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بتسيلم - مركز المعلومات الإسرائيلي لحقوق الإنسان في الأراضي المحتلة

B'Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories

2013 Annual Report

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Executive Summary

B'Tselem continued its persistent work to protect human rights and promote respect for IHL in the OPT throughout the course of 2013. Despite the seemingly Sisyphean nature of these efforts, a number of significant achievements were noted during this reporting period. These include the following:

- B'Tselem remains the gold standard for research - Our latest report, [Acting the Landlord](#), provides a comprehensive overview of the most entrenched and long-term human rights violation: Israel's massive investment in Israeli settlements alongside the prevention of Palestinian economic and social development, and the constant threat of demolition of Palestinian homes. This report now serves as the centerpiece of advocacy and public education efforts.
- Our [video project](#) continues to break new ground - B'Tselem's YouTube channel is one of the most popular non-profit channels in Israel, with over **4.1 million** views and **242** videos on site. Through our videos and social networking we are exposing new audiences to the human rights messages and mobilizing a community to advocate for change.
- Our advocacy is having an effect – Some of our key concerns regarding Israeli accountability were adopted by the [Turkel Commission](#), an official Israeli government inquiry, which recommended measures to improve Israel's treatment of suspected violations of the laws of armed conflict.
- Our accountability efforts are also achieving important impact – Since 2009, Palestinian minors have repeatedly testified to B'Tselem about abuse and torture in interrogations at [the Etzion Detention Center](#). B'Tselem's adamant intervention resulted in the Judea and Samaria District of Police finally putting an end to this unlawful conduct. Moreover, interrogations of minors are now documented by the police.

In 2013 B'Tselem collected **1,271** testimonies on the full spectrum of human rights issues. The organization released four major research projects: [Acting the Landlord](#); [Israel's Use of Crowd Control Weapons in the West Bank](#); [Human Rights Violations during Operation Pillar of Defense, 14-21 November 2012](#); and a [Position Paper: Turkel Commission 2nd Report](#). Each report was distributed by post to **10,645** recipients, including Israeli policy makers and advisors, government officials, diplomats, journalists, academics and other interested individuals, in addition to e-mail and internet distribution. In addition, B'Tselem published some **30** research items on its website on issues such as [the status of tens of thousands of Gazans living without IDs](#) and [Palestinian prisoners held in isolation in Israeli prisons](#).

B'Tselem also continued its accountability work, submitting **250** requests to investigate specific suspected violations of human rights in the oPt. **96** investigations were opened during 2013, following B'Tselem's intervention, **23** of which included video footage.

B'Tselem conducted more than **140** targeted briefings and field visits with a broad range of influential international officials and decision-makers based or visiting Israel and the PA, in Europe and in the United States.

In addition to international advocacy, during the project period, B'Tselem staff extended its outreach efforts, engaging with Israeli leaders (political, business and cultural) from a wide range of fields and political streams. In addition, B'Tselem staff met with several newly elected Members of Knesset.

With respect to B'Tselem's extensive public outreach activities using traditional and new media: B'Tselem's website was visited **390,336** times in 2013 by **266,617** unique visitors; B'Tselem's social networks (Hebrew and English Facebook pages and Twitter) now proudly host over **54,000** members. In 2013, B'Tselem released **30** press releases to over **1,800** local and foreign journalists and continued to be cited on an almost daily basis in Israeli and foreign press. B'Tselem video footage continued to be utilized on average twice per month in the media. Five op-eds by B'Tselem staff were published in Israeli and international media. B'Tselem distributed monthly newsletters in English and Hebrew via email to **18,754** individuals.

Environment and Political Context

2013 marked 46 years of occupation, and the human rights situation in the oPt remains harsh, not because of dramatic events or a sudden deterioration, but precisely because of the routine.

In Area C, the Israeli governments' policies indicate a proprietary view towards the area; conduct on the ground indicates that they view Area C as Israeli territory, large parts of which should remain under Israeli control in any future agreement, if not everything. Accordingly, these governments have employed a variety of means to tighten their grip on the area, including exploiting West Bank resources, expanding settlements and expelling Palestinians from Area C.

With 62% of the Separation Barrier complete and 85% of the planned route passing within the West Bank, largely dictated by settlements and industrial zones, the barrier results in severe daily infringement of the rights of Palestinians living close by: it restricts their access to agricultural land, to essential services and to family members living on the other side, and blocks any future development in these areas.

The Gaza Strip remains isolated from the West Bank and from the outside world, with government policy significantly restricting imports and exports largely forbidden. Israel allows import of humanitarian aid and consumer goods, however raw materials for construction, industry and agriculture are much more limited, and exports are miniscule. As a result, economic development in Gaza is limited and most Gazans remain dependent on humanitarian aid rather than being able to support themselves. In addition, passage of people between Gaza to the West Bank and Israel is still almost entirely barred by Israeli authorities, effectively turning Gaza into an area under siege. This isolation has harsh implications for family ties, the economy and educational opportunities. With the military takeover in Egypt this year, travel to Egypt through [Rafah Crossing](#) was also severely curtailed, further isolating Gaza.

The separation between Palestinians and Israelis and between Palestinians living in the West Bank and those living in Gaza is now an official government policy. As a rule, Palestinians are now forbidden from entering Israel and settlements, except if they have obtained permits, which are given on very strict conditions. As Israeli law has been applied to East Jerusalem, Palestinians who are not residents of Jerusalem must also obtain permits in order to enter that area. This continues the ongoing process of separating East Jerusalem from the West Bank. Movement within the West Bank, including between Areas A, B and C, often involves crossing checkpoints, and Israel frequently imposes additional restrictions on Palestinian movement.

In the international arena, some important developments have taken place. American Secretary of State John Kerry announced a return to peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. And in another development, EU representatives are issuing firm statements against Israel's policy in the OPT, especially as regards the settlements, with new guidelines to ensure that no EU programs support settlements.

