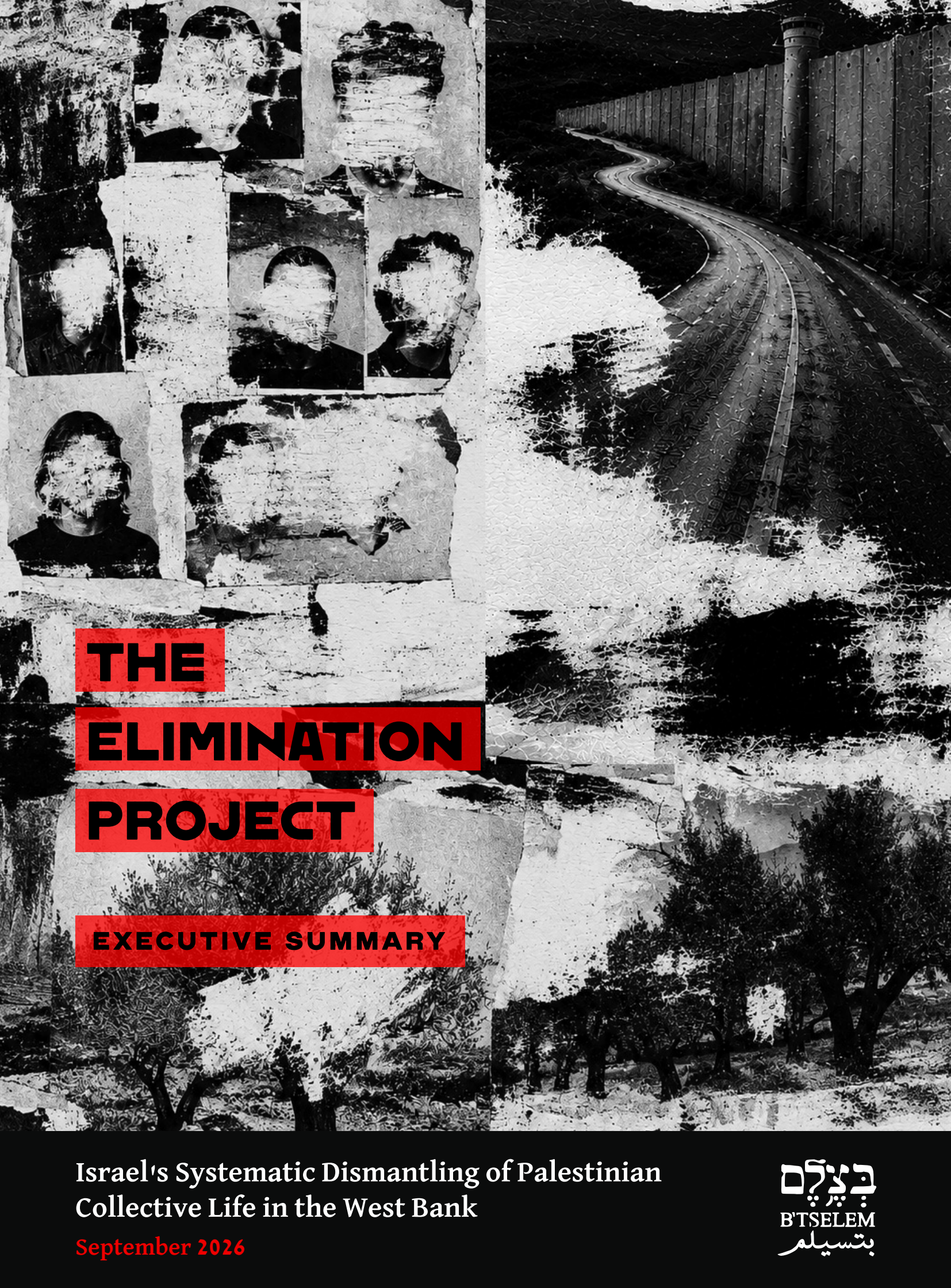




THE ELIMINATION PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Israel's Systematic Dismantling of Palestinian
Collective Life in the West Bank

