

Big wave of demolitions in the Northern Jordan Valley

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IMG_4438.red Today, June the 21st, Israeli military demolished Palestinian homes in two communities in the Jordan Valley.

At six am five military Jeeps, two Israeli Civil administration cars and two bulldozers entered the Bedouin community of Al Hadidya. They proceeded to demolish seven residential tents, 18 animal shelters and four outdoor kitchens, leaving 32 people homeless.

After the demolition of Al Hadidya, the bulldozers drove on to nearby Khirbet Yerza, where they demolished two homes and two animal shelters. As a result ten people were left homeless.

Al Hadidya is located in the northern Jordan Valley between the illegal settlements Ro'i and Beka'ot, which were built partly on their farmland. They are surrounded by military bases and the area is designated as a military zone by the Israeli Occupation Forces. Being in area C, the residents are not allowed to build anything by Israel, and are prevented from having running water and electricity. There have been up to a dozen home demolitions in Al Hadidya since 2007, with many of the resident having had their homes destroyed multiple times.

Ralia, an old woman from Al Hadidiya, has been told today by a soldier 'this is my work, sit down and shut up'.

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Khirbet Yerza is an isolated village of around 120 people located in an area classified as a military training area by Israel. Most inhabitants have lived in the area for over 100 years. Khirbet Yerza is isolated from the rest of the Jordan Valley by the wall. Tayyaseer checkpoint is located just beside the community. Demolitions last happened there five months ago, and at the end of 2011 fourteen structures, including a Mosque, were destroyed.

Yerza1.red

Al Hadidya and Khirbet Yerza are located in the Jordan Valley, Palestine. The Jordan Valley is located in the East of the West Bank, with the southern parts bordering the Dead Sea and the eastern parts bordering the Jordan River. The valley comprises 28.5% of the entire West Bank and has the most fertile land in the region. It was occupied by Israel in 1967 and is now home to 30 illegal settlements, around 9 outposts and 24 military bases of varying sizes. As a result of the Israeli policy in the area, the Palestinian population of the Jordan Valley has decreased from 320,000 in 1948-1967 to 56,000 today. Despite the amount of settlements the settler population is only around 9000, with most of them being economically motivated farmers.

Almost all of the Jordan Valley was classified as “area C” under the Oslo accords and is therefore under Israeli military control. Settlements and closed military zones control around 95% of the Jordan Valley, leaving it inaccessible to the indigenous Palestinian population. Israel also controls almost all the water resources.

In 2010 Netanyahu openly stated that Israel will never cede the Jordan Valley and in May 2011 he reinitiated this in talks with Obama where he said that Israel would need to retain a military presence there under any peace deal.

In May 2011 the Israeli human rights organisation B’tselem released a well publicised report about Israel’s exploitation of the Jordan Valley.

(photo 1 and 2 : Hilary EAPPI)

Links:

To view all articles about Al Hadidya and Khirbet Yerza on the Jordan Valley Solidarity website:

Al Hadidya

<http://bit.ly/iwYawm>

Khirbet Yerza

<http://bit.ly/mlycJb>

<http://bit.ly/jwDFKN>

More pictures :

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/activestills/sets/72157626207322202/with/5859195121/>

B’tselem’s report Dispossession and Exploitation about the Jordan Valley:

http://www.btselem.org/Campaigns/2011_Jordan_Valley/English/index.html

http://www.jordanvalleysolidarity.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=292:current-home-demolitions-in-al-hadidiya&catid=15:2010&Itemid=21