In Israel, within the governing coalition, there are elements that push for the peace negotiations while others negate any possibility of political agreement and even advocate for annexation of part or all of the West Bank. Discourse on human rights in the oPt is strikingly absent, but there has been a slight increase in the number of moderate political representatives in this current Knesset who are willing to engage with B'Tselem and its human rights message. In short, the current political system exhibits a constant push and pull between its hawkish factions and more moderate factions, a struggle which also manifests itself in the resurfacing of benched anti-democratic legislation which targets human rights organizations.

The current situation continues to cost both sides dearly. The cycle of violence, disregard for civilian life, failure to uphold the rule of law, and lack of accountability, have made people on both sides weary and wary of the possibility for peace and apathetic to the suffering on the other side. Against this backdrop, it is little wonder that many Israelis are completely unaware of the daily realities for Palestinians.

Research Informing Policymakers and the Public

B'Tselem's research remains a core competency from which all of its transformative outreach efforts radiate. **B'Tselem's meticulously-researched, in-depth reports continue to serve as a valuable resource and inform discourse amongst Israeli policymakers, and between these policymakers and diplomats from around the world.** The reports also serve to raise Israeli public awareness regarding IHL and human rights violations. Each report is distributed by post to over 10,000 recipients, including Israeli and international policy makers and advisors, government officials, diplomats, journalists, academics and other interested individuals. This compliments e-mail distribution to over 18,000 recipients, and publication in the mainstream press and through social media to over 50,000 people.

In 2013, B'Tselem published four reports on human rights issues in the oPt:

- [Israel's Use of Crowd Control Weapons in the West Bank](#), published in January 2013, reveals the full inventory of crowd control weapons used by Israeli security forces in the West Bank. These weapons are meant to be non-lethal, enabling authorities to enforce the law without endangering human life. As the report discusses, some of these weapons are dangerous and may be lethal if used improperly. The report highlights two problems in Israel's use of these weapons: unclear or problematic regulations regarding their use and lack of enforcement of regulations, ignoring the widespread misuse of weapons.
- [Human Rights Violations during Operation Pillar of Defense](#), published in May 2013, reviews civilian casualties during Operation Pillar of Defense. It provides statistics regarding the number of Palestinians and Israelis killed during the operation (14-21 November 2012). The report challenges the prevalent perception among the Israeli public and media that the operation was "surgical" and caused practically no fatalities among uninvolved Palestinian civilians. The report also demonstrates a significant difference between the first and second half of the operation: 80% of the fatalities of uninvolved Palestinians occurred in the last four days of the operation. The report was accompanied by a social media campaign and was covered in traditional media in Israel and abroad.
- [Acting the Landlord: Israel's Policy in Area C, the West Bank](#), published in June 2013, is a comprehensive report on one of B'Tselem's priority issues. 60% of the West Bank is designated Area C, under exclusive Israeli control. It is home to 180,000 Palestinians and includes most West Bank land reserves. Israel, citing "state lands" or "firing zones", largely prohibits Palestinian construction. Israel's planning policy ignores local needs: refuses to recognize villages or draft plans; blocks development and infrastructure hook-ups; and demolishes homes. Thousands are in danger of expulsion for living in firing zones or "illegal" communities. Israel has appropriated most water sources and restricts Palestinian access to them. The report was accompanied by an intensive (and still ongoing) international advocacy campaign, including briefings and site-visits.
- [Position Paper: Turkel Commission 2nd Report](#), published in August 2013, examines the Turkel Commission's recommendations on Israel's investigative policy of alleged violations of laws of war. While the commission held that Israel fulfills its obligation to investigate, it noted: "in several of the areas examined, there are grounds for amending examination and investigation mechanisms. And in several areas, there are grounds for changing the accepted policy." The commission's 18 recommendations are far-reaching. B'Tselem emphasizes that greater systemic change is needed to bring Israel's military investigative policy up to par. This position paper forms the basis for B'Tselem's advocacy to promote policy change fostering accountability.

Additional research-based items during 2013 focused on issues such as [Israel's separation policy in Hebron city center](#) (January); [Restrictions on Gaza's fishing range](#) (March); [Israeli military dogs assaulting Palestinian civilians](#) (March); [Israeli police pepper-spraying non-violent civilians](#) (April); [Work permits for Palestinian workers](#) (May); [Gazan children prohibited from visiting imprisoned fathers](#) (May); [Failure of security forces to protect Palestinians from settler attacks](#) (May); [Inefficient Military Police investigations when civilians killed in West Bank](#) (May); [Palestinian prisoners held in isolation in Israeli prisons](#) (June); [Implications of the Separation Barrier on Palestinian families](#) (June); [The status of tens of thousands of Gazans living without IDs](#) (July);

[Checkpoint inspections](#) (July); [Blocked access to West Bank villages](#) (July); ["Firing Zone 918" in the South Hebron Hills](#) (August); [Revocation of residency in East Jerusalem](#) (August); [Abuse and torture in interrogations of Palestinian minors in the Etzion Facility](#) (August); [Palestinian ghost towns](#) (September); [Israel's duty to enable Gazans' to travel abroad](#) (October); [Area C issues](#) (October); [Israeli military firing at Palestinian farmers by Israel-Gaza border](#) (October); [Israeli military inadequately prepared to protect farmers during 2013 olive harvest](#) (December); [5-year high in number of Palestinian fatalities in West Bank](#) (December).

Promoting Accountability for Human Rights Violations

Accountability Actions

In 2013, B'Tselem's field researchers collected **1,271** testimonies, some 80% of them from Palestinians from the West Bank and the rest from the residents of the Gaza Strip. Also, the field researchers wrote an additional **261** reports based on investigations of incidents.

Based on the testimonies, during 2013, B'Tselem's data coordinators submitted **250** requests to investigate suspected cases of violations. Of these requests to investigate: 21 related to fatalities in the West Bank, 3 to fatalities in Gaza and 2 to fatalities in Israel; 13 to injuries in the West Bank; 42 to instances of security force violence; 162 to instances of settler violence; and 7 to failures of security forces to carry out their duties. B'Tselem also continues to advocate for accountability in cases submitted previously, a lengthy process that can take years. **96** investigations were opened during 2013, following B'Tselem's intervention.