September 2026

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THE ELIMINATION PROJECT

Executive summary

At the time of publication, the West Bank is under a sweeping Israeli assault that is systematically and at an accelerating pace dismantling the foundations of Palestinian existence. Since the formation of the current government at the end of 2022, and with even greater intensity since October 2023, Israel has dramatically escalated its assault on all areas of life for Palestinians in the West Bank. The ability to get to work, take children to school, attend university, receive medical care or municipal services, meet with family and acquaintances, cultivate one's land, go on vacation, or attend cultural events, along with hundreds of other ordinary activities that make up daily life, are all under [constant Israeli attack](#) and are sometimes denied altogether. Over and above all this looms a constant threat to life and bodily integrity. At any moment, Palestinians may be exposed to violence by soldiers or armed settler militias, arrested and imprisoned, subjected to abuse and humiliation, and sometimes even killed. As the report shows, this combined assault, which targets Palestinians both as individuals and as a collective, has turned the lives of some 3.5 million people into a constant struggle against the oppression and dispossession imposed by the Israeli regime.

Human rights documentation, and the public discourse surrounding it, tend to focus on individual incidents of concrete harm. This report takes a broader view, looking at these different violations together. It examines the reality in the West Bank as a complex system with an underlying logic, implemented through different practices by a range of Israeli actors working at the same time and in coordination with one another. Viewed this way, Israel's actions in the West Bank are not simply a series of separate violations of individual and collective rights. Rather, they are part of a comprehensive mechanism of elimination. In this context, "[elimination](#)" means sustained harm to the material, social and political conditions that enable Palestinian collective existence - land, institutions, language, culture, social ties, leadership, shared memory and history - as well as to the possibility of imagining and sustaining a shared future. Israel's project of elimination in the West Bank is reshaping the territory and the conditions of life within it so that Israeli control and Israeli presence become continuous, entrenched, and permanent, while Palestinian existence becomes fragmented, vulnerable, and dependent.

This report shows how Israel is implementing this mechanism of elimination through five main domains: violence and intimidation, movement restrictions, economic strangulation, social and political destruction, and ethnic cleansing and territorial takeover. These five domains operate at once and reinforce one another. Movement restrictions and economic strangulation damage livelihoods, social ties, and Palestinians' ability to sustain institutions and engage in political life. The resulting political and social harm weakens Palestinians' ability to defend their rights and maintain their ties to the land. Together, they facilitate the expansion of Israeli control over the space and the displacement of Palestinians from it, tearing apart communities and devastating homes, livelihoods, collective memory and geographic contiguity. Violence is the central means of coercion that makes the entire system possible and accelerates its operation.

The report draws on the body of knowledge accumulated by [B'Tselem](#) over decades of documenting Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in the West Bank, an analysis of Israeli regime policy, and approximately 2,000 testimonies collected in recent years from Palestinians living in the West Bank, as well as analysis of official documents, legislation, government resolutions, and other reports. The report connects the different violations, examines the logic that ties them together and the mechanisms that enable them, and presents an overall picture of the reality the Israeli regime is creating in the West Bank.

The logic of elimination and the regime framework

To understand the reality now taking shape in the West Bank, it is necessary to examine the ideological roots and governing structures on which this Israeli mechanism of elimination rests. The term "[logic of elimination](#)," coined by Australian historian Patrick Wolfe, describes how a settler-colonial project works to reduce, dismantle and remove Indigenous existence as a collective with a connection to the land. Elimination can be carried out through direct actions to reduce Indigenous presence, including killing, expulsion and confinement to small enclaves. Yet it can also take the form of an ongoing mechanism that uses legal, planning, economic and geographic measures to prevent refugees from returning, dispossess people of land, fragment communities, control movement and attack social and political institutions. These measures work together to destroy the conditions necessary for the Indigenous population to maintain collective existence on the land.

