. I'll tell you the truth. Why does everyone have an office, or a classroom, at the expense of the Bedouin? They do nothing for the benefit of the Bedouin and they have no solution. Is demolishing a house and leaving a solution? They solved one problem but didn't solve another. I remained on the same piece of land, so what good did it do? They gave me a plot and I didn't want to move. They gave me nothing. They have nothing to give.

I wanted to see one thing – What solution do you have, for what reason are you demolishing {homes} but offering no solution? Why? Tell me, solve the problem. Before you demolish my home, give me a way - give me a way to go. He doesn't have any. He simply doesn't have any. He has nothing to say – the Ministry of Interior, the police...Before they demolish homes, the police should ask the Ministry of Interior why they are demolishing a person's home. Have they offered a solution?

But this is the way they prepare forces that are big enough to conquer an entire country, huge forces the likes of which I've never seen. I didn't teach my children about this. I didn't want them to see these forces. To demolish a home in front of children is like death.

The house has no license. Show me one house in the entire Bedouin community that has a license. Who will give you a license or permit? No one. First the village has to be recognized, and then we'll obtain licenses for building our houses. Our hands are open (We are open to suggestions).

We didn't know that there is a demolition, and court gave a decision that there would be no demolition until the Supreme Court will discuss it and decide. They came at a quarter to six, early, when people are sleeping. They came down from their cars and immediately start to break the windows, to break the doors, to break. [...] We asked them to take our things out from the house, they didn't want.

## **This Year's Events Regarding House Demolitions**

This year a new law was proposed that calls for placing responsibility for paying the cost of home demolitions pursuant to administrative orders upon the owner. At the end of June 2011 the bill was presented for a second and third reading before the Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee of the Knesset. Apparently the bill will be voted on during the winter Knesset session. As a result of an amendment proposed by M.K. Ze'ev Elkin from the Likud, the bill will not apply to homeowners in Jewish settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In light of this amendment, it is obvious that this bill is mainly directed at Arab citizens. The people who will be harmed most by this bill are the residents of the unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev – since most of their homes are constantly being threatened with demolition. This population suffers daily from the government's brute force and their rights have been consistently denied by the authorities.

This is a discriminatory and racist law that will result in increased alienation and isolation of the various population groups in the Negev. There is no doubt that the objective of this law is to harm the Bedouin Arabs living in the unrecognized villages in the Negev and to exert pressure on them to abandon their land and move to the towns. Apparently in the State of Israel of 2011 there are different laws that apply to different population groups.

The State of Israel filed an indictment demanding a sum of 1,790,792 NIS against 34 residents of the village of Arakib to pay for demolitions of their village. This is an additional attempt by the Israeli government to suppress the residents' struggle for their land. A series of arrests and indictments against village residents and activists occurred, as well as several extremely violent incidents involving the firing of sponge bullets at residents and activists while the demolitions were taking place. The government then engaged in a new form of punishment in the form of demanding huge compensations from the residents. This demand was presented one day before the anniversary of the first demolition of the village.



## Government Policy of House Demolitions in the Negev

For many years the Israeli government has declared a policy of demolishing homes in the unrecognized villages. The Israeli government has destroyed thousands of Bedouin homes in the Negev since the 1970s.<sup>18</sup> House demolitions serve as a scare tactic against the population, who live in a state of constant uncertainty regarding their homes. The demolitions are also another means of persuading them to move to the permanent towns.

Before 2010 the Israeli government demolished approximately 250 Bedouin homes in the Negev each year. In February 2010 it was decided to embark on a more stringent policy of demolitions and to triple the number. An objective was set for 2010 to destroy 700 houses.<sup>19</sup> Eventually, in 2010 a total of 456 houses were demolished and in 2011 approximately 1,000 homes were demolished.<sup>20</sup> Approximately six people live in each household, so we are consequently talking about approximately 6,000 people uprooted from their homes. Can you imagine that all houses in the Jewish town of Omer (6,593) or the town of Meitar (6,374) or the town of Atlit (5,664 persons) were demolished.<sup>21</sup> Such an event would, of course, never take place in Israel. No one would propose to demolish any Jewish settlement, or part of it, within the Green Line. On the other hand, the Ministry of Interior proposed tripling the number of homes to be demolished each year among one of the weakest population groups in the country, without conducting any dialogue with representatives of the Arab Bedouin population in the Negev and without assessing the repercussions upon the lives of the Bedouin or upon the relations between Jews and Arabs in the Negev.