During 2013, two indictments were issued in cases B'Tselem pressed forward. The first for a case in which security forces detained and beat a 15 year-old Palestinian in Ras el Amoud in 2010. The second for a May 2013 case in which a Palestinian taxi driver was stabbed by a Jewish resident of Gillo who, according to the indictment, held "anti-Arab views".

Also during 2013, there were five convictions in cases where B'Tselem submitted requests to investigate or provided materials used in the investigations and the trial: [Border-police officers abusing a mentally-challenged Palestinian](#) (September 2009); [killing of a Palestinian who tried to enter to work without a permit](#) (January 2013); [beating of 13 year-old Palestinian by a border-police officer in Hebron](#) (August 2009); [beating of a Palestinian worker in Israel by police](#) (April 2008); and [policeman shooting and killing Palestinian man in Tel-Aviv, whom they suspected of stealing a car](#) (September 2010).

Broad Impact of B'Tselem's Work Promoting Accountability

B'Tselem's efforts to advance accountability involve ongoing and regular engagement with a range of Israeli authorities – military, police, the courts and the Ministry of Justice – and enable B'Tselem to closely monitor and evaluate the mechanisms for conducting investigations and prosecutions. B'Tselem has been carrying out extensive research and advocacy on the need for better accountability mechanisms, collecting information on the inherent flaws in the system and offering recommendations as to how they should be rectified. For years B'Tselem has been cautioning that the Israeli military does not properly investigate suspicious of illegal conduct and refrains from enforcing the law with regard to security services personnel.

In this context, B'Tselem [testified](#) before the Turkel Commission, which was established to study the question whether Israel's present apparatus for examining and investigating claims of breach of the laws of war conforms to its international obligations. In February 2013, B'Tselem [welcomed](#) the recommendations of the Turkel Commission concerning investigations of violations of the laws of armed conflict and called for full and prompt implementation. **In its report, the commission adopted several fundamental principles presented to it by representatives of B'Tselem**, other human rights organizations and senior jurists. B'Tselem [continues to press](#) for the adoption of the Turkel Commission's recommendations through direct advocacy with Israeli policymakers as well as advocacy with the international community.

Video: Promoting Accountability and Reaching New Audiences

Video Promoting Accountability and Deterring Violence

B'Tselem's video footage has become a crucial tool in B'Tselem's work to pursue accountability from the military and the police, as well as the courts. This is due to the fact that visual images are uniquely able to challenge official denials of violations taking place and are able to attest to the impact of government and military policies.

During 2013, B'Tselem's video volunteers continued to operate some 220 cameras in 'hot-spots' in the West Bank and Gaza, capturing visual documentation of human rights violations. Over the year, staff met with the volunteers regularly to provide them with training, supervision and enrichment. 15 group workshops and meetings were held in 2013, as well as two special workshops on the right to protest and the legal right to film and document in the West Bank in cooperation with the Association for Civil Rights in Israel.

Video footage was involved in 33 of the cases B'Tselem documented in 2013, serving to advance accountability and to deter future violations. For example:

- Following a video, filmed by an international activist in March 2013, [showing arrests by the Israeli military of Palestinian children in Hebron](#), B'Tselem urgently contacted the Army's Legal Advisor for Judea and Samaria, demanding his emergency intervention regarding the detention of numerous children, including some as young as 8 to 10 years old. The video was released on B'Tselem's website, Facebook and YouTube Channel, where it reached over 108,000 views in two weeks, with a total of **131,181** views.
- On July 9 2013, B'Tselem staff and volunteers documented a grave incident in [which soldiers detained a five-year-old boy in Hebron](#) for two hours, after he threw a stone. The soldiers threatened the child and his parents, handcuffed and blindfolded the father, and handed the boy over to the Palestinian Police. B'Tselem urgently wrote to the Legal Adviser for Judea and Samaria. In his response letter, the legal advisor addressed the general issue of soldiers having to deal with a complex reality in which children under the age of criminal responsibility throw stones. He justified the soldiers' conduct from beginning to end, except their blindfolding and handcuffing the child's father. B'Tselem replied that the soldiers had acted in a fundamentally unacceptable way throughout the incident. Video footage from this incident quickly went viral, reaching a total of **306,819** views to date, and sparking public discourse in Israel and internationally.
- In April, [settlers from Giv'at Gal outpost entered the private land of the Palestinian Zaro family from Hebron](#). The family members called the police to report the trespassing. The soldiers who arrived arrested the three Palestinian land owners instead of removing the settlers from the area and the police detained the three overnight. The defense counsel submitted video footage of the arrest, filmed by B'Tselem volunteer. Due to the footage, a military court justice ordered the unconditional release of the three.
- Also in April, a B'Tselem's camera project volunteer was filming a demonstration in the village of a-Nabi Saleh when he was [pepper-sprayed in the face by a Border policeman](#). Over the past three years, B'Tselem has documented 18 incidents in which demonstrators and photographers reported the use of pepper-spray in contravention of official police orders, with police pepper-spraying unarmed, non-violent civilians. Five of these incidents were captured on video.
- Immediately following the stabbing attack on April 30 2013, in which a Palestinian killed a resident of the settlement Yitzhar, B'Tselem video volunteers documented several incidents where [the army failed in its duty to protect Palestinians from settler revenge attacks](#). B'Tselem passed the material to the relevant authorities to help promote criminal investigations and to communicate to the army that the forces did not adhere to their obligation to defend the Palestinian population.
- B'Tselem obtained video footage, captured by a security camera on 18 June 2013, in [which masked settlers are seen setting fire to a toolshed in the village of 'Asirah al-Qibliyah, which lies in the northern West Bank](#). B'Tselem transferred the footage to the police, along with a demand that an investigation be

opened in order to identify the perpetrators of the attack and arrest them. In addition, B'Tselem demanded that the army check whether soldiers were at the nearby post while the attack took place and, if so, why they did not apprehend the perpetrators. An investigation has been opened.