The Zionist-Israeli project demonstrates the key features of [settler colonialism](#): establishing Jewish-Israeli sovereignty in a space inhabited by an Indigenous Palestinian population, while undermining Palestinian existence through marginalization, [expulsion](#), dispossession and fragmentation. Defining the Zionist-Israeli project as [settler colonialism](#) does not deny Jewish historical, religious and cultural connections to the space, the continuous presence of a Jewish community in it, or the long history of persecution, displacement and violence against Jews. The question it poses regarding the Zionist-Israeli project is not whether a Jewish connection to the space exists, but concerns the ways in which the Zionist project sought to establish [exclusive Jewish-Israeli sovereignty](#) in a space where Palestinians lived and continue to live.

The [Nakba](#) was the first large-scale manifestation of this logic of elimination. Between 1947 and 1949, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were expelled or fled their homes, became refugees and were prevented from returning to their homeland. Hundreds of Palestinian communities were destroyed and depopulated. Their property was plundered, privately or institutionally, and [their lands were made available for Israeli settlement](#). In 1967, with the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel expanded its control and imposed direct military rule on millions of Palestinians. It expropriated land, established settlements, restricted Palestinian planning and development, and fragmented the territory. The Oslo Accords did not interrupt this process. While establishing the Palestinian Authority and transferring limited powers to it, the accords left Israel in control of key aspects of Palestinian space and life, within a framework in which settlement, dispossession and spatial fragmentation continued and deepened.

[Apartheid](#) is the regime structure that organizes and preserves Jewish supremacy and control over Palestinians throughout the territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, where a single Israeli regime grants rights, protections, resources and political power differently to Israeli-Jews and Palestinians. In the West Bank, the institutional distinction between the two groups is especially stark: Israeli settlers are subject to Israeli civil law and enjoy full political rights, state services and state protection, while Palestinians living in the same space are subject to military rule and military law and cannot participate in determining the policies and laws that govern almost every aspect of their lives. The fragmentation of the Palestinian collective into different legal and spatial groups is another aspect of this regime, itself producing fragmented Palestinian geographies and forms of both individual and collective life.

The project of elimination in the West Bank, described in detail in this report, operates within this regime's structure through a twofold process: Israel dismantles Palestinian existence while reorganizing the space to expand and institutionalize Israeli control and presence. Land and resources are transferred to Israeli control; settlements, outposts and farms expand; and the systems of law, planning, infrastructure and funding establish a contiguous, permanent Israeli presence. The two processes are intertwined: dismantling Palestinian existence enables the expansion of Israeli control and presence, while that expansion entrenches and deepens Palestinian displacement and fracturing.

While the Elimination Project is not new, since the current Israeli government took office at the end of 2022, and even more so since October 2023, it has accelerated and intensified. Authorities, state funding, and political power have been handed to actors committed to expanding settlements, advancing annexation, and pushing Palestinians aside; resources are funneled to settlements, including farms and outposts, while the alignment between state institutions, the military, the settlement movement, and settler militias has grown tighter and more overt. Actions previously presented as temporary, exceptional or driven by security needs are now carried out on a broad scale and in a more direct and openly declared manner.

[The "Decisive Plan"](#), published by Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich in 2017, is a key document for understanding the current reality in the West Bank because it openly articulates the logic of elimination and links settler-colonial ideology to a political action plan. The plan gives Palestinians three options: live under Jewish supremacy while relinquishing their political claims, leave, or face violent suppression if they resist. While the plan has not been formally adopted in full as a government decision or enacted as law, central elements of its logic have in recent years been translated into policy, budget allocations, delegation of powers and practices implemented on the ground.

The current escalation in the West Bank is unfolding in parallel with the [genocide](#) Israel is committing against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. In Gaza, the logic of elimination has taken its most extreme form; in the West Bank, it is realized in other forms, through the five domains of action described in the report. The two arenas are not detached. The normalization of the mass killing and colossal destruction Israel is inflicting on the Gaza Strip has dramatically expanded the boundaries of violence perceived as legitimate and deployed by the Israeli regime against Palestinians. Since October 2023, previously rarer

practices associated with the assault on Gaza have become more common in the West Bank, including airstrikes, large-scale destruction of residential areas and infrastructure, mass displacement, and a relaxation of the open-fire policy.