In February 2010 it was also decided to plow 2,250 acres of land in order to halt the sowing of land upon which seasonal land leasing fees had not been paid. "The police

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<sup>18</sup> "Israel Must Stop the Demolition of Bedouins' Houses in the Negev", HRW 1.8.2010, HRW Website retrieved on 15 November 2011. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2010/08/01/israel-halt-demolitions-bedouin-homes-negev>

<sup>19</sup> Yagneh, Y., "Demolition of Illegal Buildings In the Bedouin Sector will be Tripled in 2010", Haaretz, 18 February, 2010, Haaretz Website (In Hebrew), retrieved 15 November, 2010. <http://www.haaretz.co.il/hasite/spages/1150631.html>

<sup>20</sup> Paz-Frankel, A., "The Determined Arm Campaign: 33 Bedouin Structures were Demolished in the Negev", Globes, 6.11.2011, Globes Website (In Hebrew), Retrieved on 8 November 2011. <http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000695383>

<sup>21</sup> Central Bureau of Statistics, Population According to Settlements for 2008 from 28 June 2010. <http://www.cbs.gov.il/ishuvim/ishuv2008/bycode.xls>

will not prevent a request for the demolition of illegal buildings and will act quickly to deal with these orders," explained Yohanan Danino, commander of the southern district police force. Danino stated that he "viewed dealing with illegal building a consequence of a determined enforcement in the southern district in general and of the Bedouin sector in particular".<sup>22</sup>

In November 2011 the government demolished 33 homes in a campaign called "Determined Arm" and another 21 homes including a mosque in an additional campaign called "Guardian of the Negev".<sup>23</sup> According to information from the website of the Israeli Land Authority, 22 of these homes were demolished by their owners after the authorities convinced them that if they did not do so, they would have to pay the cost of demolition themselves.<sup>24</sup>

Table 1 shows that in keeping with government policy, hundreds of homeowners are convicted of illegal building each year, and that thousands of dunams of newly-sowed fields are plowed after the seeds have germinated. Nevertheless, every year approximately two thousand new homes are constructed. There is an acute shortage of housing, and the government has failed to recognize that thousands of young married Bedouin couples are eager to live in their own homes. Since there is no solution to the housing problem for young and old people, and an absence of building permits, the Bedouin continue to build homes despite the danger that they will be demolished.

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<sup>22</sup> Yagneh, **Ibid**.

<sup>23</sup> "Stricter Enforcement in the Negev Bears Fruit: An Illegal Mosque is Demolished by the Invaders who Built it", Israel Land Authority Website, Returned on 15 November , 2011.

[http://www.mmi.gov.il/Hodaotmmilnt/show\\_h.asp?key=1069&CodeMaarecet=1](http://www.mmi.gov.il/Hodaotmmilnt/show_h.asp?key=1069&CodeMaarecet=1)

<sup>24</sup> Paz-Frankel, **Ibid**.

**Table 1:** Number of houses demolished, convictions, buildings without permits, buildings added annually, plowed fields (4 dunams = 1 acer)

Year	Homes Demolished	Convictions for Illegal Buildings	Buildings without Permits	Buildings added each year	Plowed Fields (Dunams)
2001	<sup>25</sup> 45	Unavailable*	*	*	*
2002	<sup>26</sup> 113	<sup>27</sup> 311	<sup>28</sup> 30,000	<sup>29</sup> 1,500	*
2003	<sup>30</sup> 157	<sup>31</sup> 933	*	*	*
2004	<sup>32</sup> 119	*	*	*	*
2005	<sup>33</sup> 145	*	<sup>34</sup> 30,000	*	*
2006	<sup>35</sup> 367	<sup>36</sup> 700	<sup>37</sup> 42,000	*	<sup>38</sup> 2,900
2007	<sup>39</sup> 281	*	*	*	*
2008	<sup>40</sup> 225	*	<sup>41</sup> 50,000	<sup>42</sup> 1,500-2,000	<sup>43</sup> 700
2009	<sup>44</sup> 254	*	*	*	<sup>45</sup> 4,500
2010	<sup>46</sup> 456	*	*	*	<sup>47</sup> 9,000
2011	<sup>48</sup> 1,000	*	<sup>49</sup> 70,000	<sup>50</sup> 4,000	*

<sup>25</sup> Goldstein, M., Regional Government Administration, Ministry of Interior, Request for Data on House Demolitions in the Negev, Letter of September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Note: The Ministry of Interior Relates to the Entire Southern Region Since there is no separate data Regarding the Arab and Jewish Sectors. As the letter states, "We assume that most demolitions take place in the Arab Sector."