- On June 21 2013, during the weekly demonstration at Kafr Qadum to protest the closing of the road that links the village to the city of Nablus, [Israeli soldiers attacked a reporter and a photojournalist](#) of the Palestinian television. The men were then detained and held in custody for two days. Part of the assault was caught on video, and the soldiers are seen beating reporter Ahmad 'Othman as he tries to protect himself. In response to airing this footage, the IDF Spokesperson claimed that the journalists had attacked the soldiers, yet did not have any documentation to substantiate its claim. B'Tselem applied to the MAG Corps demanding an investigation of the incident.
- On 19 July 2013 [B'Tselem Spokesperson Sarit Michaeli was hit and injured by a rubber-coated metal bullet](#) a Border Police officer fired at her while she was filming a demonstration at the village of a-Nabi Saleh. The shooting contravenes military directives. B'Tselem conveyed footage of the incident to police.
- In October 2013, the Na'asan family went to harvest their olives, in the Ramallah district. [Several masked settlers arrived at the grove and began attacking the family with stones](#). The family responded by throwing stones back. The settlers then assaulted family members. Other family members called for the Israeli security forces, which arrived while the settlers were retreating, but made no attempt to apprehend or detain them. B'Tselem has submitted the video to police investigators. B'Tselem and other human rights organizations also applied to OC Central Command and to the Legal Advisor in Judea and Samaria demanding that security forces be deployed in areas which have seen repeated settler attacks.
- On November 27, 2013, Muhmmad 'Awad, a B'Tselem volunteer, documented clashes between Palestinian youth and soldiers. Then, his footage clearly depicts an officer pointing a tear gas launcher towards him, and [firing a canister that hit him in the chest](#). B'Tselem used the complaints procedure to protest this individual instance of direct firing of tear gas, as well as the broader phenomenon of misuse of gas canisters. B'Tselem is using the video to engage with senior commanders to have regulations that prohibit direct firing enforced. In December 2013, the MAG Corps informed B'Tselem that an MPIU investigation of the incident has been launched.

These examples demonstrate the significance of video evidence in the fight against impunity. Without the video evidence - filmed by B'Tselem's volunteers, retrieved by B'Tselem's field-researchers or submitted to B'Tselem due to its expertise of leveraging video to promote accountability - it is doubtful that conflicting accounts of incidents could have been effectively resolved through investigations. It is highly likely that the outcomes would have been different - both on the individual level, as well as on the level of policies that were changed or enforced. It is reasonable to conclude that combating impunity in these instances has a much broader impact on the overall environment within which these and similar incidents take place, by deterring future violations and empowering local actors to seek recourse to mechanisms associated with justice.

In 2013 B'Tselem put special consideration on how to further enhance gender sensitivity in all elements of B'Tselem's video work. For example, B'Tselem reached out to Palestinian women who have the potential of becoming volunteer video monitors. This outreach has succeeded in raising the number of women volunteering in B'Tselem's Video Project by more than ten percent. Some 53 women are now taking part in the program, and over this reporting period, the women participated in four training sessions designed specifically for women (individual or small-group training) and three general group workshops.

Women have already made use of their skills to produce effective footage, which has been used to promote accountability, and has reached hundreds of thousands of viewers through B'Tselem's new media tools and through traditional media services. Women in the Nablus area experience many instances of human rights violations and are therefore experienced in their documentation. Over this reporting period, these women demonstrated outstanding capacity, capturing footage that has reached hundreds of thousands. One such example is the case in May of [settlers firing at Palestinians in the presence of soldiers](#): Settlers descended on the eastern outskirts of the village 'Asira al-Qibliya, from the settlement Yitzhar. Three of B'Tselem's women volunteers documented the events from their homes. The video shows the settlers throwing stones at

Palestinian homes and later aiming their weapons at the Palestinians and firing in the presence of soldiers, injuring a village resident in the head. Using this visual documentation, B'Tselem was able to submit a request to investigate the incident, as well as increase public awareness of settler violence, with over 300,00 views of the footage, from two angles, on B'Tselem's YouTube channel alone.

Video Outreach to New Audiences

The use of visual material is now an integral element of B'Tselem's strategy to reach larger audiences and involve them in human rights advocacy. This complements the use of footage to promote accountability for human rights violations. In 2013, B'Tselem's video department continued to produce short documentaries and articles, bringing into focus the life of Palestinians living under occupation with their basic rights continually under threat. Some highlights from 2013:

- [Video: 19 years after massacre at Tomb of the Patriarchs, Israel continues to entrench separation policy in Hebron](#) (March): Since 1994, when settler Baruch Goldstein massacred Moslem worshipers in the Tomb of the Patriarchs, the Israeli military has employed a "policy of separation" in Hebron. This is implemented primarily through severe restrictions on Palestinian movement in downtown Hebron, where most Israeli settlement outposts are located. Lately the military has further entrenched this policy by building a fence dividing a central street in half and only allowing Jews to use the paved side of the street while Palestinians must use a rough, unpaved passage. (19,156 views on YouTube).
- [Video: Israel prohibits Gazan children from visiting imprisoned fathers](#) (May): Some 511 Gazan men, including 14 minors, are currently being held as prisoners and detainees in Israel. In July 2012, after a five-year hiatus, family visits to Gazan inmates in Israel were resumed, though children over eight, siblings and grandparents are not allowed to visit. B'Tselem calls upon the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) to allow all first-degree relatives to visit. (8,477 views on YouTube).
- [Video: Palestinians with work permits must arrive at checkpoints before dawn, undergo humiliating inspection](#) (October): B'Tselem's video reveals a harsh reality at the checkpoints. The ministry of Defense must adjust the conditions at checkpoints to accommodate the number of Palestinians issued work permits by the Civil Administration, and ensure that the laborers can enter Israel without violation of their human dignity. (7,452 views on YouTube).
- [Video: My own private Gaza - Bummer Generation](#) (October): Khaled al-'Azayzeh, B'Tselem field researcher in Gaza, continues to bring us his personal Gaza: "Last episode, I turned the camera inwards and looked at my home, my family, my local coffee shop. This time, we'll go outside for a bit and visit my nephew Muamen. He and his friends are recent university graduates, but instead of finding jobs and joining the workforce, they've joined the most frustrated class of people in Gaza, the unemployed ... Or as Muamen calls them, the 'bummer generation'". (1,259 views on YouTube)

In May 2013, **The Tel-Aviv Cinematheque held a tribute event to activist videographers**, as part of its festival Art Intifada, which was based almost entirely on B'Tselem's video work. Many of B'Tselem's field-researchers attended the event, where videos filmed by B'Tselem's volunteers and staff were screened.