The Mechanism of Elimination in the West Bank

Israel's elimination mechanism in the West Bank operates through five central domains of action: violence and intimidation, movement restrictions, economic strangulation, social and political destruction, and ethnic cleansing and territorial takeover. Together, these domains restrict West Bank Palestinians' ability to maintain the basics of daily life while also undermining the conditions that enable Palestinian society to exist as a political, social and territorial body with institutions, collective rights and a shared future. The significance of each domain lies not only in the direct harm it causes, but also in its relationship with the other domains and its contribution to the cumulative result.

Violence and intimidation

Violence in the West Bank functions as a central mechanism of control, displacement and dismantling. Its effects are not confined to those who are directly killed, injured, imprisoned, beaten or expelled from their homes. It intimidates the entire population. It narrows the range of action available to Palestinians as individuals, families and communities. At any moment, soldiers may break into a home; armed settlers may arrive at a grazing area; a [checkpoint](#) may close without explanation; or a person may be arrested, beaten or killed. In such conditions, every routine activity requires a calculation of risk. Fear is not a byproduct of the violence, but part of how it operates as a means of coercion and of the outcome it seeks to produce.

The violence is inflicted by the Israeli military, the police and the Shin Bet, alongside settlement security coordinators, settlement security squads and [settler militias](#). Some operate as official arms of the state; others operate with state [support](#) or protection, or within a sphere of almost complete [impunity](#). Armed settler militias attack villages, shepherding communities, farmland and grazing areas using weapons and off-road vehicles supplied by the state, while the military is often present, fails to prevent the

violence and sometimes actively participates in it: soldiers block access roads, fire tear gas or live ammunition at Palestinians who try to defend themselves and their property, and soldiers who live in settlements take part in routine violence directed at neighboring Palestinian communities. The lines between military violence, state violence and civilian settler violence are blurred and the different actors effectively function as [one system](#).

Since October 2023, the Israeli military has [recruited thousands of settlers](#) into Regional Defense Battalions for service in the areas where they live, while thousands more have joined settlement and outpost security squads. During this time, B'Tselem has documented settlers exercising "military" powers: stopping and arresting Palestinians, demanding papers, demolishing structures and imposing closures on entire communities. These practices further blur the distinction between agents of violence – armed settlers, soldiers and other official actors.

The number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank has risen dramatically in recent years. Between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2026, Israel killed 1,087 Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Of those killed, 242 were children and 21 were women.

During this period, Israel also expanded its use of airstrikes, large-scale incursions into densely populated areas and destruction of infrastructure in refugee camps. Lethal violence is part of a broader apparatus that includes night raids, home invasions, searches, detentions, threats, humiliation, surveillance and intrusions into private spaces. Together, these measures create a routine in which Palestinians have no safe space where their lives can proceed without the shadow of Israeli oppression hanging over them.

[Mass arrests and incarceration](#) are another central arm of the same mechanism. Over decades, Israel has imprisoned hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Practices of [abuse and torture](#) have served not only as means of punishment, but also as tools of broad deterrence, intended to make clear to Palestinians that any participation in political or civic activity or resistance to the Israeli apartheid regime may end in detention without trial, frequently accompanied by severe violence. Like the violence employed by the Israeli regime, the constant threat of arrest and imprisonment is also intended to intimidate Palestinians. Since October 2023, Israel has expanded the use of the incarceration system as a means of repression and intimidation directed both at individuals and at the Palestinian collective as a whole, and detention and prison facilities have become a network of torture camps in

which every Palestinian who enters is condemned to ongoing physical and psychological abuse. According to B'Tselem's monitoring, between October 2023 and June 2026 at least 32 detainees and prisoners from the West Bank died in Israeli prison facilities as a result of violence, systemic neglect and denial of medical care.

In this way, killing, violence, threats and incarceration work together to sow fear, reduce resistance and enable the operation of the other domains of elimination.