<sup>26</sup> Report of the Negev Coexistence Forum to the Committee for Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, May 2006, p. 31, Negev Coexistence Forum Website, retrieved on 11 November 2010. [http://www.dukium.org/modules/coppermine/albums/userpics/pdf\\_files/CERD\\_HEB\\_web.pdf](http://www.dukium.org/modules/coppermine/albums/userpics/pdf_files/CERD_HEB_web.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> "Report of Life on the Edge, 2006", p. 51, Arab Association for Human Rights for Promoting the Rights of the Palestinian Minority in Israel, Adalah Website (In Hebrew), retrieved on 10 November 2010. <http://www.adalah.org/newsletter/heb/jun07/hra.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Report of the Negev Coexistence Forum *ibid*, p. 31, Negev Coexistence Forum Website, retrieved on 15 November, 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Tal, A., "The Outline Plan for the Bedouin Settlements in the Negev", Knesset Information and Research Center 3.12.2006, Knesset Website (In Hebrew), retrieved on 15 November, 2011. <http://www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/data/pdf/m01668.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Report Living on the Edge, *ibid*, p. 51.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*, p. 51.

<sup>32</sup> Goldstein, *ibid*.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> Barda, M., "The Phenomenon of Illegal Building in Israel", 6 July, 2005, Knesset Information Center, Knesset Website (In Hebrew), retrieved on 15 July, 2010. <http://www.knesset.gov.il/MMM/data/docs/m01170.doc>

<sup>35</sup> Goldstein, *ibid*.

<sup>36</sup> Tal, *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Report: Living at the Edge, *ibid*. pp. 52-53.

<sup>39</sup> Goldstein, *ibid*.

<sup>40</sup> Yagneh, *ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> Goldberg Committee Report, *ibid*.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid*, p. 27.

<sup>43</sup> Yagneh, *ibid*.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*.

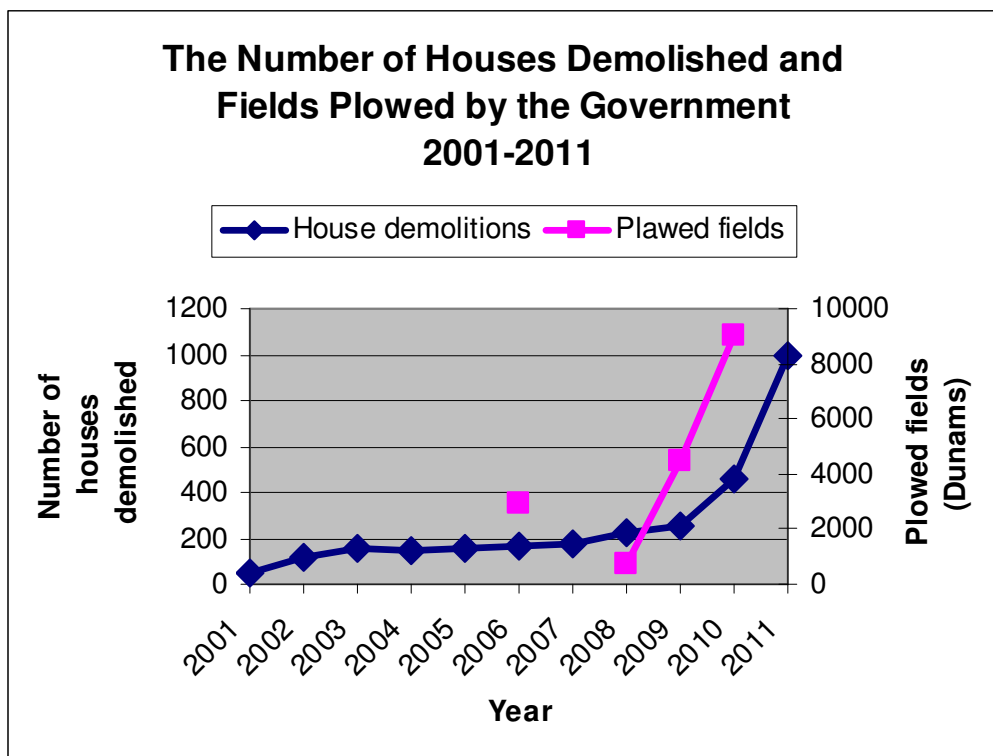
<sup>45</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> Paz-Frankel, *ibid*.