Also this year, **B'Tselem assisted Canadian artist Zohar Kfir in creating [Points of View](#)**, an ongoing interactive web documentary based on video footage shot by Palestinians working with B'Tselem's Camera Distribution Project. The site, launched in March, offers an intimate and situated look at life under the Israeli occupation. Beyond providing the footage, B'Tselem provided some technical support and creative feedback.

B'Tselem is proud to have had the short documentary, **Smile, and the World Will Smile Back**, by B'Tselem's camera project, [screened at the Berlinale Film Festival](#). The film is the product of collaborative effort by filmmakers and a Hebron family of B'Tselem volunteer photographers. The film was also accepted by North America's largest documentary film festival, [Toronto's Hot Docs festival](#), and B'Tselem anticipates many more screenings during 2014. The film documents one winter's night at the al-Haddad home in Hebron. A group of soldiers arrives for a routine night search there, for reasons unknown to the family. Diaan and Shatha al-Hadaad, brother and sister, pick up the home video camera and record the events as they unfold throughout the night. The soldiers force Diaan to stand facing a wall, saying they won't leave unless he stops smiling.

Public Resource and Information Centre

Over 2013 B'Tselem distributed monthly newsletters in English and Hebrew via email to **18,754** individuals, including diplomats, domestic and international policymakers and journalists, providing them with current information on human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories.

In addition, B'Tselem published comprehensive [statistical reports and analysis](#) on its website, providing detailed and reliable information to the public, policymakers and the media. The information includes data on fatalities, detainees and prisoners, destruction of property, the separation barrier, settlements, residency issues, restrictions on movement and water.

During 2013, as always, B'Tselem also provided individual assistance to researchers, students, diplomats, and journalists addressing human rights issues in the OPT. B'Tselem responded to dozens of information requests each month via post, phone and email. Furthermore, B'Tselem's Prisoners Data Coordinator shared detailed statistics on Palestinian prisoners in Israel, obtained through monthly Freedom of Information requests to the Israeli Prison Service, via a monthly email to relevant human rights organizations, diplomats, attorneys and UN agencies.

In 2013, B'Tselem also initiated [a follow up](#) on its website on the issue of Military Police and MAG Corps investigations of civilian Palestinian fatalities in West Bank, since the new investigation policy has been imposed. In 2011 the State Attorney's Office [notified](#) the High Court of Justice of a change to the military's investigative policy. According to the new policy, the MAG would instruct the Military Police to launch an investigation in every case in which a Palestinian not taking part in the hostilities was killed in the West Bank.

B'Tselem submitted **32** requests for information to Israeli authorities in 2013, under the auspice of the Freedom of Information Law, on issues such as accountability, house demolitions and administrative detention. In one case, [B'Tselem appealed to the court](#) after the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) breached the Freedom of Information Law, disregarding a request for information on demolition orders issued and implemented by the Civil Administration and building permits it issued for [Area C](#) from 2008 to 2012. Subsequently, the information was provided.

During 2013, B'Tselem continued to integrate data from over 24 years of documentation into a single MIS database, improving organizational efficiency and data dissemination. Combined with the capacities of B'Tselem's new Salesforce-based customer relationship management (CRM) system, B'Tselem is now able to target its information and messaging to key stakeholders more effectively. **These increased technological capacities represent significant force multipliers for B'Tselem's work.**

Finally, B'Tselem's video department has now successfully archived over 4,000 hours of video footage in an accessible, easily-searchable format (adding some 400 hours in the course of 2013). This archive is proving a valuable resource for journalists, researchers and documentary filmmakers, in addition to its uses for investigations. **In 2013, the documentary films *5 Broken Cameras* and *The Gatekeepers*, both of which made use of archived video from B'Tselem, were nominated to receive academy awards.**

Advocacy Promoting Human Rights in the oPt

Advocacy within Israel

B'Tselem's unique ability to engage with a wide variety of actors – ranging from military and police authorities, government offices and personnel, media, academia and other Israeli civil society organizations – enables it to direct efforts on a variety of levels and with many different systems and to engage directly with a broad scope of key Israeli target groups, thus enhancing its effectiveness and its ability to affect real change on the ground.

B'Tselem's awareness-raising and advocacy on human rights in the oPt with the Israeli public and its leaders continues to be directed at impacting policy and bringing about greater protection for the fundamental rights of the Palestinian population under occupation.

In 2013, B'Tselem extended its outreach efforts, engaging with Israeli leaders (political, business and cultural) from a wide range of fields and political streams. B'Tselem's Executive Director and Public Outreach Director have met with many public figures during 2013, including Dov Weisglass, prominent lawyer, former advisor to Ariel Sharon, Uriel Reichman, president of the Interdisciplinary Center and former politician, Avrum Burg, chairman of Molad - The Center for Renewal of Democracy, author and former government minister, artist David Tratakover, singer Rona Kenan, Prof. Neta Ziv, director of The Cegla Clinical Law Programs at Tel-Aviv University and the academic supervisor of the Human Rights Clinic, Yoaz Hendel, journalist and former Director of Communications and public diplomacy for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and others.

As part of B'Tselem's and other Israeli human rights organizations' campaign on Firing Zone 918 in the South Hebron Hills, [prominent Israeli writers visited the area](#), and appealed to prevent expulsion of Palestinians. Zeruya Shalev, Eyal Megged, Sayed Kashua and Alona Kimhi met with the Palestinian residents of the village of Jenbah, who told them about the reality of their lives and the danger they face of being expelled from the site, which the military has declared "Firing Zone 918".