Movement restrictions

The ability to move through space is a precondition for social, economic, familial and political life. When a person cannot reach their land, a hospital, work, school or the nearest city, land ownership or the existence of social institutions and services lose some of their practical significance. Israel's system of control over Palestinian movement rests on longstanding infrastructure: checkpoints between the West Bank and Israel, East Jerusalem and Jordan; internal checkpoints within the West Bank; gates at the entrances to Palestinian communities; [the Separation Barrier](#); bypass roads; [roads prohibited or restricted to Palestinian traffic](#); a [permit system](#); military orders; and various types of physical obstructions. Together, these have created a fragmented and discontinuous Palestinian space in which Palestinian movement depends on permits and on decisions by soldiers, other armed forces, officials and sometimes also by settlers.

[Since October 2023](#), Israel has used this infrastructure in a more intensive, [arbitrary](#) and violent manner. According to B'Tselem data, between October 2023 and June 2026 Israel established more than 200 new checkpoints and blocked dozens of Palestinian communities' access to main roads, and to roads between Palestinian communities. Such obstructions are opened and closed without advance notice, short trips stretch into hours, and people do not know whether they will reach work, school or medical care, or whether they will be able to return home. Israel has revoked all permits allowing Palestinians to enter areas within the Green Line.

Alongside official closures, settlers block roads, threaten drivers and attack Palestinians traveling on them, and sometimes pressure the military to close Palestinian traffic routes.

Control over movement operates in two complementary directions: it breaks Palestinian space into enclaves and isolated communities that depend on entrances, gates, permits and alternative, rough roads, while at the same time producing Israeli territorial contiguity through roads and infrastructure that serve Israelis. Movement restrictions are directly linked to dispossession. When [farmers cannot reach their land](#), shepherds cannot reach grazing areas, workers cannot reach their workplaces, and students, teachers or [medical teams cannot reach their destinations](#), movement restrictions also harm livelihoods, health, education, social ties and the ability to remain on the land. Often, denial of access to land creates conditions for an Israeli takeover of that land. A blocked road or closed gate is therefore not merely a movement restriction; they are an instrument serving the mechanism dispossession and elimination.

Economic strangulation

The economic strangulation of Palestinians in the West Bank harms the material conditions that allow them to earn a living, maintain a home, cultivate land, study, receive medical treatment and plan for the future. It is manifested in [poverty, unemployment and a significant decline in living standards](#). But it also functions as a mechanism of control and sustained pressure, increasing Palestinian society's dependence on Israeli rule. Since 1967, Israel has restricted independent Palestinian economic development, [channeled the Palestinian labor force into the Israeli labor market](#), controlled resources and crossings, and prevented independent development of infrastructure, industry and trade. The division of the West Bank into Areas A, B and C under the Oslo Accords left most land reserves, natural resources and water sources under Israeli control. The agreements also left Israel in control of the Palestinian economy's prospects for development and independence by preserving control over imports and exports and over policy areas that directly affect the Palestinian economy.

Since October 2023, Israel has used this dependence more aggressively. It has [revoked almost all permits](#) allowing West Bank Palestinians to work inside the Green Line, cutting more than 140,000 people off from their main source of livelihood. The unemployment rate, which stood at 13.1% in 2022, surged past 31.3% in 2024. Economic distress forced some to risk entering areas within the Green Line without a permit, risking arrest and even death: between 7 October 2023 and 30 June 2026, at least 26 Palestinian workers were killed while attempting to cross the Separation Barrier for work.

At the same time, Israel intensified delays and deductions from the tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, impairing the PA's ability to pay salaries and provide basic services. [Israeli control over the Palestinian financial system](#), water, energy, land and infrastructure enables it to exert sustained pressure that harms households, businesses and Palestinian institutions alike.

[For years, Israel has prevented independent Palestinian development](#) of water infrastructure and energy production, while also damaging existing infrastructure and local initiatives to develop alternative energy sources. Economic harm is also inflicted through the other domains of elimination: movement restrictions prevent access to workplaces and markets; violence by the military and settler militias prevents access to farmland, grazing areas and water sources; and territorial takeover blocks Palestinian development. For many families, farmland, olive trees, vineyards and flocks are not only sources of income but also an economic safety net, an intergenerational connection to the land and a foundation for communal life. Uprooting trees, stealing flocks and keeping farmers off their land do more than harm immediate income. They disrupt traditional agricultural knowledge and attachment to the land, and sever foundations for life built over generations, undermining the ability to stay on the land.