Graph 1: The Number of Houses Demolished and Fields Plowed by the Government 2001-2011



Graph 1 shows a sharp increase in both the number of homes destroyed as well as the number of dunams of newly-sowed fields belonging to the Bedouin that were plowed by representatives of the Israeli government. This is evidence of an increase in severity in the policy of house demolitions and of destroying the Bedouins' crops. The last two demolition campaigns in which 54 homes were demolished were very extensive and point to increased stringency on the part of the various factors and "increased enforcement." These campaigns were carried out by the Israel Land Authority, the Ministry of Interior, the Administration for Supervision of Open Areas, and the Israeli Police.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> **ibid.**

<sup>50</sup> **ibid.**

<sup>51</sup> "Increased Enforcement in the Negev", **ibid.**

## Summary

An unwritten government policy has existed in the Negev for many years in which entire Bedouin villages were being erased from the face of the earth. Fifty repeated demolitions in the village of Tawil Abu Jarwal between May of 2006 and July of 2010, the demolition of fourteen homes in the village of Atir Um-al Hiran at the end of June 2007, and 28 demolitions of the village of Arakib between the end of July 2010 and the beginning of November 2011 all represent this policy (see photographs 1-4 and the collection of photographs on the website of the Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality).

According to the spokeswoman of the Israeli Land Authority, Ortal Zabar, the Praver-Amidror plan "...has the objective of resettling approximately 30,000 Bedouin that will be transferred for expanding existing towns such as Rahat, Kasifa, and Hura..."<sup>52</sup> In other words, the plan will result in the eviction of 30,000 people and the destruction of many of the villages. In addition, there are unrecognized Bedouin villages in which hundreds of homes are expected to be demolished. Demolition orders have already been issued for Al-Sdir, Tel Arad, and Atir Um al-Hiran. Government plans will not allow these villages to remain within the boundaries of various government projects. Among these projects are: the "Goral Forest" that threatens the villages of Al Massadia and Awajan; the building of new military bases such as the Intelligence Corps base being planned in the area of the Liyakit Free Trade Zone and the village of Al-Makiman; the paving of new roads and widening existing ones, such as the southern extension of the Trans-Israel Highway (Route 6) that crosses several villages including Um Batin, Bir-Al Hamam, Hasham-Zana, Wadi al-Na'am, and threatens approximately 600 homes, and the enlargement of Route 31 that threatens to demolish Saua and other villages.

Professor Elkarinawi notes in "Havat Daat" that the policy of house demolition is causing extensive harm to children, and creates trauma for all family members as well as disabling family function. "*House demolition often causes disruption in the function of the family in general...All this leads to an undermining of children's perception of*

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<sup>52</sup> **Ibid.**

*the world and of the family as a secure, safe, and good place. The existence of a home fills an essential basic need that children have, and the lack of a home makes it difficult for them to create adaptive and safe interactions.*<sup>53</sup>

The policy of the present government, as those of previous ones, threatens to destroy homes and to evict many of the residents of the unrecognized Bedouin villages. These people are citizens of the State of Israel – who cannot build their homes according to law due to the lack of policy of government planning in their villages or lack of a building plans. They are being offered no alternative aside from moving to the towns. The increased policy of enforcement and its results in the form of increased demolition of peoples' homes is part of the government's attempt to forcibly gather all the Bedouin in the Negev into poverty-stricken and destitute towns in order to free land for Jewish settlement (see the case of Um al-Hiran). This is a racist policy without any long-term feasibility that harms the fabric of life in the Negev and increases the inequality between Jews and Arabs.

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<sup>53</sup> Almi, A., "House Demolition in Israel and their Repercussions on Children's Mental Health", pp. 3-4, Physicians for Human Rights Website (In Hebrew), 10 November, 2010.  
<http://www.phr.org.il/default.asp?PageID=47&ItemID=73>





**The village of Al Arakib Before Demolition, Spring 2010** (photo: NCF)



**Al Arakib, the 25<sup>th</sup> demolition, July 2011** (photo: NCF)

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