In addition to this process, B'Tselem continued its extensive engagement with the Israeli military, initiating dialogue with key personnel. During 2013, B'Tselem staff met on numerous occasions with a broad spectrum of decision-makers within the Israeli military, including the OC Central Commander; the Commander of Forces in the Judea and Samaria (West Bank) division; the IDF Legal Advisor in the West Bank; the Military Advocate General and other members of the MAG Corps; and the Hebron Brigade Commander. B'Tselem also had meetings with the Israel Police Commissioner and the West Bank Police Commander to address abuse of Palestinian minors. B'Tselem also issued over ten principled petitions to the Israeli military on issues such as [the firing of rubber bullets at protestors in the West Bank](#) and [adequate preparation of Israeli security forces for future incidents of settler violence towards Palestinians](#).

Following the elections in early 2013 and the many new elected representatives, B'Tselem also increased its outreach efforts in the Knesset, in order to enhance cooperation and advocacy on human rights in the West Bank and Gaza. As a first step in a series of efforts meant to increase cooperation and advocacy, B'Tselem invited all elected Knesset members to a briefing and a site-visit with B'Tselem.

As part of this effort, a dedicated lobbyist joined B'Tselem's staff this year. After the elections, he organized meetings with several newly elected Members of Knesset to brief them on B'Tselem's work, from the parties Yesh Atid, Hatnua, Balad, Hadash, Meretz and Ra'am-Ta'al. During the year, he continued to meet with MKs from center-left parties, and developed ties to a number of government offices. In this capacity, **B'Tselem successfully initiated a discussion in the Public Petitions Committee of the Knesset, on the arrest of Palestinian minors, on the 31st of December 2013.** B'Tselem's researcher Naama Baumgarten-Sharon presented B'Tselem's case to the participants, from a range of organizations and police and military authorities. The Committee Chairperson, MK Adi Koll, expressed her deep concern for the [rights of Palestinian minors](#) during arrest and interrogation. She requested the authorities supply additional data on the arrest of minors in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, as preparation for a follow up meeting scheduled for March 2014.

International Advocacy

Based on B'Tselem's US office, its European representative and its team in Jerusalem, B'Tselem succeeded in conducting more than **140** targeted briefings and field visits with a broad range of influential international officials and decision-makers. As in previous years, B'Tselem's research and analysis was cited extensively in states' human rights reports, in reports by special rapporteurs and the EU Heads of Mission, in diplomatic communications, and was referenced to support the engagement by international bodies with Israeli officials.

These briefings, field visits and engagements included a range of forms:

- Site-visits and briefings with Norwegian, French, UK, EU, Swedish, Japanese, Czech and UK diplomats to the southern Hebron Hills, to a-Nabi Saleh, to sites relevant for exploring issues of the relationship of Area C policies on Areas A & B and to examine the impact of the Separation Barrier;
- Briefing with European diplomats based in Tel Aviv and hosted by the Irish Embassy on Crowd Control;

- Presentation to 30 American diplomats who are primarily involved in security issues at the US Consulate (USSC);
- Targeted "Rep Office" briefings, including one with the German representative to the PA and the Office's senior staff; with the Irish and with the Belgians.
- Briefing on settlements in Geneva with European diplomats, at the invitation of an international NGO.
- Briefings with high level visiting dignitaries, including the Irish Justice and Defense Minister, Canadian Deputy Minister of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, the Canadian Head of Middle East Department, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, the Swedish Minister of Development Cooperation, the Middle East Advisor to French President Emmanuel Bonne, and groups of British MK's and Lords
- Advocacy trips to Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium/EU, the UK, Italy, Denmark, which included briefings to parliamentarians, officials in the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Development, and the Chancellor's Office.
- Extensive engagement by B'Tselem's US staff with the State Department, the NSA, key Congressional aides, and influential policy forums & think-tanks.
- Advocacy meetings with key US Congress Representatives, together with World Vision, on abuses related to the arrest and detention of minors.

Public Outreach

In addition to providing information about human rights violations, B'Tselem uses a variety of strategies to influence public opinion. **B'Tselem works hard to raise awareness of the human rights situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to generate commitment to the fundamental principles of human rights amongst Israelis.** These efforts include close engagement with the Israeli and International press, a thriving new media department and B'Tselem's renowned video outreach to the wide public through shorts and documentaries.

B'Tselem in the Press

B'Tselem's research and documentation are well respected both domestically and internationally as a primary source of information for media correspondents. During the reporting period, B'Tselem released **30** press releases (in Hebrew, English and Arabic) to over **1,800** local and foreign journalists. These served to announce the release of new reports, issue data summaries, highlight specific incidents of IHL and human rights violations, and provide a human rights perspective on current events. B'Tselem also provided assistance to journalists in preparing stories on human rights topics by, for instance, escorting them to meet with victims of violations.

During 2013, B'Tselem continued to be cited on an almost daily basis in Israeli and foreign press. B'Tselem video footage continued to be utilized on average twice per month in the media. B'Tselem's staff were frequently interviewed, written up or published in international and local media. Five op-eds by B'Tselem staff were published in Israeli and international media in 2013, including two op-eds by B'Tselem Board Chair David Zonsheine in *Ha'aretz*.

Some of the highlights during the period were:

- [The Washington Post](#) published an article in January titled *Fatal shootings of unarmed Palestinians raise concerns about Israeli use of force*. This article, among others, followed the release of B'Tselem's research report on [Israel's use of crowd control weapons in the West Bank](#). In this context, [NTDTV](#) and [The Sydney Morning Herald](#), among others, interviewed B'Tselem Spokesperson Sarit Michaeli.
- In March 2013, Ynet published an [article](#) featuring B'Tselem's video documenting [the division of a road](#) in the center of Hebron by Israeli security forces, separating it into a paved road for Jews and a narrow,

rough passage for Palestinians. The article was featured on Ynet's homepage. The day following the release of the video, B'Tselem's field-researchers in Hebron reported that **the military reversed its policy** and allowed Palestinians to pass freely in the paved road initially meant for Jews.