Economic strangulation extends from households to the institutions and services that sustain society. When families cannot buy food, repay debts or send their children to school, and when [education](#), [health](#) and welfare systems are forced to operate under chronic budget shortages, Palestinian society's ability to maintain institutional continuity, community resilience and prospects for the next generation is reduced. Economic strangulation, therefore, is not merely a byproduct of control; it is a mechanism used to dismantle Palestinian existence.

Social and political destruction

Social and political destruction undermines the institutions, relationships and spaces that enable Palestinians to organize, represent themselves, preserve knowledge and memory, and act toward a shared future. Since 1967, Israel has imposed military rule on Palestinians in the West Bank that prohibits or restricts nearly every form of independent Palestinian political activity. Through military orders and legislation, Israel outlaws civil society

organizations and political parties, closes institutions, [prevents demonstrations](#), arrests political activists, and labels political parties, youth movements, popular committees, civil society organizations, student groups, journalists and human rights defenders as "terrorists" or accuses them of "incitement". Between 1967 and 2019, Israel outlawed more than 411 political organizations, including all major Palestinian political parties.

Since October 2023 Israel has intensified its attack on every form of organization, protest and expression. Israel has arrested elected officials, activists, academics, students and journalists; raided NGO offices; restricted demonstrations and nonviolent protests; and expanded surveillance and arrests over social media posts. Participation in party or student activity, organizing a demonstration, documenting human rights violations, and even assisting victims of violence can lead to arrest, imprisonment and harm to activists and their families. In this way, incarceration serves not only to punish individuals but also to deter the public and restrict the possibility of collective action.

The [suppression of demonstrations](#), and the routine use of violent and sometimes lethal methods to disperse them, has for years been one of the main ways Israel has undermined Palestinian organizing. In the seven months between 7 October 2023 and mid-May 2024, Israeli forces killed at least 28 Palestinians, including 11 minors, in demonstrations or in connection with them. By comparison, this figure is almost half the number of Palestinians Israeli forces killed in demonstrations during the entire 13 years preceding October 2023. The intensifying violence and wave of arrests impacted protest organizers and prominent activists as well, resulting, over the course of 2024, in the decline of demonstrations that had taken place for years in villages and towns across the West Bank.

The assault is also directed at the [spaces in which shared life is created and preserved](#): schools, universities, cultural and religious centers, archives, the press and community institutions. Raids, movement restrictions and economic hardship force educational institutions to reduce teaching hours or stop operating altogether; attacks on journalists and documentation equipment restrict the ability to report what is happening; and Israel's campaign against UNRWA, which included, among other things, the enactment of two laws banning or restricting the agency's operations, harms not only the essential services UNRWA provides to refugees, but also one of the central institutional frameworks preserving refugee status and Palestinian political and historical memory.

In public space, this is compounded by the erasure of Palestinian symbols and the saturation of the landscape with Israeli ones. [Palestinian flags](#) are removed from homes, institutions and public spaces, sometimes through violence and arrests. At the same time, tens of thousands of [Israeli flags](#) are placed along roads and at the entrances to Palestinian communities. Control over symbols is not trivial: it expresses a claim to exclusivity over space, history and the political identity permitted within it.

Even under these conditions, Palestinian political and social life persists. Palestinians continue to [organize](#), [document](#), [teach](#), [write](#), [pursue legal action](#), [preserve memory](#), [defend their land](#), maintain [institutions](#) and [rebuild community spaces](#). This continuity underscores that elimination is not a completed state, but an ongoing process deployed against a collective that continues to exist and resist.

Ethnic cleansing and territorial takeover

The way Israel takes over space and the growing manifestations of ethnic cleansing in the West Bank are the clearest expressions of the two dimensions of colonial elimination: dismantling, on the one hand, the conditions for Palestinian existence in the territory, while establishing, on the other hand, a contiguous and institutionalized Israeli space. Since 1967, Israel has seized [upwards of two million dunams](#) [1 dunam = 0.1 hectares], more than one-third of the West Bank, [through](#) an array of legal, planning and administrative mechanisms: declarations of "[state lands](#)," "closed military zones," "firing zones," nature reserves and archaeological sites; planning and building restrictions; [demolition of homes](#) and infrastructure; establishment of settlements; and construction of roads and infrastructure connecting settlements to Israel. Ostensibly, these are different tools justified on different grounds, but together they shrink Palestinian living space and expand the space available to Jewish-Israelis.