- Also in March, Ynet published an article on the military's practice of spraying the 'skunk' liquid at residential homes of uninvolved civilians. The [article](#) features a B'Tselem video filmed during a demonstration in a-Nabi Saleh documenting this practice.
- In April, NPR's [This American Life](#) reported on Israeli soldiers routinely waking up Palestinian families in the middle of the night, to take photos of the teen boys in the house. This report was based on video footage by B'Tselem volunteers.
- B'Tselem's Executive Director, Jessica Montell, published an op-ed in [The Jerusalem post](#) in May, titled *Children under 12 cannot be arrested*. She is quoted: "All who call for the violation of the rights of Palestinian child suspects must first consider whether they would consent to a similar violation of an Israeli child's rights."
- Ynet English published an [article](#) in May titled *Probe: Soldiers beat Palestinian, camera turned away. B'Tselem rights group claims filming of incident in which troops allegedly beat detainee in West Bank purposely disrupted*. The article includes footage [circulated by B'Tselem](#).
- Ynet English published an [article](#) in June titled: *Light sentence for officers who abused Palestinian*. "The indictment against the former officers was filed when a B'Tselem video documenting the incident was submitted to the Internal Affairs Division at the Justice Ministry. The footage helped B'Tselem track down the victim, whose identity was not known up to that point".
- Following B'Tselem's campaign, in cooperation with other organizations, on [Firing Zone 918](#), an extensive [article](#) was featured (June) in Yedioth Ahoronot's Friday supplement (widely read in Israel) as well as in [Ha'aretz Magazine](#) (September).
- Video footage of [the incident](#) where B'Tselem Spokesperson Sarit Michaeli was injured by a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Border Police officer, in July, was distributed in real-time to local and international press and brought to coverage in two major Israeli news websites ([Ynet](#), [Walla](#)).
- Also in July, B'Tselem's Field Researcher captured [video footage](#) of soldiers detaining a Palestinian five-year-old in Hebron for two hours, after he threw a stone. The child is seen breaking down in tears while the soldiers force him onto their jeep. This disturbing footage was distributed to mainstream media in real-time, and went viral. This brought to wide coverage in local and international press. For instance, in [the New York Times](#), [Fox News](#), [Ha'aretz](#) and [Israel Today](#).
- In [an op-ed](#) published in Ma'ariv in July, titled *The first of its kind*, B'Tselem spokesperson Sarit Michaeli responds to claims by Ma'ariv columnist Ben Dror Yamini that the detention of a 5 year-old Palestinian boy in Hebron was an exceptional incident.
- In September, the Jerusalem Post published an [article](#) titled: *B'Tselem blasts IDF for closing case in killing of noncombatant Palestinian featured in 'Five Broken Cameras'*. Four and a half after the killing of Bassem Abu Rahmeh, the state announced it is closing the case citing lack of evidence, even though the death [was clearly documented](#) by three video angles.
- In November, The [Norwegian Broadcasting Cooperation](#) reported on the Norwegian Foreign Minister's meeting with Israel's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, as well as his visit to Mount Scopus with B'Tselem Executive director Jessica Montell.
- The Guardian introduced an interactive site called [Walled World](#) in November. It presents walls around the world through images, first-hand accounts and videos. It shows the effect that walls have on the people around them. One section of Walled World deals with the Separation Barrier in the West Bank. It includes three videos by B'Tselem, some produced specifically for this project.

In July 2013, *Action on Armed Violence* selected B'Tselem's Executive Director Jessica Montell as [one of 100 most influential people in armed violence reduction](#). The organization, dedicated to reducing armed violence around the world has compiled a list of "100 people who are outstanding examples of those trying to change the world for the better." The list includes government officials, international legal figures, academics, journalists, donors, public figures and non-for-profit leaders. The award is recognition of the impact of B'Tselem's work over the past two decades in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

New Media Outreach

In 2013 B'Tselem's Public Outreach Department put special emphasis on increasing the reach and resonance of its human rights message using new media and related multimedia technologies. B'Tselem actively used interactive social networking and other web-based tools to target Israeli and international audiences and to create a hub of public debate and engagement. These new media tools have significantly expanded B'Tselem's outreach, with thousands exposed to B'Tselem's messages weekly.

B'Tselem Website - a central clearinghouse of human rights information

B'Tselem's [website](#) received **390,336** visits in 2013 by **266,617** unique visitors. 67% of the visits were from new visitors. **935,978** pages were viewed during the year.

B'Tselem's web platform continues to serve as the focal point for B'Tselem's extensive body of information and data on human rights in the oPt. Its user-friendly interface and interactive map continue to integrate B'Tselem's video footage from the field with B'Tselem's more traditional forms of information (statistics, maps, testimonies, etc.). This is done in a way that conveys to the user every aspect of the context – geographic and legal – while making accessible the personal stories of right holders living under occupation.

In 2013 B'Tselem adapted a new improved platform for its interactive map, easing accessibility to the map and speed for multiple users. The new platform also enables B'Tselem to create extra detailed maps for specific issues. For instance, B'Tselem integrated information on instances of settler violence that occurred during the 2013 olive harvest into a dedicated map so as to provide a visual and informative overview. The map was then imbedded within an [informative piece](#) which includes background on the general issue as well narrative descriptions from Palestinian farmers and links to videos.

In a further technological advance during 2013, B'Tselem adapted its website for use on smartphones and tablets. This important project allows mobile users to easily access B'Tselem's website content, including use of the interactive map. In 2013, close to 19% of the visitors to the website were using smartphones, with an additional 4% of visitors using a tablet computer.

In late 2013, B'Tselem launched the [Eyes Wide Open - Photo Blog](#) on its website. The blog brings to life B'Tselem's multifaceted work for Human Rights in the West Bank and Gaza. The first post, titled "Ghost town: A tour of downtown Hebron", shows photos taken by Sharon Azran, a photographer and a B'Tselem staff member. Other posts show photos taken by B'Tselem's Field Researchers and video volunteers.

B'Tselem's social networks - hosting over 54,000 members

B'Tselem's social networks now proudly host more than **54,000** members and serve as a highly effective form of grassroots outreach. B'Tselem's Facebook pages and Twitter updates actively reach out to the Israeli and international public, initiating discourse on pertinent human right issues. Throughout the reporting period, on average, content from B'Tselem's [Hebrew Facebook page](#) (👍**20,957** to date) was viewed by an average of 11,000 users daily, while content from B'Tselem's [English Facebook page](#) (👍**22,095** to date) was viewed by 3,200 daily. B'Tselem's Twitter now counts **11,000** followers. Uploaded reports and footage on the social networks sparked discussion and encouraged members to share the information through their own networks, reaching tens of thousands in Israel and internationally.

To leverage the social networks, the ***B'Tselem Community*** - a Facebook group made up of 150 Israeli new media leaders who are B'Tselem supporters and who share and promote B'Tselem's content and information through their own networks - was launched in January 2013. The creation of an intimate community of committed people serves to amplify the reach and resonance of B'Tselem's human rights message.

B'Tselem's YouTube - Israel's leading non-profit channel

Footage has been viewed over 4.1 million times to date on B'Tselem's popular [YouTube Channel](#), which now offers 242 video items and hosts 4,284 subscribers. B'Tselem reaches out with video footage of rights violations through new media tools raising public awareness significantly. Selected footage has been imbedded into B'Tselem's website and posted on [B'Tselem's English](#) and [Hebrew Facebook](#) pages. The following examples were shared in this way, and were viewed extensively:

- In January, B'Tselem featured "My Private Gaza" - a [short film](#) created by Khaled 'Azayzeh, a B'Tselem field researcher in the Gaza Strip, which shows his personal Gaza. The film was also featured on the Israeli site *Mako*, which will also feature future episodes.
- In February 2013, B'Tselem released [a video by a B'Tselem volunteer featuring farmers from Kafr Yasuf arriving to work their land near the Tapuach settlement](#). The video shows an exchange between the farmers and a settler who arrived on the scene. The video was featured on B'Tselem's website and Facebook Page and was shared extensively on social media and the blogosphere; it was viewed 42,832 times to date on B'Tselem's YouTube Channel.

Public campaigns – leveraging B'Tselem's outreach

During the reporting period, B'Tselem launched public campaigns and 'mini' campaigns almost every month. The campaigns responded to current events, in addition to pro-actively pushing forward issues on B'Tselem's agenda, such as the publication of research reports. Some examples follow:

- [Crowd Control Weapons](#) (January 2013): The campaign accompanied the release of B'Tselem report on Israel's use of crowd control weapons in the West Bank and was featured on B'Tselem's Facebook and website. The report presents the full inventory of crowd control weapons used by Israeli security forces in the West Bank. The campaign was accompanied by B'Tselem videos illustrating the use of each weapon.
- ["Firing Zone 918" - Their home is no firing zone!](#) (February 2013): The campaign, a joint initiative with other Israeli human rights organizations, accompanied ACRI's petition to High Court of Justice against the plan to expel Palestinians from their lands and was aimed at raising public awareness of the impending expulsion. The campaign was featured on B'Tselem's Facebook and website and linked to background information on the southern Hebron Hills and Firing Zone 918. Since the launch of the campaign more than 300,000 people were exposed to its content on Facebook and Twitter, and more than 1,500 people shared the information through their own networks.
- [International Women's Day](#) (March 2013): B'Tselem marked International Women's Day by highlighting some of the women on B'Tselem's staff on its Facebook pages and website. These women, as well as others who remained behind the scenes, are integral to B'Tselem's work. B'Tselem delighted in sharing the gratitude for the human and feminine wealth they bring to the workplace.

Human Rights Community

B'Tselem is proud to be a leading member of the human rights community comprised of Israeli, Palestinian and international organizations promoting human rights in the OPT.

B'Tselem's materials, information and expertise are made available to many Israeli, Palestinian and international organizations addressing human rights issues. B'Tselem works cooperatively with a range of organizations, recognizing the overall systemic benefit of coordinated action. As part of our cooperative efforts, B'Tselem director, Jessica Montell, participates in a forum comprised of Executive Directors of leading Israeli Human Rights organizations. B'Tselem is also a member of the Euro-Med Human Rights Network (EMHRN) and its local working group, and of the FIDH human rights network.

In 2013, B'Tselem continued to work with its partners in the field, advocating against planned demolition and displacement of civilians in the Southern Hebron Hills. Along with fellow human rights organizations - including the Association for Civil rights in Israel (ACRI); Rabbis for Human Rights; Breaking the Silence; Bimkom – Planners for Planning Rights; COMET– alternative renewable energy facilities - B'Tselem acted to raise international awareness of Israel's policies in the Southern Hebron Hills, leading numerous field visits of diplomats, visiting dignitaries and media personnel to the area to concretize the pressing current issues in the area. These include the threatened displacement of Palestinian residents, and a petition by Regavim to demolish Susiya Village's northern compound, including the threatened demolition of Susiya's elementary school.

B'Tselem is engaged in an ongoing partnership with the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) that focuses on human rights defenders. B'Tselem is also in cooperative partnership with HaMoked, with joint projects on family unity between Gaza and the West Bank and freedom from torture. B'Tselem and HaMoked also coordinate their activities on the ground. One example is B'Tselem's support to Hamoked's "Humanitarian Hotline," in intervening with Civil Administration and military sources to find real-time solutions for problems arising at checkpoints and gates in the Separation Barrier. HaMoked in turn passes information on to B'Tselem regarding locations at which many problems are reported to its hotline, so that B'Tselem monitors are able to visit these sites. Such partnerships have proved impactful in advancing human rights on a wider systemic scale and are also recognized to being mutually beneficial.