Alongside the [official and bureaucratic track](#), settler militias operate from farms and outposts that receive budgets, equipment, infrastructure and military protection. Establishing agricultural farms and outposts enables small numbers of armed settlers to operate from them as militias and take over vast areas in a short time: they block roads, prevent access to grazing areas and water sources, attack residents, damage property and flocks, and enlist the military and police against Palestinian communities. As of July 2026,

Israel had taken control of more than 1,070,000 dunams through these militias, amounting to 18% of the West Bank. [Between 2023 and 2025](#), 185 new outposts were established, approximately 130 of them farm outposts.

Violence, denial of access to land, [demolition of homes](#) and infrastructure, and the absence of protection create a coercive environment in which Palestinian communities cannot remain on their land. As of June 2026, this takeover had led to the expulsion of 64 Palestinian shepherding communities from their homes and the partial expulsion of 15 more. Such forcible transfer does not always require direct physical expulsion; it also occurs when the state or actors operating under its protection make life in a place impossible. When such a pattern is aimed at removing a particular ethnic or national group from an area, it is commonly described as ethnic cleansing. In the West Bank, this pattern reduces Palestinian presence, expands Jewish-Israeli presence and breaks up the continuity of Palestinian life by pushing Palestinians into enclaves.

Another form of displacement and takeover is evident in the refugee camps in the northern West Bank. Since January 2025, [the military has displaced](#) some 33,000 residents of the Jenin, Tulkarm and Nur Shams refugee camps from their homes. It has destroyed buildings and infrastructure, stated that it would maintain its hold on the camps for the time being, and has prevented most residents from returning. This displacement forms part of a transition to a new phase of military action in refugee camps and other densely populated residential areas throughout the West Bank, larger and more aggressive.

Expulsion from the land is also expulsion from home, community, school and livelihood. After a community is displaced, its land becomes grazing territory for settler farms; access roads are closed, Israeli infrastructure is established in its place, and Palestinian presence is erased from the landscape. Palestinians sometimes remain only a short distance from their land, but with no ability to return to the way of life, livelihood and community that existed there. Ethnic cleansing and territorial takeover are the result of the combined operation of the other four domains, while also reinforcing their effects. Loss of land damages territorial contiguity, the economic base and the community fabric, further reducing the possibility of sustaining Palestinian life in the space over time.

The legal implications of the Elimination Project in the West Bank

The "elimination project" is not a discrete legal category, but a term that describes the [cumulative significance](#) of the apartheid regime together with policies and acts that international law recognizes and prohibits, including annexation, settlement construction, forcible transfer, persecution, systematic violence, and the denial of fundamental rights. Many of the practices through which the five domains described above are implemented may also constitute violations of the law of occupation and international human rights law, war crimes or crimes against humanity, including unlawful killing, torture, unlawful imprisonment, collective punishment, persecution, expulsion and forcible transfer, and the establishment of settlements. Taken together, they cannot be understood only as separate violations, but as part of an integrated system through which the elimination project is advanced.

The prohibition of apartheid under international law provides the central legal framework for analyzing the regime in the West Bank. The Israeli regime [distinguishes between two groups](#) - Jews and Palestinians - and allocates status, rights, protections, and resources differently between them; it maintains an institutionalized system of systematic domination and oppression of Palestinians; and it commits inhuman acts to establish and preserve that domination.

The law of occupation continues to apply in the West Bank, but it is neither an alternative to the apartheid framework nor sufficient on its own to capture the full legal picture. The apartheid regime in the West Bank works mainly through military control, while annexation and settlements entrench Israel's control over the territory, alter its composition and violate the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. In its [July 2024 advisory opinion](#), the International Court of Justice held that Israel's continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is unlawful and that it must end it as soon as possible.

The broad impunity enjoyed by soldiers, police officers and settlers who harm Palestinians allows the mechanisms of elimination to persist, become entrenched and take root as part of the Israeli apartheid regime. Between 2016 and 2024, 2,427 complaints concerning harm by soldiers to Palestinians and their property were submitted to the military law enforcement system; investigations were opened in only 22.7% of them, and indictments were filed in only 0.9%. The same pattern appears in cases involving violence by Israelis

against Palestinians: 93.6% of investigation files opened between 2005 and 2025 ended without an indictment, and only 3% ended in a full or partial conviction. Impunity is not restricted to punishment after the fact. It produces conditions in which perpetrators can expect the system to stand behind them, thereby enabling the violence to continue.

Conclusion: The Duty to Stop the Elimination Project and End the Israeli Apartheid Regime

The reality described here leads to a clear moral and political conclusion: the systematic and violent oppression Israel inflicts on Palestinians in the West Bank cannot be ended through more effective enforcement against particularly violent settlers, the removal of certain checkpoints, a partial construction freeze, or piecemeal policy changes. Such steps may prevent some crimes and rights violations and protect people in specific cases, and are therefore important in the immediate term. But they do not alter the structure that produces violence, dispossession and oppression. The practices described in this report are not aberrations but integral to how the regime operates.

Protecting human rights requires stopping the project of elimination and ending Israel's apartheid regime and military control over Palestinians. Sporadic fixes cannot turn a settler-colonial project based on dispossession into a system that respects human rights. Palestinians' rights can never be guaranteed within a system that works to deny them political power, control their land, and dismantle their ability to exist as a collective. A regime based on Jewish supremacy, apartheid and dispossession is illegitimate. It cannot be accepted or normalized, nor is it enough merely to reduce some of the violence and dispossession it produces.

For years, the international community has watched these events as they unfold in the West Bank while continuing to treat them as a series of separate acts and incidents: settlement expansion, settler violence, demolitions, roadblocks, land expropriation, or the killing of Palestinians. Isolated condemnations and repeated calls to show restraint, avoid unilateral steps, or return to the negotiating table give Israel time, latitude and immunity to continue advancing its elimination project. The political, military and economic support for Israel, and the diplomatic protection it receives, provide the Israeli regime with the resources, legitimacy, and freedom to continue committing crimes against Palestinians.

States and international institutions have a moral and legal obligation to do everything in their power and use all means at their disposal under international law to prevent Israel from continuing its crimes, bring them to an end, and protect Palestinians from them. International impunity prevents accountability for crimes already committed and is also one of the conditions that allows such crimes to continue. The genocide in Gaza has not prompted the fundamental shift in international policy demanded by the scale of the crimes, and the same policy enables the continued violence, economic strangulation, social and political destruction and ethnic cleansing in the West Bank.

Analyzing the elimination project also requires attention to the ways Palestinians act within and against it: they hold onto their land, sustain and develop institutions and social and political frameworks, preserve memory and identity, document, organize and resist. These actions are an integral part of the reality described in the report and of the ongoing struggle over space, life within it and the possibility of shaping a Palestinian future.

Any just political order must be grounded in recognition of Palestinians as political subjects with individual and collective rights, not as a population to be managed by Israel or international actors. Palestinians' rights to liberty, equality, self-determination, and to live collectively as a people are the premise, not a matter subject to the consent of the regime that controls them. Palestinians' political status and the conditions of their lives cannot continue to be determined through Israeli coercion, military control, or arrangements that preserve existing relations of domination.

B'Tselem works for a future of freedom, justice, equality, and democracy for all people living between the river and the sea. Such a future requires ending the apartheid regime and military rule over Palestinians, and guaranteeing individual and collective rights, equal political participation, and a meaningful opportunity for everyone to shape their future. Ending the crimes and rights violations is a necessary condition, but justice also requires recognition of injustices, accountability for crimes committed, and confronting the ongoing consequences of past and present dispossession and displacement, violence, and social and political destruction. All this requires a fundamental transformation of the existing regime structure and the construction of a system grounded in the equal worth of every human being and guaranteeing the right to live in freedom, equality, safety, and dignity.